

West Yorkshire Housing Partnership Annual Report

October 2020 - September 2021



Bradford
Calderdale
Kirklees
Leeds
Wakefield

The first year...

Of the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership – Foreward from the Chair, Helen Lennon

Welcome to the first annual report of the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership (WYHP). We have had a great first year and have achieved more than we could have wished for, so I hope you enjoy reading our story so far.

The WYHP now has 13 members all providing social housing in West Yorkshire. We are passionate about every aspect of housing and united in our values although our diversity gives us strength as we include Local Authority members who bring the perspective of having statutory housing duties, large regional housing associations who bring lessons from other Mayoral authorities, as well as more specialist associations offering a range of support services and meeting the needs of diverse communities.

The first year of activity as the WYHP has been in the context of the devastating Coronavirus pandemic. However, the successful devolution deal for West Yorkshire has given our region and us as housing providers something positive to look forward to, a new Metro Mayor with local powers. Prior to the election, we set out 5 ambitions for our work as a Partnership and with the Mayor, putting housing front and centre in West Yorkshire. These align very closely with the Mayor's housing pledges. Over the past year we have been building our collective offer to develop more homes, regenerate areas, tackle the climate emergency, connect people to economic opportunity and support health, care and homelessness.

Since the launch of our prospectus in October 2020, we have focused on building relationships and mutual understanding, including an offer to meet all Mayoral candidates (taken up by most), engaging with the newly elected Mayor, Tracy Brabin, continuing to develop our work with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the Local Authorities, as well as working together on the detail of our five ambitions. We've identified our collective development pipeline and opportunities for achieving economies of scale in the challenging decarbonisation agenda through collaborating as partners. We have built strong ties with health networks as the pandemic showed us clearly the strong links between health and housing, and have brought our combined expertise to review current provision for homelessness across the region.

There is plenty more work to be done by the WYHP and we are really proud of the start we have made. This report rounds up what the WYHP has done during its first year and what is to come. I hope you find it useful.



Helen Lennon

Chair of the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership
and Chief Executive of Connect Housing.

The West Yorkshire Housing Partnership



Who we are

The West Yorkshire Housing Partnership (WYHP) is a 'compact' of housing associations and Local Authorities providing social housing across West Yorkshire.

The WYHP was created in October 2020 to provide a single point of access for all social housing related policy and delivery in a post devolution landscape. The WYHP is apolitical, operating in the interests of providing more and better homes in thriving communities in West Yorkshire.

Members

The WYHP consists of 13 members representing all social housing providers head-quartered in West Yorkshire – 11 housing associations and two stock holding Local Authorities.

- Accent Group
- Connect Housing
- Incommunities
- Johnnie Johnson Housing
- Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council
- Leeds and Yorkshire Housing Association
- Leeds City Council
- Leeds Federated Housing Association
- Manningham Housing Association
- Together Housing
- Unity Homes and Enterprise
- WDH
- Yorkshire Housing

Also includes representation from:

- Homes England
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority

West Yorkshire Housing Partnership in numbers:

222,000+

Total homes owned or managed



168,000+

Of these homes are in West Yorkshire



13 Members in WYHP

11 Housing Associations

2 Stock holding Local Authorities

Our journey so far

Three new members joined over the year – Leeds City Council, Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council and Johnnie Johnson Housing Association. We also offered to meet all candidates in the run up to the Mayoral elections.

Timeline

Pre-Mayoral Election

Oct 2020

- The prospectus, setting out how housing associations, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Local Authorities could work together to achieve shared goals through the devolution of West Yorkshire, was launched. The prospectus is titled Housing Associations, Devolution and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority: A prospectus for partnership and action to deliver homes and support neighbourhoods, inclusion, growth and sustainability.
- The West Yorkshire Housing Partnership was established.
- Met with the Green Party mayoral candidate, Andrew Cooper.

Nov 2020

- Met with the Yorkshire Party mayoral candidate, Bob Buxton.

Feb 2021

- Met with the Labour Party mayoral candidate, Tracy Brabin.
- Formalised the governance arrangements for the Partnership and appointed Together Housing as Secretariat following a competitive tender.

Mar 2021

- Met with the Liberal Democrat mayoral candidate, Stewart Golton.
- Labour Party mayoral candidate's housing week: Tracy Brabin visited Connect Housing, Yorkshire Housing, Manningham Housing Association and Together Housing.
- Met with the Conservative Party mayoral candidate, Matthew Robinson.
- Mayoral hustings attended by WYHP members.
- Chair and Vice-Chair of the WYHP voted in as Helen Lennon of Connect Housing and Nick Atkin of Yorkshire Housing respectively.

Apr 2021

- Appearance from the WYHP Chair, Helen Lennon, on an ITV Calendar special on the West Yorkshire mayoral election to talk about housing in the campaigns.
- Conservative Party mayoral candidate, Matthew Robinson, visited WDH and Yorkshire Housing.

May 2021

The Mayoral Election

- **Labour Party mayoral candidate, Tracy Brabin, voted in as the first Mayor of West Yorkshire.**

Jun 2021

Post-Mayoral Election

- Mayor Tracy Brabin meets with WYHP members to talk about employment and skills; health, housing and homelessness; and development and the climate emergency.
- Mayor Tracy Brabin takes part in Yorkshire Housing's Raising the Roof podcast with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the WYHP to talk about housing and the work of the WYHP members related to the mayoral pledges.
- Mayor Tracy Brabin visits a dementia reminiscence pod with activity delivered by one of the WYHP members.

Aug 2021

How we operate

The WYHP has a formal set of Terms of Reference that outline the purpose, membership and working methods of the Partnership.

A Chair and Vice-Chair are appointed through a democratic process and act as ambassadors of the WYHP's work, as well as upholding the Terms of Reference. The Secretariat, appointed through a competitive tendering process, provides organisational structure to the WYHP. The Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretariat are appointed for a 3 year term and must come from separate organisations. The current appointees are:

- **Chair of the WYHP** – Helen Lennon, Chief Executive of Connect Housing
- **Vice-Chair of the WYHP** – Nick Atkin, Chief Executive of Yorkshire Housing
- **Director of the WYHP, leading the Secretariat function** – Daniel Klemm, Director of Customer Experience and Communications at Together Housing

The WYHP endorses a distributed leadership model which seeks to encourage participation from relevant housing organisations in West Yorkshire. This sees members working together to achieve greater delivery while recognising that they remain independent.

The WYHP has strategic oversight from the Chief Executives of member housing associations, with equivalent representation from Local Authority members. Meetings of the WYHP Chief Executives group take place every other month, meaning there are 6 meetings a year.

The work of the WYHP is delivered through themes. 5 operational workstreams have been established to consider specific areas of work in more detail. These workstreams have a Chief Executive sponsor, responsible for providing leadership and strategic direction in terms of the workstream activity, and an operational workstream lead or leads, responsible for progressing action. Progress of the workstreams is reported to the Chief Executives group at every meeting. The workstreams are:

	Chief Executive Sponsor (Accountable person)	Operational Workstream Lead(s) (Responsible person/s)
Investment and Regeneration	Andy Wallhead (WDH)	George Paterson (Together Housing) Andy Gamble (Yorkshire Housing)
Climate Emergency	Matthew Walker (Leeds Federated Housing Association)	Martyn Broadest (Connect Housing) Patrick Berry (Together Housing)
Health and Housing	Mark Pearson (Leeds and Yorkshire Housing Association)	Sarah Roxby (WDH) Christine Fox (Connect Housing)
Inclusive Growth	Cedric Boston (Unity Homes and Enterprise)	Adrienne Reid (Incommunities)
Homelessness	Naz Parkar (Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council)	Helen Geldart (Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council) Peter Shovlin (Leeds City Council)

The activity from each of these workstreams over the past year is outlined in this report, with further activity planned for the year to come, further strengthening the WYHP's relationship with the Mayor of West Yorkshire and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Building new homes



Building new homes

“ **Mayor Tracy Brabin’s pledge:** *To build 5,000 sustainable homes including council houses and affordable homes.* ”

As social housing providers, we are uniquely placed to contribute to the future of West Yorkshire. We are dynamic social businesses with a long-term interest in the places we work and the people and communities we serve, but also commercially aware organisations that can make things happen and deliver real change. To do this, we need to be closely involved in developing and collaborating to establish a clear pipeline of available and potential sites which places the need for more and better homes at the forefront of the agenda.

The WYHP has established an investment and regeneration workstream to progress action on building new homes and regenerating the areas members operate within.

What have we done so far?

Activity over the first year of the WYHP has included:

- Agreeing as the WYHP to develop a West Yorkshire development pipeline to be fed into the shared pipeline being coordinated by the five West Yorkshire Local Authority Directors of Development;
- Identifying a capacity for the WYHP to deliver 5,475 homes over the 3 year mayoral term, of which 2,115 homes are secured with planning permission, and the remaining requiring planning approval;
- Working closely with the Mayor, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Local Authority Directors of Development, and Homes England on how the WYHP can support housing delivery across the West Yorkshire region;
- Presenting a deep dive on the development pipeline to the Local Authority Directors of Development;
- Presenting the West Yorkshire development pipeline to the Joint West Yorkshire Leaders and Chief Executives Group; and
- Outlining the barriers that impede on regeneration schemes and the potential solutions.

What’s next?

Over the next year, the WYHP will be:

- Developing new homes, with capacity identified to deliver 1,867 homes over 2021/22, made up of both secured and unsecured homes;
- Developing a shared pipeline of sites with the Local Authority Directors of Development;
- Working with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to identify and address the challenges in delivering new homes in the region;
- Identifying opportunities to make use of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and how joint working can support this; and
- Bringing forward regeneration proposals and funding requirements.

Tackling the climate emergency and fuel poverty



Tackling the climate emergency and fuel poverty

“ **Mayor Tracy Brabin’s pledge:** *To lead the battle to tackle the climate emergency and protect our environment.* ”

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority is seeking to become a net zero carbon economy by 2038, and to capitalise on economic opportunities around carbon reduction, energy and green jobs.

As the domestic housing sector consumes over one third of energy in West Yorkshire it is important that WYHP make a commitment to the Mayor and Combined Authority to help deliver their objectives. The Scaling Up Better Homes Yorkshire report of October 2020 is the framework for our activity in this area. It recognises the role that social housing providers can play in helping to develop the market and supply chain to retrofit at scale, and identifies the potential solar PV and battery storage could have in rapidly reducing domestic carbon emissions, helping residents reduce energy costs and generating additional long-term revenues.

Many members have already begun to reduce their carbon emissions and understand that working collaboratively will achieve greater impact. The WYHP has established a climate emergency workstream that has responsibility for progressing activity and identifying opportunities for partnership working.

What have we done so far?

Activity over the first year of the WYHP has included:

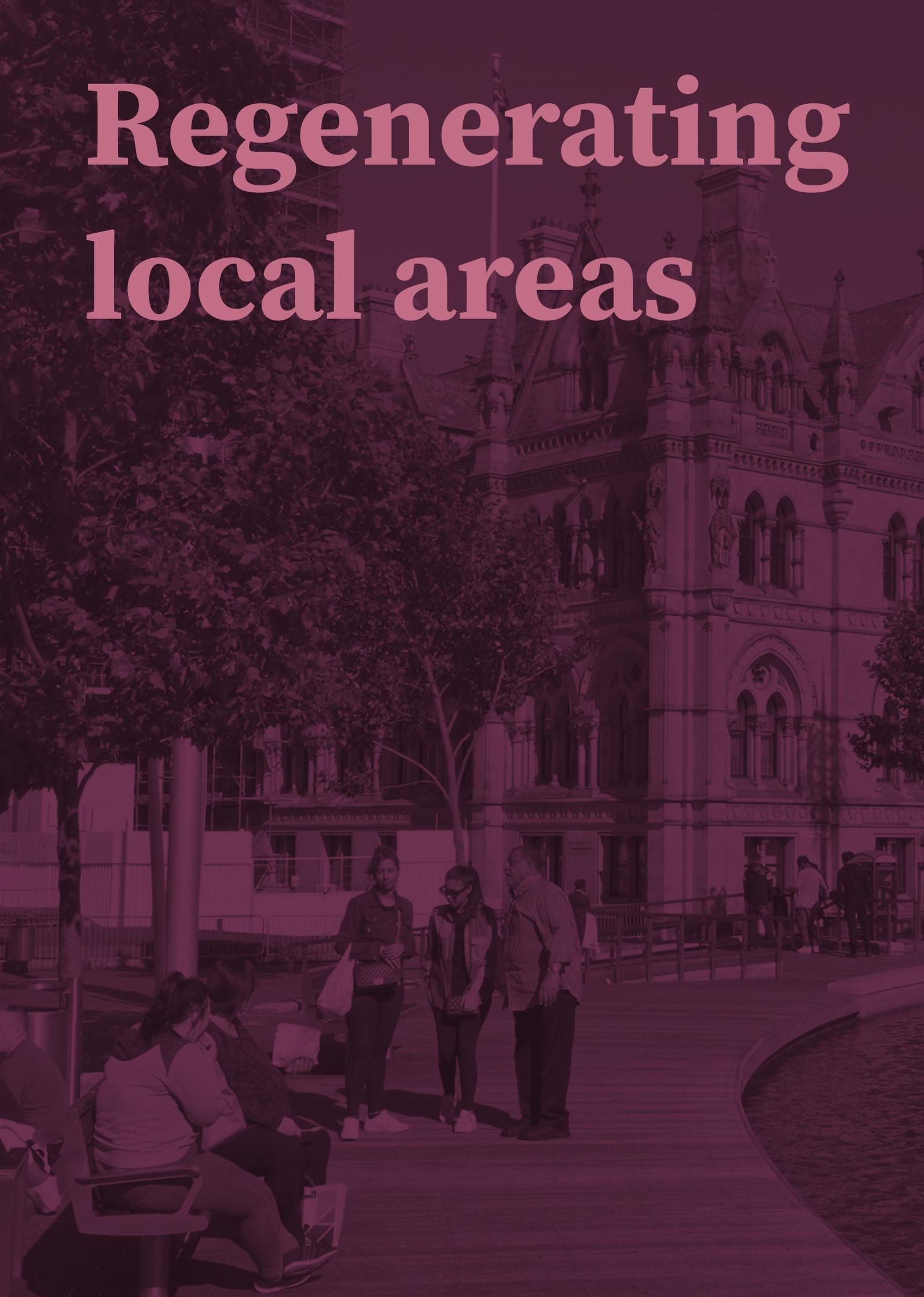
- Engaging with the Scaling Up Better Homes Yorkshire Strategy, using this to inform the work of the WYHP;
- Collating data on the current energy efficiency of WYHP members’ housing stock, together with plans for improvement;
- Using the data to develop a bid for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy’s Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund in partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority;
- Engaging with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to set out a pathway to delivery and identify the collective initiative as a candidate for grant aid support; and
- Developing a solar PV and battery prospectus, setting out an innovative approach to the scale delivery of solar PV and battery systems. It is an income generating solution that has the potential to be self-funding over the long-term while delivering multiple benefits in the form of carbon reduction, tenant benefits, employment and supply chain development.

What’s next?

Over the next year, the WYHP will be:

- Developing the business case for the solar PV and battery system project, followed by the procurement of systems and contractors;
- Continuing engagement with the Mayor to support the Mayoral pledges and working with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to identify funding opportunities for decarbonisation work; and
- Developing a collaborative programme for the engagement and upskilling of the WYHP workforce on carbon literacy and carbon reduction work.

Regenerating local areas



Regenerating local areas

“ **Mayor Tracy Brabin’s pledge:** *To take advantage of brownfield and infill sites.* ”

The members of the WYHP are long-term anchor institutions, providing integrated, place-based regeneration, making good use of brownfield sites and combining housing and physical development with people-based interventions. This supports the viability and quality of life of places by providing, managing and maintaining good quality, affordable homes.

What have we done so far?

WYHP members have been progressing regeneration projects including:

- Yorkshire Housing has completed the regeneration of the former iron works in Boothtown, Halifax, creating 46 two and three-bedroom homes. The Titan Works development, which had been derelict for over 10 years, contains homes available for affordable rent and shared ownership, offering a greener way of living through electric vehicle charging points at each property.
- Together Housing has begun construction work of over 100 affordable family homes on the Beech Hill estate in Halifax. The development will be made up of two, three, four and five-bedroom homes for affordable rent, as well as a cycle route, public open space, and parking facilities. The regeneration project also involves refurbishing the neighbouring Mount Pleasant estate, including improving the energy efficiency of homes. It is being carried out as part of the Calderdale Together Housing Investment Partnership with Calderdale Council and will support the wider transformation of Calderdale and investment in its housing, transport, public spaces and businesses.
- WDH is investing in Tombridge Crescent in Kinsley. The £2.9m regeneration scheme will provide environmental and aesthetic improvements to existing properties and reduce antisocial behaviour and disputes related to parking issues.
- Leeds City Council is currently delivering 266 homes on brownfield sites across the district with a construction value of £57.5m, alongside acquiring 112 homes back from previous Right to Buy sales. The Tarnside Drive development is delivering 41 new homes on an area of overgrown grassland, which had suffered from fly-tipping and antisocial behaviour. The development of the site has received strong support from local residents. As well as the new homes, the development will also deliver greenspace contributions and improvements to a local playground.

What’s next?

- Regeneration is closely linked with investment and new development work, and there are benefits to be achieved from collaborative working between the two. This is particularly true in West Yorkshire in light of the national ‘levelling up’ agenda. New development and regenerating older homes tackles negative place perceptions that can impede investment.
- The WYHP has established an investment and regeneration workstream with responsibility for progressing activity relating to developing new homes and regenerating areas. In future annual reports, there will not be a separate regeneration section.

A teal-tinted photograph of scientists in a laboratory setting. In the foreground, a woman with long dark hair is looking down at a piece of equipment. Behind her, a man with glasses is also looking down. To the right, another person is partially visible, looking at a computer monitor. The background shows laboratory equipment and a whiteboard. The text "Connecting people to economic opportunity" is overlaid in a large, bold, white serif font.

**Connecting
people to
economic
opportunity**

Connecting people to economic opportunity

“ **Mayor Tracy Brabin’s pledge:** *To prioritise skills and training to ensure everyone in West Yorkshire has the skills they need to secure work and to create 1,000 well paid, skilled jobs for young people.* ”

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a detrimental effect on employment rates, with the ending of the furlough scheme in September 2021 expected to see the situation worsen. WYHP members are anchor institutions and significant employers in the region, providing employment, skills and training support to West Yorkshire residents.

All members offer apprenticeships and a number have engaged with the government’s Kickstart scheme to offer work placements to young people aged 16-24. We are identifying how we can expand the reach and impact of our work to connect people to economic opportunities through closer partnership working.

The WYHP has established an inclusive growth workstream to progress activity and to coordinate engagement with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

What have we done so far?

Activity over the first year of the WYHP has included:

- Presenting at the Efficiency North Conference on economic inclusion;
- Engaging with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority on the work that WYHP does on inclusive growth;
- Collating information on the approach and employment, skills, enterprise and financial inclusion offers provided by WYHP members to present to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to support their thinking around partnership working to meet objectives; and
- Establishing a working group which will meet with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to agree practical steps in the achievement of inclusive growth.

What’s next?

Over the next year, the WYHP will be:

- Working collaboratively with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to support local communities recover from the pandemic;
- Raising awareness and understanding of the work done by WYHP members around inclusive growth, including employment and training support and financial inclusion; and
- Reviewing and supporting the developing frameworks within the West Yorkshire Combined Authority on inclusive growth and employment and skills with a view to proposing joint initiatives and bids for funding.

Supporting health and care



Supporting health and care

“ **Mayor Tracy Brabin’s pledge:** *To establish a Dementia Ready Housing Taskforce to ensure all our older people’s housing and related services are dementia friendly, develop a strategy to ensure there is an adequate supply of houses built to inclusive design standards, work with local authorities to review the enforcement of building standards and the adaptation of existing houses, and deliver a West Yorkshire Accessible Housing register.* ”

The WYHP has a long history of working collaboratively with the health and care sector. The Covid-19 pandemic has further reinforced the importance of housing in health and care, including mental health. WYHP members are acutely aware that partnership working provides opportunities to enhance wellbeing and reduce health inequalities. As well as the pandemic, the ageing population has a significant effect on housing and health, with WYHP members providing a range of retirement and adapted living options.

The WYHP has established a health and housing workstream to coordinate activity with other existing health networks.

What have we done so far?

Activity over the first year of the WYHP has included:

- Aligning with the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership’s (WYHHCP) Housing and Health Programme and their Housing and Health Network as a housing provider influence;
- Supporting Huddersfield University in developing a series of briefing notes linked to housing and health;
- Supporting WYHHCP’s anti-racism campaign;
- Submitting a bid to the Home Office for funding to provide trauma informed training to housing staff who have contact with customers. While our initial bid was not successful, subsequent bids from WYHHCP colleagues have secured funding; and
- Engaging in a task and finish group to agree a Mental Health Collaboration Framework, mapping existing provision.

What’s next?

Over the next year, the WYHP will be:

- Co-producing a trauma informed housing training package to be rolled out to all frontline housing employees;
- Engaging with the Dementia Ready Housing Taskforce to ensure WYHP representation;
- Mapping existing health and housing networks to prevent duplications and ensure adequate representation from the WYHP;
- Investing in mental health and wellbeing support for tenants to ensure they are supported in sustaining a tenancy; and
- Working with Homes England, Local Authorities and the WYHHCP to respond to the need for flexible housing options, to meet the demand identified through a West Yorkshire market needs assessment for mental health, learning disabilities and autism.

Supporting homelessness



Supporting homelessness

“ **Mayor Tracy Brabin’s pledge:** *To work with partners such as Housing First to ensure no one has to sleep rough and that young people are supported when sofa-surfing into affordable accommodation.* ”

Homelessness has been under the spotlight during the Covid-19 pandemic. The ‘Everyone In’ initiative has highlighted what can be done, at speed and at scale, when partnership working is in play and barriers are removed. WYHP members were closely involved in that response.

Covid-19 is likely to generate much more homelessness as a result of the economic and mental health consequences of the pandemic, so it is a priority for the WYHP. It cannot be resolved without partnership working, developing sustainable solutions that encompass all types of homelessness.

The WYHP has set up a homelessness workstream to provide a central point to bring together the activity of WYHP members and Local Authorities, which is being led by Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council and Leeds City Council, as the two stock-owning Local Authority members of the WYHP. All West Yorkshire Local Authorities have been engaged in this workstream, given their statutory responsibilities on homelessness.

What have we done so far?

Activity over the first year of the WYHP has included:

- Engaging with other Mayoral Combined Authorities across the country to identify best practice;
- Collating data on homelessness from across the five Local Authorities in West Yorkshire, highlighting trends over recent years, and sharing this with the Mayor; and
- Collating information on existing homelessness provision across the West Yorkshire region to identify synergies and gaps.

What’s next?

Over the next year, the WYHP will be:

- Continuing to monitor data on homelessness to identify trends, which will be used to identify possible interventions and establish their success;
- Reviewing the recommendations made based on the analysis of existing provision; and
- Developing a regional pledge or charter on homelessness, taking the existing provision into account.

**The year
to come...**



The year to come...

Closing from the Vice-Chair of the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership, Nick Atkin

If you have reached this point, then thanks for taking the time to read the first ever West Yorkshire Housing Partnership annual report.

The process to pull this document together has been a really useful opportunity to reflect over the last year and share some of the key things we have delivered.

As we emerge from the pandemic it's also now a good time to look ahead at the exciting plans we have underway.

Prior to devolution being introduced within West Yorkshire, we were already seeing the benefits in other devolved regions and the opportunities this presented for housing. We're now in the fortunate position that we no longer have devo-envy! We will use the opportunities to learn from other regions to fast track our own plans and use these to create opportunities from the challenges facing West Yorkshire.

Over the next year we'll continue to work with the Local Authority Directors of Development to identify a shared development pipeline. We're also looking at ways that we combine our skills, expertise and purchasing power to invest in solar PV and battery storage technology to help make West Yorkshire the green capital of the UK.

The pandemic has highlighted the stark challenges facing a number of communities across West Yorkshire. That's why we're continuing to focus on inclusive growth, engaging with the Dementia Ready Housing Taskforce, and developing a regional homelessness pledge. It's been a difficult year for a lot of people. The WYHP has an ever more important role in supporting the West Yorkshire region and its residents in recovering from the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. There's plenty for us to get stuck into.

We're going to build on the strong foundations we have built over the last year. We look forward to continuing to work with the Mayor to help her achieve her pledges. We'll also continue to harness the benefits from our longstanding working relationships with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Local Authorities to deliver even more.

It's going to be a busy year but we're really excited at the energy and commitment that has developed since the WYHP was formed. We will continue to place housing front and centre in the plans for West Yorkshire. Watch this space!



Nick Atkin

Vice-Chair of the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership
and Chief Executive of Yorkshire Housing

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