

Priority 2

Improving Housing Quality

2.1 Improving existing housing quality

Improving the quality of existing housing in the city is a key priority for the Housing Strategy. It is estimated that 66% of existing housing stock will still be in use by 2050.

Housing Tenure in Leeds

- 58,000 Council Housing
- 16,000 Housing Association (Registered Providers)
- 220,000 Privately Owned
- 41,000 Privately Rented
- 335,000 Total**

The Council and local Housing Associations have invested significantly in the city's social housing stock over the last 10 years and 96% of properties meet the decency standard. The Council has committed £67m up to 2018 to maintain standards of decency in council housing. The Affordable Housing section includes detail of the 'Leeds Standard' -which is over and above that of the Decency Standard-, that new council house building will need to meet. It is intended in the future that the Council will apply the 'Leeds Standard' to the maintenance of existing council housing stock as well as new build. Improving the quality of housing in the private sector is a key challenge for the Housing Strategy. Back in 2007, it was estimated that 44% (about 18,000 properties) of privately rented housing failed to meet the decency standard. The poorest quality housing is often that built before 1919 such as back to back properties. The Council's approach to tackling poor housing standards in the private sector is two-fold: targeted inspection and regulation of poor housing,. These principles are embodied in the Leeds Neighbourhood Approach.

The Council is engaging with landlord representative groups such as the Residential Landlord Association. The Council also wants to encourage landlords to join the Leeds Accreditation Scheme and is helping to set up four local landlord forums.

Case Study: LNA (Leeds Neighbourhood Approach)

The Council, in partnership with a number of other agencies, inspected 127 properties on the collective Nowell streets in East Leeds – 44 of the 127 properties were empty at the time of inspection. Programmes of improvement were agreed with property owners and this has resulted in 440 hazards being removed. 33 of the 44 empty properties have been brought back into use. A series of community action days, involving Council officers, partners and residents, have taken place to further improve the locality.

Actions and Targets

- Invest £67m on council housing improvements up to 2018
- Double the number of landlords in the Leeds Accreditation scheme
- Establish 4 local private landlord forums
- Build on the success of the LNA by continuing to improve standards in the private sector
- Develop a private rented tenant involvement strategy for the city
- Work with government and landlord groups to develop improvement strategies for the private rented sector