

LEEDS HOUSING BOARD AGENDA

Meeting: Leeds Housing Board Meeting
Date: Friday 26th September **Time:** 10:30–12:00
Location: via Teams

Item	Presented by	Time
1. Introductions and apologies	Councillor Lennox	10:30-10:35
2. Minutes of the Last Meeting	Councillor Lennox	10:35-10:40
3. Housing Strategy update		
Meeting Affordable Housing Need	Christa Jolley, Mandy Sawyer	10.40-11.00
Improving Housing Quality	Mark Ireland, Andy Hickford, Adam Crampton	11.00-11.20
Reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping	Kerrie Murray	11:20-11:40
Thriving and Inclusive Communities	Claire Smith/Liz Jarmin	11:40-11:45
Improving Health Through Housing	Mandy Sawyer	11:45-11:50
Child and Age Friendly Housing	Mandy Sawyer	11:50-11:55
4. AOB	CLlr Lennox	11:55-12:00

Date and Time of Next Meeting: TBC

Minutes



Meeting Name: Leeds Housing Board

Date: Monday 11th March 2024 **Time:** 10.00-11.30

Location: Microsoft Teams

Chair: Cllr Jessica Lennox (JL)

Members Present: Cllr Mary Harland (MH), Cllr Kayleigh Brooks (KB), Cllr Barry Anderson (BA)

Attendees Present: James Rogers, Director of Communities, Housing and Environment (JR), Gerard Tinsdale, Chief Officer, Housing (GT), Mandy Sawyer, Head of Housing & Neighbourhood Services (MS), Simon Baker, Policy Officer (Housing) (SB), Julia Preston, sector representative (JP), Mark Ireland, Head of Private Rented Sector (MI), Kerrie Murray, Head of Homelessness (KM), Adam Crampton, Head of Property Management (AC), George Munson, Senior Project Manager (GM), Kevin Brighton, Development & Improvement Manager (KB)

Apologies: Cllr Jools Heselwood, Helen Lennon

Minutes

Item	
1	Introductions and apologies
1.1	JL welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies.
2	Minutes of the last meeting
2.1	The minutes of the last Strategy session meeting, held in September 2023, were approved.
3	Housing Strategy meeting format – discussion item
3.1	MS proposed to the Board that in future each of the twice-yearly Housing Strategy session concentrate on three of the six themes of the Housing Strategy, to give more time for a detailed look at each theme, with a change to the format of the report that will focus on priorities for the next six months and the challenges that need discussion.
4.2	The Board was in agreement but requested a deep dive into three of the themes with a brief overview of the remaining three.
4	Housing Strategy Update

4.1	AC, GM and MI updated the Board on progress relating to the quality of public and private sector housing. AC mentioned the ongoing focus of decarbonisation in the capital programme and the number of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard. There is a need to take stock of and assess the ongoing programmes to see if, for example, new innovative technology is being utilised effectively and the right solutions are being used in the right areas.
4.2	GM noted the good work that has been done on decarbonisation over the past few years, but with regard to the equality between the public and private sector funding, it is getting more difficult to deliver whole neighbourhood solutions. Work is underway to support slightly more affluent private households to be able to access decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures, such as the One Stop Shop that is being launched.
4.3	<p>MI explained that the selective licensing programmes in Beeston and Harehills will cease as their 5 year programmes end, but a report is going to Executive Board considering whether to look at more selective licensing areas.</p> <p>The Renters Reform Bill is expected to become law this year, and conversations are ongoing with the government about what it looks like and how it can influence outcomes. MI also updated the Board on the DLUHC-funded pathfinder project that is underway in Leeds, which is engaging with consultants to look at criminality and how other LAs deal with it. A toolkit is being developed.</p>
4.4	CJ updated the Board on the latest affordable housing figures as contained in the report. The provision of affordable housing now stands at a ten year high, with the highest number of all Core Cities. However, as council stock continues to be sold via Right to Buy, with 600 forecast this year, overall numbers remain relatively constant.
4.5	The SHMAA is currently being reviewed and will be published in the spring, but will see a significant increase in the amount of affordable housing needed. In 2018 the SHMAA set the goal for AH, and the Affordable Housing Growth Programme is set to deliver 1200 by 2025. Brownfield Housing Grant money is supporting the delivery of a significant number of homes.
4.6	MS outlined the work being done to increase the supply of affordable housing, with the focus on those who need it most. A review of the Lettings Policy is underway, with 2500 responses the consultation received. A response has been submitted to a government consultation on proposed changes to allocations. The proposals will come to the Board for consideration before going to Executive Board for approval.
4.7	Collaborative work is ongoing with Housing Associations, so they can help meet the demand. The private rented sector remains hard to access but there has been investment in additional resource to maximise households moving into the sector.
4.8	BA asked about how we can access unspent WYCA funding. CJ outlined how we work with WYCA, and is only aware of brownfield funding that we could access.
4.9	KM briefed the Board of the report's main points. We continue to perform well in Leeds, because we accept applications at an early stage and perform well in

	relieving homelessness at an early stage though this is becoming more challenging as the private rented sector becomes more expensive.
4.10	A key priority is to reduce the number of young people, and work is ongoing with Children's Services in this area to support families in the right way to find accommodation.
4.11	Rough sleeping continues to pose a significant challenge, but we have high prevention rates. JP noted the excellent partnership working taking place but the impact of inflation will see a reduction in commissioned services due to increased costs.
4.12	KB then took the Board through the Thriving Communities theme. Areas highlighted included regulatory changes through the Social Housing Regulation Act and the Police and Crime Act. There is also a Criminal Justice Bill currently before the Commons, which all put pressure on ASB services and the police. Significant changes include the Community Trigger, policies and procedures being reviewed.
4.13	Funding has been secured from the Prosperity Fund, used to fund officers to work in the 12 high priority wards, linking with partners. A review of how we handle hate crime is being carried out.
4.14	Funding has been secured for three mediators, who teach mediation and have helped to resolve 93 cases to date. A training program is being rolled out to staff on the SARA training model.
4.15	MS then covered the significant amount of work which has taken place under the Improving Health Through Housing theme, touching on work such as the Health and Housing Breakthrough Project and the Marmot City work. The findings from the Marmot work will be brought to the Board at a future date.
4.16	Also highlighted was the partnership work going on between housing and health professionals to better understand overlapping areas of work and improve referrals and services. The hospital discharge project has to date supported 76 residents into their home or suitable accommodation. Good progress continues with adaptations, and a lot of work continues in regard to digitisation and understanding conclusively how they can be used effectively.
4.17	MS then moved onto the Child and Age Friendly theme. KM commented on work being done between LHO and children's social work teams including ensuring all families in temporary accommodation have cots and support offered for pre-school children.
4.18	MS then turned to the age friendly component. A lot of progress has been made with new extra care units, eg Gascoigne House which opened in November.
4.19	We are part of the APPG on sheltered housing, contributing our experience in rightsizing provision.
4.20	Accessible housing targets are being met, and we have are awaiting the response to the government's consultation on AH targets. In the interim we will continue with our own targets. JP highlighted work being done by Young Lives Leeds, of which she is co-chair, and funding received by GIPSIL for support for foster and kinship carers.

Next Meeting

Date:

Time:

Location: Microsoft Teams

Title: The Housing Strategy update

Author: Simon Baker

Meeting Date: 26th September 2024

1. Background

- 1.1. The Leeds Housing Strategy 2022-2027 was published in July 2022. An update on the previous Strategy, which ran from 2016 to 2021, the Housing Strategy sets out the city's housing priorities and how the housing sector in the city plays a role in helping the city to meet its wider objectives, as encapsulated in the Best City Ambition and its Three Pillars of Health and Wellbeing, Inclusive Growth and Zero Carbon.
- 1.2. The city's housing sector has a key role to play in helping to deliver better outcomes for people across the city, in all communities, of all ages and across all tenures.
- 1.3. The city's housing sector continues to face a number of challenges. The demand for affordable housing continues remains high. The continued squeeze on household finances and high interest rates are hitting families hard, particularly those households on lower incomes and changes across the housing sectors are impacting on the availability of affordable housing options.
- 1.4. The Council, along with other social housing providers, continues to invest significant sums in the city's social housing stock, improving energy efficiency and helping to lower domestic bills. Tackling damp and mould continues to be a priority, with new government regulations coming which will see mandatory timescales introduced to tackle not only damp and mould complaints but a range of other repairs when raised by tenants.

2. Main Points

- 2.1. The Housing Strategy is built around six key themes:
 - **Meeting Affordable Housing Need** – the intention of this theme is to maximise the number of affordable homes available to rent or buy, effectively meeting demand for affordable housing in the social and private rented sectors and reducing the number of empty homes in the city.
 - **Improving Housing Quality** – this theme is concerned with improving the quality and energy efficiency of homes in Leeds and improving housing quality in the private rented sector.
 - **Reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping** – this theme focuses on improving our service offer for those affected by repeat or hidden

homelessness, further developing our collaborative ways of working, ensuring availability of the right housing types, and ensuring that the health needs of people affected by homelessness and rough sleeping are met as part of a wider approach.

- **Thriving and Inclusive Communities** – this theme outlines the role the housing sector has to play in helping to maintain community safety and create confident, inclusive communities in pleasant neighbourhoods.
 - **Improving Health through Housing** – the housing sector has an important role to play in helping to reducing health inequalities and supporting people to meet their health needs. This theme is concerned with how the housing sector can work more effectively as part of the health and social care system to meet health and housing needs.
 - **Child and Age Friendly Housing** – this theme seeks to ensure that the housing needs of the youngest and oldest are effectively met through support for care leavers, sustainable tenancies for families, and making sure the right housing options are available to allow older people to remain active and independent.
- 2.2. At its last Housing Strategy session in March, the Board decided that it would in future concentrate on three themes at each of twice-yearly strategy sessions. Accordingly, this report gives full updates on the Meeting Affordable Housing Need, Improving Housing Quality and Reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping themes, with only brief updates on the remaining three themes. These will be reversed at the next Strategy session in March 2025.

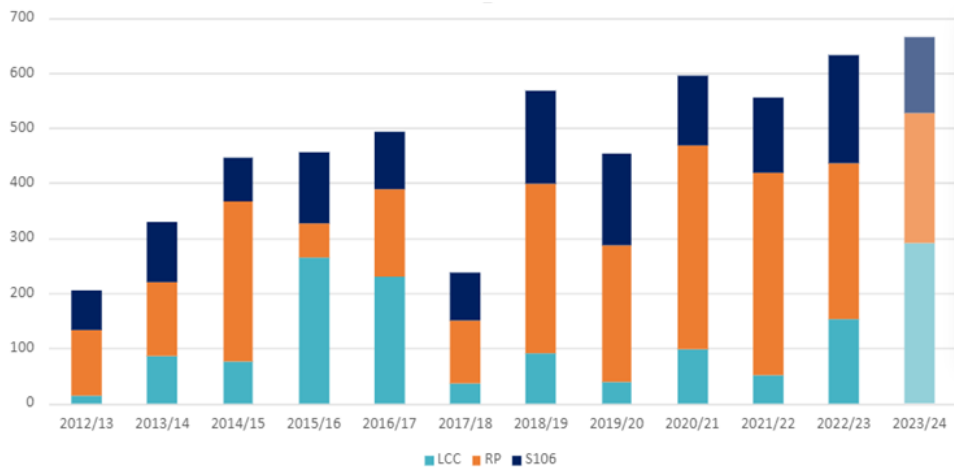
3. Meeting Affordable Housing Need

3.1. Deliver 750 new affordable homes per year 2022-25

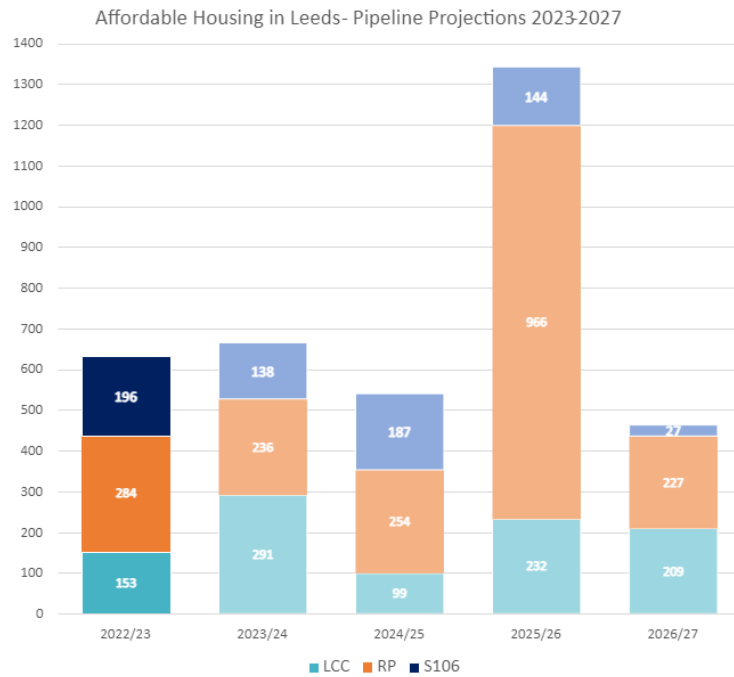
Delivery & Projections

- 3.2. As previously reported the Leeds Affordable Housing Growth Partnership Action Plan (LAHGPPAP) was finalised at the end of 2022, setting out the affordable housing ambition of all partners, with a pipeline of c750 new affordable homes per annum projected over the three years of the plan 2022-25.
- 3.3. In 2023/24, Leeds recorded delivery of 665¹ new affordable homes, 291 through direct delivery, 138 via s106 and 226 by Registered Providers and delivery partners and ten via the First Homes pilot scheme.
- 3.4. The table below shows delivery over the last 10 years, illustrating new delivery highs over the last two years.

¹ Subject to year-end verification by MHCLG – due in November 2024.



- 3.5. In 2023/24 direct Council delivery represented 44% of affordable homes delivered, followed by RP delivery at 30% and s106 at 26%. Council Housing delivery is a much larger proportion of delivery than in previous years (on average about 25%).
- 3.6. As shown in the graph below, delivery projections over the next two years look positive, with an average of c.940 homes per annum spread across both years. There is then a reduction from 2026 onwards, which is likely to be reflective of the end of the current Homes England Affordable Homes Programme (AHP), with a replacement yet to be announced. The s106 projections are less certain further into future years as the graph below only represents schemes that RP partners have contracted on with developers.
- 3.7. Note that projections are hard to predict, particularly when completions vary across financial years. They also rely on good relationships and information from partners and developers which can often be delayed.



- 3.8. The Council Housing Growth programme is projected to deliver 1,271 homes by 2026 subject to planning. When combined with the use of Council land and grants to support RP delivery, direct and indirect Council delivery totals over 1,500 homes by 2026.
- 3.9. Over the last five years Leeds has built more new affordable homes than any other city outside of London, with a greater proportion of social rented homes than the national average (36% compared with 12.4% nationally). Over the last five years just over 2,900 new affordable homes have been constructed.
- 3.10. The table below shows the numbers delivered by each delivery route:

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
LCC	38	99	52	153	291	633
RP	249	369	366	284	236	1504
S106	166	127	138	196	138	765
	453	595	556	633	665	2902

- 3.11. Yet we know that much more is needed to address affordable housing need (as highlighted below regarding the Strategic Housing Market Assessment) and welcome the Government’s focus on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and wider policy landscape as set out in the Deputy Prime Minister’s letter to Local Authorities on 30th July. [Letter from the Deputy Prime Minister to local](#)

[authorities Leaders in England: Playing your part in building the homes we need \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) – 2024 report

- 3.12. The updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2024) was considered by Development Plans Panel on 17th September 2024². The findings of the SHMA relate to the overall housing requirement, affordable housing needs, student accommodation, older persons housing and the requirements for specialist homes.
- 3.13. In relation to affordable housing need, the previous SHMA (2017) indicated that 1,230 affordable homes were needed per annum. This figure has increased to 2,136 in the 2024 SHMA. This figure represents a considerable increase and reflects the pressure on housing resulting from the cost-of-living crisis and the increased cost of private renting.
- 3.14. A tenure split of 80% rented and 20% affordable home ownership is recommended as part of the SHMA, recognising that greatest need is for social/ affordable rented properties
- 3.15. The implications of the SHMA and NPPF changes will need to be considered as part of Local Plan 2040, which will be reviewed in greater detail and consulted on in 2025. Proposals for planning policy changes will be reported to a future board meeting in due course.

3.16. Maximise the number of high priority customers rehoused through the Leeds Homes register

3.17. The figures for lets by priority for 24/25 up to the end of August are:

Band A+	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Total Lets from Q1 24/25 up to the end of August
40	995	63	120	6	1224

3.18. In 23/24 RP nominations to Leeds City Council were 928 which made up 87% of total RP lettings in Leeds. RP nominations contributed to 24% of total allocations to customer on the Leeds Homes register.

3.19. Maximise the number of customers on the Leeds Homes register rehoused into the private rented sector

3.20. For the period Apr 23 – Mar 24 we achieved 317 lets through our Private Sector Lettings Scheme. We continue to build upon a relationship with Private Landlords and are continuing to look at how we incentivise our landlord lettings scheme to ensure we are competitive in the private sector to allow us to maximise the number of landlords and properties coming into the service.

² [Public agenda back for Development Plan Panel 17/09/2024](#)

- 3.21. Alongside the relationships with private landlords we work closely with Registered Providers to enable to directly let properties to those in most need via the register, which is referred to as our Rapid Rehousing Scheme. We continue to offer customers assistance in form of providing a month's rent and bond in advance, which allows customers to source their own private rented properties throughout the city.
- 3.22. Reduce the number of long term empty homes to 3,776 in the city**
- 3.23. At the end of March 2024, the number of empty homes across Housing Leeds was 686. This represented a net reduction in empty homes of 230 from the same period in 2023.
- 3.24. The current position brings performance to within 0.1% of the 1% target. As such, the focus for the coming year remains achieving this target and retaining this position. Cross service collaboration remains pivotal to the continued positive trend.
- 3.25. Regarding the Private Rented Sector, the CPA figure for March 2023 was 4767 and the figure for March 2024 was 5156.
- 3.26. Since COVID we have seen an increase in the level of long term empty homes which we are looking at to determine why this is occurring and also to look at the data quality as there are some concerns in relation to this.

4. Improving Housing Quality

4.1. Maximise the percentage of social housing that meets the decent homes standard

- 4.2. We continue to invest significantly in improving the quality and efficiency of council owned homes. Our strategic approach to investment in homes has been reviewed and a re-focus on core-service delivery implemented, including a higher level of investment in kitchens, bathrooms, roofing, windows and doors, valuing in the region of £26m over the next two years. As at the end of Q1 24/25, 96.7% of our stock met the Decent Homes Standard.
- 4.3. Backlogs in outstanding repairs and voids have now been resolved and volumes of work in progress and empty homes are now at or below target levels.
- 4.4. This allows for focus to now shift to improved performance on turnaround times. Current performance is showing month-on-month improvements in both repairs and void turnaround times, with continuous monitoring of these areas a key focus.
- 4.5. Statutory compliance remains a key strategic focus in areas such as gas safety, fire safety, electrical safety, water hygiene, asbestos management and lift maintenance.
- 4.6. These areas are critical to customer being safe and feeling safe in their homes and remain areas of strong performance for the service
- 4.7. Deliver improvements in low carbon housing across all the city's housing sectors**

- 4.8. Our 24/25 capital programme includes £21m of major projects, including high rise energy efficiency works, contributing to the c.£90m spent on improving the energy efficiency of council owned homes since 2020.
- 4.9. Since the Board's last update, the Lovell MSFs have been connected to the network in summer 2024. There are three blocks made up of 297 properties now benefitting from the scheme.
- 4.10. The city as a whole is making progress towards its goal of achieving Zero Carbon, with (at December 2021) citywide emissions down 38% against the 2005 baseline. As at April 2023, the Council's operational emissions have dropped 62.9% against the 2005 baseline. This reporting is updated as data is available, which tends to be on a delay to allow for verification and correction.
- 4.11. The Climate, Energy and Green Spaces team produce the Climate Emergency Annual Report to update on the progress towards the net zero ambition. The annual reporting provides reference to key projects and programmes and updates on progress against the Best City Ambition on Net Zero.
- 4.12. The Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC) was introduced following the declaration of the Climate Emergency in March 2019, and has a role to check, challenge, and support the relevant work of different council departments as appropriate to help ensure that the council is leading by example and making progress as fast as practical towards its net zero ambition, with reasonable community and stakeholder engagement and support. The committee continues to meet, with working groups covering a range of areas, including Housing.
- 4.13. At its last Strategy session in March the Board was informed about a £100k grant that had been received from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to develop a detailed service blueprint and test a prototype in support of the development and launch of an operational one stop shop (OSS) to support owner-occupiers in the city to install energy efficiency improvements to decarbonise their homes. This work is being continued with the combined authority, with support from Energy Savings Trust with development of the virtual one stop shop well underway.
- 4.14. If this work is successful and leads to and leads to new products which help to create a working able-to-pay market for energy efficiency improvements, helping to make homes warmer and cheaper to heat and bringing good quality jobs, it will also provide a user-friendly way to navigate the sometimes complex options available to householders, helping them to understand the costs as well as the benefits and assist in determining what type of measures will work best for them.
- 4.15. Additionally, LCC is working with Octopus Energy & Lloyds Bank on a similar pilot scheme, with Octopus providing paid-for property surveys that can provide detailed and bespoke assessments for householders. This work is progressing well, with a large market test with Octopus customers to determine appetite for such a scheme, price points and investment

potential from householders to inform further development. The next phase of this pilot is to trial surveys with householders so that a full offer to Leeds residents can be developed and provided.

4.16. The Council has also secured a £15m worked on delivery of the HUG2 grant which aims to install both insulation, and low carbon heating and solar panels amongst a variety of measures to over 280 in 750 non-gas heated homes, in order to improve the SAP rating from below C to C or above. This project is well is now underway and will be completed by March 2025.

4.17. The Climate Energy and Green Spaces Team are in the process of engaging contractors to undertake domestic energy efficiency improvement works in the city through the ECO4-GBIS Flex scheme. These are funded by the energy suppliers, however they require Local Authority participation to certify residents as eligible. We anticipate the scheme being in place from mid-October 2024.

4.18. The Local Authority Retrofit Scheme (LARS) is a £500m fund that is set to be launched by central government later in the year to provide energy efficiency improvements for private sector housing. We intend to bid for funding from this to improve homes in Leeds when it becomes available

4.19. Ensure compliance with the 2022 Building Safety Act

4.20. The Building Safety Act continues have a significant impact on the way in which deliver services to residents in high risk residential buildings (HRRB) such as high rise flats.

4.21. Additional resources have been dedicated to the development of a Building Safety Team to ensure compliance with all the requirements of the BSA.

4.22. Improve SAP ratings to an average of C as soon as possible

4.23. The average SAP rating of the properties managed by Housing Leeds, BITMO, and the PFIs is currently sixty-nine which is SAP Band C. Of the total 52,733 homes, 34,219 (64.9) are at or above SAP Band C, and the remaining 18,514 (35.1%) are SAP Band D or lower.

4.24. The Council's capital investment programme set out a plan to deliver over £100m of renewable heating and energy efficiency projects, targeting the worst performing Council homes first over the five-year period 2020-2025

4.25. Energy modelling software procured earlier this year is being used to plan investment scenarios for the most cost effective energy efficiency measures these recommendations will then form part of the capital investment plan for 2026-2030.

4.26. Maximise positive outcomes through the Selective Licencing Scheme

4.27. In terms of the current Beeston and Harehills schemes, as per the last update visits have continued to be undertaken to address standards and support those living in the area with their wider needs. Up to the end of June 2024 the following had been achieved:

- 8205 homes had been licenced.
- 4551 inspections and revisits undertaken.

- 1561 homes improved because of the action taken with 4818 people benefiting from better homes as a result.
 - Made 1737 referrals to other agencies
- 4.28. Whilst most homes are found to be non-compliant these are improved via informal measures rather than the need for formal action. However there has been a need for formal action, resulting in 551 legal notices requiring works and 384 civil penalties being issued where landlords have failed to licence their homes or to address standards.
- 4.29. Officers have continued to support action days and have held surgeries as per the previous update. In addition, officers have supported Clear Hold Build in Harehills, working with partners on the 'Clear' and now on developing the 'Hold' phase of the strategy.
- 4.30. In Beeston officers have also been involved in a Health and Housing meeting as part of the Marmot City work to address health and housing. This was to develop better working partnerships between the Council and health partners as part of the initiative. Work is ongoing as to how to develop that relationship especially with Social Prescribers who could support those we find in need when we cross the threshold.
- 4.31. The two Selective Licensing schemes cease as of 5th January 2025 as they have been in existence for the maximum five period allowed by the Housing Act 2004. After that date both areas will no longer be covered by the scheme or the additional licence conditions to address issues round the management of properties.
- 4.32. In March 2024, the Executive Board approved the consideration of the development of further potential further scheme(s) and will consider proposals at a later date. Consultation of those proposals is proposed to commence in the near future, subject to final agreement after which the Executive Board will determine if any new scheme(s) for future designation at some point early next year.
- 4.33. In addition to the proposed consultation on potential future Selective Licensing areas the next six months will also see the service looking at several other issues.
- 4.34. Post-Grenfell all private high rise buildings continue to be investigated and work is continuing with Building Control and West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (WYFS) to ensure all 18+ blocks are safe for those living in them. WYFS are leading on the joint approach and undertaking visits (including joint visits with LCC) on all 18+ blocks in the city. This will continue over for the foreseeable future to ensure works are completed. It will take years to complete all the works in the city so this will be an ongoing piece of work for the two agencies. MHCLG continue to meet with us and WYFS regarding progress.
- 4.35. The Renters' Rights Bill is proposed to be brought forward by the Government as soon as Parliamentary time is available. It is anticipated that this will be in the next session of Parliament and is expected to introduce a number of new measures:

- Removal of s21 no fault evictions
 - Landlord Portal – all landlords must register with the portal to rent their homes
 - New powers to address category 1 hazards – potentially £5k penalty if found prior to any further action
 - Decent Home Standard applied to the private rented sector as well as the social sector
 - Awaab’s Law to be extended to private landlords
 - New investigatory powers for LHA – similar to consumer legislation
 - Address discrimination – illegal to refuse LHA/DHSS, families etc
 - Rent reform – to prevent bidding wars and inflated rents being paid
 - New PRS Ombudsman to deal with tenant issues
- 4.36. Royal Assent may be as early as Spring 2025. However, initially not all provisions will be introduced as some will take time to develop. Officers are working with MHCLG colleagues as they have done when the previous proposals under the Renters’ Reform Bill were proposed on how these could be introduced to ensure they are workable, and the legislation is enforceable and achieves the Government’s aims. Government is currently looking at the additional burden this will cause LAs and what the new burdens cost may be. Officers in the service will continue to work with Government on all aspects of the Bill over the coming months
- 4.37. As part of the Government’s PRS Pathfinder initiative, where they have given several Councils funding to try and look at different ways to improve housing quality, LCC has continued to work on a project which is due to complete in March 2025 looking at:
- Can behavioural change techniques be used to improve housing quality?
 - Looking at criminality in the PRS
- 4.38. LCC was given funding to look at these and has been working with various consultants on the projects. In terms of the behaviour change we have worked with partners and stakeholders across the PRS with behaviour change experts to look at various ideas to improve behaviour including how to increase the self-regulation in the sector. These ideas will be tested over the next few months and evaluated to help with potential new ways of working and influencing future Government policy
- 4.39. Very little research has been conducted into the use of the PRS by criminals and the second part of the project is looking at this. The aim is to review how we work in Leeds with partners, learn from others across the country, produced a toolkit to support other LHA addressing criminality in the PRS and to make policy recommendations to Government to address the issue. As well as speaking to 30+ partners, including other Councils and organisations such as the GLAA, Trading Standards, Illegal Money Lending team etc we are also working with the LGA and Home Office on the issue and recommendations for Government

- 4.40. These two projects have been funding over the last 2 years and that funding comes to an end in March 2025 when the final evaluation and reports are due. The PRS Pathfinder will one of the priorities for the service over that period to ensure we achieve the aims of the project.

5. Reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

- 5.1. Over the last five years there have been a number of national factors impacting on residents' housing situations such as the cost of living crisis, an increase in market rents, landlords retiring portfolios due to increased interest rates and the general availability of housing both in the private and social sector. The three biggest causes of homelessness in Leeds are households being asked to leave accommodation arrangements with family or friends, end of private sector tenancies, and domestic abuse.
- 5.2. Leeds Housing Options has a successful homelessness prevention model and the most recent percentage still remains significantly higher than comparable cities and the national average. The service is facing more challenges however, due to the wait times for social housing and the availability of affordable and suitable housing in the private sector. More households approaching the service are in housing situations where securing a positive outcome in their existing accommodation is becoming harder - for example, friends and family are unable to continue arrangements due to cost, private tenancies are unaffordable or landlords are wishing to sell properties. With stay put solutions and available alternative housing becoming harder to secure, the service is currently reviewing its prevention model to determine how this can be adapted within the wider context of the current national housing crisis. The service has also seen an increase in approaches from households who have recently been granted a positive asylum decision and given limited notice to leave accommodation provided by the Home Office where the majority of households have nowhere else to live.
- 5.3. The increasing pressures seen by the service has resulted in an increase in families being placed into temporary accommodation. At the end of June 2024, 195 families were in temporary accommodation. At the end of December 2021, only eight families were in temporary accommodation
- 5.4. Prevent or relieve homelessness in at least 80% of completed housing options cases**
- 5.5. The positive prevention rate measures the percentage of cases where a household approaches at a 'threatened with homelessness stage' (i.e. they are at risk of losing their home) and the service secures either their current or new accommodation for at least 6 months. In the most recently published homelessness data (January - March 2024), Leeds positively prevented 74% of cases. This compares well against the national average which was 52.7%.

- 5.6. To support maximising properties coming through our Landlord Letting Scheme, the service recently launched a rent guarantee scheme to help improve the incentive to private landlords to work with the council. The private sector is a crucial tool to resolve homelessness. We have continued to maximise matching for homeless customers through our Responsive Re-housing Scheme - properties through this scheme are from Registered Providers (Housing Associations) and has had a positive impact.
- 5.7. We continue to offer financial assistance where it will create a positive accommodation outcome. We offer a bond and first month's rent in advance to customers who find their own private rented property, subject to it being affordable and passing a health and safety inspection by colleagues in the private sector housing service. We identified that one barrier for customers being able to stay at their family home was the cost of living and how this impacted increased food and utility bills. To support people stay at home with their families whilst waiting for a planned move, we have offered small monthly payments through the household support fund to make this a tangible temporary option.
- 5.8. The Supported Housing Accommodation Programme has been successful in identify customers in supported housing at risk of losing their licence as they no longer have the level of support needs to receive the enhanced rate of benefits. This has allowed us to intervene early to support moving people into independent accommodation, but also created spaces for those who most need it in the city, allowing further preventions and relief of homelessness.
- 5.9. Reduce the number of homeless 16/17 year olds to national average levels**
- 5.10. The renewal of the joint protocol between Leeds Housing Options and Children Social Work Services continues to progress. It focuses on accessing the right support for young people at the right time, whilst being clear about the likely accommodation outcomes for young people in Leeds. It aims to strengthen our joint work and joint understanding of relevant legislation and achieve the overarching priority of reducing the number of 16/17 year olds owed a homeless duty.
- 5.11. We have dedicated officers to the Staying Close pilot, which is focussing on how care leavers can be supported in the transition from care to independence, with a focus on their own accommodation. We are co-locating at Archway with Children Social Work Services to help make this pilot as successful as possible.
- 5.12. Reduce the number of people rough sleeping**
- 5.13. Rough Sleeping continues to be a national challenge with this reflected also in Leeds. We have seen an increase in people from outside of Leeds district rough sleeping in Leeds. Regular headcounts are taking place to monitor rough sleeping and following these, intensive work is happening on reviewing what is known about those who were found, whether

accommodation was available to them, and if they had recently received an offer of temporary accommodation.

- 5.14. We are proactively making temporary accommodation offers to people who are known to be, or at risk, of rough sleeping and are maximising schemes to support housing rough sleepers permanently as quickly as possible. The Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme, Housing First Scheme and Accommodation for Ex-Offenders are being fully utilised and creating successful outcomes for those who have been found rough sleeping
- 5.15. To support the work around reducing rough sleeping, a matrix managed Senior Housing Advisor post has been created on the Street Support structure that will be closely linked to Leeds Housing Options. The recruitment recently took place and the post will start in the middle of September.
- 5.16. Leeds has recently seen increases in monthly single night headcounts, matching national increasing trends: April 2024 count = 69 (Mar: 62, Feb: 62, Jan: 41): Partners have been finding between 115 – 130 individual people in total per month, and this has remained stable over the past six months.
- 5.17. Over the past 6 months Leeds have consistently accommodated over 100+ people in off-street provision monthly, which shows how many people are prevented from rough sleeping each month.
- 5.18. Leeds does however have a high proportion of rough sleepers defined as 'long-term' (found three times or more in the past twelve months), accounting for between 55% - 65% of rough sleepers in the last six months. All have multiple-complex needs which are difficult to address while living a street-based life, including easy access to drugs and the ability to make money through begging or theft.
- 5.19. Those at risk of rough sleeping are not homogenous, but have unique personal experiences, histories, and circumstances. Most have multiple, complex, and long-term needs spanning accommodation, physical and mental health, substance misuse, being in/ out of the criminal justice system.
- 5.20. Pressures in the housing market include insufficient appropriate social housing to meet local demand and need, including long waiting lists for social housing:
 - Demand on Housing Options has increased and is at its highest ever, with emergency and off-street accommodation not meeting demand. Most current work is focussed on Temporary Accommodation for Families, impacted by large scale increases in families getting home office decision, loss of private rented housing and families and friends not able to accommodate.
 - Rent rises are resulting in a reduction in availability of affordable private sector properties, and where properties are available, many landlords will not accept tenants who have been former rough sleepers.

5.21. Maximise partnership working to ensure that people affected by homelessness and rough sleeping are supported into sustainable tenancies

- 5.22. We continue to promote the 'duty to refer' model to all partners as a single pathway to access Leeds Housing Options. In January - March 2024, Leeds Housing Options accepted duties to provide homelessness assistance to 1,476 households. 274 of these were as a result of referrals to the service from partners, with 119 of these cases being from a public authority under the duty to refer. The most referrals came from the probation service, which reflects the strong partnership we have built in Leeds directly with prisons/probation/Community Accommodation Services. The total referrals into the service were the second highest of all core cities in England.
- 5.23. In support of the Marmot City work, we have been working with health services on the creation of housing and homelessness related forms that GPs can use in their appointments. It will support asking the right questions, identifying the right information, and allow swift referrals into service to achieve earlier intervention for any housing needs that come through health
- 5.24. We have seen a large increase in cases linked to positive asylum decisions and family reunions. Leeds Housing Options is part of the Leeds Migration Partnership and has been strengthen work between services for refugees such as PAFRAS, RETAS, HAAMLA, and has also designed advice sheets for partners who are supporting refugees in Leeds, which have been translated into a number of languages.
- 5.25. The Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) continues to be a success with positive tenancy sustainment seen in the majority of cases. We currently have 38 RSAP units. We introduced the Housing First Scheme, which provides immediate accommodation to those rough sleeping our target is to achieve fifteen tenancies by the end of March 2025. There has been positive progress with this in five tenancies commencing and work across a number of Council departments is helping to achieve this.
- 5.26. In the last twelve months we have also received further properties on the LAHF housing scheme which accommodates people who have arrived in the UK and been awarded a positive asylum decision. The LAHF scheme has delivered on the purchase of twenty-nine properties to date for Afghan and Ukraine families with the majority now tenanted, and work to bring the remaining properties up to standard is well underway. A further twelve properties are being acquired and Leeds has been allocated eighteen properties for round three.

6. Thriving and Inclusive Communities

6.1. Maximise the housing sector's effective management of anti-social behaviour/community safety through a multi-agency approach

- 6.2. Housing Leeds and the Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team (LASBT) continue to review the ASB policy and procedures relating to the effective management of ASB within Leeds tenancies. This work is informed on by the information we are required to supply to the Regulator of Social Housing as well as the guidance and requirements noted within the Housing Ombudsman Spotlight review.
- 6.3. The work is very detailed and will ensure all process are captured as well as identify learning opportunities and outcomes. To enable this, we have formed a working group involving all our partners that work within the area of ASB.
- 6.4. Our ambition is to:
- Deliver a procedure that is easy to follow and administer.
 - Ensuring our colleagues and partners have the resources and knowledge required via creating short videos on each topic area. e.g. investigations, use of CCTV, third party evidence.
 - Focusing on offering the best customer Journey we can provide.
- 6.5. To compliment this work, we are also undertaking a Community Safety Partnership review. This will incorporate new processes and procedures available to partners within Safer Leeds.
- 6.6. We have recognised how we can simplify the victim's journey when seeking an ASB review. We developed this process to include hate and have now reviewed several cases relating to Hate incidents. This gives a voice to all victims of ASB and Hate related ASB this includes LCC tenants and Registered Social Landlords tenants (RSLs)
- 6.7. We continue to develop our relationships with the RSLs in Leeds and BITMO. Sharing best practice and including them into the ASB Board. Our newest contact has been with Guinness housing who are increasing their footprint within Leeds South.
- 6.8. The LASBT Mediation team are now a key prevention and intervention service for LCC tenants and other residents where the two parties at dispute agree to take part. This is strengthened ideally suited to our tenants as there is an expectation within LCC Tenancy agreements that customers should consider this option as the first element of de-escalation.
- 6.9. We are constantly reviewing our tools and guidance for both Housing, LASBT and partnership colleagues.
- 6.10. We are currently developing a ASB in Parks and Green spaces strategy to ensure they are safe places to visit.
- 6.11. Housing Leeds now share joint responsibility with the Police on the deployment of Team Leodis. This Police specialist team works closely with LASBT and Housing on complex cases. This ensures that our tenants suffering the worst examples of ASB have a quick and decisive response.

- 6.12. Our focus now turns to a darker night strategy preparing for the young people returning to school and the seasonal challenges such as the Bonfire/firework period which now spans from 15th October through to the new year.
- 6.13. Work continues to attract new investment into each of the six priority wards, including the Heart of Holbeck scheme which secured £17m of Levelling Up Funding (LUF). This significant investment will improve St. Mathew's community centre, deliver improvements to the public realm and investment to the local housing stock. Funding has also been secured from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme to deliver a local Listening Project which seeks to harness the views of aspirations of local people across the six priority wards, about how they would like their neighbourhoods to improve over the next 10 years. UKSPF will also fund a range of resident led social action projects and support the work of a team of Capable Guardians, who aim to work with local people and businesses to make their neighbourhoods safer places to live.

7. Improving Health Through Housing

- 7.1. Health & Housing in conjunction with Care and Repair have completed £800K worth of repairs/improvements to heating and insulation to elderly/disabled person homes in the last 12 months
- 7.2. Leeds Housing Growth team have adopted the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's 10 point design standard for dementia friendly homes. There is an ongoing roll out for Housing Leeds staff to become 'Dementia Friendly' as recognised by the Alzheimer's Society.
- 7.3. Work is ongoing via the Health and Housing team with the work being done as part of the Leeds Marmot City programme, including initiatives such as a wind and weatherproofing scheme to help elderly disabled and vulnerable people upgrade and repair their homes and heating systems, and the introduction of approved pathway for critical cases of child asthma between the Council and the Paediatric Asthma Clinic based at Leeds General Infirmary. Cases of all tenures re referred to LCC for action of works to improve the physical environment and improve air quality within the dwelling. The Breath Easy Homes scheme is linked to this work, which has been introduced for children with asthma seen by local GPs that fall into the RAG 'green group', which can be referred directly to Care and Repair Leeds for a home visit. Assessments are conducted to offer a number of measures to improve air quality, such as hypoallergenic duvets/pillows, hepa-filter vacuums, dehumidifiers, air quality indicators, ventilation fans, etc.
- 7.4. Joint training sessions for health and housing staff have begun. The first session was held in Beeston with a mix of professionals working in the south of the city. The session consisted of a series of presentations; a generic overview of both health services and housing services followed by

six individual topics (three from Housing, three from Health). There were seven information desks around the room from a variety of organisations working in the area based on health/housing work. Session went really well with great feedback. Second session to be held in the east of the city. Planned for November 2024.

- 7.5. Two hospital discharge caseworkers have been established, employed by Health & Housing Service in LCC but crucially the staff have been based for work within the Transfer of Care (TOC) hub at St James hospital and around the wards of the Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust's (LTHT) hospitals.

8. Child and Age Friendly Housing

- 8.1. Partnership working continues with Children's Health and Disability (CHAD) with continued attendance at their Operations Group where we discuss inappropriate referrals and learning outcomes. Formal guidance has now been produced by a working group of CHAD and Housing officers and issued to staff working in the contact centre, customer service, and Housing to help them identify the correct route for enquiries relating to adaptations to reduce inappropriate referrals and unnecessary waiting times for families.
- 8.2. The realignment of the Paralegal Team to sit within the our Income Service has given us greater control over support for families struggling to make rental payments and sustain their tenancies, and enabled us to include them and the Court Bailiff team in conversations with Children's Social Work on our Terms of Reference for requesting warrants to ensure all households with children receive assessment and support in a bid to prevent tenancies failing up to and including at the point of eviction.
- 8.3. Between April 2023 and March 2024 our Housing Officer Income (HOI) team worked with 1414 households with children and secured £668,000 in additional income for them with an average additional income per family of £472.
- 8.4. The Age Friendly Board continues to monitor the following objectives: Improving housing quality/adaptations to support Independence; Increasing public and agency awareness of information and advice on housing options with preventative focus; and Increasing provision of age friendly housing options including accessible new housing and specialist housing with support.
- 8.5. Progress to meet the objectives includes:
- Home Plus Leeds service supported 5,000 households to reduce fuel poverty and reduce falls risks, with good reach into the most deprived areas of the city.
 - Development of Leeds Directory continues including for a housing self-assessment toolkit for older people.
 - West Yorkshire Rightsizing campaign delivered and evaluated and continues to be promoted.

- The Housing targets for M4(2) accessible homes and M4(3) wheelchair adaptable homes continues to be met.
 - Housing Dementia friendly champion in place for Leeds City Council as part of West Yorkshire Housing Partnership.
 - The Extra Care market remains strong with a total of 736 Extra Care rental units with LCC holding nomination rights to 547 units, in 2024/25 this will rise to 861 units with LCC nominations to 672 of these. In addition, there are a further 384 units of extra care in the private market.
- 8.6. New objectives are to be set for 2025-2030 including bringing together resources on healthy ageing and housing and developing a set of guiding principles for partners in the region.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1. The Leeds Housing Board is recommended to note and comment on the updates contained in this report and discuss any areas of particular interest or concern.