

Burnley's Housing Strategy 2016 - 2021

Executive Member Introduction

Welcome to Burnley's five year housing strategy which sets out our ambitions for improving housing across the borough over the next five years. This strategy will set out where we will focus our energy and resources and how we will achieve our priorities.

Housing is crucial to our growing economy, creating jobs and wealth for our residents and above all supporting our schools to continue to improve the educational attainment of our pupils.

Burnley Council is committed to work across the entire housing sector to deliver our ambitious programme and support our partners wherever possible to drive forward quality and choice throughout the entire housing market for all our residents, businesses and investors.

Executive Member for Housing and Environment
(Deputy Leader)

The borough of Burnley is situated in Lancashire, 21 miles north of Manchester and 20 miles east of Preston and covers an area of 42 square miles. It has a compact urban area surrounded by open countryside with the South Pennines to the east and the gritstone outcrop of Pendle Hill dominating the northern skyline.

There are two main urban settlements, focused on Burnley and Padiham and a number of small villages and hamlets in the rural area. Burnley is one of the main urban centres in Lancashire along with Blackpool, Blackburn and Preston. It serves a wide catchment that includes parts of Pendle, Rossendale and Calderdale.

Much of the borough's character and distinctiveness today derives, not only from its attractive Pennine setting, but also from its development during the Industrial Revolution. This gave the inner parts of the urban area their distinctive terraces, built of local stone in grid-iron street patterns.

Some parts of the borough exhibit social and economic trends which are more commonly characteristic of metropolitan inner areas. The borough is continuing to address challenges in relation to educational attainment, poor health, and low housing values.

The local economy has a significant reliance on the manufacturing sector, whose performance is generally strong. Business start-ups are at a healthy level, as is their survival rate. Whilst the borough has a high level of benefit dependency, the overall outlook for the resilience and competitiveness of the economy is a healthy one, with the proportion of private sector jobs growing at a faster rate than the national average in recent years.

Underpinning the whole approach to addressing this socio-economic context is the recognition that skills development, in support of the current and future labour market, is our number one priority. To this extent, the borough has undergone a comprehensive renewal of its educational infrastructure over the last 10 years. This encompasses nursery, primary, secondary, further and higher education.

This agenda is unconditionally supported by local business, all arms of the public sector and the voluntary, community & faith sector. Crucial to Burnley's prosperity and economic growth is its housing market and this strategy aims to address a number of important priorities that will improve our housing offer to support our growth and skills agenda.

Our housing priorities

Burnley's housing strategy is built upon four central aims.

1. To create a balanced housing market
2. To deliver transformational improvement of the private rented sector
3. To reduce the proportion of empty homes in the borough
4. To promote sustainable and secure homes for all

From these aims flow a series of priorities and actions with ambitious targets to help us monitor our progress over time.

Burnley's context – why do we need a housing strategy?

This strategy is structured under a series of priorities that have developed from the identification of particular challenges and opportunities that exist within the borough's housing market. These are set out in the section below.

The housing market

House types	Council Tax Bands
The 2011 Census recorded that 50.1% of Burnley's housing stock was terraced housing compared with the regional average of 30% and the England average of 24.5%.	Analysis of council tax bands for 2015 showed that 61.3% of dwellings in Burnley were in the lowest band A with only 1.2% of properties in the highest bands F to H. In England as a whole 24.6% of properties are in band A with 9.1% in bands F to H.
Age of stock	Population
Burnley differs substantially from the national average with 71.2% of dwellings built before 1919, compared with only 23.6% nationally	Between 1991 and 2011 Burnley's population fell by 4.5% in stark contrast to a 12.7% rise in England as a whole. The supply of suitable housing is one factor contributing to this loss.
House prices	Affordability ratio
In 2013 average house prices in Burnley were around one third of the national average for England and Wales and 45% lower than the Lancashire lower tier district average.	The median income to median house price in Burnley in 2013/14 was 1 to 3.28, compare against England at 1 to 6.72 and the neighbouring district of Ribble Valley at 1 to 7.76.
Property Condition	Property Condition
The 2009 Private Sector House Condition Survey (PSHCS) for Burnley found that 43.6% was non-decent compared with the national average of 36.7%	The PSSCS also found that the highest rate of Category 1 hazards (<i>the most serious hazards</i>) were found in converted flats (57%) and terraced housing (30%)

The findings above demonstrate that Burnley has a relatively low value housing market with a predominance of low value house types. Whilst this creates opportunities for affordable home ownership it shows an imbalance in the housing mix that will affect resident choice and market demand. This lack of housing choice is a significant contributing factor in the loss of the borough's working age population. The analysis also demonstrates that the worst property condition is concentrated in the lower value housing stock that raises the question about the quality of some of the Borough's most affordable housing.

The private rented sector

Property tenure	Property tenure
The 2011 Census found that Burnley has a higher percentage of properties in the private rented sector (PRS) at 19.4%, compared with Lancashire (12 districts) at 15.1% and England at 16.8%.	The proportion of PRS properties has risen from 9.3% in 2001 to 19.4% in 2011. Out of 39 local authority areas Burnley is ranked the 4 th highest in the Northwest for the percentage of the population living in the PRS.
Property tenure	Tenure change
Out of the 15 wards within the borough 10 have more than 15% of properties in the PRS, with 5 wards having more than 24% of properties in the PRS. Only 14.1% of properties are rented from a registered social landlord in Burnley compared with 17.6% across England and Wales.	The 2011 Census records show that in all areas there has been a decrease in home ownership with a mortgage or loan. In Burnley this decrease is 18% compared to 15% across Lancashire as a whole. Between 2001 and 2011 there has been an 85% increase in the number of people living in the PRS in Burnley.
Property condition	Property condition
The PSHCS found that 28.4% of Category 1 Hazards are associated with PRS properties, compared with a cross tenure average for Burnley of 25.3%.	The PCHCS also found that 33% of pre-1919 properties had a Category 1 hazard. 88% of privately renting tenants live in pre-1919 dwellings.

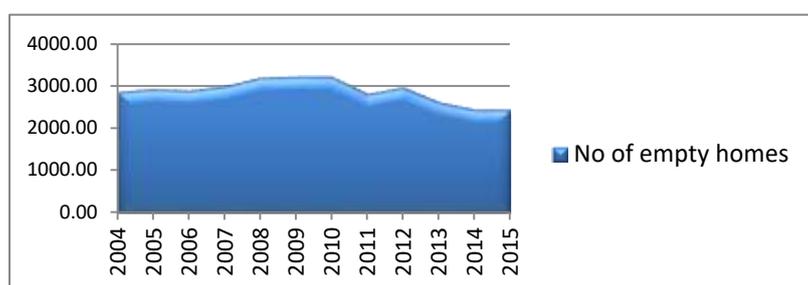
The findings above demonstrate three clear features of housing in Burnley,

1. There is a greater proportion of privately rented property, with a very significant concentration in some wards.
2. The proportion of private rented property is increasing.
3. There is a higher occurrence of property disrepair which is more heavily concentrated in the private rented sector.

Empty homes

Vacancy	Long term vacancy
At October 2014 there were 2,458 empty homes in the borough, 6% of the overall housing stock. The average for England is 2.6%.	In 2014 2.8% of dwellings in Burnley were classed as long term vacant properties. This equates to 1,116 houses 529 fewer than in 2011.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
No of empty homes in Burnley	2,866	2,944	2,900	3,004	3,209	3,232	3,226	2,824	2,978	2,626	2,458	2,456



The number of empty homes across the borough shows a positive downward trend over recent years. Despite this the proportion is still significantly higher than the national average and continues to present a challenge to improving Burnley's housing market.

Sustainable and secure homes

<p>Homelessness</p> <p>In 2015/16 there were 1082 housing enquiries, 142 homeless applications, and 140 potential cases of homelessness prevented. A full housing duty was accepted for 32 households.</p>	<p>Population</p> <p>In general the proportion of older people within the borough is growing which is due to a combination of people living longer, lower birth rates and outmigration of younger age groups. Burnley's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2016) predicted an increase from 27.2% in 2012 to 35.4% in 2032 for the proportion of households headed by older people (65+)</p>
<p>Fuel Poverty</p> <p>In 2013 14.2% of Burnley's households were considered to be in fuel poverty. This compares with the Lancashire wide figure of 11.4%. Burnley's level of fuel poverty was the 16th worst in the Country.</p>	<p>Deprivation</p> <p>In the 2015 Indices of Multiply Deprivation Burnley was ranked the 9th most deprived area out of 326 local authority areas in England. The most prevalent form of deprivation in the borough relates to health.</p>
<p>Health</p> <p>The 2011 Census indicated that Burnley has levels of limiting long-term illness above the regional and national averages at 22.5%, compared with 20.2% at a regional and 17.6% at a national level.</p>	<p>Health</p> <p>The "B with Us" housing register for Burnley shows that 23.8% of all those on the register have a disability</p>

There are a number of issues facing Burnley that require strategic planning and action to improve the sustainability of housing, and the wellbeing of our residents. In line with national trends Burnley is seeing an increase in the proportion of older residents, some of which will require services to maintain independent living. Burnley has a higher than average number of residents with a long-term illness and 1 in 4 applicants on the housing register with a disability. When considered together with higher than average fuel poverty and the Indices of Multiply Deprivation housing in Burnley has a significant role to play in improve the health, well-being and life chances of our residents. The link between housing standards and health outcomes is well established, as to is the relationship between stable, secure housing, educational attainment and employment prospects, all of which presents a strong case for action

Aim 1: To create a balanced housing market

The Council's central housing priority is to ensure there is a range and balance of housing across all tenures to ensure that housing in the borough can meet the needs of current and future residents. In Burnley 71.2% of all dwellings were built before 1919, compared with only 23.6% nationally. Whilst the borough has seen positive growth in new housing over recent years there remains a predominance of small Victorian terraced properties, particularly in the core urban areas.

These properties are crucial to providing affordable options to both own and rent but there is a need to accelerate the provision of new, better quality housing including more aspirational executive homes whilst addressing the disproportionate number of low value, poor quality homes and vacant properties.

Priority 1: Delivering housing to support economic growth

Burnley has an excellent record of proactive intervention in the housing market to improve choice, meet demand and restructure the housing offer in the Borough. Our planning service has a positive attitude towards development and is always willing to work with both the private and public sector to bring forward quality development that makes a positive contribution to Burnley, supports our economy growth, and creates jobs and prosperity.

Burnley has demonstrated strong economic growth since 2009, with 10.5% employment growth between 2009 and 2014, against national and regional growth of 4.9% and 2.6% respectively. The number of businesses in the borough has grown by 13.5% over the last 5 years. The Council has a strong track record in economic development with £800m of investment in business and transport infrastructure over recent years.

Recent developments in Burnley have included,

- **Innovation Drive** a 400,000 sq. ft. Advanced Engineering Supply Park,
- **Burnley Bridge** a 70 acre business park with 650,000 sq. ft. of manufacturing and distribution accommodation,
- **Vision Park** a 120,000 sq. ft. Business Park with a first phase of high quality managed workspace to commence early 2017;
- **On the Banks** which has delivered the regeneration of the historic Weaver's Triangle through mixed use development including offices, retail, education, housing and public realm,
- **Strategic road and rail improvements** including the direct train line to Manchester and the new Manchester Road Station and a planned investment of c. £12m in the strategic road network over the next two years.

Economic growth is driving the need to deliver greater housing numbers and a more diverse offer with aspirational housing choice.

Progress to date

Inner urban regeneration is well established in Burnley with over 200 new homes built on former cleared housing sites with a further 250 with planning permission. These neighbourhoods are now transformed in to popular areas where people choose to live offering a range of family housing with affordable options for first time buyers.

Burnley is also ambitious to see growth in higher value housing to rebalance the housing market and support our growing economy. The most recent statistics from 2015 show that there are more than 1500 planning permissions approved for new dwellings not yet started. This demonstrates that a five year supply is in place to deliver new housing in the short term. The new local plan is currently being prepared and will present a comprehensive plan setting out our vision, objectives, policies and land use allocations for the borough up to 2032. The plan will include specific housing allocations to provide certainty for sites which are considered deliverable and developable over the plan period.

We will deliver this priority by,

- ✓ Adopting a new Local Plan for Burnley which will include policies to show how the borough's objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing will be met up to 2032.
- ✓ Entering into a Joint Venture with a private sector partner to deliver further opportunities for housing across the borough, looking to capture value from higher value developments to assist in bringing forward marginal sites.
- ✓ Working with key stakeholders to explore opportunities for housing in close proximity to Manchester Road railway station, maximising the potential of the direct link to Manchester, together with Lancashire and Yorkshire.
- ✓ Securing Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Housing Zone Status and support to accelerate the delivery of key sites.
- ✓ Supporting the delivery of the Lancashire wide devolution deal to maximise investment in strategic housing sites to support growth and prosperity across the region.
- ✓ Working closely with housing developers to maximise good design and promote quality neighbourhoods.

We will measure our success by,

- Adopt a new Burnley Local Plan by March 2018 that will support housing growth across all tenures and meet the borough's objectively assessed housing need
- Establish a housing joint venture by January 2017
- In partnership with the Homes and Communities agency deliver two challenging brownfield sites for housing development during the lifetime of this strategy
- Ensure we meet our performance targets for the determination of planning decisions, promoting quality design and sustainable developments

Priority 2: The Affordable Housing Programme

Delivering high quality affordable housing is important to our aspirations for a balanced housing market. Burnley has a significant advantage as our housing is relatively affordable with the house price to earnings ratio currently at 4:1 compared with the region at 6:1. However, whilst the need for affordable housing remains strong there is a problem with some low quality terraced housing that does not offer affordability at the quality or amenity value that we aspire to. Our priority for affordable housing is not solely about addressing affordability but about affordable quality that offers modern living standards in a safe and comfortable home.

Progress to date

Burnley has delivered a successful affordable housing programme over recent years which has seen 170 new units for rent built between 2012 and 2015 and 127 households assisted into owner occupation through the "help to buy" equity loans scheme. This affordable housing has been provided by both registered providers and private house builders across a range of sites within the borough.

Burnley was the only Local Authority in the North West to progress a Starter Home development as part of the Government pilot, which will see 16 canal side apartments built as part of the "on the banks" transformational development programme. These homes will be specifically targeted at first time buyers under 40 and will be sold for owner occupation at a discount off market value.

Burnley has a strong relationship with the Homes and Communities Agency and is work together with affordable housing providers to maximise opportunities for quality additions to the supply. Calico Homes, the largest landlord in Burnley, is currently working with the Council to identify suitable sites for affordable homes with an ambitious plan to deliver 477 properties by the spring of 2019.

We will deliver this priority by,

- ✓ Working with our partners Great Places and Calico to deliver 204 affordable homes for rent awarded funding through the HCA's 2015 – 18 affordable housing programme.
- ✓ Assisting Calico to deliver 45 supported housing units awarded funding through the 2015 – 18 programme, to both expand existing provision and develop new accommodation.
- ✓ Working with Calico and Great Places to develop a pipeline of future opportunities for affordable housing by identifying strategic sites that can contribute to the existing housing offer and deliver high quality affordable homes.
- ✓ Building on the success of the starter homes pilot and working with the HCA to develop a programme for both public and privately owned land to bring forward stalled sites and brownfield land to develop opportunities for affordable home ownership.

We will measure our success by,

- The delivery of 204 affordable homes by March 2018
- The delivery of 45 additional supported housing units by March 2018
- Establishing a pipeline of sites for affordable housing by March 2017
- Developing a programme for the delivery of starter homes by April 2017
- Working with Calico Homes to ensure the delivery of the Perseverance Mill

Aim 2: To deliver transformational improvement of the private rented sector

Burnley has a higher than average supply of private rented accommodation at 19.4% compared to Lancashire at 15.1% and England at 16.8%. In some neighbourhoods there is a very significant concentration of private rented properties that can have a dominant effect on shaping the housing market and neighbourhood characteristics. Whilst we recognise the importance of this tenure in creating a balanced housing market and choice for residents we also recognise that when properties are poorly managed and maintained they have a damaging effect on an area creating an unpopular location for residents.

The Council have a long standing tradition of working with private landlords and building strong relationships to face these challenges and improve housing conditions for tenants. This remains a strong commitment and a key aim of this strategy.

Priority 3: Accreditation

Progress to date

Burnley has had voluntary accreditation, The Good Landlord and Agent Scheme (GLAS), since 2001 and by 2016 the scheme can boast a membership of 286 landlords and 9 managing agents, covering over 1600 properties. Through the scheme the Council inspect a proportion of properties from each landlord and ensure that sound management arrangements are in place to increase the supply of good quality, well managed homes that offer security and value for money.

In June 2004 Burnley Council constituted a formal Private Rented Sector Forum where landlord representatives, residents and the Council meet to discuss issues facing the sector and raise the profile of responsible renting. An important aspect of accreditation is improving knowledge and promoting best practice which the Forum achieves through Landlord Evenings and training events where all landlords get the opportunity to hear expert advice and discuss topical issues.

We will deliver this priority by,

- ✓ Continuing to champion GLAS and increasing membership through Landlord Evenings and the promotion of incentives such as property advertising, free training events and discounted fees for selective licensing.
- ✓ Ensuring that there are two Landlord Evenings and a minimum of two free training events per year.

We will measure our success by,

- Increasing the membership of the Good Landlord and Agent scheme by 25 additional landlords year on year
- A minimum of 100 landlords per year attending development days

Priority 4: Selective Licensing

The Council fully acknowledge the benefits of private rented housing in creating choice and variety in Burnley's housing market with GLAS and the Forum seen as important schemes to create closer working relationships and improve standards. However, experience has shown that they attract a limited number of landlords that in many instances already provide appropriate management standards. The voluntary nature of GLAS does not compel the worst landlords to engage with the Council or join the scheme. It is also recognised that accreditation does not have an intensive impact in any one area and does not tackle the worst properties or management practices within the Borough.

Progress to date

Burnley introduced its first designated area for selective licensing back in 2008 and currently has three live areas (*Trinity, Gannow and Queensgate*) with three further areas due to go live in November 2016 (*Burnley Wood with Healey Wood, Leyland Road area and the Ingham and Lawrence Street area*). Once all six

areas are in operation selective licensing in Burnley will cover approximately 2300 private rented properties.

Within an area designated for selective licensing all privately rented properties require a licensing to operate which contains a series of condition that the licence holder must meet. To breach the licence conditions or fail to apply for a licence is a criminal offence that could lead to prosecution and a fine of up to £20,000. Selective licensing is an intensive approach that aims to comprehensively drive up standards throughout a targeted area.

We will deliver this priority by,

- ✓ Successfully implementing the three further areas designated for selective licensing.
- ✓ Ensuring all eligible properties are licensed across the six areas.
- ✓ Pursuing prosecution where landlords fail to apply for a licence or breach the conditions of the licence.
- ✓ Introducing management orders where appropriate for properties that have no reasonable prospect of becoming licensed.
- ✓ Monitoring the areas to identify properties and landlords that are failing to adhere to the licence conditions.
- ✓ Holding weekly drop in sessions, six residents meetings and issuing two newsletters per year.
- ✓ Pro-actively inspect 200 properties throughout the areas.
- ✓ Working with residents and landlords to apply early intervention strategies to any issues that arise which could affect the wider neighbourhood.

We will measure our success by,

- Licensing 75% of the eligible properties across the 3 new licensing areas within the first year of the designations
- Carrying out 200 proactive inspections per year across all six licensing areas
- Resolving 75% of potential breaches of licensing conditions informally through support and negotiation with the Landlord
- Achieving a 98% success rate for all prosecutions taken under the selective licensing programme

Priority 5: Enforcing housing standards

The Council operate a housing standards service that tackles problems of disrepair following complaints from tenants. Local Authorities have powers under the Housing Act 2004 to inspect privately rented properties to ensure that they do not have an adverse effect on the health, safety or welfare of tenants or visitors.

The Council also conducts targeted programmes of pro-active inspections to identify sub-standard property and carry out a programme of inspections across the selective licensing areas to support the scheme in raising standards.

New legislation has further strengthened local authority powers to enforce against Managing Agents who fail to join a national redress scheme to protect property owners who utilise their services. The Government have also introduced legislation to ensure that private rented properties contain the appropriate amount of smoke alarms and those landlords who fail to comply can be fined up to £5,000.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) are recognised as an important type of housing accommodation within the Borough and often the only viable source of housing for vulnerable residents. They are recognised as higher risk accommodation in relation to fire, inadequate facilities, overcrowding and poor management. Mandatory Licensing ensures that those HMOs which present the greatest health and safety risks come to the attention of the Council, placing a direct obligation on landlords to provide acceptable standards. Every HMO that has three storeys or more and at least five people living there must be licensed.

Progress to date

The dedicated enforcement service carries out around 250 to 300 inspections per year and where necessary serve statutory improvement notices to ensure conditions are improved. The table below shows the formal action taken by the Council to remove hazards from properties.

Year	Hazard awareness notices	Improvement notices (Cat 1 + Cat 2)	Prohibition Orders	Emergency Prohibition Orders	Emergency Remedial Action
11/12	9	7	0	1	1
12/13	2	7	0	1	0
13/14	6	17	2	1	2
14/15	1	16	1	5	4
15/16	0	6	1	1	3

Whilst we do not shy away from taking enforcement action and are prepared to use all the tools available to us through legislation our aim is to work with landlords to resolve issues of disrepair without the need for formal action. In the vast majority of cases this is achieved and helps to further strengthen our relationship with the sector.

The Council were successful in securing money from the Government’s Rogue Landlord fund to carry out work to tackle poor housing standards. Flats above shops in Colne Road and Abel Street were identified as a concern following consultation with the fire service and were targeted through the scheme. We inspected 113 properties and served 75 notices for disrepair. To date we have carried out 21 prosecutions with a further 12 awaiting decisions

We will deliver this priority by,

- ✓ Continuing to operate an efficient and effective enforcement service that works with landlords to address substandard property condition and where necessary uses enforcement powers to ensure that property standards are improved.
- ✓ Issuing penalty charge notices where properties are identified as having none, or insufficient smoke alarms installed.
- ✓ Monitoring managing agents to ensure they are members of a Government approved redress scheme and take enforcement action where appropriate.
- ✓ Proactively inspect property portfolios of landlords and managing agents that continue to provide accommodation that risks the health, safety and welfare of the occupants.
- ✓ Make full use of the powers under the Housing and Planning Act 2016.
- ✓ Operating an effective HMO licensing regime that requires the owner to make an application.

We will measure our success by,

- Resolving and closing 260 housing standards cases per year
- Reviewing and revising Burnley’s standard for Houses in Multiple Occupation by March 2017
- Determining all HMO licence applications within 90 days of a valid application

Aim 3: To reduce the proportion of empty homes in the borough

Priority 6: The empty homes programme

A concentration of empty homes is the most visible sign of a poorly performing housing market. The properties are often in poor condition which affects the appearance of an area and has a negative impact on the residents. They also attract anti-social behaviour, fly tipping and vandalism, which all contribute to creating unpopular neighbourhoods.

Burnley has a longstanding problem with long term empty properties due to the oversupply in some neighbourhoods of small, poor quality Victorian terraced housing that does not meet the needs of a modern society. In Burnley 6% of its housing stock is vacant compared with 2.6% across England. Whilst the situation has improved over recent years more work is needed. Empty homes are also a wasted resource and can, if dealt with effectively provide affordable housing for both rent and owner occupation.

Returning empty homes back in to use makes a positive contribution all-round by providing a home, improving the immediate neighbourhood and generating income for the owner.

Progress to date

Burnley has an excellent record of effective intervention and innovation in tackling empty homes and has run a Vacant Property Scheme since 2002 that works with owners to encourage and support them to return their properties back in to use. The Council also recycle capital receipts to acquire properties, refurbish them to modern standards and return them back in to use through sale on the open market. Since 2002 the scheme has purchased 117 through either voluntary acquisition or compulsory purchase orders where owners have not been forthcoming in dealing with the issue themselves.

In 2013 Burnley was awarded £3.5 million through the Government's clusters of empty homes programme to tackle concentrated empty properties in three neighbourhoods across the Borough, Gannow, Queensgate and Trinity. This programme returned 223 properties back in to use against a target of 175 utilising purchase and refurbishment, loans to landlords and an empty homes leasing scheme with our partner Calico Homes.

To support the work of the clusters programme two neighbourhood improvement schemes were carried out with key streets targeted for aesthetic improvements.

In addition to direct intervention on empty homes the Council also restructured the Council Tax charging system to incentivise owners of empty homes to return them back in to use demonstrating a comprehensive approach that is committed to using all options to reduce empty homes.

Our priority is to build on the progress to date by supporting owners to tackle their empty properties, targeting our resources strategically, using legal powers available as necessary and continuing to promote innovation to ensure maximum impact.

We have committed £2.7M over the next three year capital programme to target empty homes through a combination of renovation loans to landlords and the Council run purchase, refurbishment and resale scheme.

We will deliver this priority by,

- ✓ Operating a Borough wide empty homes programme utilising recycled capital receipts to make strategic acquisitions for refurbishment and resale.
- ✓ Working with the private rented sector to offer a loans scheme for landlords to return empty homes in poor condition back in to use and to a quality standard.

- ✓ Carrying out a neighbourhood improvement scheme along the Accrington Road gateway to address the physical appearance of properties, support new housing development, improving the private rented sector and tackle empty homes.
- ✓ Making full use of all available powers such as section 215 notices and enforced sale procedures to return properties back in to use.
- ✓ Continue to lobby Government for additional resources to tackle the problem of empty homes.

We will measure our success by,

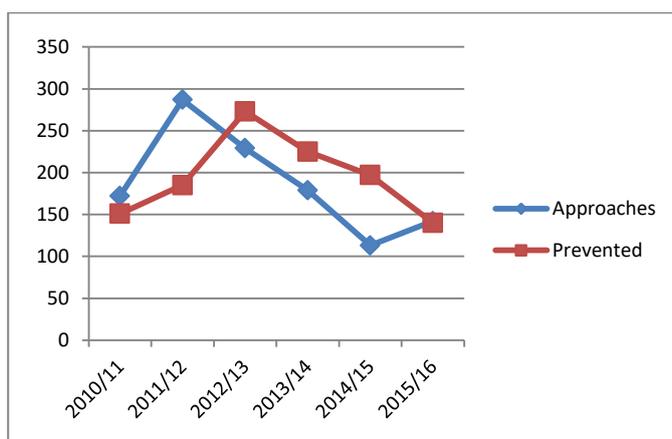
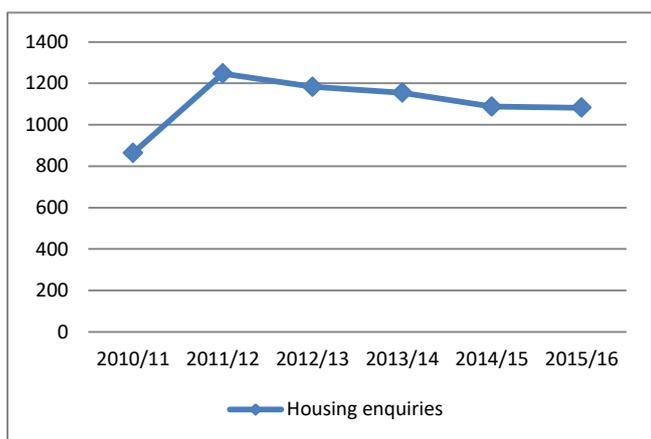
- Bringing a minimum of 40 empty homes back in to use through local authority intervention each year
- Buying and renovating 30 properties over the three year capital programme up to March 2018
- Carrying out a minimum of one neighbourhood improvement scheme each year

Aim 4: To promote sustainable and secure homes for all

Fundamental to Burnley's housing strategy is enabling residents to access and maintain housing where they feel safe, secure and can enjoy life in a comfortable home of their choice. Housing is more than a roof over our heads, it is about neighbourhoods and communities where people feel they belong and wish to remain.

Priority 7: Preventing homelessness

Homelessness is about much more than rough sleeping and in most cases affects vulnerable individuals and families who experience a housing crisis and end up living in temporary accommodation. Homelessness and its implications are well known to have a negative impact on health, employment, education and children's wellbeing. The table below shows the level of activity over recent years and demonstrates that demand for our services remains high.



Progress to date

Burnley has produced a five year Prevention of Homelessness Strategy 2013 – 2018 which sets out a range of actions and initiatives. This strategy is reviewed annual with an updated action plan. The key aims of the strategy are,

- Prevent Homelessness
- Promote multi-agency working
- Develop provision
- Monitor changing needs and provision

The cases where homelessness has been prevented have steadily increased over the years as a consequence of a strong strategy and prioritisation of key services.

We will deliver this priority by,

- ✓ Working with our partners to review and remodel temporary accommodation to meet the accommodation and support requirements of households in need.
- ✓ Supporting our partners to respond to cuts in Supporting People funding and the challenges presented by welfare reforms.
- ✓ Reviewing and updating the Prevention of Homelessness Strategy each year producing an updated and revised action plan.
- ✓ Conducting a new Homelessness Review and producing a new Prevention of Homelessness Strategy for 2019.

We will measure our success by,

- Preventing homelessness for a minimum of 200 households per year
- Determining all homelessness applications within 33 working days
- Ensuring that all households owed at full housing duty find suitable, settled accommodation within 16 weeks of the homeless decision
- Producing a new Prevention of Homelessness Strategy by July 2019

Priority 8: Promoting independent living

By developing and maintaining services that promote and assist residents to live independently in a home of their choice, together with our partners, we help to create sustainable, healthy communities. People are able to realise their housing ambitions and maintain a level of control over their lives that improves their wellbeing.

Through early and often low scale measures it is possible to avoid more radical interventions that can be complex, costly and not always in line with the wishes of the individual.

Progress to date

The Council have a range of initiatives that support people to live in their own homes independently for as long as they feel confident to do so. These include services delivered by our Home Improvement Agency run by St. Vincent Homes that includes a handyperson service to assist households with minor repairs and advice and assistance with property maintenance issues. The aim is to ensure that elderly and vulnerable residents are safe and comfortable in their own homes.

For more serious disrepair issues there is an emergency works programme where owner occupiers can access a grant for repairs that present a serious risk to their health and safety. The Council complete around 25 cases per year for households who are over 60 and on a qualifying benefit.

The Council provide a grant programme for disabled adaptations to ensure that residents can remain living in a home of their choice that is adapted to suit their needs.

Through the planning system we encourage where possible the development of properties built to lifetime home standards to facilitate sustainable housing that is capable of adaptations and can offer a sustainable home for residents with restricted mobility.

We will deliver this priority by,

- ✓ Ensuring we continue to deliver an efficient service that maximises the provision of adaptations and ensures that the right level of grant funding is available to meet need.
- ✓ Ensuring that resources are available to fund an emergency works programme targeted at the most vulnerable households dealing with the worst cases of disrepair.
- ✓ Working with the Home Improvement Agency to promote their services to as many vulnerable households as possible to assist with advice, home repairs and minor adaptations.
- ✓ Promoting the development of lifetime home standards wherever possible through the planning system.

We will measure our success by,

- Completing 80% of all urgent disabled facilities grant applications within 75 days
- Ensuring that an emergency works budget of £60,000 per year is available within the 3 year capital programme 2015 – 2018 to remove serious hazards from a minimum of 25 properties per year
- Completing 300 handyman repair jobs for elderly and disabled residents each year

Priority 9: Improving energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty

Fuel poverty affects some of our local communities and is one of the biggest contributors to health inequalities. It is important that we work with our partners to tackle fuel poverty to improve living standards for people on low incomes and encourage a more energy efficient housing sector.

Progress to date

Burnley has a long history of attracting funding through the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme where the big energy providers contribute to improving the energy efficiency of residential properties and reducing carbon emissions. In previous years these schemes have funded large scale insulation programmes for lofts and cavity walls. In 2015 Burnley joined with our neighbouring Local Authorities across Lancashire to launch the Cosy Homes in Lancashire scheme with the aim of working collectively to attract larger sums of ECO funding to provide energy efficiency measures across the County.

For a number of years Burnley has run a boiler replacement programme (Heating Rebate Scheme) where households can apply for financial help towards replacing their boiler with a new energy efficient model, or the installation of a full heating system if their property has never had central heating. In 2015/16 the Council assisted 73 households under this programme.

We will deliver this priority by,

- ✓ Maximising opportunities through Energy Company Obligation funding to bring investment into the Borough to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty.
- ✓ Committing to resource a boiler replacement scheme until 2018.
- ✓ Investigating opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of “hard to treat” properties that include many Victorian Terraced Houses.

We will measure our success by,

- Ensuring that a minimum of £40,000 is available in each year of the three year capital programme to carry out a minimum of 70 heating rebate grants per year