



West Yorkshire Housing Partnership:

Prospectus 2024

*Affordable homes, supporting
communities, economic growth
and tackling the climate
emergency*





In West Yorkshire,
around **90,000**
households are on
council waiting
lists for housing.



Building a strong future together

In West Yorkshire, around 90,000 households are on council waiting lists for housing. Rising costs, high inflation and soaring energy bills have made it even more challenging for many people to find a safe, secure place that they can afford to call home. That's why we are passionate about working together to tackle the shortage of affordable homes across the region, building the right homes in the right places.

Since the West Yorkshire devolution deal, the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership (WYHP) has taken up the unprecedented opportunity this gave to deliver more and better housing for communities across the region. We've built over 2,000 affordable homes and plans are underway to build 3,592 more.

The WYHP is also playing an active role in boosting the local economy with new jobs, implementing a range of measures to tackle the climate emergency. These include decarbonising homes, improving housing standards and collaborating with partners across the region on the links between housing, health and homelessness.

As WYHP, housing associations and other social landlords are working closely with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (the CA), the West Yorkshire Mayor, the five local authorities and local leaders to maximise the benefits offered by devolution for the region and deliver on shared priorities.

This Prospectus sets out the ways we can work together to unlock West Yorkshire's true potential. By continuing to collaborate and leverage the benefits of devolution we can move forward with a breadth, scale and pace of action that has not previously been possible.



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2,000+

Affordable homes have already been built in the region.





WYHP own or
manage nearly
167,000 homes in
West Yorkshire,
that's **17%** of
all homes.



About the partnership

The WYHP is made up of 15 members, including 13 housing associations and two stock-holding local authorities. It provides a focus for social housing related ambition, policy and collaboration across the region. As not-for-profit organisations we invest everything we make back into the local communities we serve, building more affordable homes and improving existing ones.

Our achievements:

2,018

New affordable homes delivered so far, with 3,591 more planned.

24,000

Tonnes of CO2 reduced (a 13% cut from 2020/21 to 2022/23).

Nearly 3,000

Solar PV systems and over 3,200 heat pumps installed.

11,100+

Households rehoused in West Yorkshire to address cases of homelessness.

5,311

Homes to be retrofitted using the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

Around 14,000

West Yorkshire residents assisted with skills, inclusion and employability.

We also provide support to residents and communities including around safeguarding and domestic abuse, tenancy sustainability and homelessness, and energy and financial advice.

This prospectus is a starting point for discussion around how we can deliver change. It is based around five priorities that will enable us to respond to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

- **Build affordable homes**
- **Improve our existing homes**
- **Tackle the climate emergency**
- **Connect health, housing and homelessness**
- **Investing in inclusive communities**

These ambitions work together to contribute to the region's vision for providing a sustainable future that benefits all West Yorkshire's diverse communities. It also brings a strong focus on inclusive growth to ensure those facing challenges and disadvantages are supported and provided with opportunities to thrive.

This Prospectus sets out what the WYHP can offer, and clear, practical steps where the Mayor and CA can work with us to open up new possibilities and dismantle barriers to delivering these joint aims.



Turnover of over £1.9 billion, much of it spent on maintaining and improving homes.



Priority 1:

Build affordable homes...

Around 90,000 households are on council waiting lists for housing in West Yorkshire.

The current squeeze on incomes caused by high inflation and the cost of living crisis has made it harder than ever for many people to find a secure place to call home.

Working together, we can help to address the housing crisis and shortage of homes across the region. We aim to build over 1,000 affordable and sustainable homes a year to meet the needs of local communities and the diverse population of West Yorkshire.

This will include new homes on derelict and brownfield sites to breathe new life into areas. We're working closely with partners to understand what accessible and specialist housing is needed by those with support needs and older people across the region.



Priority 1:

Build affordable homes...

Our offer:

Identify housing need – We can help to analyse the type of homes needed in different areas and communities in West Yorkshire, and collaborate with developers, local authorities, other partners and sectors on this.

Demonstrate what can be delivered – We can be clear on what volume of housing can be delivered and the resources needed, taking into account site-specific factors and goals. That allows future housing commitments for West Yorkshire to be made with confidence.

Build good quality affordable homes at scale – We can deliver a good volume of new homes to agreed high quality standards and use our local knowledge and relationships to meet housing needs in diverse communities.

Support and stimulate local economies – We employ local people and buy many of our goods and services from local suppliers which supports local business growth and jobs.

Deliver specialist and accessible housing – For example, by working with the West Yorkshire Dementia Ready Housing Taskforce to provide accessible homes.

How we can do more together:

Remove funding barriers – Tight timescales for funding and a lack of flexibility in using and mixing funding sources reduces the amount of affordable homes that can be built. Aligning funding streams and reducing the bureaucracy would allow us to build more homes faster.

Grant rates that keep pace with costs – The level of funding and grants available needs to rise in line with the cost of building affordable homes of a good standard. This has not kept pace with the rise in building costs due to inflation and it limits what we can deliver.

Support to replace poor housing – In some cases, older or poor quality housing needs replacing with new, energy efficient homes. Greater flexibility in how funding can be used and appropriate timescales are needed to support this.

Make land available and speed up planning – We need strong commitments to affordable homes, including the proportion of homes on developments that must be affordable. The pace of local planning needs speeding up to get housing schemes approved faster.

Planning and infrastructure approach to create sustainable communities – Sustainable places need access to jobs, amenities and green space, reliable internet connectivity and good transport links. By working with local planning authorities, the Partnership can ensure that new developments contribute to or create good quality places.



Priority 2:

Improve our existing homes...

WYHP members own and manage around 167,000 homes in West Yorkshire. We're committed to investing in our homes to ensure they are safe, healthy and affordable.

To us, having a good quality home is also about the neighbourhood you live in, including the condition of any outdoor spaces and streets. As housing providers, we also bring a placemaking approach to support both quality homes and neighbourhoods.

Our vision and passion also present the opportunity to collaborate on how standards are raised, not just for social rented homes but also across the private rented sector in West Yorkshire.



Priority 2:

Improve our existing homes...

Our offer:

Provide a clear vision of what good homes look like – We can share data and knowledge about housing supply and work with the CA and partners to agree what the future quality and quantity of housing should be.

Identify what investment is needed – By collaborating on the resources needed to get all housing up to the standard we aspire to, improvements can be implemented in a planned and cost-effective way.

Cost-effective delivery – We can use our collective purchasing power to achieve value for money and support local supply chains.

Demonstrate spend on rents versus existing stock investment – We can show how revenue from rents compares to the cost of stock improvement, and demonstrate value for money and the need for further investment. This could support bids for future funding such as from the Social Housing Quality Fund.

How we can do more together:

Co-ordination of local data collection – This will help the CA produce a cross-sector picture of the type and condition of homes in West Yorkshire. This valuable intelligence resource can be joined up with other information.

Align programmes and flexible funding – Programmes to improve housing (such as decarbonisation funding and funds to upgrade kitchens and bathrooms) are often separate. Better aligning programmes and cross-sector funding for area renewal would save money and mean more homes benefit from the same resource.

Agree a 'Quality Standard' for healthy homes – We invite the CA to work with WYHP to agree a quality standard for existing social housing stock. This would provide a benchmark to work towards that could also be used across the rented sectors.

Longevity in funding streams – Predictable, long-term funding is needed to support housing associations to plan long term and deliver effectively. Devolved funding would enable greater quality improvements to homes across West Yorkshire.

Support workforce skills – Further promote the skills and labour supply needed to maintain, enhance and build homes, including STEM skills (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), trades/construction skills and the green skills needed to retrofit homes and install renewable energy systems.



Priority 3:

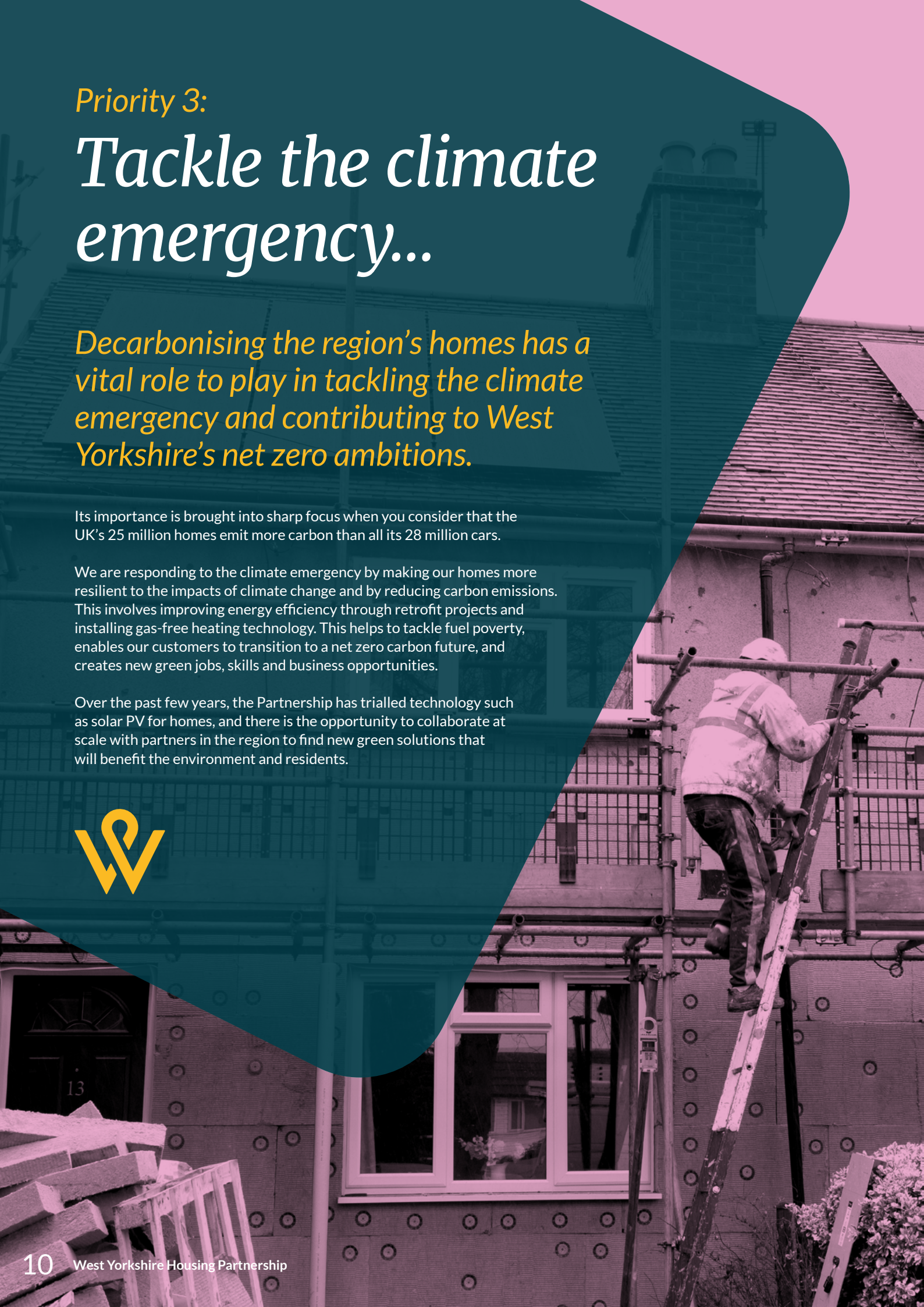
Tackle the climate emergency...

Decarbonising the region's homes has a vital role to play in tackling the climate emergency and contributing to West Yorkshire's net zero ambitions.

Its importance is brought into sharp focus when you consider that the UK's 25 million homes emit more carbon than all its 28 million cars.

We are responding to the climate emergency by making our homes more resilient to the impacts of climate change and by reducing carbon emissions. This involves improving energy efficiency through retrofit projects and installing gas-free heating technology. This helps to tackle fuel poverty, enables our customers to transition to a net zero carbon future, and creates new green jobs, skills and business opportunities.

Over the past few years, the Partnership has trialled technology such as solar PV for homes, and there is the opportunity to collaborate at scale with partners in the region to find new green solutions that will benefit the environment and residents.



Priority 3:

Tackle the climate emergency...

Our offer:

Make markets for low carbon and renewables through large scale demand – We are making good progress in a radical shift towards energy efficient housing. Our sector’s collective investment ambition creates the long-term demand needed to enable businesses providing energy efficiency and net zero products to invest. It will anchor markets and inspire others to act.

Help people reduce energy bills – We can help our tenants, including many who are fuel poor or vulnerable, to use energy efficiently. This can help them to stay well, save money, cut carbon emissions and contribute to wider environmental goals.

Invest in the large scale roll out of renewable energy – We are at the forefront of new and innovative approaches to roll out renewable energy at scale, for example, by installing solar panels and ground source heat pumps, which can cut carbon emissions and energy bills.

Enhance our natural environment – As custodians of significant land assets, we can play a key role in enhancing the biodiversity of our estate landscape. This can improve well-being and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Build new energy efficient homes – This brings immediate benefits to our customers and the environment and helps to address the housing crisis.

Create green jobs, skills and apprenticeships – We train and reskill employees in low carbon technologies to support our investments in energy efficiency, low carbon heating and renewables, and provide green job opportunities for others developing those skills.

How we can do more together:

Long-term funding for retrofit and zero carbon heating – Investment in energy efficiency and low carbon measures needs to be locally co-ordinated and supported by long-term funding which can be used flexibly. This will enable a greater scale and pace of delivery to meet the climate challenge and reduce fuel poverty.

Share data and intelligence – The CA can work with social landlords to provide fuller data on housing, energy and carbon emissions, which will support decision-making, planning and tracking of progress. Sharing of expertise, ideas and best practice can also help to develop new schemes and solutions.

A scalable delivery model for West Yorkshire – We can collaborate on creating an effective delivery model to provide an investment pipeline for decarbonisation and climate impact work. The CA can bring together investors, supply chains, employers and training providers to maximise the benefits from investment and set high expectations for low carbon approaches and green energy for homes.



Priority 4:

Connect health, housing and homelessness...

There are strong links between housing and health. This is an area where collaboration can bring great benefits as we work together to find solutions and ways of getting better outcomes for those who need specific help, support, or specialist housing.

Social housing providers are far more than landlords. We work with local authorities to reduce and prevent homelessness. We also work with partners across the region to improve mental and physical health outcomes; reduce health inequalities; support independent living for older people, including dementia ready housing; and provide safety and security for those who need it most.



Priority 4:

Connect health, housing and homelessness...

Our offer:

Advance dementia-ready housing

– The WYHP is involved in the West Yorkshire Dementia Ready Housing Task Force and is already building dementia-ready housing and contributing to the development of dementia-friendly neighbourhoods.

Collaborate to prevent homelessness

– Housing associations prevent people from becoming homeless by providing support for tenants struggling to sustain their tenancies and working closely with local authorities to rehouse people in urgent housing need.

Action on domestic abuse

– We all work in partnership with organisations to proactively respond to domestic abuse, including through our safeguarding procedures. Some of our members also provide refuge and support for people experiencing domestic abuse.

Support tenants and demonstrate best practice

– Our established relationships with our tenants enable us to spot and respond to causes for concern. That includes flagging risk cases and safeguarding referrals, taking a multi-agency approach.

Support communities and specialist needs

– We provide safe, warm and affordable housing, including for people who might struggle to afford and access housing otherwise. We also provide care and support for those who need more than a home and work with local authorities and others to develop innovative specialist care and supported housing.

How we can do more together:

Work together to support health, care and housing

– The Mayor and CA can bring health and housing organisations together to forge stronger links so that there is a more joined up and impactful approach. Accommodation-based health and care should become a clear priority.

Make tackling homelessness a high priority

– The Mayor could raise the profile of homelessness as an issue and make it an explicit priority to help galvanise action, boost resources and bring partners together to develop and deliver solutions.

Resources to ensure the quality of homes

– Increased resources would support provision of safe and good quality homes that support the physical and mental health of tenants.



Priority 5:

Investing in inclusive communities...

Together we can create safe, inclusive and sustainable communities where people want to live.

This includes ensuring there is a particular focus on preventing anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime to make sure our neighbourhoods and communities are pleasant and safe places to live.

Our approach to investing in communities also extends to supporting people's skills, employability, life chances and wellbeing. The WYHP is involved in supporting diverse and disadvantaged people across the region, opening up opportunities for them and ensuring they have the best chance to thrive in life.

By collaborating on this priority there is the potential to find new solutions and funding to benefit people across West Yorkshire and make sure that no community is left behind.



Priority 5:

Investing in inclusive communities...

Our offer:

Engage with target groups for skills and employment programmes

We have strong tenant and community relationships which provide a route for the CA and partners to support inclusive growth by reaching target groups, including diverse and disadvantaged people. We also work directly with residents to help them build skills and access employment.

Community intelligence and third sector partnerships

We know our neighbourhoods and have good intelligence and data on them, as well as partnerships with local organisations, including youth groups.

Prevent ASB and crime – We work with local authority ASB teams and the police to help prevent and tackle crime and ASB, including through identifying issues, priority areas and offering positive outlets.

How we can do more together:

A multi-agency approach to communities – This could be facilitated by the Mayor in light of policing and community safety powers, and include local authorities, the police, economic/skills specialists, social services and the voluntary sector.

Closer collaboration with the police and crime services – This would help us to find solutions to challenging ASB issues by working with local authority community safety teams, local police and the Mayor's police intelligence team. This would be joined up with neighbourhood mapping, the intelligence we hold, and exchanging knowledge on what works.

Help tackle quality issues in the private rented sector – We can collaborate with the CA and partner local authorities to agree a strategic approach to improve housing quality in the private rented sector, which impacts on neighbourhoods. Also, to consider funding opportunities for area-based regeneration in mixed tenure communities.

Access to Mayoral funding to support a social and health-based approach

Working with local authority community safety teams with a focus on preventing ASB and improving safety and security for women and girls.

A long-term approach to funding

We would welcome working with the CA to ensure its programmes allow sufficient time to submit bids and use the funding. This would include jointly lobbying national government to improve funding arrangements that are difficult to meet. This will help us make the most of the opportunities and deliver more for West Yorkshire.

Access to funding for employment, training and skills

Based on the long-term relationships we have with residents often excluded from economic growth, the Partnership would like to access funding to provide services and pilot approaches that build skills and increase employability. The Mayor's role in convening key players to establish new programmes and overcome potential barriers would be valuable.





We can make a **positive** difference across the region by working together.



Getting the best for West Yorkshire

We can make a positive difference across the region by working together, but lobbying is also needed at a national level.

Our overarching ask is for the Mayor to approach their counterparts across the North to agree and adopt a shared and aligned Northern voice on housing.

We would ask the Mayor and CA to lobby government around:

- Devolution of affordable housing in West Yorkshire to give us the same powers and resources as 'trailblazer' CAs/Mayors.
- Government funding for investing in existing homes, as in Greater Manchester and the West Midlands, which have been given devolved Social Housing Quality funding.
- A clear and supportive long-term policy on rents, as recent increases have been capped below inflation and not kept pace with the rising costs housing providers face.
- A long-term affordable housing strategy and funding to provide certainty and increased flexibilities, including around funding mixes.
- Increasing Local Housing Allowance rates which have not kept pace with private rents. This limits the options for a safe and secure home in the private rented sector when there isn't enough social housing to meet the demand.

We look forward to discussing our proposals and to further combining our efforts, expertise and investment with those of the Mayor, the CA and its partners. We have already made great strides forward, and look forward to building on this firm foundation to agree action to deliver.

Doing so will demonstrate West Yorkshire's ability to make full use of devolution opportunities, deliver on our shared ambitions and goals, and transform the lives of local people in every part of West Yorkshire.

90,000

Households are on council waiting lists for housing in West Yorkshire.



*We have already made **great strides** forward, and look forward to building on this firm foundation.*





Housing associations:

- Accent Housing
- Connect Housing
- Incommunities
- Leeds Federated
- Manningham Housing Association
- The Guinness Partnership
- Thirteen Group
- Together Housing
- Stonewater Housing Association
- Unity Homes and Enterprise
- Wakefield and District Housing
- Yorkshire Housing
- 54North Homes

Local authorities:

- Kirklees Council
- Leeds City Council

