

# North Yorkshire

## Area Assessment

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**oneplace**

for an independent overview  
of local public services

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## North Yorkshire at a glance

This independent assessment by six inspectorates sets out how well local public services are tackling the major issues in North Yorkshire. It says how well they are delivering better results for local people and how likely these are to improve in future. If, and only if, our assessment shows that the following special circumstances are met in relation to a major issue, we use flags to highlight our judgements. We use a green flag to highlight where others can learn from outstanding achievements or improvements or an innovation that has very promising prospects of success. We use a red flag to highlight where we have significant concerns about results and future prospects that are not being tackled adequately. This means that local partners need to do something more or different to improve these prospects.

### Green flags - exceptional performance or innovation that others can learn from



Green flag: Helping older and vulnerable people keep their independence

### Red flags - significant concerns, action needed

No red flags have been identified for North Yorkshire

## The local area

North Yorkshire is the largest county in England, covering around 3,103 square miles. It includes the urban areas of Harrogate and Scarborough, the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Parks, and many small towns and villages.

595,500 people live in the County, and population density is low. Only one in every hundred is from a black and minority ethnic (BME) background, but this proportion is growing. Almost 19 per cent of the population is over 65 and this is expected to rise to nearly 24 per cent by 2018.

North Yorkshire is an attractive place to be. It's a big and diverse county. The quality of life for many is good and the area attracts visitors and people seeking a good place in which to enjoy their retirement. But communities in the area are dispersed and transport is often difficult.

The next section tells you how North Yorkshire's public services are doing in each of their local priority areas.

## How is North Yorkshire doing?

## Access to services and public transport

Partners in North Yorkshire are working on three fronts in this priority area: promoting independence by giving better access to services; developing transport, particularly community transport; and, providing modern broadband for all areas including rural communities.

The County Council and partners are improving access for all residents in North Yorkshire through joint contact centres and other initiatives. With partners the County Council is developing libraries to provide access and services for citizens. The numbers of people visiting libraries and receiving an at home service are increasing. At the end of June 2009 almost four in five of North Yorkshire's residents lived within 5 miles of a Joint Access Centre. The County Council Customer Service Centre is now open 68 hours a week and the range of services continues to expand.

The County is a Centre of Excellence for local transport delivery and work is continuing to improve bus rail and road travel and community transport. This is giving people in rural areas better access to the services they need and want but there are still challenges which threaten the sustainability of some more remote communities.

The public sector led NYnet initiative is championing the roll out of super fast broadband connection for more areas. Changes in European regulation has given further impetus to NYnet. Commercial broadband providers are not available for some rural communities. NYnet has ambitions to fill that gap. It has already had successes in attracting new businesses - creative industries for example - to areas like Scarborough as part of a wider plan for economic development.

## Alcohol

Partners in North Yorkshire are working on reducing the harm caused by alcohol by reducing the damage done to people's health, crime related to alcohol including anti-social behaviour and the loss of working days because of alcohol.

Alcohol and drug misuse are significant problems for some areas in North Yorkshire. Binge drinking rates are highest in Richmondshire perhaps reflecting the impact of Catterick Garrison. In Harrogate alcohol related admissions to hospital are well above the national average.

The NYSP's work in promoting health and healthy lifestyles is not yet bearing fruit. It is at an early stage in the implementation of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy and has yet to see real improvements in outcomes for local people. More work is planned with children, young people and adults to help all of them better understand risks, effects and long-term consequences of excessive alcohol consumption and drug/substance misuse.

## Children and Young People

Partners in North Yorkshire are working on a number of important areas in this priority. These include: reducing the number of teenage pregnancies; helping children and young people to do better particularly where they are lagging behind now; ensuring that vulnerable children have the chance to get good quality education; and, getting more children and young people physically active.

Ofsted have rated North Yorkshire's children's services as performing well. Most schools, children's homes, pupil referral units, nurseries and childminders are good and some are outstanding. This means that almost all children and young people get good help and support. A higher proportion of services for very young children are good or better than in most of the country and in similar areas.

Most of the county's nursery schools are good. More North Yorkshire primary and secondary schools are good and outstanding than in similar areas. All primary schools are at least adequate. Fewer of the county's secondary schools are inadequate than in the country as a whole or in similar areas.

A recent inspection of frontline services in direct contact with children and young people who need support found two areas for urgent action. Firstly, completing assessments for children in need was taking too long. Secondly, arrangements for following up allegations of child protection referrals were not applied consistently. Both weaknesses put some of North Yorkshire's most vulnerable children at risk.

Ofsted has recently inspected services for children in the care of the County Council and arrangements for keeping children safe. It showed the County Council has acted to deal with the weaknesses found in the earlier inspection.

## Community cohesion

Partners in North Yorkshire are working on increasing the proportion of the area's population that feels people from different backgrounds get on well together. Partners are also developing their knowledge of more localised problems that weaken community cohesion. Increasing volunteering is also a key ambition for the area.

Four out of five of people in North Yorkshire believe the area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This is a high figure nationally and the best performance in Yorkshire and Humberside.

Although the county's population is not ethnically diverse changes have happened in recent years that have altered many communities. Migrant workers from Eastern Europe have become more common and have had significant impacts on some communities. Partners have worked well in helping these new arrivals - the Fire and Rescue Service's work with Polish workers in Selby is one example.

Elsewhere Gurkha service personnel and their families have been based in the infantry training centre in Catterick since the mid 1990s. There are long-standing Gypsy, Traveller and show people communities in the area. Hate crimes involving race are rare but some Gypsies and Travellers may not have a

safe place to live.

Good joint working between the public and voluntary sectors is leading to more volunteers coming forward including those from black and minority ethnic, unemployed and disabled communities. North Yorkshire Police and the two National Parks make extensive use of volunteers in their work.

## Community Safety

Partners are working on several issues as part of achieving this priority. They want to reduce re-offending rates, tackle domestic abuse, provide greater assurance to those living in fear of crime and reduce the numbers of people who die or get injured on the county's roads.

North Yorkshire is an overwhelmingly safe place to live, visit and work. Crime is low overall and fell by 3.2 per cent in 2008/09. Put another way there were 1500 fewer victims of crime. Partnership working to tackle crime and disorder is working well in district council areas.

The Inspectorate of Probation has identified that reoffending by young people in North Yorkshire is worse than in similar areas. By most measures the Youth Justice Service works well. The percentage of young people engaging with education and work opportunities is low and needs significant attention.

Impressive partnership work on domestic violence is improving the lives of families. The Making Safe initiative piloted in Ryedale and Scarborough is now being rolled out across all North Yorkshire. The initiative takes the abuser rather than the abused out of the home and takes on their behaviour. It continues to be successful at stopping offending.

Too many people die or are injured on the County's roads. 536 people died or were seriously injured on North Yorkshire's roads in 2008 down from 716 in 2007. Half of these were visitors from outside the area. Some attracted by the technical challenge of driving on some of the more scenic rural routes.

Many of these visitors drive with a disregard for their and other road users' safety despite their lack of familiarity with local roads. The North Yorkshire 95 Alive road safety partnership has done innovative work with at risk groups such as children, young drivers (including service personnel) and 'Born-Again Bikers'.

## Economy and enterprise

Partners are working on a number of tasks in this priority area. They aim to stimulate the economy and encourage enterprise. Partners also want to develop the areas' cultural and environmental attractions. Through investing in broadband and other technology partners are also trying to attract new businesses into the area.

The recession is hitting some parts of North Yorkshire hard. Unemployment is starting to increase and there is anecdotal evidence that businesses in some sectors have experienced a downturn in business. The North Yorkshire

Strategic Partnership has recognized the recession's likely impact. It knows that 18 to 24 year-olds are being hit hardest with job losses in some rural areas.

Small businesses and the public sector dominate North Yorkshire's economy. Although the area is mainly rural only a small proportion of the population works in agriculture. More people are employed in manufacturing and shop work but the biggest employer is the public sector. This proportion is expected to increase as jobs are lost in the private sector. But decreases in public spending will have significant impacts in North Yorkshire.

Partners have clear plans to tackle some effects of the downturn. They aim to stimulate the economy and encourage enterprise. They also want to increase the number of visitors by developing the areas' cultural and environmental attractions. Through investing in broadband and other technology they are attracting new businesses into the area. Recognising the recession's likely impact on family support, debt advice and benefits they have set up North Yorkshire Credit Union to help local people financially.

But there is optimism too the downturn will create some opportunities. The weak pound is increasing the number of visitors to North Yorkshire from home and abroad despite the British weather.

## Environment

Partners are working on a number of ambitions within this priority area. They are tackling global warming by reducing their own greenhouse gas emissions. Partners are also working to reduce waste and increase recycling. Bio-diversity is being promoted too. Flooding is a very real danger for some of North Yorkshire's communities and the focus of a lot of effort.

Key indicators about the environment show good performance and are improving but a few areas still perform poorly. For example, North Yorkshire people produce more household waste than in similar areas. The County Council has well-developed plans in place to address this.

Partners are taking action to reduce their areas' carbon footprint. But the nature of many properties often makes it impossible to use cavity insulation. The high price of bottled gas and heating oil means that fuel poverty is a significant issue for many in the area. There are some notable examples of microgeneration of power using water and wind that can be used without significant impacts on the local environment.

Flooding has had a major impact on the county in recent years. The new £18 million flood defence scheme in Selby has reduced the flood risk to 2,500 properties leading to greater business confidence and reduced insurance premiums for both business and homeowners. The Council is liaising with the Environment Agency over its proposals to 'retreat' from some areas of flood defences which would cause more frequent and serious flooding on agricultural land.

## Health and wellbeing

Partners in North Yorkshire are working on health related problems. These include: childhood obesity; getting people more active; reducing smoking in pregnancy; focusing on the greatest health inequalities; and, help vulnerable people get the health support they need.

North Yorkshire is a relatively healthy County and life expectancy is high. But there are some communities where this general picture is not so good.

The gap between Scarborough and the rest of the County is still significant though getting smaller. A man living in some parts of Scarborough is more likely to have worse health and die younger than is the case in other parts of the county. Rates of heart disease and strokes are also higher in Scarborough than is the case nationally.

A number of other problems are more widespread. Cancer is the most common cause of early death. Binge drinking is also increasing and has resulted in more in alcohol-related hospital admissions in Harrogate and Scarborough. The proportion of North Yorkshire women who smoke during pregnancy is a cause for concern. Given the rapidly ageing population demands for services for conditions such as Alzheimer's is certain to increase.

But there is good news too. More people take part in regular sport or exercise than in other parts of the country (except in Scarborough). Schools are encouraging children to be healthy and three quarters of them have achieved the National Healthy School Status which is above the national average. Obesity rates for Year 6 pupils are lower. Ryedale and Scarborough buck that trend though and have higher rates.

## Older people

Partners in North Yorkshire are working on several areas that are important to achieving this priority. They aim to promote healthy ageing and older people's involvement in the life of their communities. Partners are promoting older people's independence and dignity. They are also working to ensure fair access to services for all that need them while allowing them to have more control over their own lives.

North Yorkshire is a good place to grow old. North Yorkshire people rate the area highly for older people getting the help and support they need to live at home for as long as they want to. Local people also rated public services highly in North Yorkshire for treating them with respect and consideration. The area's innovation and success in helping people live independently for longer is recognised in our green flag.

The County Council and its partners have made excellent progress in helping people to uphold their independence. Partners are improving both access and the quality of services for vulnerable people with more people getting the care they need earlier. The most recent assessment of the Council's performance in all areas was 'excellent'.

Organisations are working well together to plan for the needs of North Yorkshire's growing population of older people including provision of extracare housing and more local provision of services in rural areas.

## Affordable Housing

Partners in North Yorkshire are working on affordable housing for all its people that need it including people who are vulnerable. They are also acting together to prevent and reduce homelessness.

Partners have agreed a four year target of delivering 2,220 affordable homes. But this is unlikely to be achieved for reasons mostly outside the control of organisations in the area not least the downturn in the housing market because of the recession. The impact of the downturn is shown by the number of affordable homes built over the last two years. In 2007/08 the figure was 429. In 2008/09 it was 385. Most of these have been built because of public money not as part of larger private developments.

Developers have pulled out of projects for understandable reasons. Demand and supply of private housing shrunk rapidly when mortgage and business finance got harder to get. Projects have stalled that provided affordable homes alongside private houses sold at full market value. So councils have agreed that all the districts should have new strategies in place by April 2011 to ensure that projects can start without delay when the economic climate improves.

## About North Yorkshire

A recent survey shows that in North Yorkshire 87 per cent of people are satisfied with their immediate local area as a place to live. This is higher than the average for similar areas and higher than the national average of 81 per cent.

North Yorkshire is an attractive place to be. It's a big and diverse county. The quality of life for many is good and the area attracts visitors and people seeking a good place in which to enjoy their retirement. But communities in the area are dispersed and transport is often difficult.

So living in North Yorkshire can be costly and many younger people leave to find work and cheaper housing. Digital technology is being used successfully to provide greater opportunities to link communities and encourage new business into the area.

There are seven district and borough councils - Craven, Hambleton, Harrogate, Richmondshire, Ryedale, Selby and Scarborough. Each district has its own strategic partnership for its area focussing on truly local problems. These partnerships are important part of the partnership 'family' in North Yorkshire. There are also 731 parishes with 588 parish councils. A single primary care trust commissions and provides health care across the County and the City of York. The Fire and Police services also cover county and City areas.

The North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership - NYSP - brings together local organisations from the private, public and voluntary sectors. The Partnership is working on ten priorities to tackle the most significant issues facing the area.

Partners' vision for North Yorkshire is - 'a place of equal opportunity where all can develop their full potential, participate in a flourishing economy, live and thrive in secure communities, see their high-quality environment and cultural assets maintained and enhanced, and receive effective support when they need it'.

North Yorkshire's people think highly of the area and the places that they live. The results from a recent government survey that looked at various aspects of the quality of life showed North Yorkshire's people are happier than residents in other parts of the region or other counties nationally. Four in five people believe that people get on well together in North Yorkshire. Two-thirds of people believe they belong to their neighbourhood. Results are good too for many indicators about how people think they can get involved in what is going on locally.

The county is a major tourist area attracting large numbers of visitors to the countryside and coastal resorts such as Whitby and Scarborough. It is the home of Catterick Garrison which has a military population of over 17,000. The Garrison and other military bases in North Yorkshire have major economic and social implications for the surrounding area.

Currently around 595,500 people live in the county. Only a fifth live in the main urban areas with the majority living in the small towns and villages. The population density is low - 73 schools have fewer than 50 pupils and 166 have fewer than 100. Over half the county is sparsely populated (fewer than four people a hectare). This creates challenges for both the public and private sectors in providing consistently good quality and accessible services to scattered communities over such a wide geographical area.

The most marked demographic change in North Yorkshire's population will be the estimated rise in the population of those over 65 years old. In North Yorkshire, the number of people who are 65 and over will increase from 111,400 (18.8 per cent) in 2006 to 152,400 (23.7 per cent) in 2018. A significant element of this rise is because of inward migration with many finding North Yorkshire a pleasant place to live in retirement. This growing elderly population places increasing pressures on delivery of social care services.

There is a small but growing black minority ethnic population, making up 1.1 per cent of the total. There are significant groups in Scarborough and Skipton but also small and dispersed communities elsewhere. The arrival of migrant workers from Eastern Europe has been notable in recent years and has brought both benefits and tensions to areas unused to migration.

The quality of life in North Yorkshire is good but there are pockets of deprivation in Scarborough, Selby and Colburn and areas of rural poverty. Scarborough has seven Super Output Areas that fall within the worst 10 per cent of deprived areas nationally. Health indices are good with life expectancy high, but there are inequalities. For example in Ryedale you can expect to live 1.4 years longer than in Scarborough. House prices are high and there is significant demand for second homes leading to a significant lack of affordable housing. The lack of supply is compounded by the low wages seen in many areas of the county.

Unemployment remains below the national average despite the recession but

some groups are losing jobs more readily than others. 18 to 24 year-olds are being hardest hit by job losses. The main industries centre on tourism and agriculture. Small businesses dominate, with 85 per cent of businesses employing fewer than ten people, and there are high levels of self-employment. Educational attainment is high. Young people remain in education longer but then move out of the county. This makes it difficult for the public sector to recruit and keep young staff.

The county is vulnerable to extreme weather events including flooding. Snow clearance is a problem in the rural uplands and there are problems with coastal erosion. This places demands on the Council and its partners at emergency planning, highways engineering and winter maintenance of roads. Road accidents occurring in North Yorkshire differ in type in some respects from the national picture. They are often single vehicle, high-speed crashes resulting in serious injury or death. Often the result of unfamiliarity with the county's roads coupled with unfit or thrill-seeking driving. As a result, road casualties, including deaths, are rather high.

Crime levels in North Yorkshire are the lowest in England. Most serious crime happens in more urban areas but rural communities are vulnerable to new crimes such as farm equipment theft. Fear of crime is higher than might be expected, especially among rural communities and older people.

## How well do priorities for North Yorkshire express community needs and aspirations?

The needs and aspirations of North Yorkshire's people are only partially reflected in the priorities the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership is working on. This means that some needs and wishes of North Yorkshire people will not be met. More work is underway to help the partners better understand its more vulnerable communities and the extent to which their needs are met.

In developing the sustainable community strategy for North Yorkshire Community partners got an understanding of community needs. The county strategy is reflected in the strategies for each District. North Yorkshire organisations have good intelligence and information available to them on what needs exist. Arrangements for getting local people involved in shaping their areas are in place and developing. Examples of these include the work going on in Hambleton and Selby. The partners are building a comprehensive understanding of what aspirations communities have.

The sustainable community strategy for the county as a whole doesn't contain any targets. These are in the local area agreement agreed with the government described below. The strategy does have the long-term vision and 10 medium term (3 years) high-level priorities. Although each priority highlights up to 6 key aims these are broad and not expressed as outcomes that people would be able to experience for themselves. The link between the strategy and what people will experience is the local area agreement.

This contains 31 targets agreed with government in June 2008. Many indicators mirror greatest need but others do not. Some chosen targets are

areas where performance is already good. And some areas of poor performance which affect the most vulnerable, such as housing for young offenders, are not included.

In common with other areas the partnership published the joint strategic needs assessment for health and well-being after the local area agreement. The knowledge gained in completing this assessment has not therefore shaped the priorities chosen for health. But the strategy for the area had anticipated most of the needs assessment's content.

## Access to services and public transport

The County Council is improving access for all its residents through its joint contact centres and other initiatives. The numbers of people visiting libraries and receiving an at home service are increasing. At the end of June 2009 almost 78 per cent of citizens lived within 5 miles of a joint access centre, an increase of 50 per cent since April 2007. The "No Wrong Door" strategy aims to direct people to the right service regardless of whether their first contact is with any statutory or voluntary sector partners. The customer Service Centre is now open 68 hours a week and the range of services continues to expand.

The County Council and its partners are developing libraries to provide access and services for citizens. Libraries will increasingly become Joint Access Centres or 'one stop shops' for information about anything, with knowledgeable staff working with volunteers and other partners to deliver a service that is relevant and accessible to all members of the community. This is giving people in rural areas better access to the services they need and want. The Home Library Service membership doubled to 2,200 this year and police and fire officers travel on the mobile library vans delivering information and services in the more remote areas.

A Wheels 2 Work scheme - that loans mopeds and bikes - has allowed 600 young people living in isolated rural areas get to education, training and workplaces over the last two years. The scheme provides short-term loans of mopeds/ electric bikes to enable young people to travel to work.

The County is a Centre of Excellence for local transport delivery and more people are able to access bus services. This has been achieved through actions identified in the Local Transport Plan (LTP2) (rated as excellent by government). Improved travel opportunities in the more remote areas include community vehicles and minibuses, station improvements and Ring and Ride services. Improvements to the Easingwold to York service has increased the number of passengers each year from 93,000 in 2005 to 136,300 in 2008. Over £600,000 has been invested in the Harrogate Punctuality Improvement Partnership to improve traffic signalling and layout at junctions which were identified as being a major cause for delays, or reliability on bus routes. Bus travel has increased by a fifth in Harrogate.

NYnet is providing optimism about building a superfast broadband network for North Yorkshire's more rural communities. It is already making a difference in some areas allowing new industries to set up in places that would be otherwise impractical. Plans are in place to expand the network. A recent

change in European regulation allowing the public sector more involvement in providing this service where the market cannot or will not deliver is giving NYnet a fresh impetus.

In our assessment next year we want to follow the progress on NYnet. Given this approach is believed to be unique we want to understand if there are lessons that other similar areas could learn from.

Many of North Yorkshire's most remote communities lack affordable housing, good transport, jobs and high-speed broadband. These and other problems threaten their sustainability and make their residents vulnerable. And raise a question mark about their long-term future.

Organisations locally know what their particular problems are and there are good examples of joint work to tackle these. For example libraries will increasingly become Joint Access Centres or 'one stop shops' for information about anything, with knowledgeable staff working with volunteers and other partners to deliver a service that is relevant and are accessible by all members of the community.

The statutory Local Transport Plan in North Yorkshire is rated as excellent by government and expresses the County Council and partner's objectives for transport. As well as highways, work includes policy development for bus and rail services, community transport, taxis and public transport information. The County is a Centre of Excellence for local transport delivery.

But we want to see how these plans get delivered. We particularly want to watch how the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership really makes the most of all of its members in supporting the long-term future of these remote communities. We will be looking at this over the next year.

## Alcohol

Alcohol misuse is a significant problem for some areas in North Yorkshire. Binge drinking rates are highest in Richmondshire perhaps reflecting the impact of Catterick Garrison. But binge drinking is a problem for all districts in the county.

Recent survey results have shown that North Yorkshire's people are less worried about anti-social behaviour than is the case in other areas. Results were good too for perceptions that alcohol misuse is a problem in North Yorkshire's communities.

Although fewer people in North Yorkshire go into hospital because of alcohol than elsewhere around 8,000 hospital stays are because of alcohol. Hospital admissions because of alcohol are forecast to rise however.

North Yorkshire's Strategic Partnership is at an early stage in its work on reducing the harm caused by alcohol in North Yorkshire's communities. We have been told of some early successes tackling binge drinking over the summer. This is encouraging. But partners accept that it has taken longer than they would have hoped for their work to produce the change they think is needed.

In the coming year we will be looking at the partnership's progress in building momentum in dealing with alcohol. We want to know if the promising signs we are now seeing are sustained into the future.

## Children and Young People

Ofsted has rated North Yorkshire's children's services as performing well. Most schools, children's homes, pupil referral units, nurseries and childminders are good and some are outstanding. This means that almost all children and young people get good help and support. A higher proportion of services for very young children are good or better than in most of the country and in similar areas.

Most of the county's nursery schools are good. More North Yorkshire primary and secondary schools are good and outstanding than in similar areas. All primary schools are at least adequate. Fewer of the county's secondary schools are inadequate than in the country as a whole or in similar areas.

The county council's six children's homes are good. Its two pupil referral units for children with challenging behaviour are outstanding. All 11 special schools are good or outstanding. The county council's fostering and adoption services are working as they should except in the case of private fostering.

A recent inspection of frontline services in direct contact with children and young people who need support found two areas for urgent action. Firstly, completing assessments for children in need was taking too long. Secondly, arrangements for following up allegations of child protection referrals were not applied consistently. Both weaknesses put some of North Yorkshire's most vulnerable children at risk.

Ofsted has recently inspected services for children in the care of the county council and arrangements for keeping children safe. It showed the county council has acted to deal with the weaknesses found in the earlier inspection.

A serious case review involving procedures for keeping children safe in North Yorkshire was published in January 2009.

North Yorkshire's performance against almost all national performance indicators matches or exceeds that of similar areas. Children in the county council's care do not get moved around and so have good stability in their lives. Children at all ages do better in North Yorkshire than children do nationally.

Some of North Yorkshire's vulnerable children and young people do not get the same results as their peers. For example, at age eleven some young people from minority ethnic groups do not do as well as children from other communities.

We have not had an opportunity to look closely at how partners plan to meet the needs of North Yorkshire's vulnerable children. We plan to do this in next year's assessment.

## Community cohesion

North Yorkshire's people can be vulnerable for a number of reasons. If you are a gypsy or traveller you may not have a safe place to live that enables your children to get to school. If you don't have a car and live in the countryside you may not easily be able to get to health or other services. If your partner is in the armed forces you may be left to raise your family whilst worrying about their safety.

Organisations in North Yorkshire are working hard to make sure they understand the needs and wishes of the area's vulnerable. For example good joint working between the public and voluntary sectors is leading to volunteers coming forward from black and minority ethnic, unemployed and disabled communities.

Local crime and disorder reduction partnerships - there's one for each of the seven districts in the county - have now set up contact points away from main centres. These points allow local policing teams to spend more time actually out in the community not least by cutting down travelling time. North Yorkshire Police has also set up over 80 reporting points across the county where people can report hate crimes. These points include places like libraries that are less intimidating.

North Yorkshire Police is making good progress with its scheme involving people in a range of work. The MoD plays a full role in partnerships in the area and relationships between it and other public sector organisations is close and fruitful.

The two National Parks make extensive use of volunteers in their work. For example, North York Moors National Park has 700 regular volunteers.

Partners plan to do more to meet the needs of the more vulnerable. We will look at how these plans get delivered and assess the difference that they make to the lives of these people. We will watch developments in Scarborough on the Seamer Fair and what this means for its residents' relationship with the gypsy and traveller community.

## Community Safety

North Yorkshire is one of the safest places to live in the country. Any resident or visitor is unlikely to be a victim of a crime. Criminals are also more likely to get caught and punished in North Yorkshire than in other similar areas. Crime is also falling in North Yorkshire. In 2008/09 crime fell for the fifth consecutive year to 48,769 crimes. In 2003/04 there were 71,467 crimes recorded in North Yorkshire so current performance is a significant improvement. In almost all categories of crime the area performs well.

In a recent survey North Yorkshire's people reported that they were more satisfied on many safety indicators than people in other areas locally and nationally. The area scored particularly well for perceptions of rowdiness, anti-social behaviour and drug abuse as problems.

But there are some problems. The area's elderly population attracts doorstep criminals and rogue traders. Rates of reoffending especially among young people are too high. Domestic violence still blights some North Yorkshire lives. Too many people are still dying on North Yorkshire's roads. Wildlife crime specifically killing birds of prey can be a problem in some rural areas. Farm equipment has been targeted by organised gangs.

Partners in the area know and understand the challenges that they face. At a recent event they agreed to focus on the following areas in the year ahead: anti-social behaviour; domestic violence; violent crime; fear of crime; and, road safety.

The rate of reoffending by younger people remains higher than the target set by partners. A new multi-agency group drawn from various North Yorkshire organisations is looking at this area in more detail. Reoffending rates for prolific offenders also remain too high. But work on managing adult offenders is achieving better results.

Domestic violence is being tackled successfully through several initiatives. One of these is The Making Safe scheme. It brings together local organisations to focus on the victims of this abuse and strives to keep victims of domestic abuse safely in their homes. Offenders have their behaviour challenged. Work with them encourages them to seek alternative ways of sorting problems out. What the scheme achieves is not having family life disrupted, children stay in their schools and the offender can remain in employment where appropriate. Reoffending rates are a little over one in ten. This is significantly better than the national figure of almost half.

The Making Safe scheme was initially run in the Scarborough Borough Council and Ryedale Council areas but is now being copied across North Yorkshire.

Despite the low levels of crime in the area the fear of crime remains an issue for many people. Public confidence in the work of local councils and the police are relatively high. Around half of North Yorkshire's people are positive about this. Partners know they have more to do to drive up satisfaction especially if the target of almost two-thirds of people is to be achieved in two years time.

But many interesting initiatives are already underway and achieving results. The Police Force has redesigned its web site. It now allows people to look at up-to-date maps of crime in their local areas. Another new web site covering the local arrangements for managing sexual and violent offenders has just been launched. (These arrangements are called MAPPA - multi-agency public protection arrangements.) Providing public access to information about these arrangements provides reassurance about what is happening and improves confidence in these services.

The county's road safety partnership - 95 Alive - is doing good work to tackle the high levels of death and injury on the area's roads. All North Yorkshire districts have death and injury rates on the roads that exceed the national average. Risk groups such as young men, the military, motorcyclists have been targeted for specific campaigns. The partnership has a mobile classroom/demonstrator that it takes out to places where direct contact can be made with these groups.

The Fire and Rescue Service is contributing to achieving this target through putting up temporary speed matrix signs at sites identified by local communities. Because traffic speed is a factor in livestock deaths on the North York Moors the area has some of the first matrix warning signs that feature a sheep. Because of these and other initiatives partners are on target to achieve their goals for reducing these figures in 2009. 536 people died or were seriously injured on North Yorkshire's roads in 2008 down from 716 in 2007. Half of these were visitors from outside the area. This fact explains why death and injury rates look high when related to the local population.

We plan to look at some of these areas in more detail in next year's assessment. In particular we will look at the progress being made on the priorities set for the area in 2009/10. In the areas of good performance we want to see if there are things that other areas could learn from and apply to their problems. One area we are especially interested in is joint working on dealing with doorstep crime.

## Economy and enterprise

Partners are working on several tasks in this priority area. They have plans to stimulate the economy and encourage enterprise. Public organisations are looking for new ways of working together to make savings. They are developing the areas' cultural and environmental attractions to increase visitor numbers. Through investing in broadband and other technology partners are also encouraging local enterprise and helping to attract new businesses into the area.

The public sector is important to North Yorkshire's economy. At the last census in 2001 28 per cent of the working age population worked for local public services. These services spend over £1.5 billion each year in North Yorkshire. But decreases in public spending will have a significant impact. There are examples where good work is already going on to make savings from joined up services. For example, sharing Chief Executive, management and services at Hambleton and Richmondshire Councils and creating joint access centres so residents have a single point to get to the services they need.

North Yorkshire's economy relies on small businesses working in many different and contrasting industries. The North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership has taken a lead in helping the economy during the recession. Public sector bodies are paying their bills sooner helping cash flow for businesses. Councils are also working together to ensure that their approach to buying goods and services is better understood by local business, giving them a chance to win work where they can.

Much of North Yorkshire's environment is obviously outstanding making it popular with tourists. Across the county partners are contributing well to conserve and improve natural and developed areas. All the councils and the two national parks have delivered their plans which are conserving, improving and re-creating natural environments. This is helping to attract more visitors to the area and stimulate the economy.

Many communities in rural areas of North Yorkshire have little or no access to

high speed broadband. Nynet was set up by North Yorkshire County Council to provide higher quality and faster broadband to the public sector and improve services for public organisations such as schools, universities, council offices and many others across the whole of North Yorkshire. Through partnership work it has been extended to be available to everyone and Nynet now provides access to next generation broadband for businesses, organisations and individuals. This has helped to attract new businesses to the area.

The North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership has recognized the recession's likely impact on family support, debt advice, benefit, crime, fear of crime, employment for young people (apprenticeships), homelessness and mental health services. Its plans are being kept up to date to ensure that partners give all the help they can to local communities.

There are encouraging signs of progress in maintaining and growing the economies of the area's market towns and villages. Initiatives are underway to bring space above shops in many high streets back into use adding to the vibrancy of these areas. Well-regarded farmers' and producers' markets happen in many areas allowing direct sales to the public. Excellent regeneration services in Scarborough are making a significant difference to the appearance, image and prosperity of the area. This has helped to create a momentum of confidence and accompanying investment by the private sector which looks set to continue.

Partnership working in Scarborough is strong. Positive working with public, private and voluntary sector partners have resulted in an excellent track record of external funding. Over the last ten years an estimated £100m of public and £350 million of private sector investment has been accessed to support the delivery partners' shared ambitions for regeneration and improving the area.

Regeneration projects have transformed the physical environment of the borough and delivered outcomes for local people with job creation, environmental improvements and a more sustainable economy. Tourism is now less affected by seasonal changes in visitor numbers. Early reports for this summer suggest that visitors have come to the area in greater numbers.

We will look at how all these positives come together in the next year and see whether what is happening should be shared with other areas.

#### Getting value for money for North Yorkshire's taxpayers

The public sector dominates North Yorkshire's economy. At the last census in 2001 28 per cent of the working age population worked for local public services. This proportion will go up as Catterick Garrison expands. Local public services spend over £1.5 billion each year in North Yorkshire.

Each organisation knows that the state of the public finances nationally means that they will have to do more with less in the near future. There are examples where good work is already going on such as the sharing of Chief Executive, management and services at Hambleton and Richmondshire Councils and the creation of joint access centres so residents have a single point to get to the services they need.

There is both an appetite and a will to make more things happen to deliver more effectively the action that North Yorkshire people need and want. In our assessment next year we want to follow what happens next to turn partners' ambitions to do more with less into reality.

## Environment

### Climate change

Partners in North Yorkshire know how vulnerable many parts of the county are to the likely impacts of climate change. Information from the Yorkshire and Humber climate change adaptation study is being used to inform the area's understanding of the problems it faces both at county and district level.

Rising sea levels, greater rainfall and more frequent severe weather events will bring greater risks of flooding. This will impact on homes and businesses including those that depend on tourism.

The partnership knows that it has a lot more to do to help people cope with the changing climate. It has assessed its performance on a five-point scale - 0 to 4 - set by the government. North Yorkshire, with many other areas, is at 0. This means it is finding out its starting point for adapting to the climate change that is coming. Much work is needed if the area is to reach the next level by 31 March 2010. Partners have recently recognized that the lack of high-level leadership has held back progress. This gap is now being addressed.

Partners are also focusing on making changes to the way they work to reduce their own CO<sub>2</sub> footprint. CO<sub>2</sub> is known to be one of the most significant causes of global warming. The councils and National Parks in North Yorkshire put almost 90,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere each year. Partners know that almost two-thirds of their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions come from the County Council. Most of these come from the County's schools. Partners have set themselves a target of reducing their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 4 per cent over the next two years.

But there are success stories in many areas. Schemes for microgeneration of energy - waterwheels, water turbines, Archimedes screws, wind turbines, ground source heat, combined heat and power systems and using biomass as fuel - are being encouraged in many areas including the National Parks. Projects are underway to increase the sustainability of energy use in some communities. For example, in the North York Moors National Park area communities are being helped to make their homes more energy efficient.

Historic houses can be made warmer through draught exclusion and some insulation techniques even when conservation rules mean some approaches cannot be used. When communities have worked out what their new energy needs are - after putting in efficiency measures - then they can decide how best to meet those needs in a sustainable way. In one community this has meant installing domestic woodburners and setting up community woodlands. As well as making communities more sustainable in their use of energy such projects also help foster greater cohesiveness and a sense of a shared purpose.

In some areas people remain vulnerable to changes in world commodity prices. Increases in oil prices make transport more expensive. Rural communities where travelling is unavoidable get hit hard by these price increases. Many in rural areas rely on domestic heating oil or bottled gas whose cost also rises with oil prices. Both fuels cost more than gas available through a mains supply. Fuel poverty - people spending more and more of their household incomes on heating their homes - is a problem for many households. A recent study by the Audit Commission has commended the work of partners in tackling this issue.

#### Reducing waste and increasing recycling

Key indicators about the environment show good performance but a few areas still perform poorly: Waste management indicators are improving but some are starting from a poor position. For example, North Yorkshire people produce more household waste than people in similar areas. The area exceeded its targets for recycling and waste sent to landfill in 2008/09. The County Council has well-developed plans in place to improve its performance on waste (including a PFI scheme). In Selby, Scarborough, Richmondshire and Ryedale districts the councils are all increasing the levels of commercial waste recycling and performance has more than doubled.

Many district councils have decided to introduce alternate weekly collections of household waste. These changes are politically tough but have led to more waste being recycled. More work is underway in many areas to focus attention on minimising waste.

#### Flooding

Rising sea levels will affect coastal communities. Erosion will speed up and some of North Yorkshire's more unstable coastline will come under threat and will be lost. The loss of businesses and homes to landslides is a sad and traumatic experience well known to these communities. Rising sea levels will also create problems for communities in Selby and along the River Ouse.

As well as sea level changes greater rainfall is going to bring more risk of river flooding or storm flooding from severe weather events. North Yorkshire's geography means that its river valleys and the towns and villages along them are at risk. Flooding in these areas will disrupt transport links and increase risks to businesses such as caravan and campsites integral to the tourism economy.

Flooding has had a major impact on the county in recent years. The new £18 million flood defence scheme in Selby has lessened the flood risk to 2,500 properties leading to greater business confidence and reduced insurance premiums for both business and homeowners. Councils are liaising with the Environment Agency over its proposals to 'retreat' from some areas of flood defences which would cause more frequent and serious flooding on agricultural land. Partners know they must work more closely with other organisations such as the City of York and the East Riding of Yorkshire Council. Doing so will ensure that flood risks are managed along important watercourses such as the Rivers Derwent and Ouse.

In the coming year we will be following up the partnership's progress on its

ambitions for the environment. We want to see if the promising work on reducing communities' carbon footprints should be shared with other areas. We also want to know more about how partners plan to make the changes needed to adapt the area to the climate change that is known to be coming irrespective of any reductions in its CO2 emissions.

Much of North Yorkshire's environment is obviously outstanding. Over half of its area falls either within a National Park or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is the only county in England which contains almost all of two separate National Parks: Yorkshire Dales; and, North York Moors. Between them the two Parks cover over 1200 square miles well over a third of North Yorkshire. Swaledale, Ribblesdale, Wensleydale, Farndale, Rosedale and Fylingdale. All these dales from the two Parks resonate nationally and internationally. In addition North Yorkshire has two separate Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty: the Howardian Hills; and Nidderdale. These cover a further 300 square miles around a tenth of North Yorkshire.

North Yorkshire's Heritage Coast is also known nationally and internationally from the traditional seaside resorts of Filey and Scarborough to the wilder attractions of Robin Hood's Bay and Staithes. Whitby's gothic charm attracts visitors from all over the world. North Yorkshire's cliffs and coves are home to important seabird and seal colonies.

Agriculture, forestry, country sports, recreation and rigorous planning controls have each shaped North Yorkshire's environment. The area's landscape and market towns attract visitors and new residents. North Yorkshire has a strong starting point in delivering its ambitions for the environment.

Across the county partners are contributing well to conserve and improve natural and developed areas. Work continues to improve local wildlife sites. Each council in the county has delivered its plans which are conserving, improving and re-creating natural environments. The two National Park Authorities are also contributing significantly for example through The Yorkshire Peatlands Project aimed at reducing carbon emissions and flood risk and to restore natural biodiversity. The North Yorkshire and Cleveland Coastal Forum protects, improves and gives management advice for the protection, conservation and tourism of the Heritage Coast.

## Health and wellbeing

### Health and well-being

The health of people living in North Yorkshire is generally better than the rest of the country. You will live longer and are less likely to die early from heart disease, strokes and cancer than people living in other areas. In individual districts this general picture varies subtly.

In the south of the county in Selby, for example, life expectancy for women, deaths from smoking and early deaths from cancer are better than the England averages. It's a similar picture in Craven, in the west of the county except that both men and women live longer than the England average. In the north of the county in Hambleton people again live longer than people in other areas of England. On the coast in Scarborough district this pattern

changes. Men in Scarborough die earlier than men in other areas of England. Deaths from smoking and early deaths from heart disease and stroke are also worse than the national average in Scarborough.

Deprivation is an important cause of poor health. North Yorkshire's communities are less deprived mostly than in other areas in the country. Nevertheless there is evidence in some areas of the county that people from poorer areas still have worse health even though the county is rather well-off. In Craven, Hambleton and Harrogate this affects men's life expectancy. In Scarborough and Selby men and women living in well-off areas live longer than residents in more deprived communities.

Teenage pregnancy often goes with deprivation but rates in North Yorkshire are lower than in other areas. In Scarborough where deprivation is more extensive the teenage pregnancy rate is only slightly higher than the national average. Despite this positive picture partners know that rates are increasing and they are taking action to address the problem.

Rates of road injuries and deaths are higher than the average in England in all districts. The figures for Ryedale are the highest in England albeit this is misleading because most of those injured come from outside the area. You can find out more about the work of the county's road safety partnership under the community safety priority.

Innovative programmes have been run in areas where health needs are greatest. For example, the BIG Lottery Fund is supporting a project called Altogether Better in Scarborough's coastal communities. This is bringing together public and voluntary organisations to develop knowledge and understanding about health issues among local people in eight of the poorest areas in Scarborough. This work is tied into other initiatives in these areas and is helping to raise skills and confidence in some people left behind after formal schooling.

#### Alcohol

Although fewer people in North Yorkshire go into hospital because of alcohol than elsewhere around 8,000 hospital stays are because of alcohol. Hospital admissions because of alcohol are forecasted to rise however. Partners are at an early stage of putting their alcohol harm reduction strategy into operation because of delays caused by a lack of money and people. Alcohol is a separate priority for partners in North Yorkshire. We will look at how successfully the plan has been put into action.

#### Childhood obesity

Around one in ten of North Yorkshire's children are obese when they start school. But this is not the case everywhere. Craven's and Hambleton's children do not tend to be obese. However, Scarborough's children have higher obesity rates than the national average. The same is true in Ryedale too. Partners are tackling this through schemes like the healthy schools initiative. More work is planned on promoting healthier and more active lifestyles.

#### Smoking

Too many pregnant women smoke and more smoke in pregnancy in North Yorkshire than in other areas. This picture is constant across all districts in the county with no area doing better than the national average on this indicator. Services are in place to help people give up but the evidence of their effectiveness is unclear. Some people quit and then start again after a short period. Overall smoking rates among North Yorkshire's adults are around the average for England. Partners are using health promotion techniques to drive home messages on smoking. We will look at how the partnership is tackling smoking particularly looking at smoking in pregnancy.

## Healthcare

Healthcare for the area is commissioned by North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust (PCT). The PCT has a strong track record in research and developing knowledge about the communities and people it serves. It published a document called Investing in Health in 2008 which looked at the relationship between what it spends and what peoples' health needs were. It has used this knowledge with partners to help it commission services better tailored to local need.

NHS Foundation Trust Hospitals operate in Harrogate and York. Coastal communities have a smaller NHS Trust which provides services in Scarborough and neighbouring areas. Several community hospitals provide a range of care and are important to local people. But the areas' joint strategic needs assessment recognised that although North Yorkshire's people valued their local hospital they were often doubtful about the quality of services provided in them.

## Older people

### Green flag: Helping older and vulnerable people keep their independence

Adults who may be vulnerable and older people in North Yorkshire use innovative services - that they have helped design - enabling them to live independently for longer. The Care Quality Commission has rated adult social care in the county as performing excellently. Groundbreaking and sustainable improvement in peoples' lives is flowing from the effective partnership working among public and private sector organisations. Almost 15,000 people are being supported to live independently in North Yorkshire - around a 1,000 more than in similar areas.

New technology is giving North Yorkshire's older and vulnerable people direct access to health and social care services. For many people, especially in more rural areas developments like this mean less travelling and disruption to their lives.

New technology is also helping people live longer in their own homes with support always on hand. North Yorkshire's spending on telecare infrastructure is around £270,000 a year almost twice as much as in similar areas. Spending on equipment and service to support it is almost £900,000 a year over five times the figure spent in other areas.

Motion sensors and other non-intrusive checking of peoples' mobility in their own homes is giving families peace of mind about their loved-ones. Investment in broadband through the NYnet development, led by the public sector in North Yorkshire, is making access to services quicker and easier.

NYnet is a unique approach to getting broadband and associated technologies out into rural areas. Other technology such as lifelines and fall monitors that work through the telephone is making people feel safer in their own homes.

Investment in extracare housing is helping older and other vulnerable people stay on in their communities safely with a wide range of support they can use whenever they need it. In 2008/09 159 new extracare places were made available. Success in extracare also supports the development of new affordable housing freeing up homes and enabling new ones to be built.

The extent of the investment in these facilities in North Yorkshire is shown by the significantly higher rates of extracare tenancies there in comparison with other areas. North Yorkshire has six times the number than in similar council areas. District Councils are playing a full role too through gifting land to support such schemes as well as drawing on their good working relationships with housing associations.

Extracare gives people their own front doors but in a community under one roof where company and support are always on hand. Extracare housing developments have been put in the heart of communities like Easingwold and Knaresborough. These developments are not restricted to the areas' larger towns. They are also being built in the national parks. Sycamore Hall in the centre of the Dales at Bainbridge and Esk Moors in Castleton in the North York Moors are impressive facilities.

Getting them open has been the result of successful partnership working and planning not least with the two National Park Authorities. Plans for both developments had to be approved by the Parks' Planning processes. These are exacting given the Park Authorities' responsibility for safeguarding the special nature of both Parks' environment for the nation. The fact that two such large modern buildings have been built in the heart of these National Parks shows just how effective partnership working has been. Both communities had identified that this housing was needed so people could continue living in their communities as they grew older rather than having to move into larger towns miles away from friends and family.

While allowing their residents to keep their independence they also provide a focus for other services in an area by hosting the village shop or hairdressers. In some areas these services may have been lost without the extracare developments. Locals and visitors can also use their restaurants that are open to non-residents. Instead of being shut away vulnerable people living in extracare housing are at the heart of their communities. Visible. Valued. Respected.

People who may be vulnerable and older people are getting more say and control - often through having their own budgets - over the help they want and need. The number of North Yorkshire people who receive direct payments for their care is increasing at three times the rate in similar areas. At the start of 2008/09 some 3,100 people had direct payments. By the end of

2008/09 another 2,400 people had them.

These initiatives allow older people, people with learning disabilities, mental illness or substance abuse problems to choose the help and support they want. Direct payments also help carers to keep caring by giving help and respite. It removes red tape speeding up processes and making them easier to use.

The effort given to increasing the number of people benefiting from direct payments is an expression of the belief of organisations in North Yorkshire that families and individuals know best. That their dignity and sense of self-worth is strengthened best through giving them greater control over their own lives. That's why social care clients in North Yorkshire are over three times more likely to be involved in deciding on their own support than is the case in similar areas.

The county council has made social care available to vulnerable people at an earlier stage than in most other parts of the country. This means worries are tackled early preventing them becoming bigger problems later and more difficult to solve. Investment in social care is helping more people stay in their own homes. Carers are supported well and family members are encouraged to take a well-earned break from their responsibilities sometimes by accessing respite care.

The experience and knowledge of older people is actively sought and exploited through well-supported volunteering schemes in many areas. For example the North York Moors National Park Authority has 700 regular volunteers many of whom are retired. They are important to the work of the Park and promote greater community ownership of the local work of what is, after all, a national organisation.

## Affordable Housing

The picture on affordable housing in North Yorkshire is mixed - in common with many areas - but for reasons mostly outside the control of organisations in the area. North Yorkshire's housing market reflects three related causes. High demand - people want to live there. This leads to high house prices - demand in many areas outstrips supply. But average wages are low - making buying your own home an impossible hope for many. Average wages in North Yorkshire are around £19,000 a year. An average house costs around £220,000. Lending criteria are now tighter because of the credit crunch. A typical mortgage offer based on these average earnings would be a loan of £66,500 - three and a half times salary. This obviously leaves a big and unbridgeable gap.

The impact of the downturn is shown by the number of affordable homes built over the last two years. In 2007/08 the figure was 429. In 2008/09 it was 385. Most of these have been built because of public money not as part of larger private developments. The area was successful in the recent Homes and Communities Agency minibidding round for funding. When these 403 homes are built North Yorkshire will be close to halfway in achieving its affordable homes target.

Progress is being made where possible. Organisations including the National Parks are working well together to identify land which could be used for affordable housing. This is despite the local opposition that such schemes often generate sometimes from those who have moved into these areas because of the high quality of the environment. In some areas rural housing enabling officers have been successful in helping to build local support for affordable housing schemes.

Second homes are a significant part of the local housing market. Many blame them and the selling-off of council houses in rural areas for some of the housing problems faced by local people. Councils now have the choice of levying a higher council tax on second homes. This is exactly what has happened in North Yorkshire since 2004. As a result councils in the area have had an extra funding stream. Some of this money has been directly used to boost the supply of affordable housing, including extra care housing for vulnerable people. Since the scheme started 101 new affordable homes have been available to local people who might still be struggling to buy their own home. The County Council has recently put more money into this budget which now stands at £5 million. This will be used to provide more affordable housing particularly for more vulnerable people.

Because this is such an important issue for local people we will follow up the progress being made on affordable housing in our work over the next year. In particular we will want to see how the experience of areas making the best progress is being shared and applied elsewhere.

CAA looks at how well local public services, working together, are meeting the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of independent watchdogs about the performance of local public services, and how likely they are to meet local priorities. From 9 December you will find the results of Comprehensive Area Assessment on the Oneplace website - <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/>

Alternative formats - If you require a copy of PDF documents in this site in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call: 0844 798 7070

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