

THE FUTURE'S AT STAKE STAKES

**Welcome to the ten o'clock race
Over the barriers of poverty, need
And lack of education
Here at York.**

**It's a race for old and young horses
And let's look at the starting prices:**

3-1 Target

4-1 Indicator

5-4 Outcome

And 100-1

Naked Knitting Classes for the Over 70's

And the runners and riders are lining up for the start

Here in the burning heat of the Knavesmire...

Beaconnicity, that lively filly,

Reducing Crine: somebody's stolen his stirrups,

Widening Engagement: he's got four jockeys,

**Tackling Drug Use: a very fast horse who slows down halfway round
and eats fifteen biscuits,**

Local Authority, and Private Sector, and Public Sector

All jostling in the stalls, all trying to get to the front,

Best Practice shining and well-curried,

White Paper and Green Paper throwing their jockeys to the ground,

And they're under starter's orders,

And they're hoping there won't be a change of government

Or another rash of itching acronym disease...

And they're off!

And Best Practice is making the early running,

With Crime Figures, who looks smaller than he did last year

Neck and neck with Anti-Social Behaviour

Who is graffiti-ing his jockey's hat;

And we've got a faller at the first:

It's Naked Knitting Classes for the Over 70's,

Partnership is in the following pack,

Played by a pantomime horse in three sections

So hopefully the middle part will let the back end know

What the front end is doing,

And we've a non-starter: oh, it's Cynicism,

Cynicism is left at the start.

**Over the second there are a couple of staggerers and fallers,
Alcohol Abuse and Drug Use,
Community Engagement is powering to the front
And Naked Knitting Classes for the Over 70's
Is making a strong comeback
And Housing Challenge is building (!)
With Back to Back running Back to Back
With some other Back to Backs
Down the Back to Back straight
And here comes Affordable Housing
And Studio Apartment is finding it hard to keep up
Despite his fitted carpets and his ceramic hob
And Community Engagement is still in the lead
But I have to say that Naked Knitting Classes for the Over 70's
Is still coming up on the needles, I mean the rails
And that sparky filly
If It's Monday There Must be a New Initiative
Has been taken back to the stables
Because it's Monday and there's a new initiative,
Council House Waiting Lists
Is moving very slowly to the front**

**And Hidden Homelessness has taken up residence
In the abandoned stand at the back of the water jump
And Defining Community has stopped half a dozen horses
And is having a debate about what a community is
Thus creating a new community of people
Talking about community,
And yes, Apathy is still in his stable,
And the runners are into the final few furlongs
And Discussion and Debate are having a
Discussion and a debate
And they've fallen at the water jump
And they're having a discussion and a debate
About whose fault it was
And we've a riderless horse running amok
And causing great danger and consternation
Amongst the other riders and I can't quite make out who it is
Oh, yes...it's The South of England
Eating all the hay and whinnying and whinnying
Until he gets his own way
And isn't he well-fed and healthy
Oh...he's fallen at Watford Gap!**

But now this is turning into a three horse race:

Community Engagement,

Widening Participation

And Naked Knitting Classes for the Over 70's

And as the race goes into the final turn

It's neck and neck between

Community Engagement

Widening Participation

And Naked Knitting Classes for the Over 70's

And something's happening

And what are Community Engagement

And Widening Participation

Doing behind the fence ?

Ah, they've made a new horse called

Community Empowerment

And who's that knitting the booties ?

Yes, it's

Naked Knitting Classes for the Over 70's!