

**Report of Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods**

**Report to Inner West Area committee**

**Date: 18 November 2013**

**Subject: Housing Leeds involvement in Area Committees**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Armley, Bramley and Stanningley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. Please note that this is the first report produced by the new Housing Leeds Service following the decision to terminate the role of the former Leeds ALMOs, and bring housing management services back into Council control within the Housing and Environment Directorate.
2. A separate report is to be presented to the Area Committee which will illustrate the strategic direction of the new Housing Leeds service, whilst this report will focus on more local issues, and the risks and challenges faced by Housing Leeds which will impact on services affecting Council tenants in Inner West Leeds.
3. Housing Leeds provide a range of housing management services in the West and North West of Leeds. The Inner West Area Committee area is coterminous with the 'Inner West' housing management area comprising 5,500 properties in the Armley and Bramley / Stanningley Wards. Tenancy and Estate Management services are delivered locally from our office located in Bramley and we also operate a number of Outreach Surgeries in the area.
4. Support services such as rent accounting, lettings and property repairs are currently delivered through a centralised structure, however all customer enquiries can be made locally at the Bramley Neighbourhood Office and at the Armley One Stop Centre; or via the Council Contact Centre.

5. This report seeks to advise the Area Committee of activities undertaken by Housing Leeds under the “place theme” which impact on local communities, and in addition offers a wider perspective of service delivery including services linked to property repairs and improvements.

### **Recommendations**

Comments and observations are invited from Area Committee Members, and Members are requested to offer direction in terms of the risks and challenges faced by Housing Leeds.

Area Committee Members are also invited to offer ideas and suggestions in terms of future service delivery, and the content of any future reports.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To outline how Housing Leeds contributes to the place agenda and to explore ways of making that contribution as meaningful and productive as possible. The report also provides an update on wider housing management issues including property repairs and improvements, and customer satisfaction.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 An introductory report was submitted to the Inner West Area Committee in June 2011 outlining areas of mutual interest and opportunities to promote collaborative working for the benefit of communities in Inner West Leeds. The report recommended that Housing Leeds should provide further, more detailed, reports on a twice yearly basis; it was agreed that these reports would fall into the Autumn & Springtime cycle of meetings.
- 2.2 Housing Leeds delivers services to customers through a combination of centralised and decentralised structures. Generally speaking, estate and tenancy management functions are delivered locally by the Neighbourhood Housing Team based at the Neighbourhood Housing Office on Bramley Town Street. Support services such as Lettings, Rent and Repairs are delivered through a decentralised structure; however enquiries for the range of services we provide can be handled at the local Bramley office, and also at the Armley One Stop Centre. The bulk of customer enquiries are processed through the Council Contact Centre, with whom Housing Leeds has a Service Delivery Agreement.
- 2.3 Previous housing management reports were presented under the auspices of the former ALMO, WNWhL. This is the first report presented to Area Committee by Housing Leeds and focuses mainly on local issues and service delivery in Inner West Leeds. A separate report is to be presented to Committee which covers the strategic setting and direction of the new Housing Leeds organisation.

## **3 Main issues**

### **3.1 The 'Place' Agenda**

#### **3.1.1 District Heating System**

Plans are in place to create a Biomass District Heating System which will provide a more efficient source of heating and hot water to Clyde Grange, Clyde Court and Phil May Court.

The desire is that this scheme will reduce energy costs for all residents within these dwellings by approximately 10%. It is difficult to give exact savings as they will differ

depending on the way in which customers currently manage their heating and hot water requirements

A central plant will be built on the grassed area closest to Tong Road and will consist of a wood fuel storage room and a large boiler room. We are working with Leeds Planning Department to ensure that the building sits comfortably within its surroundings.

Within the property the main difference will be that the electric storage heaters will be replaced with traditional radiators and the hot water cylinder will be replaced with a heat exchange unit.

ARUP (Specialist Consultants) were reappointed by Housing Leeds in October to develop a reference design and output specification against which the three contractors on the Green Deal/ECO framework (SSE, Willmott Dixon and Keep moat) can submit tenders.

The project still has a number of key risks to overcome:

- Air quality and planning considerations
- Timing of ERDF spend – (must be spent by the end of July 2014)
- Availability of ECO funding

However, it is important to push ahead with the installation as tenants should benefit from c10% fuel bill reductions and the Council could generate a small income from the Renewable Heat Incentive to reinvest in other housing improvements. There are also a number of other clusters of tower blocks that would also benefit from district heating, and good potential to secure external funding from ECO and future ERDF and Local Growth Fund programmes. Completing the Clyde's project will put us in a very strong position to bid for this funding. A tenant consultation was carried out on Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> of November at Phil May Court Communal room. A letter went out to residents who will benefit from this scheme and gives them the opportunity to have their say on our proposals.

We feel that this is a flagship project and is a positive step in helping to provide affordable heating and hot water to Housing Leeds' residents.

### 3.1.2 Broadlea World Food Day

In a gastronomic effort to improve community relations on the Broadlea estate in Bramley, residents teamed up with West North West Homes, BARCA, Safer Leeds, Area Management and the Police to organise a world food event in August at Broadlea youth inclusion base. The event aimed to bring the community together and celebrate their diversity.

This community's problems will not be solved overnight, but the turn out by residents to the event and open dialogue between the police, housing office and community groups demonstrates a step in the right direction and has created a legacy to build relationships

on in the future. Community tensions previously experienced appear to have stabilised, mirrored by a significant reduction in hate crimes recorded.

The Broadlea estate is one of 4 estates being prioritised for the Annual Tenancy Visit programme, by which Housing Leeds aims to visit and validate the identity of all Council tenants annually. The other areas being prioritised for visits include the Fairfield, Wyther and New Wortley estates.

Resources are being directed to these priority areas in order to send a strong signal of reassurance to residents and to maintain as high a Housing Leeds profile as possible.

### 3.1.3 Wythers Hate Crime Strategy

The Wyther estate is recognised as a priority area, and a key piece of work is being implemented focusing on ASB and Hate crime perpetrated on the lower Wyther estate. There is a specific action plan to address these issues based on the principles of Enforcement, Support and Prevention.

A project team made up of representatives from LASBT, West Yorkshire Police, Community safety and Housing Leeds has been set up to take a coordinated approach to intelligence gathering, sharing information, and coordinated actions focusing on target families that have been identified as perpetrators. Other actions have included a tenancy sweep, Annual tenancy visits and letter drops on the estate.

As part of the project team meetings, details of any new BME tenants moving onto the Wythers and Broadleas is passed onto the Hate Crime Coordinators so that they can arrange a visit or send information to introduce themselves. The Hate Crime Coordinator is now also linking into any tenancy visits with the local Housing officer.

The Hate Crime Coordinators and Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team manager are also looking to arrange a session to talk to young people around ASB/Hate crime and the consequences of this at the Lazer Centre. They are also going to explore other ways of engaging with young people.

Recent actions include the serving of Anti-social Behaviour warning letters, housing cautions, garden enforcement letters and convictions for criminal offending of key nominal living in this area. The project team will continue to meet regularly to share intelligence and continue to pursue further actions. Since the focussed work on the Wythers, there has been a reduction of issues of Hate Crime incidents and complaints of anti-social behaviour.

### 3.1.4 High Rise Management Team

The High Rise Management Team intensively manages 17 blocks across the area 10 of which are in the Inner West focusing on addressing priorities which are having a negative impact on customer satisfaction. The team works hard to create places where people

want to live. The team work proactively with customers, the Leads Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the police, alongside various other agencies, tackling problems in a joined up manner to obtain the best results. Having a dedicated focus on high rise blocks means that problems are identified in a timely manner and as the team know the blocks so well, they can often suggest quick win solutions which will address issues.

The team's efforts have been recognised with satisfaction levels across some of the blocks, increasing dramatically. They continue to work towards increasing satisfaction in the remaining blocks.

There has been much work taking place around the multi storey blocks of Clyde Court/Grange and Wortley Towers/Heights, to improve the local environment and place. The recycling nodes are to be reinstalled at Clyde Grange/Court, once again offering recycling facilities in the immediate locality. The re-introduction will be closely monitored to avoid fly tipping and bin contamination, which were an issue previously.

There has been extensive multi agency work taking place to address the ASB concerns surrounding the blocks. Two multi-agency action days are planned for December to target rough sleepers, drug dealing and using in the blocks, and encourage reporting of crimes and damage as the blocks are currently a reporting 'cold spot'.

The scaffolding around the main entrance to Wortley Heights has been removed following steeplejack inspections of the roof and masonry. This will be followed up with work by the caretakers to address the over grown weeds/trees which we have not been able to access due to the scaffold impeding access. The CCTV is also being upgraded at the Clydes & Wortleys blocks. This will be monitored by Leeds watch and will therefore be a better deterrent in identifying people causing ASB and who maybe breaching the pet policy or leave rubbish in communal areas rather than disposing of it in the correct manner.

Of the £500,000 allocated to investment in high rises in 2013/14 in the former West North West ALMO area, almost £300,000 is being spent in the Inner west area. In addition to the CCTV upgrades to the Clydes, Wortleys & Raynville blocks, there are planned refurbishments to the foyer areas of the 4 Poplar blocks and Wortley Heights, and new flooring to the Raynville blocks to complement the already newly painted walls. Blocks which are entered via a fob access system will be upgraded with a new system which enables greater tenancy management control. New more secure communal doors have been installed at the 4 Poplar & 2 Raynville blocks and Wortley Towers. These doors have helped address unauthorised access and damage in the Raynviles and Wortley Towers considerably.

Recently, litter picking services were taken over by PMC from the local caretaking teams. This task had been carried out on a daily basis but was only scheduled for 2 main litter picks per week through PMC. The High Rise Living Coordinator asked PMC to allocated additional resources to these 4 blocks to ensure that service standards did not deteriorate.

The blocks are on a main thoroughfare and rubbish frequently collects around the blocks. PMC have allocated full time cleaning resources to the 4 blocks. Only 2 weeks in and the blocks have further improved as the staff have time to carry out additional tasks which they did not have before when also having other blocks to clean.

### 3.1.5 Locality Working.

The previous ALMOs and LCC have a shared sense of purpose and vision to achieve LCC's ambitions to be the best city in the UK through delivering better joined up services that are delivered through a 'one council' approach. This service has historically had separate operations delivered by the previous ALMOs and LCC.

The singular approach and creation of one team will enable:-

- § One accountable, accessible and responsive point of contact for environmental cleansing.
- § One consistent set of Service Standards.
- § One clear message to the public aimed at improved environmental behaviours, sustainability and enforcement that educates and informs.
- § Removal of duplication and bureaucracy in having two similar services operating in the City.

Local discussions between the ALMOs and Locality Teams have identified the estates in scope. For some, a detailed programme of work has been devised for the estate whilst for others; a rapid response approach is planned. The work to be undertaken will be selected from the following according to local need:-

- Graffiti removal
- Cutting-back work
- Road & pavement cleansing (mechanical)
- In depth de-littering
- Fly tip investigation and removal
- Removal of waste in gardens (enforcement / tenancy management)
- De-leafing

Locality working commenced in the Inner West Area on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2013, on the Broadlea Estate. The LCC Locality Team joined the Inner West Neighbourhood Caretakers and worked to a carefully structured work programme to deep clean the area. The extra resource provided by LCC enables us to provide this enhanced service. Many elements of work were carried out including litter picking, graffiti removal, cutting back overgrown hedges that were protruding on to footpaths and ginnels. Fly tipping was removed and LCC road sweepers were present.

Phase 2 saw the Bruces and Clydes receive the same attention working to the same specification. Feedback from both customers and staff has been very positive with outstanding results being achieved and one customer quoting:

"I have never seen the estates looking so clean and tidy long may it continue"

### 3.1.6 Bin yards.

We have approached the Locality Team to try and develop a strategic approach to bin yards in the Cedars, Avaries and Edinburghs areas in Armley which are very obviously a blight on the community. Housing Leeds has limited opportunities to tackle these since many are privately owned but we are more than willing to work with partners to improve environmental conditions for residents. Where there are Council tenants involved we can work directly with them but a more strategic approach would be desirable and hopefully more productive and effective. Initial discussions with the Locality Team indicate that collaborative working will be productive, with the possibility of enforcement against private landlords amongst a range of options being considered.

### 3.1.7 Local Area Action Days:

Neighbourhood Housing Teams along with partners carry out regular action days to tackle Environmental, Tenancy Management and ASB issues on the estates that they manage. We believe everyone should be free to live and work in clean and well-kept spaces that are both safe and attractive. Action Days challenge local people and agencies to tackle issues of local environmental concern, such as graffiti, abandoned vehicles, and other damage and fly tipping.

Some of the tasks that we carry out on action days are;

**Door Knocking** – carrying out annual home visits to ensure the authenticity of the tenancy. This is also a chance for our tenants to raise any concerns with their local Neighbourhood Management Officer.

**Skips** – Skips are provided so our tenants are able to disregard of any rubbish they may have in their property or in the garden.

**Gardens** – Untidy gardens are identified and contact is made with the tenant/s to ensure they are adhering to their tenancy agreement and keeping their garden clean and tidy – enforcement action may be taken.

**Customer Details**- we are able to update our systems with any new customer contact details.

**Fly Tipping** – Fly tipping is identified and referred to our Neighbourhood Caretaking Team, work is done to establish who is fly tipping and enforcement action is taken if necessary.

**Anti-Social Behaviour** – customers that have any concerns regarding anti-social behaviour can discuss this in the comfort of their own homes with the Neighbourhood Management Officer.



**Environmental Issues** – The Neighbourhood Management Officer will identify any issues of concern and deal with accordingly, this can include illegal structures etc.

**Pets in Multi story Flats** – we are able to identify if tenants have pets living in MSFs that they should not have and advise the tenant of this and ensure the tenants take responsibility in re-homing the pet

Action days are scheduled in the following areas to be completed by March 2014:

Bardens / Cedars

Snowdens

Rossefields

Lower & Top Wyther

Summerfields & Fairfields

Ganners

Broadleas

Fernbanks.

Area Panel recently approved the provision of skips for the above action days with joint funding from the Community Safety team.

### 3.1.8 Neighbourhood Caretaking.

Neighbourhood Caretaking Teams are currently planning a schedule of estate deep cleans running alongside the locality project in the Inner West area and the following areas have been earmarked to be worked on in the run up to Christmas:

The Avenues - Armley

The Abbots, Parliaments, Ley Lane /Mistress Lane. – Armley

New Wortley - Armley

Wythers - Armley

Snowdens – Bramley

Fairfields – Bramley

Broadleas – Bramley

Rossefields– Bramley

The focus for the team will be to improve the environmental appearance of our estates and increase customer satisfaction. Alongside the above the caretakers provide a patrol service of estates on a planned basis, assessing and dealing with environmental issues in communal areas, such as ginnels, walkways and communal land where hotspots exist.

### 3.1.9 Estate Walkabouts and Inspections.

In line with our published service standards Housing Leeds arranges regular Estate Inspections which take place on a monthly basis for each area; and twice yearly Estate Walkabouts for each area. Estate Walkabouts are promoted and the local housing office welcomes the opportunity for customers, partners and other representatives to attend the inspections and walkabouts with us. Often the issues identified may be the responsibility of other Council Departments e.g. Highways, Parks & Countryside and the Walkabouts provide an opportunity for other agencies to contribute to improving environmental conditions and quality of life for local people.

Members of Area Committee, and colleagues within Area Management, are invited to contact the author of this report should there be any interest in attending one of the walkabouts, or estate inspections.

Councillors Caroline Gruen and Ted Hanley attend regular walkabouts in the Bramley area.

### 3.1.10 Burnsall High Rise updates:

Drying room issues:

The drying rooms were recently decommissioned in Burnsall Croft and Grange due to Health & Safety issues, however following complaints from residents and local ward members Housing Leeds carried out a customer consultation exercise by way of a survey to determine the usage. The results identified that approximately half the residents in each block do make use of the drying facility.

After considering a couple of viable options it has been agreed that we pursue the preferred option of installing 8 drying facilities per block.

As these are 16 storey blocks, the provision of 8 units averages out at 1 unit every 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, equating to the usage that the consultation survey indicated. This proposal was shared with local Members and with residents through the Tenants and Residents Association and received positive feedback. Preliminary work has started on the project and it is envisaged that work will be well underway and potentially complete by the Christmas period.

Fire Safety Policy.

As part of the on-going fire safety checks in MSFs inspections are being carried out with the assistance of Pat Gibbons chief fire safety officer for Leeds City Council. Burnsall Court and Grange were inspected on Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> November and recommendations from the inspections are now being formulated into an action plan which will be discussed with residents and local members before any action is taken. The main issues identified in Burnsall Grange were the use of net curtains, plastic plants and non-compliant door mats. Unsuitable and potentially dangerous furniture has been replaced at Burnsall Court, and this block has the additional assurance of an alarm system.

Fire Risk Assessments have been undertaken at all our multi storey and sheltered accommodation and Housing Leeds is committed to working creatively with residents to reduce any areas of non-compliance for example the introduction of a swop scheme for the doormats.

### 3.2 Community Involvement Week

Building on the success of last year, Community Involvement Week 2013 proved again to be a key date on the former West North West Homes Leeds (WNWhL) community involvement calendar.

Community Involvement Week brought together housing staff from across the business with customers, community groups, contractor partners, Leeds City Council, schools, faith centres and other key organisations in a fun and creative way.

In total fourteen events and activities took place, ranging from community sports and games, skills and information activities, environmental inspections, and customer showcase and consultation sessions.

Many of our regular actively involved customers and community groups supported the week and took part. The variety of activities also enabled us to engage with younger and under-represented diverse groups such as an Eastern European group, Women's group, Armley mosque, younger residents of Moorside Community Centre and primary school children.

Events in the Inner West Area included:

#### **Community Cricket Match: Armley Mosque vs WNWhL staff**

WNWhL staff played community members from Armley Mosque in a tough fought cricket match! The event aimed to provide an opportunity for staff and the local community to get together informally, help build good relations between WNWhL staff and the community and to have fun!

#### **Community Rounders Match: Moorside Community Centre vs WNWhL staff**

Moorside Community Centre and WNWhL staffs got together for rounders re-match following WNWhL's win in 2012. The match aimed to bring staff and local residents

together to have fun and promote healthy activity whilst engaging with the community in an informal way.

### 3.3 Service Improvement- Out of Hours working

The Out Of Hours Tenancy team which was launched in late July 2012 has now been enhanced to deliver its service over a 7 day period. The team consists of 4 officers working in pairs during evening hours 4pm until 12pm each week. Officers carry out various planned and ad-hoc visits, identifying abandoned and sub-let properties and enable us to provide a rapid response to events and incidents occurring outside the traditional '9 to 5' service hours. The service also allows us to provide a visible presence at our MSFs and other properties in the evenings and at weekends with the aim of providing reassurance to residents. The officers continue to be well received on the estates and customer feedback continues to be very positive as the officers are visible on the estates and complement our daytime tenancy management services.

### 3.4 Area Panels

Housing Leeds has four Area Panels, which have the same boundaries as Leeds City Council's Inner and Outer West and Inner and Outer North West Area Committees. The Area Panels have an active role in setting and agreeing local priorities using local Community Partnership Agreements. They have a delegated budget and are able to approve bid submissions for issues such as:

- Environmental schemes
- Community safety schemes
- Tenant involvement schemes

Since the last update, funding has been agreed for various schemes across the area including Armley Fun Day and Christmas Lights, A new notice board on the Broadleas, Planters at Burnsall Sheltered scheme and various fencing projects across the area.

### 3.5 Neighbourhood Action Plans

The Area Committee received an update in 2012 regarding the introduction of Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs), representing a revised model for neighbourhood improvements in our most deprived areas. Housing Leeds met with involved partners, ward members, the area panel chair and representatives from local residents groups in September to review the plan and set out our new priorities for the year ahead.

The Neighbourhood Action Plan has been developed working with customers and local partners. It gives some information and examples of our activity over the last year or so, provides information about the area, and then sets out a plan showing how we play our

part in tackling the issues that our customers and partners have raised. Plans can cover a range of issues, from housing to the environment, community safety, health, leisure and access to services.

### 3.6 Tenant Satisfaction- STAR

Leeds City Council carries out a Tenant Satisfaction Survey every two years in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the perception and satisfaction ratings of general needs tenants across the city. The most recent survey has been managed and delivered in-house by the ABCL Satisfaction and Research Team.

Housing Leeds places high importance on consultation with tenants and gaining understanding of satisfaction levels across a range of services. The information given directly from tenants provides an opportunity to us to assess how well we are meeting tenant priorities and to inform future improvements to local services.

Citywide, overall tenant satisfaction increased to 74% over the preceding period, however there are marked variations both across the city and within the former WNWhL area. Three areas in particular produced lower than average levels of satisfaction, one of which is Armley. Overall satisfaction levels in Bramley were above average and comparable to Wetherby which emerged as the area demonstrating the highest satisfaction rates in the City.

Drilling down into the causes of dissatisfaction in Armley the STAR report indicated that residents cited environmental factors such as rubbish and litter as major problems along with community safety issues including drug use or dealing. Community safety figures show a considerably higher level of recorded crime than the Leeds average and in common with other areas demonstrating low levels of satisfaction, the levels of deprivation in Armley are higher than the city average. Tenant priorities expressed in the survey revealed repairs and maintenance, quality of home and dealing with ASB as the three main issues.

In West Leeds a correlation was identified linking low levels of satisfaction to areas with high concentrations of multi storey accommodation – this applied to Armey and Wortley and to a lesser extent Kirkstall. This report includes a section on the role of the High Rise Management Team and we have been able to demonstrate improving satisfaction levels and positive feedback from tenants living in high rise blocks in Armley. A significant amount of investment has been earmarked to make improvements to the stock, particularly for enhancements to communal areas and work to improve safety and security at the blocks.

The HRMT has been designed to respond quickly to tenancy issues and ASB and the blocks in the scheme were selected based on a range of business intelligence which included crime and ASB statistics. The work of the HRMT has been supplemented by the

Out of Hours Tenancy Team and regular patrols are undertaken both on a planned and responsive basis to provide reassurance to residents and to act as a deterrent factor.

In terms of quality of home as a priority we have improved the levels of decency in Armley from 86% at the time of the survey to current levels of 95.5%. Decency levels in Bramley are also at this level, and both are above the WNW area average of 94.37% and the annual target of 95%. Work is ongoing to address the environmental issues which affected customer confidence in Armley and much of this work is featured earlier in this report for example the joint working initiatives with the Locality Teams, the drive to improve the bin yards and the neighbourhood caretaker patrols where we link with the Police Operation Optimal wherever possible.

We are also committed to improving access to services and in particular the facilities at the Housing Offices. Our ambition is to at least match the services and facilities provided by the Council's One Stop Centres, and recent initiatives include the introduction of a 'floor walker' scheme to assist customers at busy times and a queue management system at the Bramley NHO. Further developments include the 'paperless office' concept and a 'channel shift' approach to enable customers to use automated services and systems. The Bramley office has been equipped with a T.V screen which will be used to advertise Council services and display useful community information.

It is envisaged that the scheme will be rolled out across other housing offices if these initiatives are successful, and the projects are seen as definite opportunities to increase customer satisfaction, improve communication and modernise service provision. Housing Leeds is also working with Council colleagues to deliver the Community Hub initiative and Armley has been selected as one of three areas to deliver a pilot scheme. Whilst this is not specifically a response to the STAR survey, it is recognition of the multiple deprivation factors and challenges faced by the community and a signal of the Council's intent to improve service delivery, boost resident confidence and raise satisfaction levels.

### 3.7 Capital Investment

Schemes programmed for completion in the current financial year include:

- Isolated window replacement – Wyther Park
- Fire safety doors – Wyther Park and Raynville low rise properties.
- Main Door renewals – Raynville Court and Grange
- Main Door renewals – Poplar Mount & Court
- Isolated rewires – 29 properties across IW
- Isolated Kitchen/ bathroom refurbishment – 70 properties across IW
- Isolated Heating installation – 27 properties across IW
- Insulation/ cladding – Cheltenham St
- Conversion to residential use – Broadlea Gardens
- Access control & cctv upgrades – Clyde Court & Grange, Wortley Towers & Heights
- Foyer upgrade – Wortley Towers

- Lock replacement – Broadlea estate
- District Heating scheme – Clyde Court & Grange, Phil May Court.
- Metal Fencing – Broadlea Grove
- Metal Fencing – Summerfield Drive,
- Metal Fencing – Outgang Lane, Snowden Royd
- Parking restrictions – Summerfield Walk
- Landscaping works – Ashlea Court

An indicative Capital Programme for 2014/15 has been presented to the Housing Advisory Board, the Programme will also need to be approved by the Executive Board and this is expected to be in February 2014. The draft programme features numerous generic schemes such as fire safety work, isolated kitchen and bathroom upgrades, window replacement & rewires. The draft programme indicates conversion of Wyther Park House to residential use and the continuation of the district heating scheme in New Wortley.

### 3.8 New Council Housing

The new build site at the Broadleas is one of 10 shortlisted sites for development under the Council Housing Growth Programme which was approved at Executive Board. The two sites at the Broadleas were identified, alongside East Park Road, Burmantofts, and The Garnets, Beeston, as the first sites for development as a result of a feasibility exercise undertaken by Norfolk Property Services (NPS) who have been commissioned to deliver the sites. Developments are at an early stage however there has been consultation with Ward Members and a further Design Meeting is planned for 10<sup>th</sup> December, at which Housing Leeds will be represented.

### 3.9 Contractor Performance

Poor performance from the Morrison contractor, MFS, resulted in Early Warning Notices being served in early 2012. Potentially the Notices could have brought the contract to an end however a programme of Service Improvements was agreed which was monitored by ALMO and Council officers at SMT level. MFS were subsequently bought by the Mears Group however MFS continued to be used as a brand name, and at the time of the takeover although performance was improving there were still problems and undoubtedly the perception of MFS as our repair contractor was a significant factor in the satisfaction ratings expressed in the STAR survey.

In view of the fact that Mears introduced a new management team, ethos and culture the Council and ALMOs were minded to work with Mears to rebrand and refresh the Leeds contract which had struggled under the MFS regime. Mears is now the recognised name and brand delivering services on behalf of Housing Leeds in South and West Leeds. Performance does continue to be an issue and repair enquiries form the basis of many Member enquiries and the majority of formal complaints. However, a snapshot of recent

performance as shown below indicates an improving situation, and performance in relation to gas repairs continues to be good.

PI Description		Target	Previous month %	Current %	Target met/unmet	Improved/Declined from previous month
% Repairs Completed First Time (RR1) (Higher is better)	W&NW	95.00%	88.74%	<b>88.85%</b>	unmet	▲
% Repairs Completed within Target (RR2) (Higher is better)	W&NW	99.00%	92.97%	<b>93.89%</b>	unmet	▲
% Repairs Appointments Kept (RR3) (Higher is better)	W&NW	99.00%	92.35%	<b>92.56%</b>	unmet	▲
% Gas Completed First Time (GS1) (Higher is better)	W&NW	87.00%	99.78%	<b>99.82%</b>	met	▲
% Gas Completed within Target (GS2) (Higher is better)	W&NW	98.00%	98.60%	<b>98.99%</b>	met	▲
% Satisfaction with Repairs service (Higher is better)	W&NW	97.00%	99.00%	<b>98.53%</b>	met	▼

Contractor performance is managed locally by the operational teams and reported to Housing Leeds Senior Management, and at a strategic level by the Strategic Core Group which includes former ALMO and Council representation. Discussions are ongoing with Mears to re-establish the contractor repair surgeries at local offices which are planned as a response to the STAR survey.

### 3.9 Risks and Challenges

A number of risks and challenges are faced by Housing Leeds as we move forward. From a citywide perspective Welfare changes present a formidable challenge, and whilst there has been a major effort to limit the impact of the Benefit Cap and Under Occupation rules we still face the prospect of Universal Credit. At a strategic level the Welfare changes present a risk to the self- financing HRA and as a consequence the ability to repair and improve the housing stock.

We also face the challenges presented by areas of high or multiple deprivation and the impact these factors may have on housing management services for example low customer satisfaction, unpopular properties and higher than average tenancy turnover. Housing Leeds is committed to working with partners at both a strategic and operational level to reduce inequalities and improve these areas. An example of this commitment may be found in the 'WNW Works' project, which has been extended following positive feedback from Members and partner agencies.

Housing Leeds will also endeavour to continue the improvements in Contractor performance and recognises that this service area is crucial to tenants, and to securing improved tenant satisfaction rates.



At a local level the challenges faced by the Inner West team include a lack of formal tenant engagement and involvement in three of our priority areas – the Fairfields, Broadleas and Wythers. We also face the challenge of managing and enforcing tenancy conditions for example unkempt and untidy gardens, particularly where there are vulnerability issues associated with the tenancy and limited support options available to help tenants.

Lastly, there is the challenge of attracting investment to continue to make property and environmental improvements in the area, and the risks posed if we fail to do this in terms of dissatisfaction, unpopular estates and reputational damage.

## **4.0 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 This report confirms the commitment of Housing Leeds to consult and engage with residents wherever possible. We also seek to consult with stakeholders including Area Management and other Council Departments where appropriate.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

4.2.1 The services and functions described in this report are consistent with the Council's approach to Equality Diversity and Cohesion. In particular paragraph 3.2 elaborates on some of the activities designed to improve community relations and cohesion.

### **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

4.3.1 The content of this report is consistent with the former WNWhL strategic objectives, and the strategic aims of the Council encompassed by the Vision for Leeds; Leeds Children & Young Person Plan; Strategic Health & Wellbeing Plan.

### **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

4.4.1 No direct implications, services delivered by Housing Leeds are within budget allocated through internal financial arrangements.

### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 No direct implications. This report is not eligible for call in, due to being a Council Function.

### **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 Housing Leeds has a corporate approach to risk management, with risks to business prioritised according to likelihood and impact. Risks are mitigated by action planning accordingly.

## **5 Conclusions**

5.2 It is concluded that there are clear benefits and opportunities for Housing Leeds working closely with the Area Committee as outlined in this report. This approach provides the opportunity to develop services and deliver joined up solutions to support local communities.

## **6 Recommendations**

6.1 Comments and observations are invited from Area Committee Members, and Members are requested to offer direction in terms of the risks and challenges faced by Housing Leeds.

Area Committee Members are also invited to offer ideas and suggestions in terms of future service delivery, and the content of any future reports.

## **7 Background documents - None**