

# Leeds Housing Strategy 2022–27



Meeting the city's housing needs and providing high quality affordable homes in thriving and inclusive communities, with appropriate support for those who need it

# Introduction

Our ambition for Leeds is that it is the best city in the UK. To help us achieve this Leeds has put in place the Best City Ambition. The heart of our ambition for the city is to tackle poverty and inequality and improve the quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home.

The Best City Ambition is built around 'Three Pillars', which guide and give a focus to everything we seek to do to meet our aims. The city's housing stock has a fundamental role in supporting each of the Three Pillars, and this is reflected in our Housing Vision: **Meeting the city's housing needs and providing high quality affordable homes in thriving and inclusive communities, with appropriate support for those who need it.**

The last Housing Strategy was developed in 2016. Most of the aims it identified in the last strategy are still very relevant. The challenge of providing enough high-quality homes, especially affordable homes, remains a salient issue for the city, whilst maintaining the unique identities of our communities and making sure they are pleasant places for people to live. But since 2016 there have emerged some significant issues which impact on housing in Leeds. The tragic fire at Grenfell Tower has highlighted the need to ensure our housing stock is safe. In 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency in Leeds and has put in place an ambitious target of transitioning to a net zero economy by 2030. The Covid pandemic has highlighted entrenched inequalities in a wide range of areas - health, education, transport and connectivity, quality employment and safe, strong communities. Each of these is directly affected by the city's housing sector.

But we have also seen a lot of progress since 2016. Affordable housing, including newly built social housing, is being provided in increasing numbers. The Council is recognised for its successful work, in conjunction with partners, in tackling homelessness and rough sleeping. Huge investment is going into the social housing stock to maintain and improve quality and make homes more energy efficient. Communities are being given a bigger say in how they develop and evolve. We are in a strong position, we have excellent relationships with partners, stakeholders, and citizens, but there is always more to be done.

Like the Best City Ambition, this Housing Strategy recognises that partnership work is fundamental to achieving our aims. The Strategy does not seek to impose top-down solutions on our partners and our communities. A recurring theme of this Strategy is the importance of working together with partners and communities across the city, collaborating effectively to develop and deliver outcomes.

**Councillor Mohammed Rafique**  
Executive Member for Environment and Housing



# Leeds The Best City

The Best City Ambition has set out the vision for the future of the city.

Through the Ambition the city's mission is to tackle poverty and inequality and improve the quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home. To do this, the focus will be on improving outcomes across the Three Pillars of the Best City Ambition - health and wellbeing, inclusive growth and zero carbon.

The Three Pillars capture the things that will make the biggest difference to improving the lives of the people of Leeds, and housing has a role to play in supporting each of these three pillars and delivering progress on them.

Fundamental to improving outcomes will be for organisations and communities from across the city to work together and bring their contributions to making Leeds the Best City in the UK – the 'Team Leeds' approach. Team Leeds means everyone in Leeds coming together to play their part in reaching our ambitions, and this approach will play a key role in the city reaching the goals in this updated Housing Strategy.

The Leeds Housing Strategy (2022-2027) sets out the city's housing ambitions and how the city will work together to meet these over the next five years. It has been developed in conjunction with stakeholders across the city, and citizens themselves.

Since the last Housing Strategy was developed in 2016 we have seen lots of progress with significant investment in the delivery of new affordable homes, improvements to the energy efficiency of existing homes, continued success in maximising homelessness preventions and minimising temporary homelessness and a strengthened collaboration through the Leeds Strategic Housing Partnership.

## **Our Housing Vision for the next 5 years is:**

Meeting the city's housing needs and providing high quality affordable homes in thriving and inclusive communities, with appropriate support for those who need it.

## **How the Housing Strategy supports the Three Pillars**

The Strategy has been developed to recognise and complement the city's overarching strategic goals that are encapsulated within the Three Pillars. It also recognises the importance of everyone in Leeds working together to meet these aims. The Team Leeds approach underpins this new Strategy and will help the city to work together and meet the aim of improved outcomes for everyone who calls Leeds their home.

# Best City Ambition - the Three Pillars

## Health and Wellbeing

In 2030 Leeds will be a healthy and caring city for everyone: where those who are most likely to experience poverty improve their mental and physical health the fastest, people are living healthy lives for longer, and are supported to thrive from early years to later life.



## Zero Carbon

In 2030 Leeds will have made rapid progress towards carbon neutrality, reducing our impact on the planet and doing so in a fair way which improves standards of living in all the city's communities.

## Inclusive Growth

In 2030 Leeds will have an economy that works for everyone, where we work to tackle poverty and ensure that the benefits of economic growth are distributed fairly across the city, creating opportunities for all.

# Health and Wellbeing



**In 2030 Leeds will be a healthy and caring city for everyone:** where those who are most likely to experience poverty improve their mental and physical health the fastest, people are living healthy lives for longer, and are supported to thrive from early years to later life.

The housing strategy has a key role in supporting this pillar:



Maximising a 'preventative' approach, e.g. homelessness, rough sleeping, mental health, care leavers.



Maximising the benefits from technology to improve health and wellbeing linked to housing.



Supporting good mental and physical health through improved housing quality and affordability.



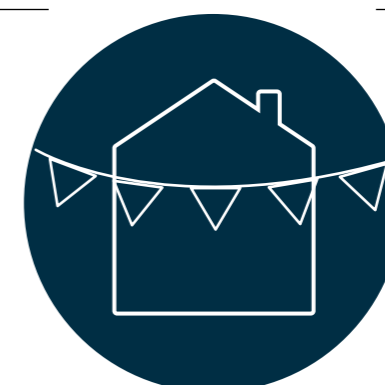
Ensuring that the housing environment enables people to be healthy, social and active.



Ensuring that housing needs are met through integrated models of care.



Providing age friendly housing which supports independence, self care and social inclusion.



Promoting strong, well-connected communities and pride in sustainable local neighbourhoods.



Supporting the system to respond to the impacts of COVID on health and wellbeing.



## Inclusive Growth

**In 2030 Leeds will have an economy that works for everyone**, where we work to tackle poverty and ensure that the benefits of economic growth are distributed fairly across the city, creating opportunities for all.

The housing strategy has a key role in supporting this pillar:



Targeting investment to tackle poverty, e.g. COVID impacts, priority neighbourhoods.



Maximising digital and financial inclusion in deprived neighbourhoods.



Building more affordable homes of the right type and location.



Supporting strategic placemaking principles, ensuring that housing contributes to creation of local neighbourhoods.



Securing inclusive growth principles through employment and procurement in the housing sector.



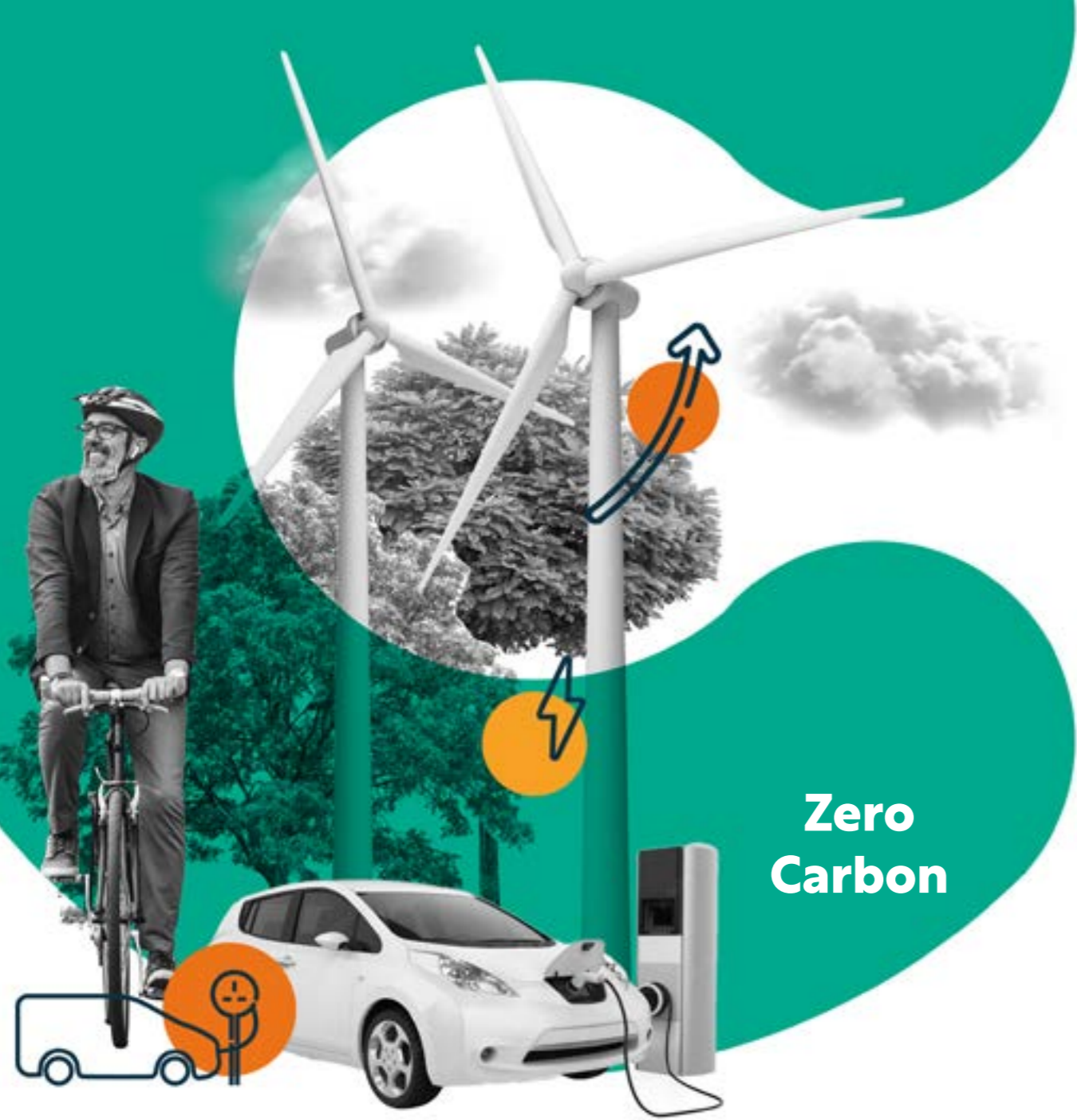
Ensuring that housing and services are inclusive, supporting diverse communities.



Making assets work to support communities and growth through Asset Based Community Development.



Supporting economic recovery of city and local centres through housing.



**Zero Carbon**

**In 2030 Leeds will have made rapid progress towards carbon neutrality, reducing our impact on the planet and doing so in a fair way which improves standards of living in all the city's communities.**

The housing strategy has a key role in supporting this pillar:



Supporting strategic placemaking principles in support of 20 minute neighbourhoods



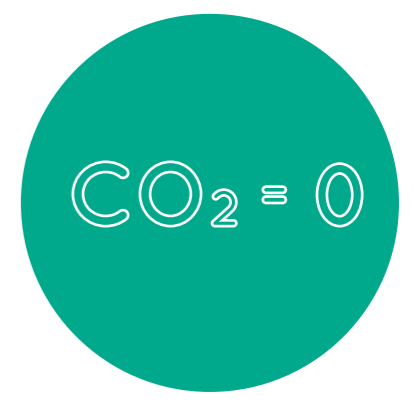
Supporting wider climate and flood resilience through green infrastructure in areas of housing.



Building 'greener' new housing developments with stricter energy efficiency standards.



Decarbonation of existing housing stock and improving energy efficiency.



Supporting zero carbon ambitions through organisational service delivery and procurements, e.g. grey mileage, office estate



Supporting sustainable transport options as part of new housing developments.



Reducing fuel poverty through improved heating and insulation.



Supporting citizen engagement on climate emergency ambitions.

# THE LEEDS POPULATION

**Results from the 2021 Census show that the city's population is 812,000 people, an increase of 8.1% from the 2011 figure of 751,500. This is a bigger increase than the average figure for England, which is 6.6%. The city remains the second largest local authority area in terms of population - only Birmingham has more people.**

Around 175,000 people are estimated to be living in relative poverty, and the pandemic is likely to have intensified inequalities across the city. In-work poverty has become an increasing problem, with an estimated 68,457 working age adults being from working households and living in poverty.

According to the 2019 Leeds Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), of the 482 Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) that make up the city, 114 of them (10%) are ranked amongst the most deprived 10% nationally, 9 higher than the figure from 2015's IMD. 12 of them have been ranked in the most deprived 1% nationally, though this a reduction from the 16 that were ranked in this group in 2015.

The 2021 census breaks the population down as:

- 144,600 children and young people aged 0-15, 17.8% of the population
- 540,600 people of working age (16-64), 66.6% of the population
- 126,800 older people aged 65 and over, 15.6% of the population

A third of the city's households were one person households according to the census in 2011. Almost half of these were older people. Detailed information from the 2021 survey is expected in autumn 2023 which will show if this figure has changed.

Over the last 20 years, the 50+ population has grown by around 30,000, and the projected future growth is greatest in the 80+ population, reinforcing the importance of this Strategy in looking at housing provision for people as they age.

Most older people live in mainstream housing, rather than specialist housing, and this is likely to continue to be the case, so this Strategy considers how people can be supported to live in suitable accommodation, in supportive communities, as they age.

Around 17% of Leeds residents are disabled or have a long-term health problem, and this strategy outlines a team Leeds approach to encourage people to live independent lives in homes that support their individual needs, in inclusive communities.

The ethnic diversity of Leeds continues to grow. Figures from the 2021 census show that 9.7% of the city's population identify as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh. 5.6% identify as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African and 3.4% as coming from Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups. The percentage identifying as White is 79%. Other ethnic group identification stands at 2.3%.

The economy has proved strong and resilient over the past 20 years. Figures from 2021 show 471,000 people work in Leeds, 322,000 full-time and 148,000 part-time. Around three quarters work in the private sector, making Leeds one of the top cities nationally in terms of its private sector workforce. Strong employment growth, pre-pandemic, has maintained the city's employment rate above national and regional averages. The city's diverse economy has allowed it to weather economic shocks well. The gross average wage in Leeds in 2022 was £621.3 a week, with males averaging £671 and females £557. These are above the Yorkshire and Humberside figures but slightly below the British figures.

Despite this, the number of workless households in 2021 was around 45,700. Around 109,000 were economically inactive, and of those people 18,900 people wanted to work. In July 2023 23,400 people were claiming benefits.

However, the COVID pandemic has had an economic impact - though Leeds is strongly placed to recover well thanks to its strong, diverse and knowledge-rich employment base, the pandemic has highlighted continuing inequalities across the city. The new strategy will be directed at tackling these.



# The Leeds Housing Market

Information from the 2021 Census gives a snapshot of the Leeds Housing Market in 2021. There were 362,780 properties in the city. 57.6% of those were owner occupied, either owned outright, with a mortgage or in shared ownership, compared to 58.6% in 2011.

The type of tenure has changed significantly over several decades. The proportion of owner occupiers has trended downwards over recent decades, which is continuing. In 2021 57.6% of the city's homes were owner occupied, either owned outright, with a mortgage or in shared ownership, compared to 58.6% in 2011. Conversely, over recent decades the private rented sector has seen significant growth. This trend also continues, with the sector growing from 19.4% in 2011 to 21.8% in 2021. The social rented sector has also continued to trend downwards, dropping from 21.9% in 2011 to 20.4% in 2021. The median house price in Leeds stood at approximately £225,000 in 2022, up from £175,000 in 2015.

Like most large cities, Leeds has a large amount of older housing, concentrated in poorer neighbourhoods. Leeds has a notably large amount of 19,500 pre-1919 back-to-back houses still in use.

The private rented sector is a very important provider of homes within the city, meeting the housing needs of many citizens of Leeds. It contributes to the economy of the city, providing homes for students, visiting professionals and those who choose to live in the sector. There is no single private rented sector, but it is made of several different markets with standards driven by the needs and expectations of these different markets.

Providing the new housing the city needs is an ongoing challenge, but the city is rising to the challenge. More planning permissions have been granted over the past five years than at any other time. In 2018/19 almost 10,000 new homes were approved through planning permissions, a record for the city since monitoring began in the early 1970s, with new home completions consistently averaging around 3,000 a year. Over the last five years Leeds has delivered 16,249 homes, and was responsible for 2.2% of England's housing supply in 2021.

The delivery of affordable housing is a key priority for the city. Delivery of affordable housing is delivered with a range of different stakeholders playing their part, including the council, registered

providers and private developers. Direct delivery of homes by registered providers through Homes England's Affordable Homes Programme and Strategic Partnerships historically delivers an average of 450 new affordable homes each year, with projections set to increase the number of homes delivered over the next three years.

In 2021, 595 new affordable homes were built in Leeds, and the council has committed to building 1,500 new council houses, through the council House Growth Programme, by 2025.

Social housing continues to play an important role in Leeds. There are approximately 54,000 council-owned dwellings in Leeds, though the number continues to reduce as homes are bought via the right to buy scheme. These homes cover a wide range of archetypes and ages, from pre-1914 traditional brick homes to new build homes built using modern methods of construction.

The Council continues to invest in the city's housing stock to ensure it meets decency standards and can contribute to the city's zero carbon ambition through being energy efficient, which also reduces energy bills for tenants.



## The Policy Context

**There have been many changes during the five-year life of the 2016 Leeds Housing Strategy which have impacted on the priorities within this refreshed Housing Strategy.**

In June 2017 the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy occurred where 72 people died. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry began later in 2017 and the government also commissioned an independent review of building safety regulations and fire safety in the same year. Inquiries into the Grenfell tragedy have informed some key changes in approach to regulation of the housing sector. The social housing green paper 'A new deal for social housing' published in 2018 and the social housing white paper 'A new charter for social housing tenants' was published in 2020. Both papers set out planned changes to strengthen building safety, improve the quality of homes and neighbourhoods and strengthen regulation of the social rented sector, ensuring that complaints are dealt with promptly and fairly, that the resident's voice is heard and that residents are treated with respect.

The Building Safety Act 2022 is intended to strengthen the regulatory system for building safety, placing increased responsibilities on building developers, owners and managers to ensure greater accountability for the design, construction and occupation of high-risk buildings.

Building safety of high-rise homes is a huge priority in Leeds, with over 100 Council owned high rise apartment blocks in addition to privately owned blocks.

The 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act placed new responsibilities on local authorities to take a strategic approach to homelessness, with responsibilities to provide anyone at risk of homelessness with advice and support to prevent them from becoming homeless. Leeds has for many years taken a preventative approach to homelessness and welcomed this shift of focus. In 2018 the national Rough Sleeping Strategy was published outlining the government's commitment to ending rough sleeping by 2027. Leeds responded to these changes with its 2019 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy with a vision "Leeds is a compassionate city where people and services work together to prevent and end homelessness".

Over the last five years we have seen large numbers of working age adults transition from legacy benefits to Universal Credit; central government has outlined its plan to move all claimants to Universal Credit by 2024. The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 introduced further welfare benefit changes including the benefit cap, benefit

freeze, two child limit along with other measures. Over the same period the number of people living in relative poverty has increased, creating severe hardship for many households who are impacted by increased housing and other costs and welfare changes. Higher levels of inflation, particularly recent significant increases in fuel costs are projected to impact dramatically on low-income families during this new housing strategy period.

Social housing budgets have been under pressure since 2016 when central government introduced an amended regulation to the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 requiring registered providers in England to reduce social housing rents by 1% for the four years following 2015/16. Significant reductions in rental income have inevitably impacted on levels of investment into social housing during this period and beyond. Wider financial pressures, including recent inflationary increases will further compound pressures on housing organisations to deliver priorities identified in this updated Housing Strategy.

In 2019 central government declared a climate emergency, amending the 2008 Climate Change Act to commit the UK to bringing down all greenhouse

gas emissions to net zero by 2050. Leeds quickly responded to this, declaring its own climate emergency in 2019 and setting an ambition to make Leeds carbon neutral by 2030. Housing accounted for 27% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Leeds in 2019 and so the housing sector has a critical role in supporting the city's carbon zero ambitions through this strategy.

Metro mayors were introduced in England in 2016 as part of central government's devolution agenda, allowing combined authorities to take on more functions such as housing and transport in accordance with a devolution deal reached with government. The West Yorkshire devolution deal took effect in early 2021, seeing the appointment of the first Mayor of West Yorkshire. Devolution has created many opportunities for a regional response on housing issues, particularly affordable housing growth, and so the Leeds Housing Strategy sits within a regional context and wider strategic approach.

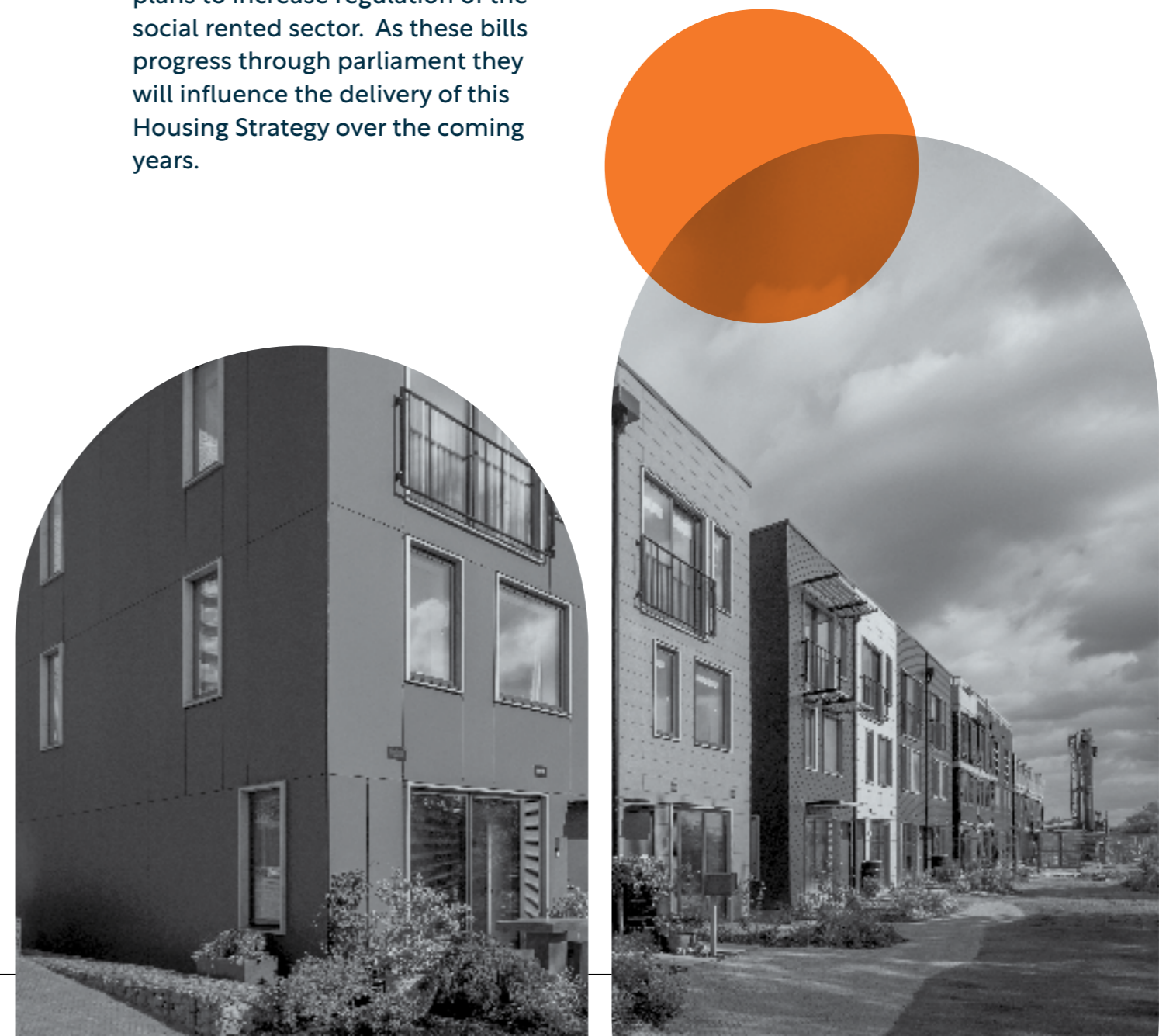
There have been wider legislative changes which have had an impact on the housing sector - the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act placed additional responsibilities on the

housing sector to support people experiencing domestic violence and the Social Care White Paper published in 2021 which recognises the importance of the housing in care decisions and the importance of greater connection between housing, health and care sectors. A collaborative approach is a key working principle of the Leeds Housing Strategy.

The COVID pandemic has had a profound impact on all aspects of the housing sector - it has impacted on the delivery of new homes as well as the delivery of key services to existing tenants/homes. The pandemic has magnified a number of issues which already existed such as poverty and social isolation and contributed towards an increase in demand for social housing. But there are many positives from the pandemic, the biggest being the tireless 'can do' approach which was adopted by everyone. In refreshing the Leeds Housing Strategy, we are keen to harness this truly collaborative approach to support the delivery of the strategy's priorities.

In early 2022, the government confirmed three further bills which set out the direction of travel for the housing sector.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill is expected to set out plans to increase the supply of affordable housing and improve housing quality across the regions, the Renter's Reform Bill is expected to set out plans to abolish section 21 notices and improve housing quality in the private rented sector and the Social Housing Regulation Bill will set out the governments plans to increase regulation of the social rented sector. As these bills progress through parliament they will influence the delivery of this Housing Strategy over the coming years.



# Our Housing Vision

Meeting the city's housing needs and providing high quality affordable homes in thriving and inclusive communities, with appropriate support for those who need it

The city's overarching priorities as encapsulated in the Three Pillars, alongside engagement and consultation with partners across the city and citizens, have informed the development of six Key Themes which are a priority for this five year Housing Strategy.

01



## Meeting Affordable Housing Need

Increasing new affordable housing and effectively meeting demand

02



## Improving Housing Quality

Achieving carbon zero homes and improving the quality of all homes

03



## Reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Improving our offer to marginalised groups, ensuring the right housing and support offer

04



## Thriving and Inclusive Communities

Ensuring community safety, reducing poverty and maximising inclusion

05



## Improving Health through Housing

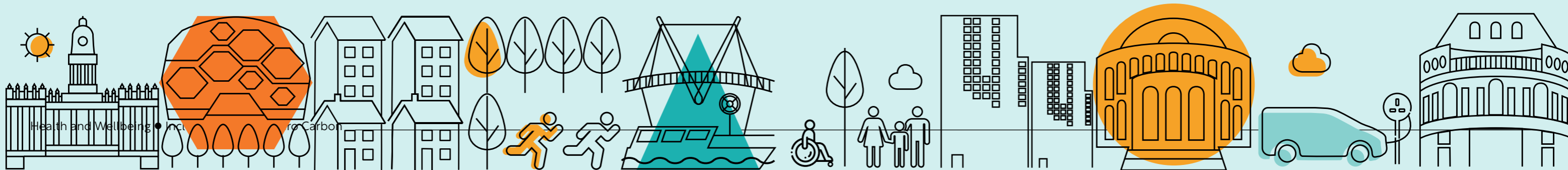
Reducing health inequalities, with housing integrated into care, digitalisation and safeguarding

06



## Child and Age Friendly Housing

Ensuring that housing and support needs of youngest and oldest are met



# Meeting Affordable Housing Need

Having an affordable home is a crucial requirement for everyone to be able to meet their potential for positive life outcomes.



## Affordable Housing Growth

Whilst growth in housing supply has been a real success in Leeds over recent years, with Leeds delivering housing numbers in line with its Local Plan target of 3,247 homes per annum, as a city we continue to fall short of meeting the identified needs for 1,230 affordable homes per annum. Over the last five years Leeds has delivered an average of 475 homes per annum (meeting in year need), delivering a 10 year high of 595 affordable homes in 2020/21.

It is essential that delivery is not just about numbers, but also making sure the right tenures (or types) are provided to ensure homes are truly affordable for our residents. Leeds has a good track record of delivering social rented homes, with a greater proportion of truly affordable homes being delivered than the national average.

The Leeds Affordable Housing Growth Partnership Action Plan 2022-25 will set out an affordable housing pipeline that aims to deliver c 800 new affordable homes per annum over the next three years. This higher rate of delivery is testament to the ambitions of the Council's own direct delivery, which is set to deliver 1,500 affordable homes by 2025, but also the commitment of the Registered Provider sector in the city.

To achieve our pipeline delivery and enable further growth we need to tackle several challenges the sector faces both locally and

nationally. The Leeds Affordable Housing Growth Action Plan will set out the following:

Challenge/Opportunity	Action/Commitment
Land opportunities & new housing markets - ensuring the right opportunities are available to deliver Affordable Housing Growth.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council land disposals</li> <li>2. Innovation in delivery models</li> <li>3. Site intelligence sharing</li> <li>4. Levelling up &amp; Priority Neighbourhoods</li> <li>5. Consideration of Planning Policy changes</li> </ol>
Affordable net-zero homes - ensuring our affordable homes are warm, sustainable and affordable for residents to heat.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promoting MMC &amp; sustainable technologies</li> <li>2. Supporting green jobs</li> </ol>
Affordable housing policy - ensuring we have the right tools to unlock affordable housing growth.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Local Plan update to consider affordable housing scope</li> <li>2. Support place outcomes and lobby for investment in regenerating our estates</li> </ol>
Viability & unlocking delivery - considering wider economic pressures and cost inflation ensure our resources are effectively deployed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Effective and timely targeting of resources</li> <li>2. Promoting affordable housing growth in the city and wider region</li> </ol>

## Rented Sector

There are currently over 26,000 applicants on the Leeds Homes Register who are wishing to be considered for social housing. Over recent years the numbers in the highest priority band has increased and 22% of applicants are now identified as having an urgent housing need. As social housing turnover has also reduced it means that there is an average of over 300 bids for each Council home via Choice Based Lettings and for those in the highest priority group the average rehousing time for social housing is over two years.

It is a priority through this strategy to ensure that the management of the Leeds Homes Register, the Council's lettings policy and Registered Provider nomination agreements ensure that those in the highest need are prioritised for social housing, with Council Housing Teams, Registered Providers, support providers and Leeds Housing Options working collaboratively to ensure an effective re-housing pathway is in place to support applicants into sustainable tenancies.

## Case Studies

### Meeting Demand in the Private Rented Sector

Housing Leeds has a long standing relationship with the private rented sector enabling it to meet urgent housing need as a quality alternative to social housing. The Leeds Housing Options service facilitates an average of 60 lets per month in the private rented sector for households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Nonetheless, due to a variety of factors, access to the private rented sector is becoming increasingly difficult with increasing rents and start up costs often a barrier for applicants. Increased demand en masse for properties for specific groups such as those seeking asylum and prison leavers has made access harder than ever.

It is a priority through this strategy to expand access into the private rented via an improved incentives/ security package for landlords who are seeking to help those who need more help than most. New posts specifically linked to procurement, marketing and retention have been approved, with an aspiration to recruit landlords to help with various corporate pressures relating to families experiencing homelessness, applicants supported by social care, refugees, and victims of domestic abuse.

### Reducing the Number of Empty Homes

Minimising the number of empty homes is key to ensuring the availability of affordable homes and so is a key priority in this strategy. In March 2022 there were 4457 long-term empty homes in Leeds in the private sector. The numbers increased during the COVID pandemic and it is a priority to reduce these to the target of 3776. The Council will continue to minimise the number of empty homes via its regulatory capacity, including the use of compulsory purchase orders. There are also a number of initiatives in place which help to further reduce the number of empty homes in the city. Leeds continues to work in collaboration with partners including Leeds Empties, a social enterprise, to provide housing advice to empty home owners via the Empty Homes Doctor service and third sector partnerships with agencies such as LATCH and Canopy to buy empty homes and renovate them through a community volunteering programme.

### Points Cross Residential Scheme; The Guinness Partnership – delivering 311 affordable homes in the heart of South Bank

The Guinness Partnership's Points Cross development is the first scheme in West Yorkshire to benefit from devolved Brownfield Housing Fund support, administered by West Yorkshire Combined Authority. It will deliver 928 mixed tenure homes starting with an initial 311 energy efficient, affordable homes, making a vital contribution to the exciting regeneration of the South Bank. The development includes high quality public space and is possible thanks to Homes England Strategic Partnership funding.

The Points Cross scheme supports national, regional and local policy, focusing on 'brownfield first' and sustainable growth principles and local housing need to deliver mixed tenure affordable housing set out in Leeds Core Strategy. The scheme seeks to meet ambitious people-focused design principles established in the South Bank Redevelopment Framework with a focus on high quality place-making. Points Cross clearly delivers against the Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan priorities - delivering high quality green infrastructure, building homes and creating jobs and apprenticeships, supporting good growth .



### **St Cecilia St. & Railway Street - using our assets and resources to deliver affordable housing**

With the aspiration to create mixed communities, particularly in the city centre, the Council's disposal of these sites has been ring-fenced to Registered Providers and restricted to schemes providing 100% affordable housing.

These schemes will utilise up to £2m affordable housing commuted sums which is helping to lever in £65,000 per home through Homes England Affordable Homes Programme funding.

The Council is working with Legal & General Affordable Homes to deliver 78 homes for social rent at St. Cecilia Street, whilst Leeds & Yorkshire Housing Association have submitted planning for a 58 affordable home scheme, all for social rent at Railway Street.

Both schemes are aiming to tackle the climate emergency challenge by installing low carbon heating solutions with the aim connecting into the Leeds PIPES district heating network.



## Target Outcomes

- Delivered 800 new affordable homes p.a. 2022–25
- Maximised the number of high priority customers rehoused through the Leeds Homes Register
- Maximised the number of customers on the Leeds Homes Register rehoused into the private rented sector
- Reduced the number of long term empty homes to 3776 in the city

# Improving Housing Quality

A high quality, energy efficient and safe home with security of tenure available for all is an important determinant of health and wellbeing and inclusive growth. The decarbonisation of housing is also an essential part of tackling the climate emergency. Improving housing quality is a critical theme of this housing strategy which will have positive

impacts on most other strategy themes.



## Zero Carbon Homes

Housing accounted for 27% of Leeds' CO2 emissions in 2019, with 63% of homes having a SAP energy rating of band D or worse. 16.8% of households were in fuel poverty in 2019, with significant impacts on health and well-being. Fuel poverty will unfortunately only worsen, with average fuel bills rising by 83% between April 2021 and April 2022. To make all homes healthy, affordable and net zero will cost over £5.5bn (Arup/BEIS, 2021) with around £860m needed for council homes and over £4.7bn for all other homes.

The city is doing everything it can to make all homes net zero as soon as possible, with significant progress by 2030. However, this is a huge challenge.

Meeting this target requires a step change in the speed and scale of housing retrofit. It will also fundamentally change services within our homes, with gas boilers incompatible with net zero ambitions. This will require us to rapidly trial and adopt alternative sources of heating, such as heat pumps and district heating. We are working to identify zones in the city most suitable for these different technologies.

Leeds has led the way delivering major investments to homes of all tenures, particularly in more deprived areas, including low carbon heating for over 3000 council flats, external wall insulation for over 1500 Victorian terraced homes and solar panels on over 1500 homes. To make the step change required, over the next five years we will:

- Create a regional retrofit hub and financial mechanism for the 'able to pay' sector (covering energy efficiency, renewables, adaptations and disrepair).
- Build campaigns to encourage more homeowners to choose low carbon retrofits.
- Increase area renewal investment, building on the successes of Holbeck and using social housing investment to kickstart work in neighbouring homes of all tenures.
- Invest £100m by 2025 from the Housing Leeds capital programme in low carbon retrofit.
- Join together as a housing sector to make the case to government for more finance over the longer-term targeting area-based approaches, driving investment, skills and supply chain needed to deliver low carbon retrofits.

## Improving the Quality of Council Owned Homes

Improving the quality of Council-owned homes remains a significant priority of the updated housing strategy. Housing Leeds uses stock condition data and business intelligence to understand where improvements need to be made in council housing quality. It then adopts a whole-team approach to improving housing quality - through investment and improvement works, high quality repairs and maintenance service, supporting tenants to thrive in our homes and listening to what's important to them.

In addition, the application of innovative technologies, such as smart sensors to actively monitor the environmental conditions within homes is something that Leeds City Council continues to trial. These technologies offer a range of opportunities to improve the quality of the home and link and improve health outcomes for residents.

Leeds City Council is committed to adopting the principles outlined in the Housing Ombudsman Spotlight on Damp and Mould; It's Not Lifestyle report, not least in the application of a 'zero tolerance' approach to damp and mould in Leeds City Council Homes.



### Improving Wider Housing Quality

It remains a priority of this strategy to drive wider improvements in housing quality across the housing sector. It is important that social housing continues to meet the Decent Homes Standard and any changes to that standard during the life of this strategy, and that the housing sector robustly applies the requirements of the 2022 Building Safety Act to ensure the safety of residents. The social housing sector is making preparations for the introduction of increased regulation with a focus on greater transparency, effective resolution of complaints and improved resident engagement. There are significant opportunities to innovate to improve housing quality - delivering digital solutions to improve housing quality, citywide procurement approaches and maximising sector capacity. It is important through this strategy that the wider housing sector in Leeds works together to maximise collaborative opportunities to deliver improvements in housing quality across Leeds.

### Improving Quality in the Private Rented Sector

The private rented sector offers an attractive, high quality housing offer to many Leeds residents. The private rented sector has worked collaboratively with the Council for many years to improve housing quality across the sector via the Leeds Rental Standard which drives self-regulation and improved housing quality and to encourage a strategic approach to the sector's development.

Where landlords fail to provide high quality homes a number of interventions remain a priority through this strategy. The Council will continue to take enforcement action against landlords which fail to meet standards via the Reactive Team and Rogue Landlord Unit and will ensure that houses in multiple occupation are safe via the mandatory HMO licensing scheme. Targeted area based initiatives continue to offer collaborative opportunities for a more targeted approach to improvements in quality, with the wider housing sector and related services providing support to landlords, residents and communities, for example via Selective Licensing in Beeston and Harehills and the Neighbourhood Approach in Holbeck.

### Improving Housing Quality of New Homes

New homes are built to the latest national building regulations, meaning that they are more energy efficient and tend to be more accessible than older homes. However, Leeds continues to seek further improvements in the quality of new homes via the local planning system. Leeds is committed to increasing the supply of accessible new homes, introducing Core Strategy targets in 2018 for accessible and wheelchair user dwellings and

the Council continues to work with developers to increase accessibility of new developments. Leeds is also seeking to drive tighter standards for carbon reduction in new buildings through the Local Plan so that the need to retrofit new housing stock in future years is reduced, again working with developers across the sector to maximise delivery and drive innovation. As a developer of social housing, the Council is developing all new homes to a higher standard, in support of the Council's ambitions.



## Case Studies

### Holbeck Victorian Terrace Retrofit

Leeds is a recognised national leader in carrying out transformative energy efficient improvements and essential repair works to existing homes, focusing on Victorian terraced housing in deprived neighbourhoods.

This is exemplified by the work in the Receptions in Holbeck which will deliver comprehensive energy efficiency and heating improvements to more than 300 homes over two phases at a cost of over £10m. Improvements have included new insulated roofs, removal of chimneys and soffits etc., external wall insulation with brick effect render, replacement of rainwater goods, new windows and doors and heating improvements where necessary. The overall impact of the scheme will improve housing conditions, reduce heating costs and carbon emissions, which will contribute towards better health outcomes for residents.

This is a cross sector initiative, co-ordinated by Leeds City Council, providing improvements to owner occupied, private rented sector, council and housing association homes. The council has navigated the complex external funding landscape and built a trusted solution to provide simple and compelling offers to householders and landlords to affordably transform their homes' energy efficiency. The success of the first phase meant that within a month of announcing a second phase, more than 80 households had already signed up. The site now regular hosts best practice visits, including from Ministers, who hear first-hand from satisfied residents and see for themselves the uplift in the area.



### Ground Source Heat Pump Project at The Heights East and West

The Heights East and West are two Council owned high rise buildings containing 120 apartments in West Leeds which had outdated and inefficient electric storage heating and water heating systems. Following an option appraisal Housing Leeds commenced its first ground source heat pump installation utilising 'green' energy, using a shared ground loop to tap into heat from the earth which provides a constantly replenished natural energy source and creates 3-4 times more energy than it consumes, achieving higher levels of efficiency than any other heating system.

The project has made significant contributions to reducing carbon emissions in the city, achieving carbon reductions of 765 tonnes each year and has been well received by residents who will see a reduction in their energy bills of around 50% along with improved thermal comfort. This housing retro fit project has utilised an excellent sustainable heating solution to support the decarbonisation of the housing portfolio and demonstrated a genuine commitment of Housing Leeds to meeting its net zero carbon ambition and improving the health and wellbeing of people living in council homes.

The project has been positively received by residents leading to many compliments, for example: 'I am really happy with the work. The new systems have definitely made a marked and welcome difference to the heating in my flat - just in time for the winter months!'

This technology has been extended to further high-rise buildings across the city. It forms part of a larger five year programme of investment supporting the city's ambition to make as many homes as possible carbon neutral by 2030.





## Target Outcomes

- Maximised the percentage of social housing that meets the decent homes standard
- Deliver improvements in low carbon housing across all the city's housing sectors
- Ensured compliance with the 2022 Building Safety Act
- Maximised positive outcomes through the Selective Licensing Scheme
- Improve SAP ratings to an average of C as soon as possible

### Roxby Close Retrofit Project - Enhancing Leeds Pipes Project Works

Leeds City Council delivered this £2 million retrofit project to a high rise building of 60 apartments in one of the city's priority neighbourhoods - taking a whole building approach to deliver a comprehensive package of works including concrete repairs, external wall insulation, roof replacement, balcony renewals and communal rewire. The scheme was delivered without needing to decant residents from their homes. The scheme has improved the quality of the living environment, reduced water penetration and associated damp, and improved the block's thermal efficiency with around 10.6 tonnes of carbon emissions saved each year.

In an area where many residents are on a low income and experience fuel poverty the scheme has helped to reduce fuel bills by circa 21%, so reducing fuel poverty and improving health outcomes for residents.

The block had previously benefited from the PIPES project. Between 2018-2021 Leeds City Council, in partnership with Vital Energi, delivered the Leeds PIPES scheme, a District Heating Network which uses energy generated by burning waste at the city's Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility (RERF) to heat homes and other buildings.

Around 1,900 council homes were connected to the network, which provides low carbon heating and hot water. Investment by Leeds City Council of £47m in Leeds PIPES will reduce carbon emissions by 7,000 tonnes each year by 2023 rising to over 22,000 tonnes when the network is fully utilised.

### Selective Licensing in Harehills and Beeston

In 2020 Leeds City Council designated two areas of the city as selective licensing schemes, Beeston and Harehills. Selective licensing is a power, subject to a business case meeting one of six criteria and appropriately designated, to ensure all private rented properties have a licence with conditions which landlords must adhere to. These include issues of safety, waste, ASB as well as tenancy management. Any scheme working as part of a wider agenda can help to make a difference to both people's lives but also the community in which they live.

The Leeds schemes support the Council's Locality Agenda, as the business cases were based on the level of deprivation criteria. The aims of the schemes are to cross the threshold of homes, work with partners and make a difference not just to the quality of homes but also address wider needs of residents such as health, financial, employment and training needs amongst others. By working this way it will hopefully make a difference to those people's lives and the wider community as part of working to address the issues facing the two areas.

## Reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Leeds is recognised as a national example of good practice in helping to prevent homelessness and supporting people who become homeless or are rough sleeping. While the city is successful at preventing homelessness for 90% of people threatened with homelessness or rough sleeping we continue to strive to get it right for the remaining 10%.

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While our focus will remain on prevention we also recognise that our main service offer doesn't work for some specifically marginalised groups. Our strategy will therefore focus on the small groups of people for whom our offer needs to adapt with a view to ensuring that everyone in Leeds who needs homelessness assistance can get the right help, at the right time.

The understanding of homelessness in Leeds has been greatly impacted by the experience of the Covid pandemic. The 'Everyone In' initiative gave practitioners and service providers a greater understanding of homelessness in the city, particularly the 'hidden homeless', people who are vulnerably housed or resorting to sofa surfing, for example. The city's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has four priorities:

### Repeat and Hidden Homelessness

It is evident that more people are vulnerably housed or sofa surfing than we knew, and it is particularly apparent that certain, potentially vulnerable, groups are disproportionately affected by hidden homelessness and its negative impacts. Our challenge is to reach those people affected in the first instance and ensure they then have access to the appropriate services and interventions; we are particularly interested in making help and services more accessible for young people, sex workers and people from an LGBTQ+ background.

We are seeking to ensure that pathways into services are accessible to those we know are hardest to reach and they take account of their specific support needs and characteristics.

### Having the right services working in the right way

Leeds is fortunate to have so many different services, offering expertise and support on various aspects of prevention and responding to homelessness. Whilst there is already a strong partnership approach in Leeds the vast range of services can present us with issues in terms of effective pathways and coordination, and duplication. It is therefore a priority through this strategy to further strengthen integration between services, ensuring as much efficiency as possible and effectiveness in terms of ensuring clients get the specific support and assistance they need.



## Case Studies

### Providing the right accommodation and making it accessible

The pandemic has helped services across the city to understand what the 'right offer' of accommodation looks like, both at an urgent intervention stage and a second, longer term stage. When decent accommodation, with food, wraparound support and most importantly its own front door, was offered to people, they accepted. Drawing on extensive consultation with our service users, we are looking to ensure we have the right mix of accommodation available which will ensure sustainable tenancies and support our efforts in reducing the number of people sleeping rough in Leeds.

### Health & Wellbeing Support

This priority recognises that eradicating homelessness, and specifically rough sleeping, isn't only about a lack of accommodation. Offering accommodation without addressing someone's health and wellbeing needs is short sighted and often leads to tenancy breakdown, repeat homelessness and an already disadvantaged client becoming more so. Through the strategy we will continue to broaden the system's understanding and response to rough sleeping so that the health needs of individuals along with drug, alcohol and sexual health services are given additional importance.

### A Focus on Homelessness Prevention

Leeds Housing Options has for many years had one of the highest successful homelessness prevention rates in the country and some of the lowest numbers of people living in temporary accommodation compared to other large cities. Leeds has prided itself on its innovative approaches to homelessness including embedding a culture of early intervention, ensuring that the Council's Lettings Policy is aligned to a homeless preventative approach, a strong collaboration across the housing and support sectors via the Leeds Homelessness Prevention Forum and a pro-active relationship with private rented sector landlords to support rehousing into the private rented sector.

A key part of Leeds' preventative approach is to maximise interventions at the point that someone is threatened with homelessness instead of once someone has actually become homeless. In January - March 2022, 67% of all applicants assessed in Leeds approached the service at the point they were threatened with homelessness rather than homeless. In the most recent published figures nationally (July - September 2021), only 44% of applicants were assessed at the point they were threatened with homelessness.

A successful outcome for people approaching whilst threatened with homelessness is to secure accommodation for six months or more. In January - March 2022, 80% of Leeds applicants had successful prevention outcomes. In the most recent published figures nationally (July - September 2021), only 55% of applicants had successful prevention outcomes.





## Target Outcomes

- Prevented or relieved homelessness in at least 80% of completed housing options cases
- Reduced the number of homeless 16/17 year olds to national average levels
- Reduce the number of people affected by rough sleeping
- Maximised partnership working to ensure that people affected by homelessness and rough sleeping are supported into sustainable tenancies

### Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme

Leeds has been successful in bidding for the funds available via central government's Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme, to support people who have been rough sleeping to move into a longer term home, with support available from specialist staff in relation to mental health and substance abuse problems, moving towards training and work. The scheme supports wider plans to end rough sleeping in the city.

Leeds City Council has secured funding through the scheme to purchase 30 one bedroom properties across Leeds, providing supported accommodation for up to two years for individuals who are either moving from emergency accommodation, from one of Beacon's intensive support environments or directly from the street in a 'housing first' approach. Each resident will work with a housing navigator who will provide intensive support to develop independent living skills and resilience to sustain a longer term tenancy, along with supporting access to wider health and related services. The Council has also worked with partners Clarion Housing on a bid for nine units with support from St George's Crypt who will also support people in a further six of their own units. A bid for funds for a project with Together Women Project delivering 15 units for women, the Somewhere Safe to Live project, was also successful.

The scheme is providing positive outcomes for individuals. A recent success was relating to a woman who moved to Leeds to escape domestic violence. Initially housed in a hotel following a period of rough sleeping, she was moved into a home through the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme where she stayed for 16 months. During this time she was fully engaged with the services available to her and has been successful in gaining a permanent tenancy in Leeds. Support has been ongoing as she began her tenancy, and she was supported to find furnishings, white goods and carpets to help her create a new home, encouraging a sustainable long-term tenancy.



## Thriving and Inclusive Communities

A community is what makes a house a home - a place where residents feel safe, that is well connected and with a vibrant and sustainable community-based infrastructure. This makes 'thriving and inclusive communities' an integral part of the housing strategy.

### Community Safety

The housing sector has a critical role in supporting community safety, encouraging neighbourhoods to be inclusive and thrive. Through the Leeds ASB Strategy themes of prevention, intervention, enforcement, community empowerment and integrated intelligence Housing's integration into the multi-agency Anti-Social Behaviour Partnership Silver Board is important. This will ensure that there is a strategic and tactical partnership approach, both in terms of responding to incidents of ASB and supporting communities and individuals to minimise community impacts and maximise tenancy sustainment, but also activities to enhance community cohesion and offer diversionary activities.

### Domestic Violence and Abuse

Domestic violence and abuse is everyone's responsibility and requires a co-ordinated and pragmatic partnership response. A multi-agency approach to domestic violence and abuse is well established in Leeds via the Domestic Violence and Abuse Local Partnership Board, with a key role for the housing sector to proactively support the Leeds Domestic Violence Strategy and meet specific responsibilities of the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act. Housing organisations have an important role in identifying suspected abuse, ensuring that homes are available and accessible to victims-survivors, supporting them and their children to access appropriate housing and support options and working to support and challenge individuals that cause harm.

### Reducing Poverty and Maximising Inclusion

Poverty is a significant issue facing many areas of inner city Leeds and it is important that the housing sector is an active part of a wider collaborative approach to targeted support, using asset based approaches to support communities to identify the issues and their causes, and deliver their own solutions. Landlords have an important role in working with local residents and partners to support communities to improve housing quality and affordability, reduce fuel poverty, maximise financial and digital inclusion to help to reduce deprivation. Diverse communities are vibrant communities and the housing sector has an important role in promoting diversity and inclusion, supporting minority communities including asylum seekers, minimising community tensions and responding proactively to hate crime.

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## Case Studies

### Strategic Place Making

The housing sector has an important role in supporting strategic place making principles, not only to support Leeds to progress towards carbon neutrality by 2030 but also to help create housing environments that promote safe, thriving and active communities. In developing new housing sites it is important that land and resources are used as efficiently as possible and that developments support the principle of the 20 minute neighbourhood, connecting homes to local infrastructure - local jobs, shops and opportunities for active travel and public transport. Green and blue infrastructure, such as tree planting, ponds and community gardens, have an important role in supporting our carbon zero ambition but also increasing levels of physical activity. As most housing is already built, it is important that collaborative consideration is given to how strategic place making principles can be applied to current housing areas, considering biodiversity options and opportunities to increase connectivity to neighbourhoods.



### The SARA Problem-Oriented Model in Leeds

SARA is a problem-oriented policing model used to address community problems and crime, looking to identify and overcome the underlying causes of crime or community issues instead of treating the symptoms. The practice is well embedded in Leeds across housing and community safety partnerships, via local tasking meetings and is used regularly to provide a proactive focus on communities where there are particular issues which require a more intensive and collaborative approach. It is a decision-making model which stands for:

**Scanning:** Identifying, prioritising and selecting problems that need addressing using both data from police and other sources as well as partner, community and citizen input.

**Analysis:** Deeply analysing the causes of the problem, including the underlying causes of repeated calls for service and crime incidents.

**Response:** Determining and implementing a response to a particular problem. Ideas for responses should be “evidence-based” when possible or at least tailored to the specific problem at hand using general principles of prevention.

**Assessment:** Assessing and evaluating the impact of a particular response and being willing to try something different if the response was not effective.

The SARA methodology has highlighted the importance of prioritisation, effective allocation of deploying resources and assisted with systematic learning when evaluating.







## Communities on Top Through ABCD

One of the major tools that is used in Leeds to help communities change the things that local residents care most about in a way that suits them is Asset Based Community Development (ABCD).

ABCD is a way of working with people and communities that starts by asking what is strong, not what is wrong and what is present, not what is lacking. The approach seeks to discover the assets, skills and aspirations that exist within a community to bring about positive social action, rather than 'top-down' interventions a council or other agencies.

The approach is actively used in the city's priority neighbourhoods, with 'community builders' helping connect people who are active in community life and bringing others together, supported by 'Small Sparks' grants to help local residents kickstart their ideas into action.

The principles of the ABCD approach are included in the Housing Leeds 'Communities on Top' service offer, which describes the practical help and support we give to the city's tenants, residents and community groups to help them connect with fellow residents, build relationships with others and achieve their aims. Communities on Top itself was created using the learning from a pilot with a national good practice organisation in tenant engagement (called TPAS) who explored with us and four different tenant and residents groups how ABCD could be used to help them bring about the changes they wanted to see.

The Communities on Top offer gives an annual support grant to help with groups' running costs, support on how to hold events and activities, commitments to link groups with others doing the same, help with social media, offering free accounts checks and offering to host community consultations on a groups behalf on Your Voice Leeds. Since Covid restrictions lifted the service have been supporting a growing number of groups in this way.



## Target Outcomes

- Maximised the housing sector's effective management of ASB/ community safety through a multi agency approach
- Maximised the housing sector's effective management of domestic abuse through a multi-agency approach
- Ensured that a preventative and proactive 'zero tolerance' approach to hate crime is in place across the housing sector through a multi-agency approach
- Maximised the housing sector's role in supporting activity to reduce poverty in priority neighbourhoods
- Maximised the housing sector's role in minimising poverty including fuel poverty, and maximising digital and financial inclusion in the city

# Improving Health Through Housing

The critical link between housing and physical and mental health is well evidenced and the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy underpins a number of the themes of this housing strategy. The focus of this theme is on how the housing, health and social care sectors can work together to maximise the health of Leeds residents and minimise health inequalities through housing.

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## Reducing Health Inequalities

Leeds, as a Marmot city, has set out its commitment to addressing health inequalities and putting wider determinants of health at the centre of what we do. Housing is a key determinant of health and as such the housing sector has a critical role in contributing towards the reduction of health inequalities in Leeds.

Through the Best City Ambition the Council has identified Health and Housing as one of four citywide breakthrough projects and alongside this there is Housing representation on the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board. These strategic health and housing collaborations provide a framework through which the housing sector can play its part in reducing housing related health inequalities in the city.

## Housing, Health and Social Care System Supporting Independence

At an operational level, the housing sector has a key role in working with the health and social care sectors as part of the Integrated Care System to improve housing standards and ensure that the housing impacts on health of individuals are effectively managed.

It is a priority through this strategy that the housing sector has proactive and preventative housing solutions in place to support people to live independently and minimise preventable health and social care interventions. This will include ensuring that adaptations are maximised to support people with mobility needs, sensory needs or cognitive impairments to live independently, minimising hospital admissions and streamlining hospital discharges linked to housing needs. It will also include ensuring that key referral pathways, e.g. homelessness and mental health support are efficient and collaborative.

Effective operational collaboration will be achieved through the housing, health and social care sectors having a basic awareness of assessments and referral pathways of each other's sector and strong partnership links via Local Care Partnerships.

## Housing Digitalisation and Health

Digital technology has an important role in supporting people to be healthy and independent in their home. Through the life of this strategy the digital opportunities will no doubt develop considerably and it is important that the housing and health sector in Leeds work proactively with developers to bring innovation to the market.

Such innovation will include using digital technology to monitor the conditions of the home and associated health risks and create healthier living environments, using digital assisted living technologies to support independence, providing support services digitally and maximising digital opportunities for data sharing/ referral pathways across the sectors.

## Safeguarding

As a service which routinely visits people in their homes, landlords and repairs operatives have a key role in identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns relating to both children and adults. It is a priority through this strategy for the housing sector to be closely aligned to the strategic priorities of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board and Leeds Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Self-neglect and hoarding are safeguarding issues which are often very visible in the home and the housing sector has an important role in working with partner agencies to ensure that people are supported in accordance with the Leeds Self Neglect Strategy.

## Case Studies

### A Whole System Approach to Supporting Independence of Children and Adults

A safe home which has been adapted to meet the needs of its residents is fundamental to supporting a resident's independence. In Leeds a 'whole system approach' is embedded where the housing, health and care sectors work together with individuals and families as part of an integrated system to achieve positive outcomes for residents and cost-effective solutions for the health and social care system.

Regular collaboration takes place between social care and housing teams to review individual cases and consider how resources can be used innovatively to best meet housing need. A number of solutions have and continue to be delivered to meet a growing need for highly adapted homes in the city.

Leeds City Council partnered with Habinteg Housing Association to deliver six new bespoke wheelchair accessible homes on three council owned sites in 2019/20 - meeting the needs of families who had been waiting for an accessible home for a long time, and enabling homes to be customised to an individual's specific needs.

Housing Leeds has also through its council housing growth programme been able to deliver homes which have been designed and adapted to meet an identified resident's specific needs, funded extensions to existing homes and joined two adjoining properties into one in order to meet specific needs. The system's work, particularly with disabled children, has been highlighted by Foundations, the Government's mouthpiece on adaptations, and described Leeds as the 'national leader' in such work.





### Housing as a Key Wider Determinant of Health – Housing's Role as Part of the Integrated Care System in Leeds and West Yorkshire

National research has for some time evidenced the critical role of housing as a wider determinant of health and in Leeds the housing sector is increasingly being seen as a critical partner to the delivery of the city's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The housing sector is now represented on the city's Health and Wellbeing Board and one of the four breakthrough projects as part of the Best City Ambition is 'Healthy Housing', reinforcing the city's commitment to integrating the housing sector into strategic conversations about health and wellbeing in the city.

Local Care Partnerships (LCPs) have been established in Leeds as a model of joined up working across health and care teams to improve health and care delivery to local people, reducing health inequalities and tackling the wider determinants of health for a particular area of the city, aligned to Primary Care Networks. Housing Leeds is represented on the LCPs, contributing towards the identification of LCP priorities and supporting the Population Health Management programme for an area. Partnership working through the LCPs has included work to reduce health inequalities in the inner east of the city and more targeted work during the COVID pandemic to minimise spread and maximise vaccine uptake.

Housing's integration into the health and care system is also well embedded at a regional level, with the housing sector from Leeds well represented on the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership's Housing for Health Network, a network which seeks to share intelligence and best practice, collectively consider policy developments and consider a regional approach where appropriate.



## Target Outcomes

- Maximised the housing sector's role in minimising health inequalities in the city
- Maximised the housing sector's role as part of the health and social care system
- Increased the percentage of adaptations that are completed within a target timescale
- Strengthened housing and health pathways in place for hospital discharge, people who are rough sleeping and experiencing mental health difficulties
- Maximised digital innovation in housing to improve health outcomes
- The housing sector has minimised safeguarding risks to residents

## Child and Age Friendly Housing

The child and age friendly ambitions set out in the Best City Ambition are well established priorities in Leeds. It is important that the housing strategy adopts a full life-course approach, ensuring that the housing needs of the youngest and oldest residents are also effectively met.

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### Care Leavers Housing Policy

The housing sector has an important corporate parenting role for children and young people in care and a responsibility to support care leavers to achieve safe and suitable accommodation which helps every young person to achieve their maximum potential. A Care Leavers Housing Policy is being developed which will include joint housing assessments and improved collaboration between housing, support and social care agencies to ensure that care leavers are supported to progress successfully into a suitable home.

### Supporting Families to Achieve Successful Tenancies

There is an important role of the housing sector to ensure that the wider needs of families are considered and supported as part of any service that they provide, ensuring that families are living in suitable homes with sustainable tenancies which enable a child and family to thrive. It is a priority through this strategy for landlords, social care and support agencies to work collaboratively, adopting 'Think Family, Work Family' principles to work with wider families to understand and identify solutions to any tenancy and support needs. Examples of this include, but are not limited to supporting families with disabled children to build bespoke homes with adaptations and supporting families in social housing tenancies to ensure that they are sustainable.

### Supporting Independence into Older Age Through Improved Information and Advice

Many people put off planning for their future housing needs into older age until there is a crisis and then it can be more difficult to make a positive and planned move into a more suitable home. Improved information and advice available on age friendly housing options e.g. via Leeds Directory and raising awareness of these options with people and other agencies, is key to ensuring that older people live in suitable homes with appropriate adaptations and support available and reducing pressures on the health and social care sectors. A preventative approach is essential; through this strategy we will encourage a preventative approach to encourage people to give earlier consideration to their future housing needs, e.g. via self assessment tool/publicity campaigns.



## Providing a Range of Age Friendly Housing Options

It is important that a range of attractive housing options are available to support people as they age to 'rightsize' into age friendly housing options, making best use of housing supply, supporting people to live in housing that can accommodate future support and care needs in an environment that promotes social inclusion and active independence. As most older people want to live in general housing it is important that through this strategy we increase the supply of new age friendly, accessible general housing via the Core Strategy's targets for new accessible homes. To complement this the housing sector has an important role in ensuring that high quality homes with support are available, e.g. retirement living homes which offer support as part of a retirement community. It is a priority for Leeds to maximise the effectiveness of and delivery of extra care and dementia friendly housing in the city, ensuring that a wide range of options are available. Many older people want to live in mixed communities so it is important that housing providers consider intergenerational opportunities in existing and new specialist settings.



## Target Outcomes

- 100% care leavers have moved into suitable accommodation
- Collaboration between housing and social care robustly in place to maximise tenancy sustainment of families
- Delivered 1000 extra care units by 2028
- Met targets new accessible homes delivered via the planning system

## Case Studies

### Our Way Leeds (OWL)

Our Way Leeds launched in July 2020 and is delivered by a consortium of experienced partners; GIPSIL, Foundation and Turning Lives Around (TLA). The service provides a single point of access to offer support and accommodation with a focus on prevention for any young people in the city who are at risk of homelessness including Care Leavers and Children Who are Looked After.

The service provides advice, counselling, support with employment and education and an opportunity to gain valuable experiences from peer mentor support.

The service takes referrals from two prime referrers; Leeds Housing Options and Children and Families service alongside referrals from the Youth Justice, External Agencies and Self-Referrals.

A range of options are available such as floating support for young people living in their own accommodation, emergency accommodation, supported accommodation such as core and cluster, dispersed and trainer flats. Support is available 24/7 in some of the provision as well as extended hours of support and access at weekends and evenings when required. Complex Needs Workers will be available to deliver support for those that require extensive support and advice.

Children's Social Care and OWL are working together to improve access to housing support by co-locating support staff in Archway, providing a young person's hub where young people can access interventions through drop-ins and by taking part in activities to help them on their journey towards independence and improving their wellbeing.

Since the launch of OWL in 2020 the service has received 1531 referrals and 635 Young People are currently being supported by OWL. Performance information is reported quarterly via a performance framework - almost 90% of homelessness prevention cases have been closed with a positive outcome and over 80% left the service with a successful outcome.

Children's Social Care and OWL are working together to improve access to housing support by co-locating support staff in Archway, providing a young person's hub where young people can access interventions through drop-ins and by taking part in activities to help them on their journey towards independence and improving their wellbeing.

### Leeds Partnership With Centre for Ageing Better

In 2017 Leeds City Council and Leeds Older People's Forum entered into a five year partnership with the Centre for Ageing Better, an independent charitable foundation with a vision of society in which everyone enjoys a good later life. The Centre's work is informed by evidence which includes research, lived experiences and the views of practitioners. The partnership has focused on responding to specific local ageing issues as well as identifying opportunities for innovation and new delivery models, in three key areas of work - transport, housing and community contributions. The partnership has delivered a number of key projects for the city including an evaluation of the Leeds Neighbourhood Networks to demonstrate their role in healthy ageing; showcasing Leeds' work on strength and balance to a national audience, supporting age-friendly to become a priority in the Best Council Plan and the State of Ageing in Leeds in December 2021 which has led to a refresh of the Leeds Age Friendly Strategy.

On the housing theme, evidence from Ageing Better's Home and Dry work was used to secure funding and recommission the Home Plus Service, which works to reduce fall hazards and reduce the number of cold homes; Ageing Better also gave evidence to support the city's targets for new homes to be built to accessible standards. The partnership has worked with the 'Me and My Home Group' to commission a piece of research in Leeds to examine what kind of housing information and advice people want as they age and where they currently get this support and information from. The findings from this research have been used to inform priority pieces of work, including a review of the Leeds Directory housing information, and a promotion in the city's Shine magazine to encourage people to think about what they want from a home in later life.

### Extra Care Housing in Leeds

The Leeds vision for extra care housing is to work with partner organisations to construct more than 1000 units of extra care housing by 2028 to meet the growing demand for this accommodation type and population forecasts. As part of this the Council is building a further three schemes with a minimum of 180 units with the first, Gascoigne House, Middleton, due to open in spring 2023. In addition in 2019 the Council entered into contract with a consortium made up of Home Group and Lovell Later Living for a minimum of 240 units of extra care housing over four sites. As Home Group is developing their schemes at the same time as the future council schemes, regular partnership meetings are taking place to share good practice, use lessons learnt and ensure that joint working is in place particularly for allocations. All schemes provided by Home Group will be 100% affordable homes for rent, with the Council having 100% full nomination rights for the first lettings, followed by 75% nomination rights on subsequent lettings for a period of 60 years.

A key part of the approach is to provide housing which helps to maintain a person's independence and the schemes have been planned to provide accessible and flexible accommodation designed, or capable of being adapted, to support the delivery of personal social and health care services. A joint local lettings panel is formed for each scheme and is chaired by a Social Work Team Manager with representatives from Home Group, Housing Leeds and an Occupational Therapist. The eligibility criteria has a clear focus on current health issues, the opportunity to prevent deterioration of health conditions and projected future care need.

Building layouts are bright and airy with a number of shared spaces that offer connections (particularly to outdoor space), encourage interaction, support independence and avoid an institutional feel. The first of the four Home Group schemes, Amblers Orchard, Tingley, opened in December 2021 and is already providing positive outcomes for individuals and is becoming a hive of activity for residents, their carers, families and the public with the extensive communal facilities being the 'heart' of the scheme.

# Key Working Principles





# Delivering the Housing Strategy

There is already a strong collaborative culture in Leeds with embedded partnerships in place to oversee the Leeds Housing Strategy priorities.

## Who are our partners involved in delivering the Housing Strategy?

Housing providers have a key role whether Housing Leeds, Registered Providers, private landlords or third sector providers. Housing developers, repairs and maintenance contractors, the Police and Safer Leeds, commissioned support and service providers, Adult Social Care, Children's Services and NHS organisations. Homes England, Social Housing Regulator, the Housing Ombudsman Service. Best practice organisations, the city's Equalities Hubs, community based groups, e.g. neighbourhood networks. The list is endless.

All citizens of Leeds have an interest in the successful delivery of this housing strategy. It is important that the citizen's view is central to our approach, ensuring that we listen to this view before, during and after solutions and approaches are developed and delivered. It is particularly critical that approaches are inclusive and meet the diverse needs of citizens and communities, with genuine commitments from the housing sector to undertake robust equality impact assessments and challenge systemic inequalities.

Leeds is part of a wider West Yorkshire region with a number of Leeds housing providers being part of the established West Yorkshire Housing Partnership, working with the West Yorkshire Mayor and Mayoral Authority to deliver on county wide housing priorities. It is important through the life of this strategy that the delivery of its priorities are aligned where appropriate and that there is effective collaboration at the West Yorkshire level.

## How will we deliver the Housing Strategy priorities?

The Leeds Strategic Housing Board was established in 2018 to oversee the delivery of the Leeds Housing Strategy and will continue to oversee the delivery of the refreshed Housing Strategy. However, the strategy will be owned by the wider Leeds Strategic Housing Partnership, working together through a collaborative approach to progress priorities within the strategy. There are already a number of established networks with the Housing Association sector, private rented sector and third sector which lead and support the delivery of actions relating to priorities. To complement this we will hold a series of Leeds Strategic Housing

Partnership workshops during the life of this strategy, covering complex cross cutting issues which require a cross sector approach. A number of the Housing Strategy priorities are aligned to other Council priorities and so progress will be reported into other formal Council Boards, e.g. Housing Growth Board, Age Friendly Board, Domestic Violence Board.

## How will we know when we have achieved the Housing Strategy?

The refreshed strategy sets out an updated position on the priorities for each of the six themes of the Housing Strategy along with some updated target outcomes. For some of the priorities targets are clear but for many of the priorities it is more difficult to set numerical targets as the ambitions are more qualitative than quantitative. Progress will be monitored as outlined above and the priorities will no doubt evolve throughout the life of the strategy. As important as the themes and priorities are the working principles - the strategy is seeking the support of the overall housing sector to work collaboratively as part of a wider system to meet the housing needs of the city.



## References and related strategies

### **Best Council Plan Annual Performance Report 2020/21 -**

<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s223866/Corporate%20Performance%20Report%20Appendix%201%20120721.pdf>

### **Equality Progress 2020 - 2021 Leeds - The Compassionate City:**

**Tackling Inequalities** - <https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s223329/Equality%20Improvement%20Priority%20Report%20Appendix%201%20290621.pdf>

### **Leeds Joint Strategic Assessment 2021 -**

<https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/JSA-Summary-Report-Oct-21-FINAL-1-1.pdf>

### **Domestic Violence and Abuse - Support in Safe Accommodation**

**Commissioning Strategy** - <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/plans-and-strategies/domestic-violence-and-abuse-support-in-safe-accommodation-commissioning-strategy>

### **Living with Dementia in Leeds - Our strategy 2020-25 -**

<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s210202/HWB%2030%20Sept%20Item%2012%20-%20Leeds%20Dementia%20Strategy.pdf>

### **Leeds Best City Ambition** - <https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s229372/Best%20City%20Ambition%20Report%20Appendix%201%20310122.pdf>

<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s229372/Best%20City%20Ambition%20Report%20Appendix%201%20310122.pdf>

### **A Net-Zero Carbon Roadmap for Leeds** - [https://www.leedsclimate.org.uk/sites/default/files/Net-Zero%20Carbon%20Roadmap%20for%20Leeds\\_0.pdf](https://www.leedsclimate.org.uk/sites/default/files/Net-Zero%20Carbon%20Roadmap%20for%20Leeds_0.pdf)

[https://www.leedsclimate.org.uk/sites/default/files/Net-Zero%20Carbon%20Roadmap%20for%20Leeds\\_0.pdf](https://www.leedsclimate.org.uk/sites/default/files/Net-Zero%20Carbon%20Roadmap%20for%20Leeds_0.pdf)

### **Safer, Stronger Communities: Leeds Plan (2021-24) -**

<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s226942/Safer%20Stronger%20Communities%20Leeds%20Plan%202021-24%20Appx%201%20261021.pdf>

### **Leeds Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019** - <https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/IMD2019KeyFindings.pdf>

<https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/IMD2019KeyFindings.pdf>

### **Thriving - The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds 2019-2022 -**

<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s196972/Child%20Poverty%20Strategy%20Report%20Appendix%201%20121119.pdf>

**Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 - 2022** - <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/docs/Homelessness%20and%20Rough%20Sleeping%20Strategy.pdf>

### **Leeds Children's and Young People's Plan 2018 - 2023 -**

<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/childfriendlyleeds/Documents/CMT18-022%20Childrens%20and%20YP%20Plan%2018-23.pdf>

**Leeds Affordable Warmth Strategy** - <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/benefits/affordable-warmth/affordable-warmth-strategy>

**Equality improvement priorities 2021 to 2025** - <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/plans-and-strategies/equality-improvement-priorities-plan>

**Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy 2022 to 2032** - <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/plans-and-strategies/parks-and-green-spaces-strategy>

