

Leeds Housing

LEEDS PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING STRATEGY

2005 – 2010

OCTOBER 2006

1. PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

Private rented housing provides an important component of the structure of housing provision in Leeds. In particular it provides housing for young mobile people, those on lower incomes and those relocating or moving to Leeds for employment or to study. The strength of the private rented sector in Leeds lies in its flexibility and adaptability to changing housing demand and choice and changing housing market conditions.

The purpose of this strategy is to set out the strategic direction for private rented housing in Leeds for the next five years. It aims to enable the creation and maintenance of a prosperous private rented sector that provides choice and offers good quality and well-managed rented accommodation which contributes to sustainability of the communities in which it is located..

This strategy seeks to set out the roles and responsibilities of the range of organisations and agencies involved in the provision, management and regulation of private rented housing along with advice agencies, the Leeds Benefits Service and the Rent Officer service. It also includes an action plan with targets and milestones to deliver the strategy over the next five years.

2. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The development of this strategy is taking place against a backdrop of changing housing market conditions, the emergence of choice and aspiration as the most powerful driver of use of housing and a large increase in the number and proportion of households renting privately.

- Scale of the Private rented housing sector in Leeds

Census statistics show that for the last 40 years approximately 40% of households in Leeds rent their homes either from the Council through its six Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs); through Registered Social Landlords or from private landlords. Over the last three years however, expansion of the private rented sector has compensated for contraction of the social sector.

It is estimated that there are now over 45,000 households renting their homes from private landlords, around 14% of households compared to 7% in 1981. Private rented housing provides a home for students, nurses and young professionals, low income households, benefit claimants as well as for households relocating from other parts of the country, migrating from outside the UK or seeking asylum

The increasingly attractive return that housing provides as a form of investment have led to increasing levels of 'buy-to-let' purchasing either for commercial return or to provide pension income for those without long-term occupational provision. Lower than average house price inflation in certain parts of the city have also made housing in those areas attractive to investors. This has led in some parts of the city, for private rented housing to be the dominant tenure. In Headingley ward where the proportion is around 60% and in Beeston Hill, the proportion of housing privately rented is between 40 and 50%. The % of housing privately rented in Beeston Hill has increased by three times over the last three years. In both areas the increase has led to problems of instability and 'churning'.

In the city centre 'city living' boom, on the other hand, it is estimated that buoyant prices and attractive returns have led to approximately 40% of apartments developed being purchased by investors for letting and this is shown by the flourishing lettings market in the city centre.

Continuing increases in house prices, the flexibility increasingly required in the labour market and changing preferences are all likely to drive further expansion of the private rented sector in Leeds.

- Markets

The private rented housing market has diversified and extended greatly over the last 20 years. In the past the majority of private rented housing has been concentrated in inner urban areas of older terraced housing and in 'Leeds 6' catering for students. Over the last 5 years however, private rented housing has become attractive to a wide range of people. Markets for private rented housing have developed amongst people relocating to work in Leeds, visiting academics and medical practitioners taking up time limited contracts at the Leeds Teaching Hospitals, young professionals working in the legal, financial, ICT and retail/leisure businesses in Leeds City Centre as well as to students, benefit claimants and those in work on low incomes.

Analysis of the rental market by Allsopp's shows that private rented markets exist in all Leeds postal areas and offers a range of property types including apartments, detached and semi detached houses as well as in older terraced housing. However, it remains the case that concentrations of private rented housing are evident in areas such as Headingley and some other inner urban areas such as Beeston Hill, Cross Green and Harehills.

The city living market has developed through significant buy-to-let investment from local and national investors and caters for a range of people working in the financial, legal and service businesses in the city centre.

- Stakeholders and relationships

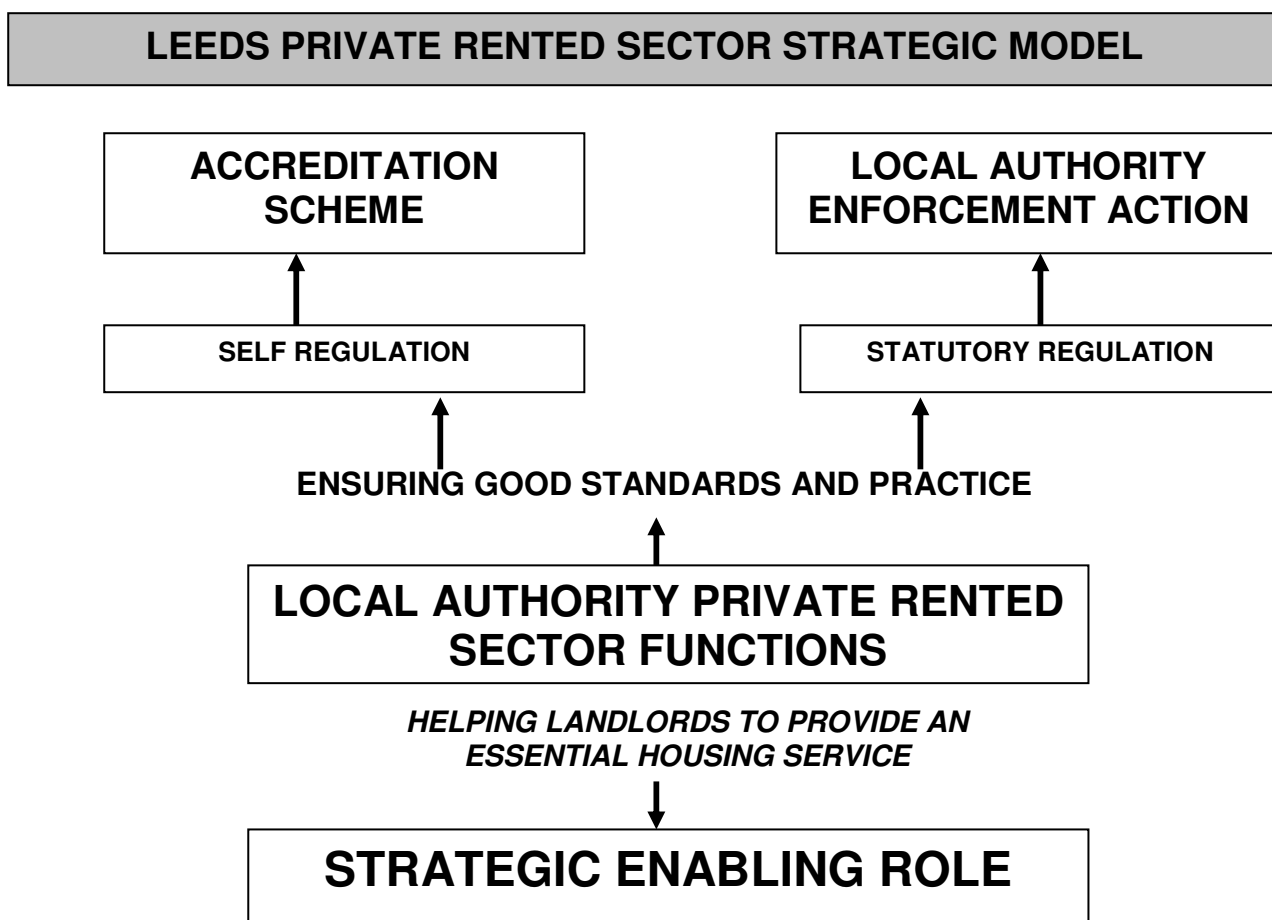
There are a range of stakeholders involved in the delivery of this strategy, including a range of Council Departments and services, landlords and their associations, estate and managing agents, UNIPOL, community associations representing areas containing private rented housing, tenants and residents associations, the Leeds Benefits Service, the Rent Officer service and a range of advice agencies and their associations dealing in landlord and tenant issues. These also include funders and mortgage lenders.

Formulating and implementing a strategy for private rented housing therefore will require a constructive relationship between those stakeholders. The Council has been working to develop a strategic and partnership based approach involving working closely with private landlords and other agencies and using a mix of enabling, regulatory and enforcement functions to ensure a healthy and good quality private rented sector. The diagram below represents this.

The development of the Leeds Landlords Accreditation Scheme and the UNIPOL Code of Standards in conjunction with UNIPOL and Landlords has provided a good example of the mixed approach of enabling and enforcement being taken by the Council. The operation of a pilot Local Housing Allowance (to potentially replace housing benefit) in Leeds has also required a cooperative response from the range of stakeholders involved.

The Leeds Property Forum has been established to coordinate and represent the interests of private landlords and managing agents and to provide a voice in discussions with the Council and other key actors.

The challenges posed by the Housing Act 2004 and current or future potential changes in market conditions along with the results of changing policy on higher education will require a cooperative working to enable the range of stakeholders to meet those challenges.



3. STRATEGIC DRIVERS AND KEY ISSUES

There are a number of key issues that are driving the formation and implementation of this strategy and issues that need to be addressed by its formulation and implementation:

Economic Growth and well being

The economy of Leeds is growing fast and is expected to grow even further. The need for a skilled, flexible and mobile workforce is a key part of ensuring that growth while attracting and retaining students and graduates to support the skills base of that economic growth is crucial. The private rented sector provides flexibility and assists labour mobility including providing a 'first port of call' for those relocating and unaware of local housing market conditions, opportunities and costs and for visiting academics, medical staff on time limited contracts with the Leeds Universities and teaching Hospitals. Economic analysis suggests that much job growth in the Leeds City Region over the coming years will be as much in short-term, limited hours and non-secure employment. A range of rented housing will be needed to meet the housing needs of those taking up lower paid and non secure jobs.

Choice

Enabling the extension of choice for individuals and households over a range of parts of their lives has become the policy of all the main political parties. The private rented housing sector provides choice and adds to choice in terms of location, type and size of housing. The private rented sector provides options for households to live in areas who are unable to access social rented housing or unable to buy on the open market. It also enables households to express lifestyle choice.

Meeting housing needs

Increasing use is being made of private rented housing to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households, vulnerable people and people seeking asylum and refugees. The flexibility and instant access of private rented housing offers a flexible response that hostel type accommodation cannot offer. In addition Supporting People strategy is seeking to shift funding from buildings based provision towards support to independent living and in particular is seeking to offer support funding to those living in private rented housing or owner occupation. In this context it is essential for private rented housing to be of a good quality and be well managed.

Student Housing

Private rented housing has traditionally provided the majority of housing for students with most returning students seeking to live in shared housing in communities. The Government's drive towards increasing student numbers led to huge expansions in shared privately rented housing in cities with large student populations such as Leeds which has been very difficult to manage posing challenges to the Council, landlords and community groups. However, the development of substantial numbers of purpose-built accommodation blocks for students and the potential impact of HMO licensing and the Home Health and Safety Rating may raise issues for the size of the student focused private rented sector.

Anti Social Behaviour

The private rented sector can however, provide a 'bolthole' for those households evicted from or prevented from living in certain areas. Action to tackle anti-social behaviour in one area can lead to influx of 'problem households' into those areas with a high proportion of private rented housing as it is that which is most immediately accessible. This can lead to labelling of an area and the injection of permanent instability of population.

Stability and Community Cohesion

The private rented sector tends to have significantly higher turnover than other tenures. With tenancy conditions different and with less onus on private landlords to maintain tenants in those tenancies, areas with high concentrations of private rented housing also tend to have high rates of turnover where the population of those areas changes rapidly, bringing permanent instability of population and hindering the achievement of community cohesion and community pride and the active involvement of local households in their communities.

Quality and Condition

The quality and condition of private rented housing is variable. In some areas it is of a very high quality offering standards of housing far better than elsewhere in the rented sector or through home ownership. In those areas accommodating students, the higher expectations of some students and their parents have driven up standards, but in other often inner urban and deprived areas, quality of private rented housing is poor with ownership often by small scale landlords unconnected to the accreditation schemes, absentee or speculative landlords.

Standards of Management

In the past, standards of housing and tenancy management have been traditionally poor, with Landlords doing little housing or tenancy management. However, the success and expansion of the Accreditation Schemes have brought signs of improvement and far better management. The necessity to have effective housing and tenancy management is crucial if areas with high stocks of private rented housing are to be managed well and turnover of housing is not to bring problems and a lack of cohesion.

Housing Legislation

The Housing Act 2004 holds significant implications for private landlords not least the costs associated with its provisions. The Housing Health and Safety Rating system, HMO licensing and selective licensing, if implemented within the City, will all have significant implications for landlords and for the Council. An important element of the successful implementation of the act will be for all stakeholders involved with private rented housing to work together to achieve compliance with the minimum of disruption for all concerned. The Leeds Property Forum drawn from the two landlords associations has been supportive of the Council in the introduction of HMO licensing although it has expressed its opposition to the introduction of selective licensing.

Local Housing Allowance

Leeds is a pathfinder for the Local Housing Allowance (LHA), which has replaced Housing Benefit to assist tenants living in private rented housing to meet their housing costs. The introduction of LHA commenced in February 2004 and has required co-operative working between the Council's Benefits and Enforcement services, Landlords and managing agents, the rent officer service and advice agencies. The Council believes that the LHA to date has met its objectives which are to promote fairness, choice, transparency, personal responsibility, financial inclusion, improved administration and reduced barriers to work.

The number of tenants receiving benefit in the private rented sector in Leeds has increased by 12% in the last 2 years and the majority of tenants are receiving their allowance and paying the rent to the landlord. Relationships and responsibilities of tenants and landlords are now clearer under LHA. The Government are currently considering how Local Housing Allowance will roll-out nationally in the Private Rented Sector and how the pathfinders will incorporate any changes.

Public health and narrowing health inequalities

With private rented housing providing homes for vulnerable people, improving and maintaining good housing standards in this market is a very effective way of reducing some of the causes of poor health. By ensuring properties in the private rented sector are compliant with the Housing Health and Safety Rating some important public health issues such as asthma, excess winter mortality, coronary heart disease, strokes, accidents in the home can be tackled..

Leeds Homes

Leeds City Council are currently inviting accredited private landlords to advertise their available properties through Leeds Homes Choice-Based Lettings scheme. This will enable applicants to bid for private lets with landlords. Landlords will be given a list of applicants for each vacancy from which they may make a letting. This will provide both greater choice and widen the housing options for applicants, especially those in high demand areas.

4. OBJECTIVES, PRIORITIES AND ROLES

The strategy seeks to set out the roles and responsibilities of the range of organisations and agencies involved in the provision, management and regulation of private rented housing along with advice agencies, the Leeds Benefits Service and the Rent Officer service.

Vision

To enable good quality, well managed private rented housing to be an essential part of sustainable and balanced housing provision across Leeds and in individual neighbourhoods.

The Vision of this Strategy will be achieved through three priority themes:

- A. *Promoting and supporting the private rented sector to meet needs and provide choice:***
involving the Council using its enabling role to promote the private rented housing and ensure that the Council and all relevant departments support a healthy private rented sector; and landlords contributing to agreed strategic objectives such as meeting housing needs and contributing to regeneration programmes and sustainable and balanced housing provision
- B. *Ensuring good standards of housing and management:***
involving the Council using its regulatory role to encourage responsible landlords and its enforcement role to tackle bad conditions and standards of management and landlords using self regulation through support to accreditation schemes to provide good quality housing.
- C. *Effective advice and information and encouraging the positive engagement of private tenants and communities hosting private rented housing:***
Involving the Council providing or supporting provision of accurate and timely advice and information to private tenants and working with the Leeds Tenants Federation and other community engagement groups to encourage the inclusion of private tenants in tenant and resident groups, community associations and other forms of community engagement

A. PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR TO MEET NEEDS AND PROVIDE CHOICE

Objectives

1. **To ensure that there is a healthy and prosperous private rented sector that forms part of a balanced and sustainable structure of housing provision across the city and within neighbourhoods**

Role of the Leeds Housing Partnership and the Council (Neighbourhoods and Housing)

- To respect and recognise the contribution of responsible landlords and promote the role of private rented housing in meeting needs, demand and choice
- To establish agreement on the level of private rented housing that enables a balance of housing from different tenures within neighbourhoods to help create and maintain mixed, sustainable communities
- To recognise the right of private landlords to operate a profitable business while having responsibility for the safety, health and well-being of their tenants and contributing to maintaining the neighbourhoods in which they operate.
- To understand changes and trends in supply, demand and cost in the private rented sector and where private rented housing is located.

Role of Private Landlords

- To support the strategic aim of the Leeds Housing Partnership and the Council to create and maintain mixed, sustainable communities
- To participate a dialogue with the Council with a view to agreeing strategies for the private rented sector, including the most appropriate levels of private rented housing across the city and within various neighbourhoods
- To consider advertising their available properties through Leeds Homes

Role of Community Groups

- To contribute to a dialogue with the Council and Landlords over optimum levels of private rented housing within neighbourhoods and impacts on local residents

Outputs/Outcomes

- a) Regularly updated strategy for private rented housing
- b) An agreed approach between the Council, Landlords and community representatives on issues of balance in neighbourhoods

2. To enable those private landlords who wish to do so to help meet the needs of specific groups such as students, homeless and vulnerable people and asylum seekers or refugees

Role of the Council (*Neighbourhoods and Housing Supporting People Team, Housing Needs Group, Environmental Health*)

- To agree the level and type of provision needed from private landlords to house homeless and vulnerable people
- To work with NASS to establish levels of provision needed to accommodate asylum seekers
- To establish and operate appropriate and efficient contracting arrangements for use of private rented housing from accredited landlords only.
- To ensure that health and safety standards in private rented housing contracted are met.
- To work with the Council, UNIPOL, Students Unions and community associations to develop and implement a student housing strategy for Leeds
- To seek to provide private landlords with a long-term as well as there being a longer term commitment to arrangements for the provision of such accommodation and to recognise that landlords will only provide such accommodation if it is economic and profitable to do so
- To seek to maximise available funding to ensure provision of effective floating support provision to vulnerable people housed in private rented housing.

Role of Private Landlords

- To provide well managed and good quality housing for a range of housing needs including homeless and vulnerable people, students and asylum seekers and refugees, professional people and those suffering relationship breakdowns
- To provide good quality, well-managed and affordable housing for students that fully complies with the UNIPOL Accreditation Scheme or the Leeds Landlords Accreditation Scheme

Role of UNIPOL

- To work with the Council, the Universities, Students Unions and landlords/private sector providers to ensure that housing for students is of a good standard
- To provide good quality, well-managed and affordable housing for students

Outputs/Outcomes

- ✓ *More homeless households temporarily and permanently housed in private rented housing*
- ✓ *More privately rented properties to be made available to settle asylum seekers pending decision of their cases*

- ✓ *Providing opportunities for more students to live outside traditional areas*
3. **To ensure that effective, accurate and timely payment of local housing allowance takes place to meet the needs of tenants and enable tenants to make rent payments to landlords in a timely fashion.**

Objectives

Role of the Council (Leeds Benefits Service)

- To ensure the efficient, accurate and timely processing of Housing benefit/Local Housing Allowance applications and payments in line with national performance standards and local targets
- To ensure that payment is made to the landlords where the circumstances justify this action To provide information to landlords as to progress in respect of claims where tenants direct Leeds Benefits Service to do so.
- To ensure that landlords are involved in discussions on the implementation of the Local Housing Allowance and are kept informed on its implementation

Role of Landlords

- To work constructively with the Leeds Benefits Service to ensure the efficiency of the benefits system
- To provide accurate information required by the Leeds benefits service in a timely manner.

Role of the Rent Officer Service

- To provide accurate information on rent levels to the local housing allowance process
- To consult with landlords and collect information on the rental market as part of any review of rent levels set for the local housing allowance

Outputs/Outcomes

- ✓ *Accurate and timely payment of Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance*
- ✓ *Performance standards set for Local Housing Allowance /Housing Benefit processing met*

4. **To ensure that appropriate planning policies are in place to support sustainable and appropriate private rented housing**

Role of the Council

- To ensure that planning policies relating to private rented housing are operated fairly, accurately and in a timely manner
- To ensure that planning applications are fairly transparently and properly determined without bias towards other interested groups.
- To consider how planning policies can be best used to manage the distribution of private rented housing

Outputs/Outcomes

- ✓ *Performance standards for planning applications met*

B. ENSURING GOOD STANDARDS OF HOUSING AND MANAGEMENT

Objectives

1. **To ensure that the highest possible standards of housing provision, amenity and management in private rented housing.**

Role of the Council (Environmental Health and Housing Needs Group)

- To utilise the **regulatory role** to improve standards of provision and management through
 - encouraging landlords to join or maintain membership of the Leeds Landlords or UNIPOL Accreditation Schemes
 - developing and promoting an accreditation scheme for Managing Agents
 - implementing local accreditation schemes such as that in Beeston Hill and Holbeck

- promoting and endorsing other suitable accreditation schemes
- To utilise its **enabling** role to
 - provide support and training for private landlords and advice on quality and health and safety issues to assist them in meeting the terms of legislation and accreditation scheme codes of standards
 - support accredited landlords through corporate initiatives such as supporting parking concessions for members of LLAS working on their properties or the refuse disposal concession.
 - hold regular landlords forums to raise awareness of the implications legislative or policy change or changes in codes of standards and to enable consultation on housing strategy and policy development
 - provide a Bond Guarantee Scheme
 - consult regularly with representatives of landlords and management agents in the formulation of policy and pay proper heed to their views and concerns.
- To exert its **health, safety enforcement role** to ensure compliance of private landlords with the key legislation providing for the safety, health and well-being of tenants
- To use its **enforcement role** to
 - take action against any landlord found to be operating their business in a substandard manner, within the terms of the Government's Enforcement Concordat methodology as detailed in the QMS system for Environmental Health and in particular to ensure that:
 - i. Enforcement action is proportional to risk and enforcement procedures are transparent
 - ii. Standards are clear
 - iii. Landlords' representatives are consulted on all standards and enforcement procedures and proper regard is had to their views and concerns. Informal non-statutory action will be employed initially unless there is good reason not to do so as detailed in the Enforcement Methodology
 - introduce and operate the Licensing of HMOs and undertake enforcement of advisory standards in non licensable HMOs and enforcement of action in singly occupied properties and consider the need for additional HMO licensing powers to regulate the management of lower risk HMOs.
 - to consider the need for additional HMO licensing powers after April 2007 to regulate the management of lower risk HMOs (i.e. those not covered by mandatory HMO licensing)
 - notwithstanding the concerns and opposition of the Landlords Associations, , to consider the use of selective licensing to regulate the management of all privately rented houses in any designated areas of low demand or high anti social behaviour
 - seek to introduce targeted enforcement action by a range of agencies including Environmental Health, the Fire Service, Building Control, Planning, the Tenancy Relations service, Trading Standards and the Health and Safety Executive to address exceptional cases where a landlord providing a very substandard service who will not improve despite help and support from the Council and other agencies

Role of Private landlords

- To support the Leeds Landlords Accreditation Scheme, the UNIPOL Accreditation Scheme or other endorsed schemes and maintain their membership
- To ensure that the quality of their housing and standards of management comply with reasonable standards as defined through the Accreditation Schemes
- To support and attend landlords forums and ensure they have good awareness of current legislation and good practice and undertake appropriate training in their roles as landlords
- To co-operate as far as practicable and reasonable with the Council to address anti-social behaviour by their tenants with account is to be taken of the costs and practical differences of enforcement action.
- To adopt and promote the Leeds Landlord's Accreditation Scheme in its existing or future format

Outputs/Outcomes

- *For 20,000 bedspaces in the private rented sector to be covered by a recognised Accreditation Scheme by 2010*
- *For 10,000 bedspaces to be covered by the proposed Managing Agents Accreditation scheme in the first year of operation and a 25% year on year increase upto 2010.*

C. EFFECTIVE ADVICE, INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF PRIVATE TENANTS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

Objectives

- 1. To ensure that private tenants receive appropriate advice and assistance in relation to health and safety, landlord/tenant and rent payment/housing benefit issues**

Role of the Council (*Neighbourhoods and Housing Needs Group, Leeds Benefits Service and Environmental Health*),

- To provide effective, accurate and timely advice and support to private tenants on health and safety, landlord/tenant, rent payment and housing benefit matters through its Housing Advice centre
- To support other advice agencies (CAB, Harehills Housing Aid etc) to provide effective, accurate and timely advice and support to private tenants on health and safety, landlord/tenant, rent payment and housing benefit matters
- To ensure effective, accurate and timely advice on housing benefits matters

Role of Landlords

- To support and uphold tenants welfare rights and other legal rights
- To support and work constructively with advice agencies and the Leeds City Council Housing Advice Centre
- To provide effective, accurate and timely advice and support on health and safety matters
- To consider advertising available properties through Leeds Homes

Role of the Advice Agencies

- To provide effective, accurate and timely advice and support to private tenants on landlord/tenant, rent payment and housing benefit matters
- To refer tenants with health and safety matters to Leeds City Council Environmental Health
- To work constructively with Landlords, Advice agencies and the Council to ensure that private tenants receive the best possible advice services

Outputs/Outcomes

✓ *Provision of effective advice to tenants*

2. To ensure that private tenants take advantage of community engagement processes to represent and promote their interests

Role of the Council

- To promote the inclusion of private tenants in community engagement structures
- To work with the Leeds Tenants Federation to explore how to include private tenants in tenants and residents groups
- To encourage registered tenants groups and community associations to include promote membership to private tenants

Role of Tenants and Residents and Community Organisations

- To explore how to include private tenants in registered tenants and residents groups
- To promote membership to private tenants

Role of Landlords

- To encourage tenants to join local tenants and residents groups or community associations

Outputs/Outcomes

- ✓ *Private tenants invited to join tenants/residents groups or community associations*
- ✓ *Increasing number of private tenants with membership of join tenants/residents groups or community associations*
- ✓ *Systematic consultation with private tenants*

5. OUTCOMES

This strategy when implemented will ensure that all of those involved in private rented housing will work together to achieve or contribute to:

- The recognition of private rented housing as a valued component of balanced and sustainable housing provision and communities in Leeds
- A recognition of the role of private rented housing in not only meeting demand and choice but also meeting needs of specific groups including students, homeless and vulnerable people and asylum seekers and refugees so long as it is economic to do so
- More privately rented homes of a good standard through encouragement of landlords to improve their service
- Fewer private rented homes of a poor standard of condition and amenity through effective enforcement action being taken against poor landlords
- Increased membership of the Leeds Landlords Accreditation Scheme, the UNIPOL Code of Standards and other accreditation schemes
- Increasing numbers of bedspaces in the private rented sector provided by accredited landlords
- Provision of accurate and timely advice and information to private tenants
- Inclusion of private tenants in tenant and resident involvement and community engagement structures
- Efficient operation of housing benefit/local housing allowance processes for the benefit of private tenants and landlords
- Efficient and timely application of planning policies relating to private rented housing

This will result in a private rented sector that provides good quality and well managed housing that offers an essential component of sustainable and balanced housing provision in Leeds.

6. ACTION PLAN

Action	Agency	Lead	Timescale	Outcome	Risk (if not achieved)
A. PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR TO MEET NEEDS AND PROVIDE CHOICE					
<i>Promotion/Enabling of Private Rented Housing</i>					
Promote the value, benefit and function of private rented housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promotion plan - monitoring 	re'new LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Environmental Health LHP Private Rented Strategic Working Group	NM/HJ NM/PW	Nov 06 Ongoing	Wider recognition of value and role of private rented housing	High
Development and implementation of a private rented housing strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategy signed off - Action plan developed - Monitoring of implementation of strategy 	LHP Private Rented Strategic Working Group	AB HJ/NM/PW NM/PW	June 06 Oct 06 Ongoing	A structured and strategic approach to private rented housing	Moderate
Agree an optimum level of private rented housing within neighbourhoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussions with Leeds Property Forum - Discussions with Community groups and LCC Area Management - Develop agreed approach 	Development Agency/ Landlords/ re'new	AC//HJ HJ AC/HJ	Nov-Dec 06 Jan-Feb 07 April 07	Agreement over the balance of tenures in neighbourhoods that can support sustainable communities	High
Provide support and training for private landlords <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide training on changing housing and other legislation - Provide advice to landlords on quality and health and safety issues - Hold quarterly landlords forums 	LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Environmental Health LCC Housing Advice Centre	NM BE NM	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Assistance to landlords to meet obligations and terms of Accreditation scheme Provides a 'voice for Landlords'	Moderate

Action	Agency	Lead	Timescale	Outcome	Risk (if not achieved)
Meeting Needs					
Provide well managed and good quality housing for homeless and vulnerable people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish level and type of provision needed from private landlords to house homeless and vulnerable people - Establish levels of provision needed to accommodate asylum seekers - Establish and operate appropriate and efficient contracting arrangements for use of private rented housing - Report to meetings of Private Rented Housing Strategic Working Group 	LCC Housing Needs Group/ Supporting people team LCC Asylum team Landlords	BE	Sept 06	Effective use of private rented housing to for homeless and vulnerable people, asylum seekers/migrants	Moderate
		BE	Sept 06	No. of units of accommodation contracted	Moderate
		BE	Ongoing		High
		BE/RJ	Ongoing		
Ensure provision of well managed and good quality private rented housing for Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and implement a student housing strategy for Leeds - Monitor impact of new purpose built housing and other factors on supply of private rented housing for students - Establish likely requirements from students for housing in private rented sector - Monitor provision in terms of extent, quality and cost 	Student Housing Group re'new Neighbourhoods and Housing Environmental Health Services	HJ	Oct 06	Strategic approach to housing students	Moderate
		HJ/MB	Ongoing		Moderate
		HJ/MB	Nov 07		Low
		AC/RC	Ongoing		

Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance					
Housing benefit/Local Housing Allowance applications and payments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring efficient, accurate and timely processing of applications and payments 	Leeds Benefits Service	JM	Ongoing	Prompt payments to claimants xx% of LHA applications processed within xx days (xx% of payments made within xx days Reports to Private Rented Housing Strategy Working Group on progress	High
Ensure accurate provision of information to enable efficient operation of the LHA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide accurate information required by the Leeds Benefits service in a timely manner - Provide accurate information on rent levels to the local housing allowance process - Consult with landlords on any review of rent levels set for the local housing allowance 	Landlords Leeds Benefits Service Rent Officer Service	LPF LPF LRS	Ongoing Ongoing Annual	LHA based on robust and accurate data and information	Moderate
Planning Policies					
Operate planning policies relating to private rented housing in a fair, accurate and timely manner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish policies impacting on private rented sector - Establish process for incorporating views of landlords in planning policy review - Establish process for incorporating views of residents of areas with large private rented housing provision 	LCC Development Department Building Control	RC RC RC	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Improving confidence of landlords and residents in planning system	Moderate

Action	Agency	Lead	Timescale	Outcome	Risk (if not achieved)
B. ENSURING GOOD STANDARDS OF HOUSING AND MANAGEMENT					
Accreditation					
<p>Encourage landlords to join or maintain membership of the LLAS or UNIPOL Accreditation Schemes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote membership of LLAS - Develop and promote an accreditation scheme for Managing Agents - Implement the Beeston Hill and Holbeck accreditation scheme - Identify scope for other accreditation schemes 	Leeds Housing Partnership/ LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Dept (All actions)	NM/PW NM/PW MI/PW NM	Ongoing April 06 Ongoing April 07	14,577 bed-spaces covered by the LLAS by 2008 20,000 bed-spaces covered by the LLAS by 2010 Regular reports from LPF to Private Rented Housing Strategic Working Group	High
<p>Ensuring continuing Landlord support for the Leeds Landlords Accreditation Scheme, the UNIPOL Accreditation Scheme or other endorsed schemes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain membership levels - Provide housing and standards of management compliant with reasonable standards as defined through the Accreditation Schemes - Support and attend landlords forums - addressing anti-social behaviour - Adoption and promotion of the Accredited Tenants Scheme 	Leeds Property Forum Individual Landlords (All Actions)	LPF/RJ LPF/RJ LPF/RJ LPF/RJ LPF/RJ	Ongoing Ongoing Quarterly Ongoing October 06?	Regular reports from LPF (RJ) to Private Rented Housing Strategic Working Group Increasing membership of accreditation schemes Continually improving service from Landlords	High
<p>Establish a Bond Guarantee Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish business case - Identify funding and logistical arrangements - Scheme Operational 	LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Dept Housing Advice Centre	BE BE BE	December 06 April 07?	Bond Guarantee scheme established	Moderate

Action	Agency	Lead	Timescale	Outcome	Risk (if not achieved)
Enforcement					
<p>Ensure effective enforcement of relevant legislation relating to private rented housing to continually improve standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek to take action against any landlord found to be operating their business in a substandard manner, within the terms of the Government's Enforcement Concordat - Consultation with Landlords on all standards and enforcement procedures and proper regard is had to their views and concerns - Undertake enforcement of standards in non-licensable HMOs - Undertake enforcement action in singly occupied properties - Ensure compliance of private landlords with the key legislation providing for the safety, health and welfare of tenants 	LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Dept Environmental Health	PW/ Area Teams PW/NM PW/ Area Teams PW/ Area Teams PW/ Area teams	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Reduced no. of landlords operating in a sub-standard manner Reduction in number of landlords not complying with relevant legislation	High
<p>Introduce and operate the Licensing of HMOs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure licensing system is operational - achieve licensing of xx% of eligible HMOs - Consider the need for additional HMO licensing powers to regulate the management of lower risk HMOs 	LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Dept Environmental Health	PW PW AB	April 06 April 07 April 07	HMO Licensing operational Increasing no. of licences issued	High

Action	Agency	Lead	Timescale	Outcome	Risk (if not achieved)
C. EFFECTIVE ADVICE, INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF PRIVATE TENANTS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS					
Advice to Tenants					
<p>Provide effective, accurate and timely advice and support to private tenants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on health and safety matters, - on landlord/tenant issues - on rent payment and housing benefit matters 	<p>LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Dept Environmental Health</p> <p>Housing Advice Centre</p> <p>Leeds Benefits Service</p> <p>Other Advice Agencies</p>	<p>BE</p> <p>TW</p> <p>JM</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Resolution of problems for tenants</p> <p>Reduction of risk of unplanned loss of accommodation</p> <p>Reduction in rent arrears</p>	<p>High</p>
Tenant Involvement					
<p>Increasing opportunities for participation and involvement of private tenants in Tenants and Residents Associations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote the inclusion of private tenants in community engagement structures - Explore how to include private tenants in tenants and residents groups - Encourage private tenants to join local tenants and residents groups or community associations - Encourage registered tenants groups and community associations to promote membership to private tenants - Production of Involvement and Participation strategy for private tenants 	<p>LCC Regeneration Division</p> <p>LCC Strategic Landlord</p> <p>Leeds Tenants Federation</p>	<p>MS</p> <p>QB/HJ</p> <p>SP/QB</p> <p>QB/LTF</p> <p>HJ</p>	<p>Dec 06</p> <p>Dec 06</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Apr 07</p>	<p>Improved cohesion in neighbourhoods with high private renting</p> <p>Improved community pride and spirit in areas with high private renting</p>	<p>Moderate</p>

LEAD RESPONSIBILITY HOLDERS

AB	Andy Beattie	LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Environmental Health
AC	Andrew Crates	Development Agency
HJ	Huw Jones	re'new
NM	Neil Marsden	LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Environmental Health
PW	Peter Warneford	LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Environmental Health
MI	Mark Ireland	LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Environmental Health
BE	Bridget Emery	LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Strategic Housing Services
JM	Jane McManus	Leeds Benefits Service
MB	Martin Blakey	UNIPOL
MS	Martyn Stenton	LCC Neighbourhoods and Housing Regeneration Division
QB	Quintin Bradley	Leeds Tenants Federation
RJ	Richard Jones	Leeds Property Forum, Leeds Property Association, Residential Landlords Association
LPF	Leeds Property Forum	
LTF	Leeds Tenants Federation	
LRS	Leeds Rent Service	
RC	Robin Coghlan	LCC Development Department, Planning

Appendix A PARTNERSHIP WORKING MODEL

THE COUNCIL'S OBLIGATIONS	LANDLORDS' OBLIGATIONS
<p> Agree partnership working arrangements Agree a private rented sector strategy Agree reasonable housing standards Provide accreditation scheme Endorse other bona fide accreditation schemes Publicise clear standards Provide landlord training Hold landlord forums Consult landlords on housing strategies Operate an Enforcement Concordat Provide housing markets advice Promote membership of landlord associations Work with landlord associations Provide quality advice for landlords Hold annual landlord event Provide bond guarantee schemes </p>	<p> Support the partnership agreement Support the Authority's PRS strategy Comply with reasonable standards Support accreditation schemes Promote self regulatory Codes of Practice Attend landlord training events Support landlord forums Sit on the Authority's working committees Assist the Authority with area regeneration Co-operation so far as is practicable to reduce anti social behaviour Assist the Authority to house the homeless Invite Authority officers to attend landlord association meetings Support tenants welfare rights </p>