



West Yorkshire Housing Partnership:

Annual Report

October 2023 to September 2024



Introduction:

Welcome to our annual report...

Foreword from the Chair of the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership, Andy Wallhead

The West Yorkshire Housing Partnership (WYHP) has had a productive year. We launched a revised prospectus outlining our priorities, saw the re-election of Tracy Brabin as Mayor, and witnessed a Labour government return after 14 years. During this time of change, WYHP has continued to achieve its goals. The partnership provides a collective voice for housing in West Yorkshire and works to deliver the new affordable homes needed by communities across the region.

This year, we refreshed our priorities to adapt to a changing environment. In response to reports of poor-quality social housing nationally, we focused on quality and regeneration, investing in existing homes to ensure they are safe and comfortable. We have also brought a clear emphasis to inclusive communities and have aligned our aims closely with the Mayor's priorities.

We continue to address the housing crisis by committing to building more affordable homes and decarbonising existing ones. We also continue to support dementia-ready housing and work with local authorities to tackle homelessness.

Over the past year, WYHP has built relationships with key stakeholders, including local MPs, and raised our profile at UKREiiF 2024. There is a real power in collaborating around shared priorities and we are seeing some great work happening across the region as we work together with our partners, such as the Mayor, Combined Authority and Homes England.

As social housing providers, we are in a unique position to influence the delivery of new homes, and the lives of thousands of people across the region who live in our homes and communities.

Sadly, the housing crisis persists and continues to impact on the lives of West Yorkshire residents. We are therefore resolute in our commitment to deliver more affordable homes.

It has been a privilege to lead the partnership over the past year, and I'm pleased to let you know that I am now handing over to Rachael Dennis, CEO of Incommunities. As the new Chair of the Partnership from January 2025, Rachael will continue the great work being achieved.

This report details our achievements and future plans, highlighting our ongoing commitment to improving housing in West Yorkshire.

Andy Wallhead, Chair of the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership and Chief Executive of WDH.



We continue to address the housing crisis by committing to building more affordable homes.



Introduction:

About us and our members....

The West Yorkshire Housing Partnership (WYHP) has 15 members – 13 housing associations and 2 stock holding Local Authorities. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Homes England are also full members.

The WYHP owns or manages over 346,000 homes, and over 167,000 of these are in West Yorkshire. This year we refreshed our priorities to align with the recently launched West Yorkshire Housing Strategy 2040, and the ambitions of our partners and members.

We have five workstreams which reflect the following priorities.

- **New affordable homes**
- **Quality and regeneration**
- **Climate emergency**
- **Inclusive communities**
- **Housing, health and homelessness**

Through our work, the Partnership aims to positively impact communities across West Yorkshire and support the work and housing priorities of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Mayor of West Yorkshire.

This report sets out our achievements in delivering these priorities over the past year and our plans for the future.



Through our work, the Partnership aims to **positively impact** communities across West Yorkshire.



346,000

Homes owned or managed by WYHP.



Introduction:

Celebrating our year of success...

Our partnership:

- Supported the development of the West Yorkshire Housing Strategy 2040.
- Reviewed our priorities and established two new workstreams, on quality and regeneration and on inclusive communities.
- Refreshed and updated the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership brand.
- Extended an invitation to meet with all West Yorkshire Mayoral candidates in the run up to the election.
- Wrote to all MPs following the General Election, informing them of the role of the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership and offering a meeting and/or site visit.

Our workstreams:

- Delivered 1,436 new affordable homes.
- Supported the development of the West Yorkshire Strategic Place Partnership between the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Homes England.
- Provided a suite of e-learning on managing damp, mould and condensation to all Partnership members.
- Improved 805 homes to EPC C through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.1.
- Partnership members signed up to the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission's Climate Pledge.
- Members signed up to the West Yorkshire Fair Work Charter.
- Supported and adopted the dementia ready housing criteria for development standards for new homes.
- Developed and delivered bespoke housing training on Trauma Informed Practice to members.

1,436

New affordable homes have been delivered for the region.



Workstream 1:

New affordable homes

In West Yorkshire there are almost 85,000 people on housing waiting lists.

With high inflation and cost of living rises over the past few years, many people have been priced out of homeownership and the private rental market. This means the need for more high quality affordable homes is greater than ever.

The Partnership is committed to the delivery of the new affordable homes needed across the region, working closely with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Homes England.

We have refreshed our priorities and now have a dedicated New Development workstream. It covers development, planning, infrastructure and housing need, supporting the Mayor's priority to build 5,000 new affordable homes by 2028.

It is a challenging time for development due to high build costs and skilled labour shortages. We are working together to explore how to deliver the homes communities need, making use of brownfield land and delivering accessible and specialist homes.

Our achievements this year:

- Delivered 1,436 new affordable homes in 2023/24.
- Identified development delivery risks and worked with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to identify possible solutions (eg for planning issues).
- Supported the development of the West Yorkshire Strategic Place Partnership (SPP) between the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Homes England. The WYHP has a seat on the SPP Board.
- Participated in discussions at the SPP's Developer Forum on housing market challenges and collaborative solutions.

Our plans for the year ahead:

- Projected delivery of 1,805 new homes in 2024/25.
- Include section 106 developer contributions and dementia-ready housing in development pipeline figures.
- Identify opportunities for the Partnership by exploring the outcomes of Cushman and Wakefield's work for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority on affordable housing models through the Accelerator Fund.
- Focus on key challenges for members, including the Building Safety Act 2022, Biodiversity Net Gain and procurement.



The need for more high quality affordable homes is greater than ever.



Case study:

Shared development pipeline...

The West Yorkshire Housing Partnership has developed a shared 3-year development pipeline, coordinated by the Combined Authority.

The pipeline uses high level, anonymised information about development sites and is shared with WYHP members and updated every 6 months. The information includes the total West Yorkshire supply pipeline to 2027/28, with splits for supply by Local Authority area, year and status category (secured, unsecured and ambition).

This pipeline has provided a high level of confidence that the projected development numbers are accurate and has removed any duplication in how sites are counted. This shared development pipeline is thought to be the first of its kind among Mayoral region housing partnerships.



Workstream 2:

Quality and regeneration

The social housing sector has faced questions over the quality of some homes.

WYHP is addressing these challenges by splitting its previous investment and regeneration workstream into two: one for new development and one for quality and regeneration. This new focus aims to improve existing homes and aligns with the Mayor's priority of improving the quality of existing rented homes. This workstream is new so this is mostly an overview on the work we have planned.

Our achievements this year:

- Provided a suite of e-learning on managing damp, mould and condensation to all members.
- Established a Task and Finish Group to look at investment needs for older homes.
- Established a new workstream and identified areas of priority and focus for members.

Our plans for the year ahead:

- Focus on the areas where joint working will make the most impact, including around damp and mould, property management systems and data, stock viability and investment and divestment opportunities, and repairs demand.
- Respond to changes in regulation and legislation, such as the revised Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law.



*This new focus aims to improve existing homes and aligns with the **Mayor's priority** of improving the quality of existing rented homes.*



Case study:

Damp, mould and condensation training...

WYHP members have shared best practice in responding to damp and mould, including training technical staff through accredited training programmes and qualifications.

However, it's also vital for a wider range of frontline colleagues to be able to identify and report early signs of damp and mould.

To do this, WYHP members collaborated to develop an e-learning package for front-line staff and contractors. This package, based on and adapted from a toolkit from Riverside, includes interactive content, videos, and simulations. The training navigates the learner around a house and includes how to interact with residents.

WYHP members worked with a specialist contractor to adapt and deliver the training package locally, which was funded by WYHP. This saved time and money and ensured high-quality training could be delivered swiftly. The training will ensure staff have the knowledge and understanding to identify and address issues of damp and mould, and how to talk residents about this to improve their experience.



Workstream 3:

Climate emergency

Climate change continues to impact our daily lives, with extreme weather conditions happening across the globe.

The government has made commitments to decarbonisation and improving the energy efficiency of social homes. We have adapted our approach to this and are focusing on retrofit, biodiversity, energy efficiency, low carbon and renewable energy, supporting the Mayor's priority of creating a greener West Yorkshire.

We are working to ensure our homes are warm, efficient and resilient to the effects of climate change. We are tackling fuel poverty; and being market-makers, not just for manufacturers but for skills and education. The workstream brings members together to share best practice and provide economies of scale. Through this work, we aim to have a positive impact on the natural environment and the biodiversity of the areas where we provide homes.

Our achievements this year:

- Provided data to the Energy Savings Trust on home energy performance, retrofit strategies and investment pipelines for the first stage of the Collaborative Decarbonisation Strategic Investment Planning Project working with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- Signed the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission's Climate Pledge along with many of our members.
- Completed retrofit on around 1,400 homes through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 1, with 916 homes achieving EPC C. Further retrofits are planned for 1,743 homes via the Mayor's Gainshare funding for the SHDF Booster. Another 805 homes achieved EPC C via the SHDF Wave 2.1.
- Advanced the solar PV and battery project, establishing legal agreements and a procurement framework to reduce carbon emissions, benefit residents, create jobs, and develop supply chains.

Our plans for the year ahead:

- Retrofitting another 1,300 homes through SHDF Wave 2.1 by September 2025.
- Submitting a consortium bid with WYHP members and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority for the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund to retrofit around 8,000 homes.
- Start the on-site delivery of the solar PV and battery project, (this was delayed by new British Standards Institute guidance on battery storage placement).



*We are working to ensure our homes are **warm, efficient and resilient** to the effects of climate change.*



Workstream 4:

Inclusive communities

Over the past year, the cost of living crisis has severely impacted our communities. There have also been challenges with community cohesion, culminating in disturbances across the UK.

As anchor institutions, our members strive to support safe and sustainable communities, providing opportunities for residents. Inclusive, cohesive communities are essential for positive lives.

Previously our focus was on inclusive growth looking specifically at skills and employment opportunities. However, to recognise the wider needs and concerns of communities we have expanded our priorities to include neighbourhood management and tackling issues such as anti-social behaviour, which has become a growing area of interest nationally.

Our new Inclusive Communities workstream focuses on housing management, community safety, and employment and skills, including green skills development, aligning with the Mayor's priorities of employment for all, a region of learning, and safer streets. We invest in communities to ensure safety, sustainability and diversity, helping residents achieve their aspirations.

This workstream is new and future reports will detail its progress.

Our achievements this year:

- Numerous members signed up to the West Yorkshire Fair Work Charter.
- Refocussed the workstream and set out our expanded remit.

Our plans for the year ahead:

- Holding a colleague summit to identify strategic priorities.
- Exploring the use of GIS mapping software to identify areas with a significant number of members' homes for trialling antisocial behaviour and good neighbourhood management interventions.
- Identifying priorities for joint training programmes, and opportunities for partnership working with adult social care and the judiciary.



*We invest in communities to ensure **safety, sustainability and diversity**, helping residents achieve their aspirations.*



Workstream 5:

Health, housing and homelessness

Good quality housing has many health benefits.

It can save the NHS money, help people live longer and manage illnesses. Poor housing and homelessness have the opposite effect. The Health, Housing, and Homelessness workstream focuses on these issues together to develop solutions. Its focus is on dementia-ready housing, domestic abuse, homelessness, safeguarding and supported housing. This workstream collaborates with the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership and the Homelessness Forum to share knowledge, influence partners where necessary and work together effectively on these themes.

Our achievements this year:

- Members nominated Dementia Champions to support their organisations to be dementia friendly, build dementia ready homes and support the West Yorkshire Dementia Ready Housing Task Force. Training was provided by the Alzheimer's Society.
- Supported and adopted dementia ready housing criteria for new homes.
- Participated in the West Yorkshire Homelessness Forum's workshops, supported by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Discussions included current homelessness pressures, whether there is a regional and strategic role for the Combined Authority to support Local Authorities and how the WYHP can support Local Authorities to meet urgent pressures on homelessness services.
- Funded autism training for colleagues provided by the National Autistic Society.
- Concluded the rightsizing campaign to empower older people across West Yorkshire to find the right sized home for them and make informed choices.
- Supported the recruitment of a Policy Fellow at the University of Huddersfield to work with WYHP and research indoor air quality, damp and mould, and the prevention of homelessness for non-UK nationals.
- Developed and delivered bespoke housing training on Trauma Informed Practice to members.
- Met with respiratory health colleagues to progress asthma referral pathways between health and housing.
- Engaged with the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) to explore options for accreditation.

Our plans for the year ahead:

- Develop approach for recording how our existing homes meet the dementia ready housing criteria and how they could be brought up to standard.
- Analyse the causes and reasons for damp and mould and talking to residents about what solutions have and have not worked.
- Scope research to explore how organisations can support homeless people who are seeking asylum to housing.



Supported and adopted dementia ready housing criteria for new homes.

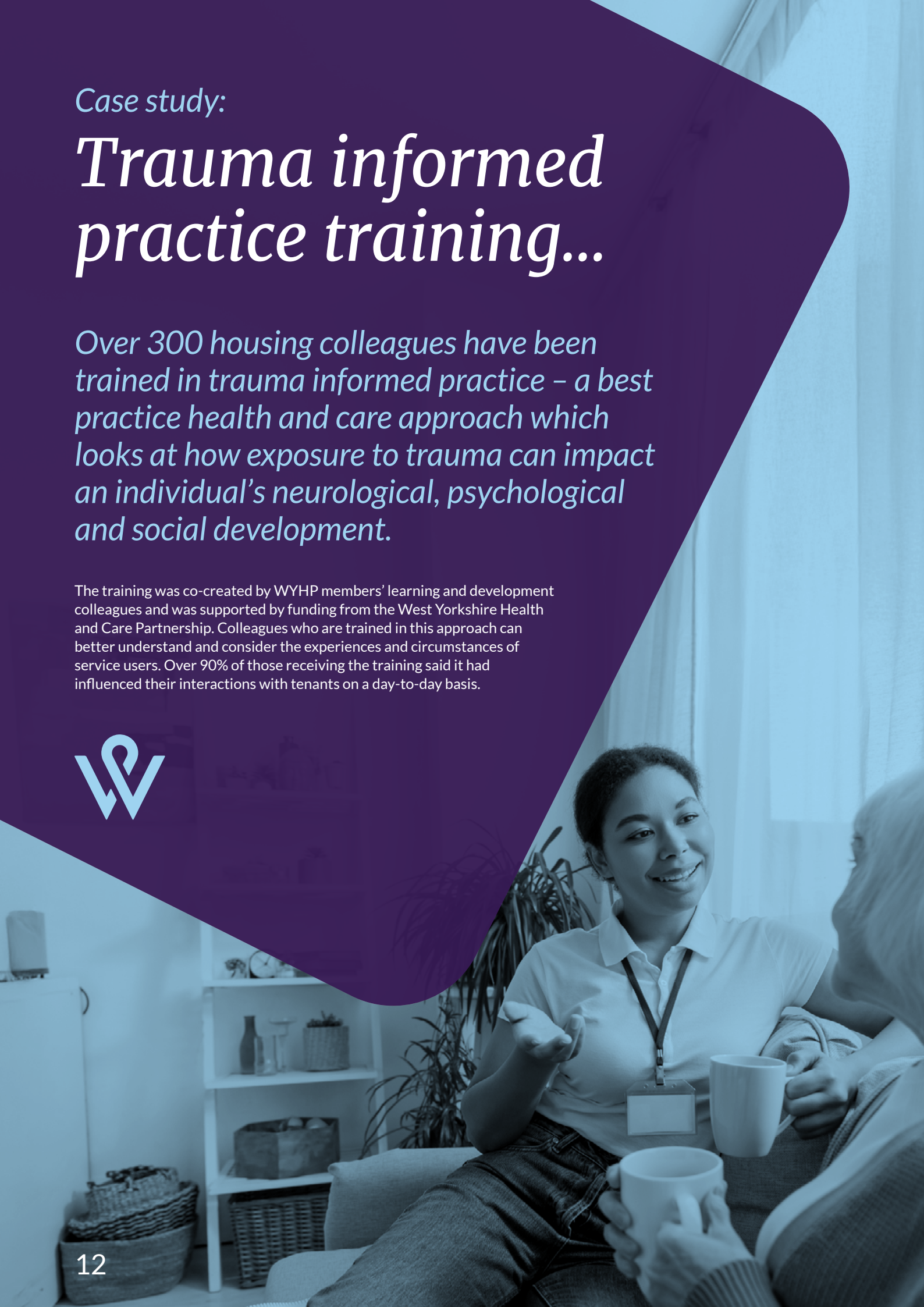


Case study:

Trauma informed practice training...

Over 300 housing colleagues have been trained in trauma informed practice – a best practice health and care approach which looks at how exposure to trauma can impact an individual’s neurological, psychological and social development.

The training was co-created by WYHP members’ learning and development colleagues and was supported by funding from the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership. Colleagues who are trained in this approach can better understand and consider the experiences and circumstances of service users. Over 90% of those receiving the training said it had influenced their interactions with tenants on a day-to-day basis.



Final words:

Looking ahead...

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

Housing associations are operating in an everchanging economic, political and regulatory landscape. The WYHP is alive to these changes, and we are adapting so that we can continue to deliver for the region. This report shows our progress over the last year and provides a renewed focus for the years ahead.

We will continue to put the residents of West Yorkshire at the heart of what we do. That is why our Partnership exists.

To navigate these changing times, collaboration and relationships are more important than ever, which is why we will continue to build on this over the coming year. The refresh of our priorities has given us a boost of enthusiasm, with a revised set of workstreams to deliver our objectives, some of which are only just getting started.

We will continue to explore how we can deliver the affordable homes the region needs, looking at innovative solutions to overcome challenges around funding, land acquisition, planning and labour shortages and build costs. Working together gives us the tools to be innovative. This supports our priority, the Mayor's priority and the new government's priority.

We haven't lost sight of our existing homes. That's why we will continue to work to ensure they are safe, healthy and comfortable, improving their energy efficiency through retrofit. We provide homes for life. That's why I'm excited to see how the dementia ready housing criteria progresses following its recent launch.

We've also broadened our view of inclusive communities and over the next year, we will be working to progress good neighbourhood management alongside skills and employment support, recognising the intersections between these two areas.

We have achieved a lot over the last 12 months. Our commitment to working with the Mayor and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority remains steadfast. I hope that's evident from this report. These might be challenging times, but they're certainly interesting times, and we're going to be keeping up the momentum.

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



We will continue to put the residents of West Yorkshire at the heart of what we do. That is why our Partnership exists.





Housing associations:

- 54North Homes
- Accent Group
- Connect Housing
- Incommunities
- Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council
- Leeds City Council
- Leeds Federated Housing Association
- Manningham Housing Association
- Stonewater
- The Guinness Partnership
- Thirteen Group
- Together Housing
- Unity Homes and Enterprise
- WDH
- Yorkshire Housing

Representation from:

- Homes England
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority
- National Housing Federation

www.wyhousing.co.uk

