

Net Zero Homes Plan – Summary Version

This is a truncated version of the net zero housing plan summarising the main points and actions the council will take. The full version is available on request.

Executive Summary

The Net Zero Housing Plan sets out how Leeds City Council will accelerate the transition to net zero across housing of all tenures so that all Leeds residents can benefit from healthy, comfortable and affordable home as quickly as possible. It supports the high level aims and targets contained in the Best City Ambition and the Housing Strategy.

It focuses on practical steps that are needed to improve the quality of all housing in Leeds. It embraces technical upgrades that increase energy efficiency, reduce the carbon intensity of heating and hot water and increase the amount of renewable energy our homes generate. The plan also considers how these physical upgrades are best financed and delivered, how people can be motivated and supported to choose net zero, together with analysis of the gaps and barriers that need to be addressed.

The key actions that we will take to accelerate housing decarbonisation are:

1. **Creating a retrofit hub and financial mechanism for the 'able to pay' sector**

To decarbonise all housing in Leeds, it is essential to create programmes that support everyone. This includes owner occupiers in larger homes with higher carbon emissions, who have been overlooked for support in recent years.

By the end of 2023 the Better Homes Hub will be established, and Leeds will have commenced delivery of an able to pay demonstrator within one community.

By the end of 2024 there will be a property linked finance product available in Leeds to provide a means to invest in homes without an upfront cost.

2. **Engaging and motivating people to choose low carbon retrofits**

To increase uptake of retrofit measures it is important to understand household motivations for investing in decarbonisation and how we can influence them. This will be particularly important for the success of the proposed retrofit one stop shop which will need to recruit customers and then retain them through every stage of the retrofit process.

To draw together learning from research and previous projects to create an engaging and motivating package of communications materials to support the delivery of the retrofit one stop shop.

3. **Upscaling area renewal investment, using social housing investment to kick start work on all tenures in neighbouring homes.**

There are communities in Leeds that have suffered the scourge of fuel poverty for too long. These communities require significant investment in both housing and social infrastructure via a grant programme delivered over the medium term.

Appendix 1

Subject to securing Levelling Up Funding, deliver Holbeck phase 3 to improve a further 240 back-to-back properties by 2025.

Undertake surveys on properties in additional priority neighbourhoods to create a business case to take to government with the aim of securing funding to start work during 2024 on a scaled-up area based retrofit programme.

4. Improving our planning framework and engaging with the industry to ensure new homes reach net zero standards.

New build homes produce significantly less carbon than existing homes, but any new development that is not zero carbon simply adds to the total amount of carbon emitted by Leeds, making our net zero ambitions harder to achieve. We must accelerate the point at which all new homes are operationally net zero (in terms of how they are heated and powered) and consider how to offset the carbon emitted from any new homes which are not net zero. We will also set a framework to move towards reducing the whole life cycle carbon of homes through construction.

To consult, refine, adopt and implement the Local Plan Update to ensure that new housing in Leeds is operationally net zero and that we move towards whole life cycle net zero for construction.

We will also undertake enabling actions to help deliver carbon reductions over the medium term:

5. Zoning the city, to indicate the most suitable fabric investments and heating solutions by neighbourhood.

Decarbonising homes does not have a one size fits all solution. Different homes require different technical solutions; different income levels will need different mixtures of grants and financial products; and different people are motivated by diverse factors.

By 2025, the council will develop an interactive GIS map which divides the city's housing into zones and sub-zones according to their characteristics and the local demographics to allow us to plan effective retrofit intervention programmes.

6. Expanding green jobs, skills and supply chains to meet demand.

A workforce with the right skills is essential if we are to meet the challenges of net zero, both when it comes to building new homes and retrofitting existing stock. If we are proactive, this becomes an opportunity to create good long-term local jobs and improve workforce skills.

To ensure that the Green Skills Plan aligns with planned work to decarbonise new and existing homes and supports the retrofit and construction industry to train and recruit staff at all levels to deliver the net zero ambition.

Finally, the plan also identifies the key gaps, barriers and policy conflicts that stand in the way of these actions and recommends changes needed at regional or national level to overcome them.