

Meeting: Housing and Regeneration Board

Population: All people in Leeds

Outcome: Local people benefit from regeneration investment

Priority: Maximise regeneration investment to increase housing choice and affordability within sustainable neighbourhoods.

Why and where is this a priority

Leeds is a growing city. The current population of approx. 787,700 (as of mid-2009) is expected to increase to approximately 880,000 by 2018 and by 2033 to just over 1 million (ONS)¹. The implications of the projected rise in population brings to the forefront a continued requirement for housing growth, affordable housing and for improvements to existing public and private sector stock.

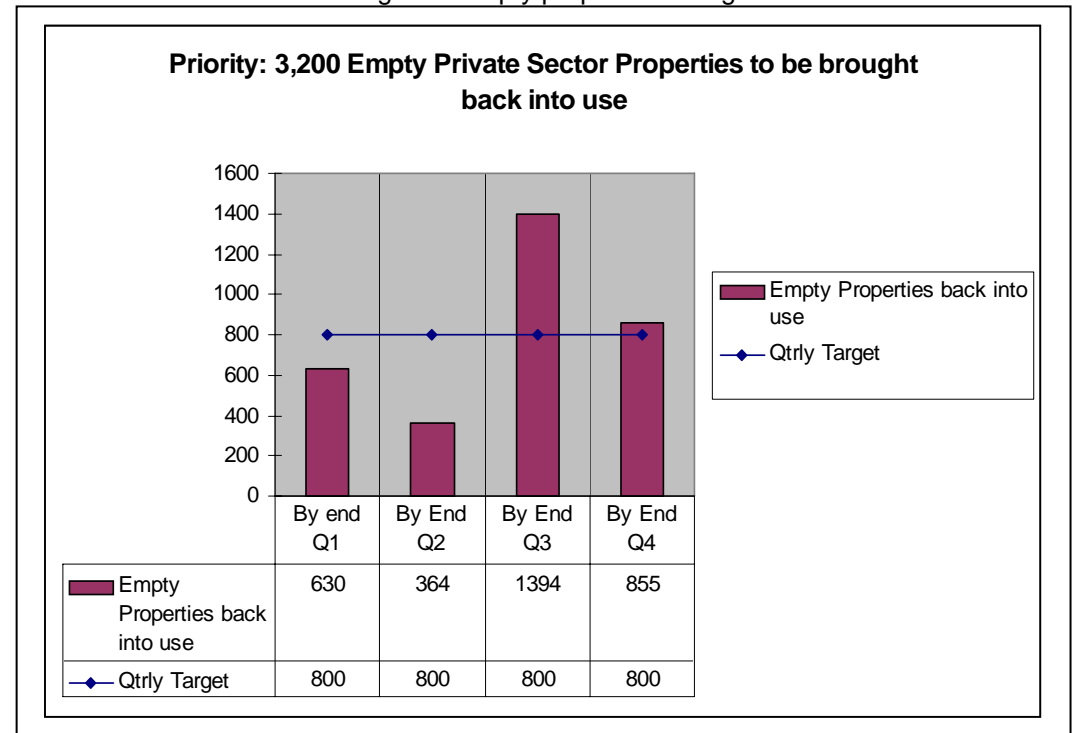
Overall Progress:
GREEN



Story behind the baseline

- The Draft Core Strategy indicates that the City has a housing requirement of 3660 units per annum. The targets set for this indicator of 1730 and 500 this year for new and affordable homes are forecasts based on existing programmes however the challenge over the next 4 years is to ensure a steady rate of growth is achieved that will enable the city to move closer towards meeting its housing needs. Activities which support this priority are as follows:
- Central Government has undertaken significant **reform of the planning system** through the recent consultations on the National Planning Policy Framework and through the Localism Bill. In this context, the Council continues to take forward priorities under the LDF: Core Strategy; Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD); Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (NRWDPD); Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan (AVLAAP); and Neighbourhood Plans.
- The Localism Act has introduced new means through which communities and businesses can support and encourage growth at the neighbourhood level. Leeds has secured funding to pilot four development focussed Neighbourhood Plans at Kippax, Boston Spa, Otley and Wetherby, to be progressed during 2012/13.
- A programme of **investment in affordable housing** through the HCA funded Affordable Housing Investment programme and working with developers to deliver affordable housing on commercial sites via the planning system, in addition to work to bring empty properties back into use.

Headline Indicators: Increase the number of new homes built per year.
Increase the number of new affordable homes built each year.
Increase the number of long-term empty properties brought back into use.



What do key stakeholders think

The Yarn Street development for example, has the support of local Members and continues to be supported by the Council as a priority as it lies in the Aire Valley Leeds. The development is in delivery phase and has been through consultations through the planning process.

¹ The University of Leeds estimate that the population of Leeds will be 828,650 by 2018 and 951,500 by 2033. The main factor behind the University's more conservative figures is the impact of migration which the University believes the ONS has over-estimated. As at June 2011, the Business Transformation Team have not yet agreed on whether the City Council will be using ONS or Leeds University's figures.

What we did (Qtr 4)

Priority: Provide a mix of housing tenure options and types that can meet the changing needs of individuals and communities in target areas.

New Housing Developments:

- In Q4 540 new dwelling units were built (Gross Building within the Quarter (Non-Cumulative))
- Work commenced on Older People's Housing pilot project for Seacroft to establish procurement and delivery options through initial market testing.
- Government approval secured to appoint preferred bidder for Little London & Beeston Hill & Holbeck Housing PFI project. Delay in progressing to financial close, awaiting resolution of corporate merger by Preferred Bidder.
- The Council is working with developers to identify ways of maximising growth and investment, for example in supporting Miller Homes in the delivery of the Yarn Street Development (AVL) site which has the benefit of Kickstart 2 funding. The new homes have been completed on time and demand on the site is strong. The Council supported a new bid from Miller Homes for funding for 2012/13 through the governments Housing Strategy (Laying the Foundations).

Affordable Housing Programme :

- Total for q4: 139, total for 2011/12: 489 plus a possible additional 6 S106 units will bring total to 495 against target for the year of 500.
- Agreement in principle with Local Planning Authority for use of existing s106 funds to assist access to and supply of affordable housing - work underway to make a first tranche of Equity Share support available for prospective purchaser on the Bellway development in Seacroft.

Priority: Maximise use of public sector land and assets to deliver lasting and measurable economic, social and environmental improvements.

- Dialogue on-going with Registered Providers (RPs), Planning & Ward Members to progress approved allocations under the new Affordable Housing Programme. This includes ensuring that as much of the indicative (ie non site specific) programme is secured to maximise grant supported investment in Leeds.
- A project to identify investment solutions for the provision of older peoples accommodation is being developed which includes a consideration of how the Council's land can enable or catalyse investment.
- Preparing land for development and devising investment solutions in key areas such as Middleton and Beckhills estate at Meanwood
- Consultation has commenced on the proposed development of 18ha of HCA-owned land to the rear of Seacroft Hospital, in advance of submission of an outline planning application for up to 600 new homes.
- Work has commenced on Neighbourhood Planning Statements for Seacroft, focussed on underused LCC land and assets, to set out redevelopment opportunities and options.

New Actions (2012/13 Qtr 1)

Priority: Provide a mix of housing tenure options and types that can meet the changing needs of individuals and communities in target areas.

New Housing Developments:

- Finalisation of Little London & Beeston Hill & Holbeck Housing PFI contract documents and technical details for Financial Close.
- Agree LCC sites to be market tested with the HCA's DPP as feasibility for packaged housing development programme.
- Consultation on Seacroft Hospital to continue, outline plans to be prepared prior to outline planning application
- Agree Equity Share model to initially support purchasers in Seacroft and commence roll out of model city-wide to other sites and developers.
- Market testing for Seacroft Older People's project and appraisal of procurement and delivery options arising.

New Affordable Housing Developments:

- Ongoing dialogue with Registered Providers (RPs) and Planning.
- Development of innovative new approaches such as the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme and development of a new phase of equity loan to support access to home ownership and stimulate the housing market

Priority: Maximise use of public sector land and assets to deliver lasting and measurable economic, social and environmental improvements.

- Further discussion with HCA, to be informed by LABV discussion.

Priority: Maximise the use of existing long term empty properties as a potential source of new housing provision across the city

- Approval of the Empty Property Strategy element of the Housing Strategy.
- Work ongoing to deliver the actions within the Empty Property Action Plan.
- The target of 3200 has been set for 2012/13 and all contributors will continue to work towards this target.

Data Development

In order to set targets which are both ambitious and realistic, work is underway to review the targets and the way in which track progress, having reference to the need identified in the Core Strategy and expected levels of investment

Equality

Equality Focus: Ensure that Housing and Regeneration investment meets the changing needs of individuals and communities

Equality Analysis: Households headed by women with children, BME groups and those living in the social rented sector are more likely to live in overcrowded or substandard housing. There are also significantly higher numbers of BME people and people with disabilities who are unemployed.

Priority: Maximise the use of existing long term empty properties as a potential source of new housing provision across the city

- The Empty Property section of the overall Housing Strategy has been drafted and agreed by Chief Officers.
- Empty Property Action Plan project mandate drafted and agreed. Action Plan developed and progress made towards its implementation. Progress against targets on track.
- 3243 long term empty private sector properties have been returned to occupation by the end of 2011/12. The annual target of 3200 has been achieved.

Equality Action: 1 – Increase the number and quality of older people’s housing - 1) A project to deliver a comprehensive approach to housing provision and care for older people is being worked up across the Directorates of E & N and ASC - "Housing and Care Futures for Older People". Progress will be reported to CLT in April with a view to presenting a detailed approach to Executive Board in July. 2) There are some specific schemes already being developed with registered providers through the new HCA Affordable Housing Programme including Sanctuary Housing in Armley and Unity hoping to submit planning shortly in Chapel Allerton. Procurement of an Extra Care pilot for Seacroft has commenced via the HCAs Delivery Partner Panel. Continuing s106 negotiations for sites in Otley & Cookridge in conjunction with Planning.

Risks and Challenges

The pressures of predicted population growth and current issues of affordability and homelessness present challenges which the city needs to address. The Draft Core Strategy sets a target to provide 70,000 (net) new dwellings between 2012 and 2028 to meet those needs. The sources of investment the city has relied on in the past to meet housing needs have either severely reduced or are funding streams which have come to an end. These include: grant funding to Registered Providers (RPs) from the HCA, Housing Renewal funding and a reduction in affordable housing delivered via planning gain (via s106) in line with the difficulties faced by the housing market as a whole. The challenge therefore is to find new and innovative ways to deliver new housing and maximise resources.

- Delivering new homes and bringing empty properties into use produces resources through increased Council Tax and the New Homes Bonus, however the amount paid for empty homes is based on the net reduction over the year. This means that although interventions may be successful in bringing empty homes back into use (with a positive impact on neighbourhoods in respect of long term or problematic voids) if more empty properties occur (as a result of market conditions for example) this might not result in NHB being paid to the Council.
- Land availability has been cited as barrier to development, however, the Draft Core Strategy sets out the Councils commitment to housing growth and the packaging of greenfield/brownfield sites and a selective review of the green belt identified as potential routes through which development may be encouraged. Delivery of housing on publicly-owned sites will depend on the market appetite for risk in marginal locations; challenges remain to ensure neighbourhood and environmental management is ongoing to support private investment.
- Access to mortgage finance remains the most critical barrier identified by developers to the delivery of new housing and the poor functioning of the housing market. Interventions such as those described above will continue to be developed in addition to working with developers to take advantage of development finance assistance such as Get Britain Building. Looking forward there are a number of potential funding opportunities flowing out of the national housing strategy which will be explored.

Meeting: Housing and Regeneration Board

Population: All people in Leeds

Outcome: Houses of all tenancies are able to meet the needs of citizens of Leeds at different stages of their lives

Priority: Improve housing conditions and energy efficiency.

Why and where is this a priority

The most recent Private Stock Condition Survey (2007) found that a third of private sector housing in Leeds (or 81,800 units) was non-decent, with the main issue being thermal comfort. Ongoing investment into Council stock is critical in maintaining its function as a provider of decent, affordable housing for a large proportion of the City's growing population.

Overall Progress:
GREEN ↑

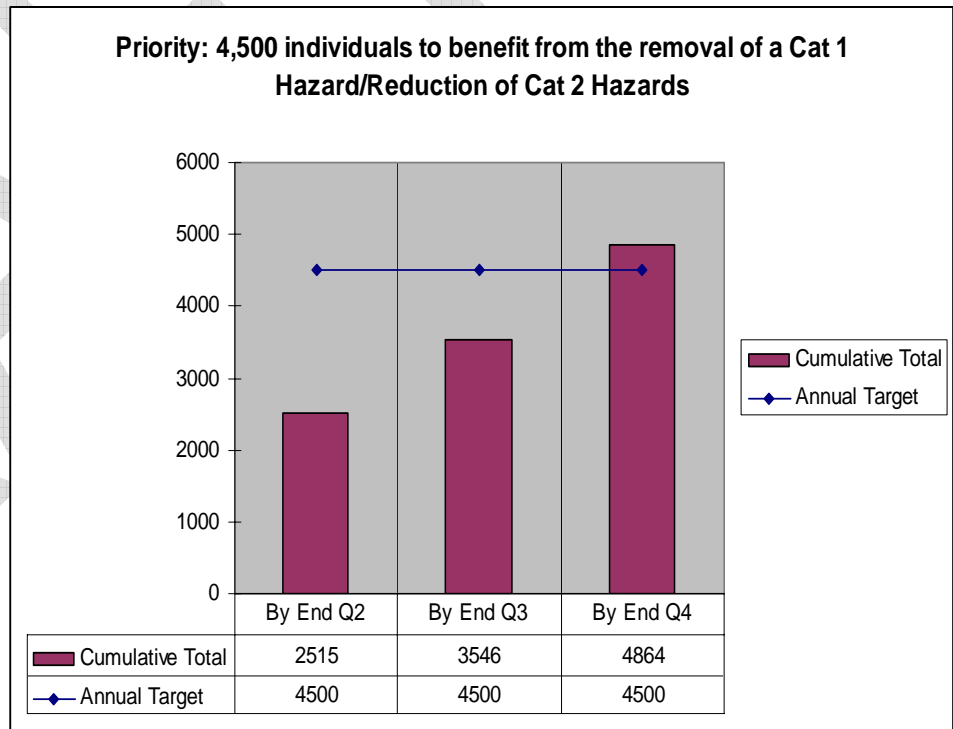
Story behind the baseline

- **Decency** across council stock has been maintained (slight increase from 96.4% at the end of Qtr2 to 96.76% at the end of Qtr 3 to 96.9 at the end of Qtr 4).
- Exec Board approved **Home Insulation Scheme** report in October 2012, procurement completed and Yorkshire Energy Services (YES) appointed to **deliver the Home Insulation Scheme (now known as Wrap Up Leeds)**.
- New homes in East Leeds are currently being built to older part L building regulations standard (equivalent to **Code for Sustainable Homes level 3**) which meets the original target however, there is less scope for CSH level 4 to be achieved due to the HCA rolling back its expectations to CHS3 on viability grounds.
- With the continual rise in energy prices and the squeeze on household income (particularly those on low and fixed incomes) fuel poverty rates in Leeds have risen from a low of 22% in 2005 to 27% in 2010. Coupled to this, budgets for energy efficiency grants such as Warmfront have been slashed and many local third sector organisations (such as Groundwork and Care and Repair) have seen funding streams dry up. So just at a time when fuel poverty is at its worst, the help available is at its lowest.

Headline Indicator: Increase the number of properties improved with energy efficiency measures.

Increase the number of properties which achieved the decency standard

Priority: 4,500 individuals to benefit from the removal of a Cat 1 Hazard/Reduction of Cat 2 Hazards



What do key stakeholders think

The high uptake levels from Wrap Up Leeds and the Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) projects demonstrates that energy efficiency improvements are becoming increasingly important for householders, as energy prices rise and incomes are squeezed.

What we did (Qtr 4)

Priority: Deliver well-designed, visually-appealing and energy-efficient housing (new and existing stock) in target neighbourhoods

- New homes currently underway in East Leeds are being built to older part L building regulations standards (equivalent to CSH 3)

Priority: Maintain decent homes standard in Council housing

- At the end of March 2012 96.09% of Council Housing met the decent homes standard, therefore achieving the target of 96%.
- 1063 private sector properties have been made decent by the end of Q4.

Priority: Sustainable improvements to housing conditions within the private sector (pre-1919 stock (back-to-back's and through terraces) in target neighbourhoods

- 9973 bedspaces covered by Leeds Landlord Accreditation Scheme (LLAS). LLAS has recently been outsourced to RLA to deliver. This is a 5 year contract with breaks at year 1 & 3. The performance of the RLA is continually monitored to ensure delivery against targets.
- 4864 individuals have benefited from the removal of a hazard to their homes by the end of Q4 against an annual target of 4,500.
- 834 properties have received inspections to ensure compliance with both HMO and selective licensing licence conditions against an annual target of 600.

Priority: Implement Leeds Home Insulation Programme, (Implement Solar PV Schemes (public & private sector) & Green Deal

- Wrap Up Leeds (providing free insulation) was launched in Jan 2012 with 1526 insulation measures completed in Qtr 4.
- Scrutiny Board has agreed a detailed Fuel Poverty scrutiny report complete with 20 recommendations for the Council and partners to complete.
- Fully funded Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) projects are now underway in letting areas within both WNW & AV Homes.
- A live procurement is underway to try to install solar PV for free to ALMO properties, even after the drastic reduction in FIT rates.
- Secured £232k from the Dept of Health for Care and Repair to support vulnerable people with emergency boiler repairs, an extension of the Groundwork Green Doctor scheme and for a grassroots programme of winter warmth delivered by Leeds Community Foundation.
- Secured £60k from Scottish Power's Energy People trust to allow Care and Repair to continue to manage a health related energy efficiency referral scheme (now called the Warm Homes Service) to 2014.

New Actions (2012/13 Qtr 1)

Priority: Deliver well-designed, visually-appealing and energy-efficient housing (new and existing stock) in target neighbourhoods

- Equity support package to be determined for new homes in East Leeds to maintain delivery on-site.

Priority: Maintain decent homes standard in Council housing

- ALMO capital programmes for 2012/13 have been developed with a view to continuing to maintain decency levels at 96% and programmes that deliver decency in the private sector will be continuing for the 2012/3

Priority: Implement Leeds Home Insulation Programme, (Implement Solar PV Schemes (public & private sector) & Green Deal

- A Green Deal planning event was held in March to raise awareness of this new incentive scheme amongst officers. We are now working with the LCR on a long-term and ambitious Green Deal partnership.
- Discussions are underway with several of the newly announced Green Deal Providers to establish short-medium term offers for Leeds.
- A proposal to trial a new product to insulate cavity walls that are too narrow for standard insulation will be developed.

Data Development:

We have lobbied the government successfully to release all Energy Performance Certificate data to the Council and expect this in April/May. We will use this information to better target new initiatives such as the Green Deal.

Equality

Equality Focus: Improve energy efficiency

Equality Analysis: Many households containing people recovering from long term illness, disabled people and pensioners can not afford to heat their homes.

Equality Action: In 2011 we invested in 11 solar PV systems in homes, in vulnerable people's homes and in disadvantaged areas. Between July and December, these have generated 8,838kWh, worth £3,964 to the Council, 10% higher than our predictions. Residents also receive free electricity, helping combat fuel poverty.

What worked locally /Case study of impact

Wrap Up Leeds has been promoted through intensive door to door marketing campaigns in specific parts of some wards, where there are both technically suitable properties and relatively high levels of deprivation. In Burmantofts and Richmond Hill, we now know that over 80% of suitable properties in the areas targeted have been insulated.

Risks and Challenges

Priority: Implement Leeds Home Insulation Programme, (Implement Solar PV Schemes (public & private sector) & Green Deal

The biggest issue is the change from CERT/CESP/Warmfront grants to the Green Deal loan and ECO grants. It is highly likely that there will be a transitional period between late 2012 and mid 2013 when very little activity will be possible.