

**FROM INDIVIDUAL NEIGHBOURHOODS TO A WHOLE CITY APPROACH:
THE EXPERIENCE OF WOLVERHAMPTON IN MAXIMISING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE TO INFLUENCE REGENERATION
AND PUBLIC SERVICE IMPROVEMENT**

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Abstract

Following the government's national strategy for neighbourhood renewal, local authority areas with intense deprivation needs were expected to fully engage neighbourhoods in the development and delivery of regeneration activity. Wolverhampton took a national lead in this approach, with its city housing strategy effectively delivering neighbourhood renewal. Changes have been delivered by joint working between the local strategic partnership and the city council.

Wolverhampton took risks with this approach, which was based on a long history of active involvement of local people in improving their neighbourhoods, irrespective of tenure. Seven neighbourhood clusters in the city were initially selected to take this forward, each cluster having a different tenure mix. Due to the interest from a government ministry, the approach was then independently audited. Following city-wide consultation (including all political parties), the approach was subsequently rolled out to cover the whole city. The success of the approach has been recognised in a number of national government publications.

The 'tenure blind' nature of the approach has been critical to its success. Wolverhampton has approximately 26,000 Council tenants living in houses managed by Wolverhampton Homes, an Arms Length Management Organisation. However, this is only 10% of the city's population – a far greater number of people own their own homes or rent from private landlords. Others rent from housing associations. The approach has been for each neighbourhood to define its needs/aspirations rather than these be defined by tenure.

This paper explores the background to Wolverhampton's approach, the outcomes of the seven pilots, lessons learnt and how the city-wide approach will deliver change.