GREATER BIRMINGHAM & SOLIHULL SUPERVISORY BOARD

Thursday 21st June 2018 at 14:00
Committee Room 2, Council House
Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BB

AGENDA

	PART I – OPEN ITEMS	
	(Open to the Press and Public)	
1.	**Welcome and Apologies for Absence** By the current Supervisory Board Chair	
2.	**Notes of the last meeting on 22nd February 2018 and matters arising**	**Attached**
3.	**Election of the Chairman**	**Verbal**
4.	**Election of the Vice-Chairman**	**Verbal**
5.	**Appointment of the Secretary**	**Verbal**
6.	**Membership and substitute members for 2018/19**	**Attached**
7.	**Notification of any declarations of interest**	**Verbal**
8.	**Growth Programme Update**	**Attached**
9.	**GBSLEP Housing Framework**	**Attached**
10.	**GBSLEP Towns & Local Centres Framework**	**Attached**
	Day and Time of Meetings • 27th September, 14:00, Council House • 6th December, 14:00, Council House	
	PART II – EXEMPT ITEMS NIL	

Greater Birmingham & Solihull Supervisory Board

22nd February 2018 at 14:00 hrs

Committee Room 2, Council House, Birmingham

PRESENT

Cllr Mike Wilcox – Lichfield

Cllr Robert Hulland – Solihull

Cllr Bill Hartnett – Redditch

Cllr Brigid Jones – Birmingham

Cllr Steve Claymore – Tamworth

Cllr Marcus Hart – Wyre Forest

APOLOGIES

Cllr George Adamson – Cannock Chase

Cllr Geoff Denaro – Bromsgrove

Cllr Ian Ward – Birmingham

Cllr Bob Sleigh OBE – Solihull

IN ATTENDANCE

Diane Tilley – Chief Executive, Lichfield

Kevin Dicks – Chief Executive, Redditch and Bromsgrove

Stella Manzie – Chief Executive, Birmingham

Andrew Barratt – Corporate Director, Tamworth

Ian Miller – Chief Executive, Wyre Forest

Roger Mendonça – Director, GBSLEP

Nick Glover – Executive Manager, GBSLEP

Peter Jenion – Policy Officer, GBSLEP

1.	Welcome and apologies for absence
	The Chair, Cllr Mike Wilcox, welcomed the Supervisory Board and noted apologies for: • Cllr George Adamson – Cannock Chase

		• Cllr Geoff Denaro – Bromsgrove • Cllr Ian Ward – Birmingham • Cllr Bob Sleigh OBE – Solihull
2.		**Declarations of interest**
		No Declarations of interests were announced.
3.		**Agree notes of the Last Meeting on 7th December 2017 and Matters Arising**
		The minutes of the meeting on 7th December were approved as an accurate record. Nick Glover noted the need for the LEP Executive to consider the quorum issue and consult with Leaders; and noted that progress with the Strategic Employment Sites Study has been slower than anticipated, although a working group has been formally constituted and is aiming to produce a study brief shortly.
84		**RESOLVED:** The Supervisory Board:
	i	Approved the minutes as an accurate record.
4.		**Growth Programme update**
		Roger Mendonça presented this item, the purpose of which was to note and discuss the progress made in delivering the Growth Deal programme. In the discussion, Roger complimented and congratulated Wyre Forest District Council for their contribution to the Churchfields Urban Village project bid. The potential to utilise any in-year underspend on projects currently in delivery was also discussed.
85		**RESOLVED:** The Supervisory Board:
	i	Noted the project investment decisions made – including: • Clean Air Hydrogen Bus Project (Birmingham City Council (BCC)) – FBC approval for £2.156m grant over 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years • Youth Skills and Enterprise Hub and Flagship Centre (Prince's Trust) – Full Business Case (FBC) approval for £627,203 grant in 2017/18 • Lichfield Southern Bypass (Staffordshire County Council) – Outline Business Case (OBC) conditional approval for £2.3m over 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years • Aspirations for All (Sense) – FBC approval for £1.206m grant over 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years • Dance Hub (Birmingham Hippodrome) – FBC approval for £1.476m grant over 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years
	ii	Noted the withdrawal of funding allocations from the One Station and Making the Connections projects

iii		Noted progress made with the Programme Delivery Board 'Star Chambers'.
5.	**LEP Governance & Transparency Best Practice Guidance**	
	Nick Glover presented this item, the purpose of which was note the progress with implementing the LEP Governance & Transparency Best Practice Guidance. In the discussion, Ian Miller recognised that the Executive had used the examples provided in the guidance but suggested some amendments to the Complaints and Whistleblowing policies; in particular, that the Public Disclosure Act gained Royal Assent in 1998 (not 1999); and that the paragraph of the whistleblowing policy relating to confidentiality and disclosure to external bodies was not in keeping with the Civil Service Commission's own guidance and should be removed.	
86	**RESOLVED:** The Supervisory Board:	
i		Noted the publication of the LEP Governance & Transparency Best Practice Guidance;
ii		Noted that the Nominations & Governance Committee met on 13 February and noted the Terms of Reference;
iii		Agreed to nominate Cllr Bob Sleigh from the Metropolitan authorities and Cllr Mike Wilcox from the District authorities to attend the Nominations & Governance Committee;
iv		Noted and discussed the challenges associated with the publication of papers for key meetings;
v		Noted that the Nominations Committee agreed to adopt the Code of Conduct for Board Directors;
vi		Noted that the Nominations & Governance Committee agreed to adopt the Complaints and Confidential Complaints procedure, and agreed to amend the reference to the Public Disclosure Act; and
vii		Noted that the Nominations & Governance Committee agreed to adopt the Whistleblowing procedure, and agreed to remove the paragraph related to confidentiality and disclosure to external bodies.
6.	**Dates of future meetings**	
87	**RESOLVED:** The Supervisory Board:	
i		Agreed that there will be Supervisory Board meeting a fortnight after each LEP Board meeting at the same location. Nick Glover will circulate the dates.

7.	Any other business
	None

The meeting closed at 14:26hrs.

………………………………..
    CHAIRMAN

Report to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Supervisory Board

21st June 2018

Membership & Nominated Substitutes of the Supervisory Board for 2018/19

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To note the updated membership of the Supervisory Board following the new appointments made by the nine Local Authority members' respective Authorities for the municipal year 2018/19.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

2.1 Note the membership of the Supervisory Board as set out below.

3. Background

3.1 The Supervisory Board was established on 28th March 2014. An updated list of membership (including substitute members) is provided below following the appointments made by the nine LEP local Authorities for the municipal year 2018/19 and is for noting.

BIRMINGHAM
Councillor Ian Ward (Voting)
Councillor Brigid Jones (Substitute voting Member)

BROMSGROVE
Councillor Geoff Denaro (Voting)
Councillor Karen May (Substitute voting Member)

CANNOCK CHASE
Councillor George Adamson (Voting)
Councillor Gordon Alcott (Substitute voting Member)

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE
Councillor Richard Grosvenor (Voting)
Councillor Patricia Ackroyd (Substitute voting Member)

LICHFIELD
Councillor Michael Wilcox (Voting)
Councillor Ian Pritchard (Substitute voting Member)

REDDITCH
Councillor Matthew Dormer (Voting)
Councillor David Bush (Substitute voting Member)

SOLIHULL
Councillor Robert Sleigh OBE (Voting)
Councillor Ian Courts (Substitute voting Member)

TAMWORTH
Councillor Steven Claymore (Voting)
Councillor Daniel Cook (Substitute voting Member)

WYRE FOREST
Councillor Marcus Hart (Voting)
Councillor Ian Hardiman (Substitute voting Member)

Prepared by: Nick Glover
                      GBSLEP Executive Manager

Contact: nick.glover@birmingham.gov.uk
                      07730 281 420

Date Created: 12th June 2018

Report to the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Supervisory Board

Thursday 21st June 2018

GROWTH PROGRAMME UPDATE

Purpose of the report

To note and discuss the progress made in delivering the Growth Deal programme.

Recommendations

The Supervisory Board is requested to note the:

- the current programme and pipeline status;

- project investment approvals made;

- note that there was c.10% financial slippage across the LGF projects in 2017/18 financial year and was within expectations; and

- note that there was full utilisation of LGF funding for 2017/18.

Programme Status

Pipeline and Project Delivery Overview

1. There was a concentration of activity over March with projects progressing through the Stage Gateways. In total, 5 Local Growth Fund (LGF) projects completed in Q4 2017/18, taking the total number of completed LGF projects to 26 out of a current programme size of 58. Further details are at Appendix A and project level details are included as Appendix D. A case study on the Centre for Clinical Haematology that completed in Q4 has been added to the GBSLEP website and featured in recent GBSLEP newsletters.

2. The six-monthly review of the strategic pipeline of projects is in progress. This will encompass the SEP Delivery Plans and map out those priority capital interventions associated with these, some of which are currently on the pipeline and others which will be commissioned.

Project Investment Approvals

3. The following LGF project investment decisions have been made since the last meeting by the Programme Delivery Board (PDB) or LEP Director under delegated authority:

- Symphony Hall Extension (Performances Birmingham Ltd) – approval of £408,148 of project development funding to support the preparation of the Full Business Case. Further background information is included in Appendix B.

- Kidderminster Railway Station Interchange (Worcestershire County Council) - approval by the Programme Delivery Board of an increase in conditional funding allocation for the project to £2.407m (an increase of £0.607m), subject to a satisfactory Full Business Case. Further background information is included in Appendix C.

Financial Profile

4. The 2017/18 LGF grant claims came to £23.3m against an annual allocation from government of £25.6m. This equates to approximately 10% slippage across projects, which was within the internal estimate of up to 25%. It represents a significant improvement from the 68% slippage across projects in 2016/17, and demonstrates the benefits of additional LEP programme resource being in place and improvements across projects.

5. There was a full utilisation of the annual LGF allocation, with the remaining funding being temporarily transferred to the Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) before being returned to the programme in Q1 2018/19.

6. Looking to the year ahead, the financial profile is substantially over-programmed to 185%, with £35m already allocated against £19m of available funding to mitigate against the risk of any slippage. The RIF will be utilised and converted back to grant to cover this level of over-programming and to buttress the dip in the LGF funding profile over 2018/19 – 2019/20.

Programme Management Office (PMO)

7. A series of improvements to the PMO arrangements have now been completed, as per the SEP Business Plan. These improvements will build upon the work already done to test project delivery plans and seeks to embed good practice across all projects on the programme. The next phase of improvements are already underway as part of the continuous improvement of the programme.

8. Through the PMO changes the LEP Programme Team have improved the level of information that is being reported by projects on outputs and outcomes. The first period of revised reporting is currently being reviewed and an enhance profile picture of outputs will be provided once completed.

9. The LEP has commissioned a series of externally facilitated workshops to support capacity building with project sponsors. The first themes have been around project and programme management, and business case development, both of which have received positive feedback.

Conclusions

10. The performance of the LGF programme is continuing to improve. Whilst there was some limited financial slippage across projects in 2017/18, there has been a substantial improvement in the position and a low risk of occurrence in the financial year ahead. As the improvements to the PMO are being embedded, there will be increased attention is on supporting the development of pipeline projects.

Prepared by:	Tom Fletcher
	Acting Head of Delivery
Contact:	tom.fletcher@birmingham.gov.uk
	0121 303 2150 / 07860 906438
Date:	8th June 2018

Programme Level Key Issues and Strategic Risks – May 2018

Overall Programme Status (Current Key Issues)

Budget	Time	Benefits
↔	↑	↔
Growth Deal funding insufficient to deliver all projects we would ideally take forward. SEP Delivery Plans informing where to target resources to ensure we achieve greatest impact for the resources available.	Greater confidence in the accuracy of project delivery plans following ongoing testing through additional Programme Team resource and PDB 'Star Chambers'. C10% financial slippage across LGF projects in 2017/18 and 2018/19 forecast 180% to programme.	With the exception of skills, and to lesser extent commercial floorspace, forecast outputs exceed original forecast. However, previous slippage raises questions about deliverability of outputs in practice.
Actions in hand: 1. Arrangements for Programme Management Levy escalated within Accountable Body and show signs of progressing. 2. Pipeline projects being developed to Outline Business Case allowing other potential sources of funding to be identified and pursued. 3. Exploration into options to provide greater support to develop pipeline projects in order to take advantage of current and future funding opportunities. 4. Additional LEP resources secured to support access to alternative funding streams. £7.7m successful bids supported so far.	**Actions in hand:** 1. Level of overprogramming for 2018/19 higher than previous years to reduce risk of any slippage. 2. Revolving Investment Fund to be accessed to accommodate overprogramming and smooth out uneven financial profile through to 2020/21. 3. Programme Team and PDB 'Star Chambers' reviewing projects higher risk projects. Projects informed that funding reallocation may take place. 4. First phase of PMO improvements completed April 2018. Will further support better understanding of project delivery confidence.	**Actions in hand:** 1. Emerging SEP Delivery Plans to clearly identify priority interventions required to support the SEP ambition and targets. Strategic pipeline review to be conducted in light of this. 2. Revised project reporting in place April 2018 to better capture and distinguish outputs and outcomes. 3. Revised outputs forecast to be provided to CLoG and updated as pipeline projects enter the programme. 4. Project evaluation guidance in development in next phase of PMO improvements to support overall programme evaluation.

Financials

Financial Year	Previous Years	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
Growth Deal allocation	£63.20m	£25.70m	£19.30m	£12.72m	£31.85m	£152.77m
Forecast Expenditure*	£63.20m	£23.26m	£36.49m	£14.16m	£8.71m	£145.82m
Variation	-	-£2.44m	+£17.19m	+£0.87m	-£28.43m	-
Level of overprogramming	-	90%	189%	111%	27%	-
Revolving Investment Fund**	£35.7m					
Growth Deal Funding available for Strategic Pipeline						£42.65m
Claims to date 2018/19						£0.37

Forecast expenditure does not include priority pipeline projects until a conditional allocation is made.

**RIF can be converted back to grant to cover any annual over allocation, if required.

Stage Gateway Progress

	Number of Projects	Proportion	Variation from Last Quarter
Total Funded Projects	58	100%	+3
Live Projects	32	55%	-2
Completed Projects	26	45%	+5
Projects by Stage Gateways			
Completed Projects (Stage Gate 6+)	26	45%	+5
Delivery (Stage Gate 5)	20	34%	-
Contracting (Stage Gate 4)	6	10%	-2
FBC (Stage Gate 3)	6	10%	0

Benefits

	Total Outcomes and Outputs					
	Public / Private contributions (£m)	Leverage (£m)	Jobs created / safeguarded	Homes built	Commercial Floorspace (m2)	Learners Assisted (p.a.)
Total Forecast	127.2	263.0	38,119	10,251	603,680	1,565
Growth Deal Target	119.0	0.0	20,300	4,900	641,703	12,500
Variation	+8.2	+263.0	+17,819	+5,351	-38,023	-10,935

Key Strategic Programme Risks

Risk	Status	Management response
Project development and delivery stalls due to lack of resources or internal support within project sponsors	↔ Significant historical slippage evident in 2016/17 and 2017/18 and certain themes of project pipeline slow to progress.	• Additional resource established within the LEP Programme Team to support project sponsors to develop and deliver projects • Test forecast financial profiles with project sponsors and notify them that slipped funding will at risk • LEP resource identified to support capability building in Council partners • LEP project development funding being accessed by projects to progress from OBC to FBC • SEP Delivery Plans identify pipeline projects where the LEP will intervene to accelerate development • More rigorous assessment of deliverability has been adopted as part of GD3 appraisal processes • Increased use of overprogramming enables easier switching of resources from stalled projects in future years
Poor programme management decisions are made due to a lack of accurate data on projects	↑ Manually operated data management systems are time consuming and create the potential for errors in the processing of information from highlight report to management system to report	• Additional resource recruited into the LEP to more proactively assess project information • PDB 'Star Chambers' review projects that are assessed to be a higher risk of not proceeding to plan • First phase of Programme Management Office (PMO) improvements made April 2018 and next phase of changes over Q1/2 18/19 • New project monitoring, change request, completion and evaluation forms are providing more relevant data • New Programme Management System (PMS) to enable improved data management and reporting to be explored following project-data review and PMO formalisation

Appendix B

Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP

Investment Report – Project Development Funding

Birmingham Symphony Hall Extension

Recommendation

The Supervisory Board is recommended to note the:

1. Approval of the allocation of £408,148 (four hundred and eight thousand and one hundred forty-eight pounds) Development Funding to Performances Birmingham Limited to progress the Birmingham Symphony Hall Extension project from Outline to Full Business Case. This is in accordance with the GBSLEP Assurance Framework, following the conditional approval of the Outline Business Case by GBSLEP's Programme Delivery Board on 9th November 2017.

Background

2. Following the submission of an Expression of Interest for the Symphony Hall Extension project in September 2016 and its assessment as an 'A' strategic fit against GBSLEP's Strategic Economic Plan, Performance Birmingham Limited (PBL) submitted their Outline Business Case (OBC) in June 2017. Subsequent to independent appraisal of the OBC, the project was recommended for approval by the LEP Executive in October 2017.

3. The request for an LGF grant allocation of £4.5m against a total project cost of £12,532,300 was conditionally approved by GBSLEP's Programme Delivery Board on 9 November 2017. This approval was subject to a Full Business Case (FBC) being submitted by no later than 31st December 2018, and to PBL securing additional match funding to the value of at least £8.032m.

4. While PBL did not apply for development funding with their OBC submission, they indicated their intent to do so later on in the process in order to progress the project designs to the level required at the FBC Gateway.

5. The Development Funding applied for will enable PBL to complete relevant capital design works (progressing to RIBA Stage 3), surveys and specialist design inputs.

6. The process followed is compliant with the GBSLEP Assurance Framework.

Financial Implications

7. The allocation of Development Funding will be included in the total capital grant allocated to the project, subject to the approval of the FBC. Should the FBC not be approved or delivery of the project does not commence, the project sponsor will be required to return the funds to GBSLEP. The below table profiles the funding allocation for the project, reflecting the Development Funding allocation (FY2018/19) and the balance of LGF subject to FBC approval.

	Previous years	**2017/18**	**2018/19**	**2019/20**	**2020/21**	**Future years**	**Total**
Capital funding (£000s)							
GBSLEP LGF Grant funding requested	-	-	**408**	-	**4,092**	-	**4,500**
Total capital cost	-	444	408	775	10,905	-	12,532

Conclusions

8. The Birmingham Symphony Hall Extension will transform the commercial capability of this major cultural attraction. Approval of Development Funding will enable PBL to develop its Full Business Case and this contributing to achieving this ambitious aim.

Reviewed by: Tom Fletcher
                      Acting Head of Delivery

Prepared by: Lada Zimina
                      Project Support Officer

Contact: lada.zimina@birmingham.gov.uk
                      07864 931 943

Date: 12th April 2018

Appendix C

Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP

Programme Delivery Board Meeting

Change Request: Kidderminster Railway Station Interchange

Recommendation

The Supervisory Board is requested to note the Programme Delivery Board's (PDB) approval of the increase in conditional allocation for the Kidderminster Railway Station Interchange project to £2.407m, subject to a satisfactory Full Business Case.

Background

1. Worcestershire County Council (WCC) submitted an Expression of Interest (EoI) for the Kidderminster Railway Station Interchange project in September 2014 as part of the Growth Deal 1&2 process. At this early stage of project development, the total project cost was estimated to be £4.3m, with £1.8m LGF request to the GBSLEP and the remainder being sourced from Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP).

2. Following earlier issues in progressing with the development of the project, SLC Rail were commissioned to manage the development of the scheme.

3. The project completed its GRIP 3 designs in March 2017, following which an independent review process with WLEP conditionally approved it for LGF funding.

4. The project's progress in overcoming the earlier issues was noted by the Programme Delivery Board (PDB) in May 2017. At this stage it was reported that cost estimates to deliver the project were anticipated as being higher than the existing project funding package.

5. Since then GRIP 4 designs were completed in March 2018, and GRIP 5 together with appointing the contractor in May 2018. The Full Business Case is due to be submitted on 15 May 2018 to WLEP, who will lead on its technical appraisal on behalf of GBSLEP.

6. The project is now shovel-ready, with rail works due to start on site in August 2018 and scheme to be completed by May 2019.

Funding

7. The initial project cost was estimated at £4.3m, with GBSLEP committing £1.8m and WLEP – £2.5m. Following the submission of tenders in April 2018, the expectation of cost increases has been realised, with the total project cost reaching £5.295m, thus a funding gap of £0.995m. Despite the cost increases, the business case remains very strong with a Benefit:Cost Ratio (BCR) of 7.71.

8. While reducing the scope of the project remains an option this would negatively impact project's BCR and would result in key objectives of the scheme no longer being achieved. Furthermore, it would also represent a missed opportunity for the area.

9. At a recent project funding meeting, WLEP stated that there is an absence of uncommitted funding for the project; Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) committed £0.075m; and further additional funding is being sought from WCC and West Midlands Trains.

10. The GBSLEP has previously permitted any unutilised funding from Growth Deal 1&2 projects to be considered for reallocation to existing projects that encounter cost pressures or could increase scope to deliver more benefits. The current headroom from several projects coming in under budget in 2017/18 is confirmed at £0.607m. This headroom does not include Birmingham City Council projects that have had funding reallocated to indicatively support the Commonwealth Games.

11. On 17th May the PDB approved the conditional allocation of this £0.607m headroom to reduce the funding gap on the project. Subject to a satisfactory Full Business Case, this would increase the GBSLEP contribution to £2.407m towards the project. The final funding decision will be made by the LEP Director as it falls within the <£2.5m delegation.

Conclusion

12. This report details PDB's approval to increase conditional allocation for the Kidderminster Railway Station Interchange project to £2.407m, subject to a satisfactory Full Business Case. This is a strategically important project in an area that previously received limited GBSLEP investment. The project completed its key development milestones on time and is ready to start works on site.

Reviewed by:	Tom Fletcher Acting Head of Delivery
Prepared by:	Lada Zimina Project Support Officer
Contact:	lada.zimina@birmingham.gov.uk 07864 931 943
Date:	4th May 2018

Item 8b - Project Overview and Exceptions

Local Growth Fund - Programme Financial Profile Summary (2015/16 - 20/21)

Date of last update: 22/04/2018 All figures in £m's

Project Title	Project Sponsor	Stage Gate	Total Project Cost	Total LGF Grant Allocation	Total Match Funding	2015/16 Agreed Grant (1)	Actual Claimed (2)	Variation (= 2-1) (3)	2016/17 Agreed Grant (4)	Actual Grant (5)	Variation (= 5-4) (6)	2017/18 Agreed Grant (7)	Actual Grant (8)	Variation (= 8-7) (9)	2018/19 Agreed Grant (10)	Forecast Grant (11)	Variation (=)	Grant Claimed in 2018/19 to date	2019/20 Agreed Grant ()	Forecast Grant ()	Variation (= 7-8)	2020/21 Agreed Grant ()	Forecast Grant ()	Variation (=)	Time	Benefits	Cost	Reputation	Update	Background (summary of project)
Snow Hill Station (Public Realm)	BCC	3	9.900	4.656	5.240	0.326	0.326	0.000	1.300	0.000	-1.300	2.800	0.000	-2.800	0.230	1.890	1.660	0.000	0.000	2.444	2.444	0.000	0.000	0.000					Project subject has experienced extended delays in preparing Full Business Case and scope has changed over the years of development. Project has now progressed with full scheme designs and has been through internal governance within the Project Sponsor. FBC was expected to have been submitted by May 2018 but has experienced further delays and now due June / July 2018.	The development will enhance the public realm at and around one of the city's key railway stations. The project will also deliver economic benefits to the wider Snow Hill district.
Kidderminster Railway Station	Worcs CC	3	4.300	1.800	2.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.800	2.407	0.607	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Change Request agreed to reprofile entire grant claim to 2018/19 following historical delays with progressing the project. Tenders for the work now received and total project costs are exceed the current budget (by c.£950k) as per previous expectations. Change request to increase the GBSLEP LGF contribution by £607k to be decided by PDB in May. FBC submitted and under appraisal by WLEP at present.	The scheme will replace Kidderminster's inadequate railway interchange with a new facility. It improve accessibility to the Wyre Forest for employment, health, education, leisure, retail and tourism including the Severn Valley Railway which is an important regional tourist destination.
Symphony Hall Extension	Performances Birmingham Ltd	3	12.532	4.500	8.032	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.433	0.433	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.067	4.067					Project progressing to FBC in December 2018 as planned. Development funding to progress to FBC approved by LEP Director in April 2018.	A Growth Deal 3 project - Symphony Hall is one of the finest concert halls in the world. Presenting a world-class programme of music and education, it is a major cultural draw for Birmingham. The project will extend and re-model the Symphony Hall's public spaces to create a building that is economically sustainable, vibrant, and connected to the public realm.
Sustainable Urban Extension - Peddimore	BCC	3	8.760	2.720	6.040	0.310	0.310	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.500	0.000	-0.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.750	1.250	0.500	1.160	1.160	0.000					New accesses for two major development (Peddimore (Employment) and Langley (Housing)) sites east of Sutton Coldfield, including 80ha major investment site, proposed as part of Birmingham's Development Plan.	New accesses for two major development (Peddimore (Employment) and Langley (Housing)) sites east of Sutton Coldfield, including 80ha major investment site, proposed as part of Birmingham's Development Plan.
Lichfield Southern Bypass	Staffordshire CC	3	17.347	2.300	15.047	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000	2.000	0.000	0.000	0.300	0.300	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					FBC submitted to GBSLEP for independent appraisal in May 2018. Anticipate making a funding decision by July 2018, subject to any clarifications being satisfied.	A Growth Deal 3 project - The Lichfield Southern Bypass construction includes the final 0.67km of a 2.3km bypass. The final phase links two A-roads via a rail underbridge and housing site distributor road.
Hagley Road SPRINT	TfWM	4	14.650	8.100	6.550	0.750	0.810	0.060	0.270	0.000	-0.270	1.630	0.762	-0.868	2.260	3.128	0.868	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.400	3.400	0.000					Project scope has been substantially expanded following additional WMCA funding allocation, resulting in a £94.95m scheme. Funding agreement signed in March 2018 and first grant claim made. Change request to revise financial profile to be decided by PDB in May 2018 following a delay with progressing the funding agreement and land acquisitions, at which point the financial profile will be reviewed.	Bus Rapid Transit scheme along the Hagley Road to Quinton, a major upgrade to public transport in this corridor linking key areas of Birmingham City Centre such as Broad Street, Paradise Circus, New Street and Moor Street stations and in the longer term Curzon St HS2.
Friarsgate	Lichfield DC	4	54.572	2.400	52.172	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.500	0.000	-1.500	0.900	0.000	-0.900	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.000	1.900	1.900	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Project has encountered extended delays associated with land assembly and securing finance for the development. CPO represents a high risk of further delays. Scheme funding now being pursued through Lichfield DC with a decision expected June 2018. Project due to report progress against milestones to the next PDB meeting after July 2018, as agreed at the project review at February 2018 PDB meeting.	The redevelopment of a 3.3 hectare site which is located on the fringe of Lichfield's city centre. Friarsgate is a retail and leisure led mixed use development combining 16,369 sqm of commercial floorspace, 95 dwellings, a new car park, a new bus station and new areas of public realm.
Clean Air Hydrogen Bus Project	BCC	4	11.000	2.156	8.844	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.431	0.000	-0.431	1.725	2.156	0.431	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Delays in progressing grant agreement and financial slippage from Q4 2017/18 into Q1/2 2018/19. Grant agreement signed May 2018.	This pilot project will introduce 22 zero-emission, hydrogen fuelled busess onto establised routes across Birmingham City.
Hybrid Vehicle Technology Training Centre	Solihull College & Univercity Centre	4	0.594	0.278	0.316	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.316	0.000	-0.316	0.316	0.316	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					FBC approved March 2018 and grant agreement being prepared. Financial profile has moved into 2018/19 due to approval being mid-March 2018.	The project will help to equip the Hybrid Vehicle Technology Training Centre with new vehicles and appropriate tooling, as well as a new lab which will create opportunities for the students to investigate and apply techniques relevant to autonomous vehicle operation and control.It aims to ensure the College's automotive and motor vehicle training facilities are updated reflecting emerging technologies and related skills gaps and enabling the development and take up of low carbon technologies.
New Manufacturing Engineering	South & City College Birmingham	4	0.665	0.250	0.315	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.250	0.250	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					FBC approved March 2018 and grant agreement being prepared. Financial profile has moved into 2018/19 due to approval being mid-March 2018.	The project aims to support the establishment of a dedicated training facility for manufacturing engineering SMEs in the supply chains of major national and local companies, enabling them to obtain a supply of suitably qualified and skilled labour. It directly responds to shortages of skilled labour and provides opportunities for both young people and adults to enhance their engineering skills and safeguard and/or lead to sustainable employment. It will also promote and support new apprenticeship opportunities in manufacturing engineering. The project is located in an area where there is substantial demand for the proposed courses. The project will start with lower-level qualifications, aiming to move on to higher-level qualifications.
Tyseley Energy Park Access Road	Tyseley Energy Park Limited	4	3.894	1.763	2.131	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.300	0.000	-0.300	1.463	1.763	0.300	0.310	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Grant agreement signed and project due to break ground in May 2018. Grant claim for Q4 17/18 slipped due to project banking error and was processed for Q1 18/19. Project delivery is on track.	A Growth Deal 3 project - The project involves the construction of an Access Road and surface infrastructure route off the A45 through to the Tyseley Energy Park (TEP) enabling off road access – particularly for HGVs, buses, taxis and vans – to support the low/zero emission refuelling hub, which is being promoted by Birmingham City Council (BCC) and led by Webster & Horsfall Ltd.
Journey Time Reliability Improvements to Growth Areas Phases 1 and 2	BCC	5	1.568	1.111	0.457	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.211	0.211	0.000	0.420	0.420	0.000	0.300	0.300	0.000	0.180	0.180	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Change control for historical financial slippage agreed February 2018. The Project Sponsor is expected to go through internal governance in March 2018 for Phase 2 of the scheme, with the FBC to release the next phase of LGF delayed until July 2018.	This project will see a package of relatively small highway measures which are aimed at improving journey reliability. In total there are seven projects in Birmingham and a further 11 in Solihull. These improvements will help to unlock economic growth by linking to Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone and UK Central.
Battery Way Extension, Tyseley	BCC	5	6.453	3.710	2.743	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.310	0.311	0.000	0.660	0.559	-0.102	2.609	2.769	0.160	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Design and build contractor appointed and construction works on programme to start April 2018. Minor financial slippage experienced in 2017/18 for which a change request has been received and is being reviewed.	This project will see the creation of a new 700m long, 7.3m wide single carriageway road between the existing Battery Way and Reddings Lane with the ultimate effect of unlocking a redundant industrial estate. The project will also act as an important catalyst for the regeneration of the wider Tyseley and Greet areas, which are key employment areas for the south-east of the city with more than 15,000 people employed on sites based around the A41 Warwick Road.
Mid-Cannock Freight Interchange	Pentalver	5	14.638	1.300	13.338	0.601	0.601	0.000	0.699	0.000	-0.699	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.699	0.699	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Extensive delays to project progress stemming from compnay takeover and progressing with permissions for the scheme. Project sponsor presented to PDB in March 2018 and agreed to receive a revised project delivery plan once key milestone (Netwrok Rail permissions) are received in June 18.	This project will create a new road-rail interchange facility with rail sidings and container handling cranes on the Chase Line. The aim is to significantly decrease the number of HGVs using the adjacent strategic road network and increase the inward investment offer for export-based industries.
Motor Vehicle Training Centre	South & City College	5	0.677	0.242	0.419	0.258	0.237	-0.021	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Project at practical completion and awaiting financial completion in Q1 2018/19. Original grant allocation	The project will establish a dedicated training facility for engineering SMEs in the supply chain of major companies.
Engineering Centre for Manufacturing Support	South & City College	5	0.501	0.230	0.294	0.207	0.182	-0.025	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Project at practical completion and awaiting financial completion in Q1 2018/19. Change request previously approved to increase grant allocation from £207k, reflecting the headroom created across other S&SC projects with LGF funding.	Refurbishment and upgrade of facilities to provide training in latest techniques for electrical and mechanical fault finding and diagnostics.
Ashted Circus, Birmingham Ring Road	BCC	5	8.100	5.545	2.555	0.223	0.223	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.853	1.853	0.000	2.968	2.968	0.000	0.501	0.501	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Grant agreement signed and first grant claim payment made Q4 2017/18. Project progressing to plan.	This project will create left-turn slip lanes on both Dartmouth Middleway approaches at Ashted Circus – a key junction for Aston University, Eastside and the Curzon regeneration area. The benefits of this will see future capacity constraints alleviated by providing an additional approach lane on these arms and also offering the benefit of removing left-turning vehicles from the roundabout, which are predicted to significantly increase in future years.
Longbridge Connectivity Scheme Phase 1	BCC	5	8.990	4.860	4.139	0.400	0.400	0.000	1.935	1.935	0.000	2.209	1.969	-0.240	0.316	0.678	0.362	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Project encountered slippage with milestones and financial profile and now worklgn to a revised delivery plan. Change request for slippage approved by PDB in February 2018 and awaiting completion of deed of variation.	A package of connectivity improvements in and around Longbridge and the former Rover site. These include an upgrade of the railway station and a transformation of the existing bus interchange. Furthermore, the Park & Ride facility will be extended and there will be a programme of highway improvements alongside some wayfinding and cycling improvements.
Unlocking Stalled Housing Sites Programme - Phases 1 and 2	BCC	5	8.998	8.998	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.073	0.049	-0.024	2.703	1.926	-0.777	4.543	4.543	0.000	0.049	1.679	1.679	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Programme reliant on demand and will be prone to variances in quarterly grant claim profile. Programme is broadly progressing to plan and has exceeded housing output targets as it approaches being fully committed. Change control for historical financial slippage approved in January 2018. Updated financial profile based on current demand to be received from project.	Programme to support the acceleration of small housing sites across the LEP working with land owners and small developers to bring forward at least 500 new homes in the area.
Birmingham Cycle Revolution Phase 2	BCC	5	8.000	6.000	2.000	1.157	1.157	0.000	1.600	1.548	-0.052	1.243	0.536	-0.707	1.000	1.329	0.329	0.000	1.000	1.495	0.495	0.000	0.000	0.000					Project has encountered some delays resulting in financial slippage. Change request for revised financial profile approved by PDB in March 2018 with an understanding that this will need updating following the financial year end.	Part of the 20-year Birmingham Cycle Revolution strategy. Developed to complement and add value to existing cycling projects, and coupled with supporting revenue measures, Phase 2 will support cycle access to major employment sites and Enterprise Zones, better integrate cycling as part of a longer journey by public transport, improve and provide access to opportunity, reduce congestion at key pinchpoints and support improved health and wellbeing.
Iron Lane, Birmingham	BCC	5	12.984	5.000	7.984	0.380	0.380	0.000	0.060	0.060	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.960	2.960	0.000	0.000	1.600	1.600	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000					Project currently going through the CPO process and awaiting confirmation of outcome in June 2018. PDB received project exception report in March 2018 and a further update will be provided following the CPO outcome.	This major junction is on a key section of the A4040 Outer Ring Road, effectively connecting east Birmingham with the M6 and major employment sites. This project will see the implementation of two new gyratory arrangements to increase junction capacity and reduce congestion. Dedicated pedestrian/cycle-crossing facilities will be provided to enhance 'active travel' and new street lighting.

Project	Sponsor	No	Total Cost	LGF	Other	17/18 Profile	17/18 Actual	Var	17/18 b	17/18 b act	Var	17/18 c	17/18 c act	Var	18/19	18/19 act	Var		19/20	19/20 act	Var	20/21	20/21 act	Var	RAG	Status	Description
Selly Oak New Road Phase 1b	BCC	5	9.223	3.633	5.590	0.110	0.200	0.090	0.110	0.000	-0.110	0.230	0.229	-0.001	1.656	1.656	0.000	0.000	1.547	1.547	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	amber/green	DoV for historical milestone and financial slippage approved in April 2018. However, slippage in 17/18 requires another change request and DoV and financials will be revised.Project now progressing to revised delivery plan with site investigations commencing March 2018 as planned.	Highway improvements to the 'Selly Oak triangle', a key junction between the A38 and A4040, providing access to the Life Sciences campus, UoB, and QE Hospital.
Making the Connections (Public Realm) - WITHDRAWN January 2018. Development Funding only	BCC	3	0.592	0.592	0.000	0.476	0.476	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.116	0.107	-0.009	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	red/amber	Due to continued slippage, Exceptional PDB decision to withdraw funding, Development fund to remain available to develop FBC if required £476k already drawn down £116k still avaialable BCC to confirm when required. Funding allocation changed to £0.592m to reflect this. FBC expected in Autumn 2018	To provide high quality connections to Southside (via Lower Hill Street), Mailbox (via Navigation St West) and Colmore Business District (via Lower and Upper Temple Street).
A34 corridor-Perry Barr Phase 1	BCC Saaied Manzoor	5	6.080	3.500	2.580	0.100	0.100	0.000	1.420	1.420	0.000	0.380	0.159	-0.221	0.760	0.760	0.000	0.000	0.760	0.760	0.000	0.080	0.080	0.000	amber	At present, SLA only covers £1.9m approved, remaining £1.6m is subject to separate FBC addendum. PDB approved change request in February 2018 for minor amendments to scope and financial profile. Submission date for FBC for Phase 2 to be determined due to the change of context around the project with Commonwealth Games work expected in the area.	This project is a package of five measures relating to land acquisitions, highway works at Birchfield Roundabout, public realm enhancements, gap funding for new development and bus interchange improvements at One Stop Shopping Centre.
Life Sciences Campus	BCC	5	15.360	5.180	10.180	5.180	5.012	-0.168	0.168	0.107	-0.061	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.061	0.061	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	green	Project practically complete and awaiting final claim for £61k, subject to change request. Ongoing discussions with BCC and UoB regarding the outputs and outcomes.	This project will begin the delivery of a four hectare Life Science Campus on a site which is currently contaminated and derelict next to the University of Birmingham and Queen Elizabeth Hospital. This project would provide a science park specifically for life science businesses, capable of supporting over 400,000sq ft of office space, including laboratories
Kingswood Lakeside Access Phase 2	Staffordshire CC	5	2.160	2.160	0.583	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.289	0.289	0.000	1.696	1.440	-0.256	0.175	0.175	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	green	Minor utilities issue arisen with the final plot in the programme resulting in financial slippage from 2017/18 to Q4 18/19. A change control request will be submitted as soon as appropriate reliable information can be secured from the developer. Following this, the project will be at completion for the remediation works and subsequent development of the site is forecast to continue through to 2022.	Phase 2 of this project will continue the remediation of the site to create 24,749sqm Floor space and 469 new jobs. This will allow the development can progress at a faster rate.
National College for High Speed Rail	BCC	5	25.555	7.012	18.543	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.261	2.373	0.112	5.204	4.561	-0.643	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	green	Project now practically complete and awaiting financial completion. College opening event was held Oct 2017. Change request for minor financial slippage associated items beyond the scope of snagging approved and total grant allocation has reduced.	This project will see the construction of the Birmingham campus for the new National College for High Speed Rail to bring forward a 5,703m2 new build training facility for delivery of Level 4+ skills in engineering to support delivery of HS2 and other infrastructure projects. Project case study available: https://gbslep.co.uk/projects-and-case-studies/case-studies/national-college-high-speed-rail-birmingham-new-training-facility-heart-future-rail-industry
Longbridge Connectivity - MSCP Phase 2	TfWM	5	5.738	1.800	3.938	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.800	1.800	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	green	Project at financial completion (Q4 2017/18) with practical completion due summer 2018.	The scheme aims to expand the Park and Ride as part of the second phase of the Longbridge Connectivity Scheme by increasing parking provision at Longbridge station from 102 spaces to 223 spaces.
Changan UK Research and Development Facility	Changan Automotive UK	5	16.113	1.610	14.503	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.443	1.443	0.000	0.167	0.167	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	green	Project progressing to plan.	The project will see the development of a new state of the art research and development centre on Birmingham Business Park as Changan Automotive centralise part of the R&D functions.
STEAMhouse	Birmingham City University	5	42.407	1.000	41.407	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	green	Project Sponsor going through internal governance for investment approval and expected to be completed 22.11.17. £14m BEIS funding secured through section 31 agreement Assuming approved, will purchase the land immediately using BEIS funding. 18/02.18 Delays due to BCC change of planning on one plot. Significant risk to security of BEIS funding 10.04.18 Grant agreement in place including £1m LGF and £14m BEIS. Land purchased and claim paid for £4.5m from BEIS funding. Section 31 Grant Determination Letter awarding the second £7m sent to BCC from BEIS.	The project aims to create a collaborative innovation centre focused around STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and maths), including related teaching and learning space delivered by BCU through the STEAM Academy plus commercial space and grow on space for SMEs and office space for a single user or multiple users. BEIS have committed £14m via section 31 grant to be managed by GBSLEP and LGF committed £1m
Aspirations for All	Sense UK	5	1.206	1.206	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.650	0.650	0.000	0.556	0.556	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	green	Grant agreement signed and progressing to plan.	A Growth Deal 3 project - Based at TouchBase Pears in Selly Oak, Sense will bring forward employment related training and development activities for over 200 sensory impaired and otherwise disabled people (Sense service users) and a further 200 Sense Volunteers.
Birmingham Dance Hub	Birmingham Hippodrome	5	4.476	1.476	3.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.975	0.975	0.000	0.501	0.501	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	green	Project FBC approved February 2018 and grant agreement drafted.	The project aims to extend the fourth floor above the existing Birmingham Royal Ballet building on Thorp Street to provide the One Dance UK cluster with a space to expand and enhance its dance services. The new facilities will create spaces for international and national dance services that are already based in Birmingham, and those organisations attracted from London into Birmingham's Dance Cluster.
AMH Phase A - (JB Foods & Rylands Garage)	BCC	6	10.706	4.412	6.256	3.208	4.079	0.871	0.934	0.032	-0.902	0.308	0.301	-0.007	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project now at practical and financial completion for the LGF funded scope (Q4 2017/18) and being issued with completion letter. Minor level of unclaimed grant (£37,915).	This project will see the delivery of an Advanced Manufacturing Hub on a 20 hectare regional investment site next to Junction 6 of the M6.
Sustainable Urban Extension - Minworth	BCC	6	2.348	2.280	0.069	0.140	0.140	0.000	1.470	1.470	0.000	0.670	0.670	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project at practical completion and financial completion Q4 2017/18. Outputs are linked with Peddimore project and to be reviewed to test additionality.	The Unlocking Birmingham Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) package includes works at two locations adjacent to the proposed Green Belt SUE. These involve improvements to an existing five-arm roundabout and a new access junction for the developments. In effect, these two schemes will unlock and support accelerated economic growth at two major development sites east of Sutton Coldfield.
WMG Academy for Young Engineers (Future Skills Fund)	WMG University Technical College	6	2.216	1.108	1.108	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.599	0.599	0.000	0.509	0.508	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project at practical completion and financial completion. Project to be issued completion letter.	Support for employer led projects that form the core of the WMG Academy's curriculum in Solihull.
Birmingham Institute of Haematology	Queen Elizabeth Hospital	6	3.177	2.402	0.775	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.402	2.402	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project reached practical and financial completion in Q4 2017/18. Project Closure report requested.	The scheme seeks to expand the Birmingham Centre for Clinical Haematology (BCCH) at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham by converting 2,100 m2 of floorspace in the BCCH building into premises for clinical innovation and research.
Princes Trust Youth Skills & Enterprise Hub	Prince's Trust	6	2.455	0.627	1.904	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.627	0.629	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project reached practical and financial completion in Q4 2017/18.	A Growth Deal 3 project - The Prince's Trust plan to create a ground-breaking Young People's Skills & Enterprise Hub in the centre of Birmingham by refurbishing the Cold Store building in the Beorma Quarter into a state of the art building with the aim of up-skilling and supporting unemployed young people into jobs directly or through start-up businesses.
Lode Lane Phase 1	Solihull MBC	6	5.240	1.790	3.450	1.790	1.790	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Project Completion Report has been completed. Final total project costs increased to £5.24m from £4.858m.	Package of public transport, cycling and walking improvements on a major route which provides access to significant development sites including UK Central, Birmingham Airport, and JLR Lode Lane Plant.
East Staffordshire Growth and Regeneration Programme	East Staffs BC	6	5.700	1.500	4.200	1.500	1.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Project Completion Report has been completed.	This project brings forward three brownfield land sites currently in ownership of the council for new homes and commercial floorspace. Project case study available: https://gbslep.co.uk/projects-and-case-studies/case-studies/east-staffordshire-regeneration-programme
Food Technology Hub	University College Birmingham (UCB)	6	1.031	0.342	0.689	0.342	0.342	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Final project cost increased from £750,000 to £1.02m.	This project will see the creation of a ground-breaking food technology and food science hub. Driven by industry, the hub will provide access to specialist facilities that will enable skills development for a growing sector with an already identified chronic skills shortage. Project case study available: https://gbslep.co.uk/projects-and-case-studies/case-studies/university-college-birmingham-food-technology-hub-skills-excellence
Universities@IBC	Innovation Birmingham	6	10.294	2.494	7.800	0.205	0.205	0.000	2.196	2.196	0.000	0.092	0.091	-0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Closure Report receive April 2018	Extension to the existing Faraday Wharf incubator building at the Innovation Birmingham Campus to provide an additional 445m2 of state of the art enterprise space which enables local universities to collaborate with business start-ups, creating 1800 jobs part of the Enterprise Zone.
Centre for Advanced Aeronautical ProVision (formerly Aviation Engineering Training Centre)	Solihull College	6	3.720	1.059	2.661	0.623	0.623	0.000	0.424	0.424	0.000	0.012	0.012	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete (Q2 2017/18). Unclaimed amount of £2,727 to be returned to the programme. Project Sponsor to be advised of this through financial closure letter	This project will see the creation of an aerospace and aviation centre/academy close to Birmingham Airport, providing a link to companies in this sector. This facility would provide the required skills in aerospace engineering in particular relating to maintenance and repair. Project case study available: https://gbslep.co.uk/projects-and-case-studies/case-studies/centre-advanced-aeronautical-provision
Kingswood Lakeside Access Phase 1	Staffordshire CC	6	10.149	0.800	9.349	0.800	0.800	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Project Completion Report has been completed.	Gap funding to support remediation works, access, lighting, and drainage works for a prime employment location adjacent to the M6 Toll, creating 1300 jobs
Meeting the Skills Needs of Local Businesses	South & City College	6	0.029	0.010	0.019	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.010	0.010	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete (Q3 17/18). Reduction in the grant amount of £123,246 and total project cost reduced from £300,000 to £28,757. Project Closure Report expected end Q1 2018.	Creation of walk in facilities, across the college's three main campuses, that replica the concept of a commercial recruitment agency.
Metro Extension - Eastside (Project Development)	TfWM Dft reporting	6	5.500	5.500	0.000	5.500	5.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete.	Development fees to support the design and development of the full business case. The route will link Midland Metro with the proposed HS2 station at Curzon Street and then via New Canal Street through Digbeth to Adderley Street
South Kidderminster Enterprise Park – Hoobrook Link Road	Worcs CC	6	16.254	4.800	11.454	4.800	4.800	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete.	This project will enable the completion of phase two of Hoobrook Link Road which connects the A451 Stourport Road to the A449 Worcester Road. The road unlocks the 24 hectare former British Sugar Site (known as Silverwoods) and will transform the accessibility to and within South Kidderminster Enterprise Park.
Metro Extension - Centenary Square (includes Complementary Highway Works)	TfWM	6	42.400	7.970	34.430	7.970	7.970	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete.	This project will deliver an extension of Midland Metro from Stephenson Street via Victoria Square and Paradise Circus to Centenary Square, together with a package of complementary highway measures and the creation of a world-class public square.
Wholesale Markets	BCC	6	25.000	3.000	22.000	3.000	3.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Project Closure Report will be sent out to collect evidence of outputs.	Gap funding to for the relocation of the Wholesale Markets in Birmingham to its new purpose-built site in Witton. This will facilitate major redevelopment of a prime site in the city centre Enterprise Zone, as outlined in the Smithfield Masterplan.
Journey Time Reliability Improvements to Growth Areas Phase 1 and 2	Solihull MBC	6	1.415	1.305	0.185	0.405	0.405	0.000	0.900	0.900	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Project Completion Report has been completed.	This project will see a package of relatively small highway measures which are aimed at improving journey reliability. In total there are seven projects in Birmingham and a further 11 in Solihull. These improvements will help to unlock economic growth by linking to Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone and UK Central.
North Worcestershire Centre of Engineering Excellence	MGTS	6	1.580	0.350	1.230	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.350	0.350	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Project Completion Report has been completed.	The relocation of MGTS to larger premises, with the refurbishment and equipping of the new facility to support demand driven growth for engineering apprentices. This is a cross LEP project that will increase the number of MGTS apprenticeships by 132 and an additional 35 level 2 to 4+ qualifications (NVQ) in team leader and management skills. Project case study available: https://gbslep.co.uk/projects-and-case-studies/case-studies/north-worcestershire-centre-engineering-excellence
Chester Road	BCC	6	14.603	1.000	13.603	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Project Closure Report complete. Total project costs increased from £12.7m to £14.63m.	Contribution to the completion of the A452 Chester Road.. The scheme is on-site and involves highway improvements including capacity enhancements to the main junctions and links on Chester Road.
Advanced Life Science Facilities	Solihull College	6	1.020	0.445	0.575	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.445	0.436	-0.009	0.000	0.009	0.009	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project at practical completion and awaiting financial completion. Project achieved final completion Q2 17/18.	This project allows for the redevelopment of the existing laboratories to provide highly flexible practical spaces for use in subjects across the life sciences.
Midland Metro Catenary	TfWM	6	15.090	3.150	11.940	3.150	3.150	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Project Closure Report complete.	The project covers the proposed installation of Battery Equipment on 30 existing and new trams on TfWM routes radiating from Birmingham City Centre to Wolverhampton. No direct outputs but potential saving s on running costs and visual impact of catenary-free Metro sections and the 'demonstrator impact' of catenary free sections of Metro.

Project	Sponsor	Stage																											Notes	Description
A457 Dudley Road (Project Development)	BCC	6	0.450	0.302	0.148	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.302	0.302	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		£300,000 loaned to cover development fees - full repayment expected once FBC has been approved by DfT.	Development funding support for the project. The A457 Dudley Road corridor from Ladywood Middleway / Spring Hill junction on the Ring Road to City Road forms part of Birmingham's Strategic Highway Network. This project will deliver improvements in capacity, accessibility, safety and reduce congestion through a comprehensive package of junction improvement, road widening to a dual carriageway and making enhancements to pedestrian and cycling facilities.
Virtual Reality and Robotics Development Centre	Solihull College	6	0.393	0.189	0.204	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.044	0.000	0.145	0.134	-0.010	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and finacially complete (Q3 2017/18).	The project will link computing and engineering students at Solihull College and University Centre in order to develop the skills required to create and work within virtual reality environments as well as the programming languages used in robotics. Project case study available: https://gbslep.co.uk/projects-and-case-studies/case-studies/virtual-reality-robotics-development-centre
West Midlands Safari Park Skills Academy	WM Safari Park	6	0.750	0.066	0.466	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.066	0.066	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete.	The project will support the new build installation of a dedicated Training Academy at the West Midlands Safari Park, Bewdley in the Wyre Forest, which will be operated by Birmingham Metropolitan College. Project case study available: https://gbslep.co.uk/projects-and-case-studies/case-studies/west-midlands-safari-park
Food and Drinks Advanced Manufacturing Facility	Birmingham Metropolitan College	6	0.050	0.024	0.025	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.024	0.024	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete.	The project will support the installation of a high-quality, industry-approved/supported, dedicated, specialist Food and Drink Advanced Manufacturing Facility, BMet.
Lode Lane Phase 2	Solihull MBC	7	1.691	1.686	0.005	0.400	0.400	0.000	1.286	1.286	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		Project practically and financially complete. Project Completion Report has been completed.	Complementary works for Phase 1 of Lode Lane Route Enhancement scheme to provide further corridor improvement works, including delivering additional bus priority, walking and cycling.
Revolving Investment Fund (GPF)	GBSLEP	X		35.729			0.000		33.290	33.290	0.000	2.439	2.439	0.000	0.000			0.000	0.000		0.000					
Totals			484.252	138.487	347.605	45.441	46.248		54.457	49.644	-4.814	34.462	25.699	-8.763	30.514	36.492	5.977		8.818	14.157	5.339	8.707	8.707	0.000			
Growth Deal Allocation				186.055		47.314			49.175			25.699			19.303				12.716			31.847					

Stage Gateways	
Pre-application	0
Strategic fit assessment	1
Outline Business Case (Programme	2
Full Business Case assessment	3
Contracting	4
Delivery	5
Project Completion	6
Evaluation	7

Project Investment Decisions Forward Plan

Project Name	Project Sponsor	Funding Request (m)	Total project cost (m)	Stage	Status
Snow Hill Public Realm (Growth Deal 1)	BCC	£ 4.66	£ 16.00	FBC	Draft FBC submission delayed from March to June 2018.
Kidderminster (Growth Deal 1)	Worcestershire CC	£ 2.41		FBC	FBC submitted and being independently appraised by WLEP. Subject to a change request to PDB in May for increased funding allocation. Anticipate decision by LEP Director by June 2018.
A38 New Access Junction - Peddimore / Langley	BCC	-	-	OBC	No longer anticipating OBC to be submitted for further funding request.
University Station	WMCA	£ 10.00	£ 29.90	OBC	Independent appraisal now concluding. Anticipate decision by LEP Board in June or July 2018.
Burton Town Centre Regeneration and Flood Defences	East Staffs BC	£ 3.00	£ 33.90	OBC	OBC submitted April 2018 and undergoing independent appraisal. Anticipate decision by PDB via written procedure in June 2018.
National Memorial Arboretum Expansion	National Memorial Arboretum	£ 0.50	£ 8.10	FBC	FBC submitted end of March 2018 and independent appraisal going through clarifications at present. Anticipate decision by LEP Director in July 2018.
The Junction Works	Grand Union Studios	£ 0.60	£ 2.35	OBC	Independent appraisal underway. Anticipate decision by LEP Director in June 2018.
A38 Bromsgrove	Worcestershire CC	£ 2.40	-	OBC	Draft OBC submission delayed from March to June 2018. Independent appraisal to be led by WLEP.
Future Skills Fund Programme	GBSLEP	£ 6.00	-	OBC	Independent appraisal has recommended further work on developing the OBC prior to funding decision. Anticipate decision by PDB in August 2018.
Churchfields Urban Village	Wyre Forest DC	£ 2.30	£ 5.70	FBC	Interim FBC expected August 2018 and final FBC February 2019.
Silverwoods Industrial	Wyre Forest DC	£ 2.04	-	FBC	Finance Birmingham to engage with the project sponsor May 2018.
Commonwealth Games	BCC	£ 20.00	tbc	OBC	Anticipate OBC submission in September 2018.

Additions to the Strategic Pipeline

Project Name	Project Sponsor	Brief description of programme / project	Strategic Fit Priority Category (A-D)	GBSLEP funding amount requested (£)	Total project cost (£)	Programme Theme	Date added (Quarter-Year)
Worcester Street Regeneration, Kidderminster	Wyre Forest District Council	The project will redefine the use of the public highway at Worcester Street, in order to act as a catalyst for development. The project will define the new edge of the retail core of the town, stimulate a market response, increase footfall, respond to and link to the regeneration works that have already taken place in the town centre and that are taking place at Lion Fields.	B	£ 500,000	£ 2,000,000	Towns and Local Centres	Q2-2018
Fast Track Into Rail	Birmingham Metropolitan College	The project seeks to develop sector skills in rail: a critical economic growth sector for the LEP area. It will facilitate social mobility, creating pathways for individuals to progress into careers in the rail sector and/or higher level skills training by providing a foundation (L2 – L3) in rail engineering infrastructure. The project involves the installation of two lines of track, including a set of switches and crossings; all installed to conform to the Network Rail Track Induction Course (TIC) compliance requirements and will be approved by NSAR.	B	£ 25,000	£ 50,000	Skills	Q2-2018

Report to the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Supervisory Board

Thursday 21ˢᵗ June 2018

GBSLEP Housing Framework

Purpose of the report

To note the GBSLEP Board's approval of the GBSLEP Housing Framework

Recommendations

The Supervisory Board is recommended to:

- Consider the attached Housing Framework.

- Note the LEP Board's approval of the four specific recommendations from the Housing Framework for GBSLEP to take forward.

- Note the LEP Board's approval for the official publication of the Housing Framework in an appropriate format.

Background to the development of the Housing Framework

1. In our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), GBSLEP sets out its objectives to:

    - Develop specific measures that will accelerate the rate of house building by working with industry to understand and overcome its key challenges and barriers

    - Ensure an appropriate mix of tenure and affordability of homes across Greater Birmingham, with new developments meeting the needs and aspirations of our communities

2. These objectives recognise that an appropriate supply of housing is essential to the continued economic growth of the wider LEP area. We also recognise that quality, affordable housing, along with the right job opportunities and a high quality environment, is crucial to attracting and retaining talented individuals.

3. However, if housing development continues at the current rate using land already identified, there will be a significant dwelling shortfall in the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area (HMA) by 2031. GBSLEP and its partners therefore need to ensure that the current rate of house building is significantly accelerated, and that homes are built with an appropriate mix of tenure and affordability.

4. To this end, GBSLEP proposed the development of a 'warehouse of information' which we and partners could use as a resource to inform our activities, helping to concentrate the LEP's efforts where we can add value to the work already being undertaken by a range of partner organisations. To develop this warehouse of information, we brought together a task and finish group made up of local authority officers with involvement in housing, housing professionals, and representatives from the private sector. The Senior Responsible Officer for the group was Mike Parker of Wyre Forest District Council, with oversight from the GBSLEP NED for Optimising Assets, and executive support from the LEP's Optimising Assets Officer.

5. In addition, a number of other stakeholders were invited to contribute to the work of the task and finish group by means of presentations to the group, or attendance at discussion sessions, or through one-to-one interviews. This helped to ensure that the LEP was sighted on a wide range of housing issues across the area.

6. The task and finish group agreed that the aim of its work would be:

   to develop a Framework which will provide an overview of housing tenure, affordability, and need across the GBSLEP area, outline opportunities to develop the housing schemes that will be required to support the growth ambitions for the area, and present a series of recommendations identifying activities that partners and government can undertake to deliver housing in the area

7. A first draft of the warehouse of information – now known as the Housing Framework – was completed by the end of December 2017, and the final draft was completed by the end of January 2018. This draft progressed through a 'sense check' process with a range of partners, to ensure that the findings and recommendations were sound.

8. The sense check process included: review and refinement by the Housing task and finish group; discussion at the Local Authorities Chief Executives' meeting (held the week before LEP Board); and discussion and input from Place Board members. The draft Framework was also published on the GBSLEP website, and conversations will also be arranged with colleagues at WMCA in order to understand their views on our proposals.

Overview of the findings of the Housing Framework

9. **Affordability**

   - Homes to purchase – there have been significant price rises over recent years, with these rises far outstripping wage growth. These affordability constraints are important, because a housing market which does not meet the needs of its local population will stifle economic growth.

- We see the most acute affordability challenges at the lower quartile of income, resulting in a market which is more static than it could be, which in turn affects mobility and adaptability.

- For the rented sector, price rises across the board are evident, with demand in this sector continuing to grow. Affordability issues are particularly acute at the lower quartile of income.

10. Homelessness and rough sleeping

- 2017 statistics indicate a 132% increase in the number of people sleeping rough in England since 2010.

- The number of households considered statutorily homeless is also rising, and the new Homelessness Reduction Act (introduced in April 2018) will almost inevitably lead to further rises in homelessness numbers.

11. Stock management

- Across the HMA area in 2016, over 12,000 properties were long-term vacant, with over 4,000 of these in Birmingham.

12. Housing tenure

- Home ownership – specifically home ownership through a mortgage or loan – is declining.

- Renting – particularly in the private sector – is increasing, and as the number of people wishing (or having) to rent grows, rental affordability is declining.

- This increase in numbers in the rented sector, along with its declining affordability, represents a fundamental shift in the UK's housing market.

- As a result of these fundamental market shifts, Local Authorities are again finding themselves involved in direct housing delivery.

13. Housing completions

- Between the financial crash of 2008, and 2011/12, total completions almost halved.

- There has been a recovery since 2011/12, but it is relatively slight, leaving a significant gap between completions and the annual target required to meet need.

14. Barriers to delivery

- SMEs are finding it difficult to secure small sites through local authority procurement processes.

- A high number of planning permissions have been granted, but are yet to be built out. The reasons for this are varied, and in some cases remain unclear. The UK Government has proposed work to explore this issue further.

- Rate of progress through the planning system is becoming an increasingly problematic issue for home builders of all sizes.

Recommendations for GBSLEP to progress

15. Based on the research findings from the Housing Framework, the task and finish group has formulated a number of recommendations for action for the LEP to take forward.

16. The task and finish group developed 19 recommendations in total. Of these 19 recommendations, the majority require the LEP to take a supporting role (e.g. working with WMCA or with Homes England, who would take the lead partner role) or will be taken forward as a result of day-to-day influencing through partnership working activities.

17. However, for four of the recommendations, the LEP could take a role as leading partner. These recommendations are presented on subsequent pages of this report, along with the potential activities, benefits, and resources associated with each.

LEP involvement in direct delivery	
Recommendations 1 & 2	West Midlands housing associations are working with WMCA and Homes England to explore the potential for a joint delivery vehicle to increase the supply of new homes of all tenures, including affordable, across the Combined Authority area. These discussions have involved the LEP, through the Non-Executive Director for Place. **GBSLEP should continue to be involved in joint delivery vehicle (JDV) discussions, exploring options such as the LEP's role as an investment partner**, possibly through a revolving capital loan fund. A number of authorities across the GBSLEP area, including Birmingham, Tamworth, and Wyre Forest, are progressing local authority housing schemes for market housing. **The LEP's role could involve co-ordination / facilitation / information sharing in relation to such schemes, or could be more direct and involve becoming a partner in a JDV.**
What this means in practice	The LEP's NED for Optimising Assets, along with the Executive Officer for Optimising Assets, will continue discussions with partners, particularly the WMCA, Homes England, and local authority partners with an interest in direct delivery. As discussions continue, and potential ideas are further developed, the NED for Optimising Assets will bring further recommendations to LEP board for their consideration. These discussions should also include the potential to roll out the LEP's Unlocking Stalled Housing Sites programme, which has invested £7m to ensure the completion of 550 homes before the end of 2018 (beating the programme's initial target of investing in 500 properties by the end of 2019). The progression of the recommendations in relation to JDVs is dependent upon the LEP being able to clearly add value to work already in development through partner organisations. The key task at the discussion stage will be to assess if/how the LEP's involvement will bring additional economic growth.
Potential benefits	Potential benefits of involvement in JDVs cannot be ascribed until discussions have progressed further. However, the development of a JDV involving major regional partners has the potential to make a significant impact on housing delivery across the area, thereby supporting economic growth within the region.
LEP resource implications	LEP Executive time to work with partners to develop ideas. Any future resources to be confirmed subject to Board's consideration of detailed proposals.

LEP involvement in providing loan funds for acquisition of vacant properties	
Recommendation 3	Ensuring that local authorities have the ability to cover the costs of acquisition (such as Compulsory Purchase Orders and purchase of easements) of long-term vacant homes would enable such properties to be brought back into use. **GBSLEP should explore the possibility of creating a recyclable loan fund that local authorities can borrow from in order to cover acquisition costs**.
What this means in practice	The LEP could usefully research the feasibility of developing a revolving loan fund which local authorities could apply to in order to cover acquisition costs for long-term vacant homes. This loan fund could be administered through the LEP, or through a partner such as Finance Birmingham, with rates at 0%, effectively making this a repayable grant.
Potential benefits	Local authority partners will be able to move forward with the purchase of long-term vacant properties. Repayments would be reinvested back into the loan fund, allowing for ongoing support for other projects. Any refurbished properties brought back onto the market would be eligible for a New Homes Bonus payment, which could be reinvested in the authority's housing stock. In addition, the revitalisation of derelict and empty properties is likely to build investor confidence and encourage private sector investment in the locality.
LEP resource implications	£10,000 to commission a small piece of research into the feasibility and practicality of the loan fund proposal (to cover both Housing and Towns and Local Centres proposals); LEP Executive time to commission and manage the research. Subject to the findings of the research, we will come back to Board with more detailed proposals and recommendations, highlighting a sum necessary to establish the fund and to administer the fund.

LEP involvement in tackling planning delays and build out delays	
Recommendation 4	**The LEP could bring together a pool of expertise to help local authorities to progress housing developments more quickly through the planning system**. The operational arrangements of such a pool would need to be discussed with all local authority partners in the first instance, in order to establish the feasibility of this idea. **The LEP could also support the pool of experts to identify the barriers for schemes which have planning permission but have yet to build out, and begin to formulate solutions to these problems.**
What this means in practice	Local Authority partners have already expressed an interest in sharing planning resources across administrative boundaries, in order to respond more effectively to fluctuating demand for planning services. However, although initial discussion were undertaken around this idea, partners lack the capacity to further develop such a proposal and to then set up a resource-sharing scheme. The LEP could therefore take a lead in developing the idea, consulting with partners as to their needs and requirements for the scheme, and facilitating its delivery. Further, many of our local authority partners have expressed frustration at the rate at which sites with planning permission are 'built out'. The government has commissioned research (the Letwin Review) to identify the reasons for such delays, and to recommend actions. This review will report in autumn 2018. In the meantime, there is potential for the LEP to play a co-ordinating role in identifying barriers to build out on individual sites within the LEP area, developing a central repository of information, assessing patterns and common issues, and proposing local solutions. To do this, the LEP would work with the house building industry in the area (from SMEs to major developers) in order to enable them to identify what the LEP could do to assist.
Potential benefits	Local Authority partners would be able to draw support from a pool of planning expertise as required, enabling housing applications to progress through the system more rapidly. A central repository of information could be developed, identifying common barriers and suggesting solutions to problems that typically delay build out of sites.
LEP resource implications	LEP Executive time to facilitate discussions between partners, and to draw up the parameters for the pool of expertise scheme. Further funding will be neccesary to facilitate the operation of the pool of expertise. LEP Executive time to facilitate discussions with the private sector regarding the barriers they face, and to pull together a repository of information to assist with overcoming these barriers.

Conclusions

18. The draft Framework identifies recommendations for action for GBSLEP to progress. Following discussions with a range of stakeholders, the task and finish group proposed that four of these recommendations be taken forward for further exploration and/or moved into delivery.

19. At its meeting on 5 June 2018, the LEP Board approved the Housing Framework and the four key recommendations. The Executive will now consider how best to take those recommendations forward.

Prepared by: Sarah Hughes (Executive Officer for Optimising Assets)

Contact: sarah.hughes@birmingham.gov.uk
                07712 436694

Date: 12 June 2018

Housing Framework

Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership

June 2018

Contents

Executive Summary

Background to the project

High quality, affordable housing, along with the right job opportunities and a high quality environment, is crucial to attracting and retaining talented individuals, and improving quality of life across the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) area. However, if development continues at the current rate using land already identified, there will be a significant dwelling shortfall in the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area (HMA) by 2031.

The Government's White Paper, published in February 2017, recognises, as we do locally, that any new developments will also need to provide the right tenure options to meet the needs and aspirations of the area. GBSLEP and its partners need to ensure that the current rate of house building is significantly accelerated, and that homes are built with an appropriate mix of tenure and affordability.

To this end, GBSLEP proposed the development of a guidance framework or 'warehouse of information', which we named the Housing Framework. We felt that this would give us a richer understanding of housing needs within the area, particularly in terms of affordability and tenure, and also help us to look at alternative methods of delivery, such as modern methods of construction. This report represents our Housing Framework for the GBSLEP area.

Please note that this report is not a statutory document. Control of housing and planning issues remains, clearly, with individual local planning authorities across the area.

About the project

The personnel involved in the development of this Housing Framework were:

Project Executive:	Simon Marks, LEP Board Director for Optimising Assets
Senior Responsible Officer:	Mike Parker, Wyre Forest District Council
Project Manager:	Sarah Hughes, LEP Executive
Task and finish group members:	Craig Jordan, Lichfield District Council
	Matthew Cloke, Birmingham City Council
	Kevin Rodgers, WM Housing Group
	Kate Warburton, National Housing Federation
	Charlotte Hill, Homes England
	Dan McGowan / Helen Chard, Taylor Wimpey

In producing this Housing Framework, our aim was: to develop a Framework which will provide an overview of housing tenure, affordability, and need across the GBSLEP area, outline opportunities to develop the housing schemes that will be required to support the growth ambitions for the area, and present a series of recommendations identifying activities that partners and government can undertake to deliver housing in the area. We accepted that – as the work was explorative in nature, and would inevitably be steered by different issues as they arose – all of our research objectives may not be addressed in full within the final report.

The start date for the project was April 2017, and the end date (i.e. production of the report) was January 2018.

The GBSLEP Place Board was accountable for the delivery of the Housing Framework to the LEP Board, whilst the LEP Board acted as the ultimate owner of the Housing Framework, and was responsible for sign-off of the final product. It is for the GBSLEP Board to accept or reject recommendations made within the action plan, and to act as it deems appropriate.

Context – national, regional, and local strategies

The Housing Framework has been produced within the context of a number of national and regional strategies. These include the UK Government's Housing White Paper (and subsequent consultation document), the WMCA's Land Commission report, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), Peter Brett Associates Strategic Housing Needs Study, G L Hearn's work looking into the housing shortfall across the region, and GBSLEP's own Strategic Economic Plan.

Local Plan summaries indicate that, for all authorities, affordability of homes is an ongoing issue. One way to tackle this issue is through the implementation of affordable homes contributions on new developments. We also see that most local authorities are prioritising brownfield land for development, but a number are willing to consider greenfield site development in specific circumstances. The required tenure split of homes does vary across the area, from 62% to 82% market housing (i.e. owner occupied and private rent) and 18% to 38% affordable and social rent.

Affordability

There is a wide range of issues to be considered in terms of affordability. For those wishing to purchase a home, there have been significant price rises over the last few years, with these rises far outstripping wage growth. This constraint is important to GBSLEP because a housing market which does not meet the needs of its local population is a housing market which will stifle economic growth. It is at the lower quartile where we see the most acute affordability challenges, with this quartile of the market moving more slowly than the upper quartile. This results in a market which is more static than it could be, with mobility becoming stratified.

In terms of the rented sector, price rises across the board are evident, with demand in this sector continuing to grow. Given these issues around lower quartile affordability, and the constraints of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA), it is clear that we need to see increased provision of good quality rental properties at affordable prices. Longer tenancy agreements for these properties are likely to be popular, as they provide increased security for tenants.

With affordability of all types and tenures of housing being such an issue, GBSLEP will support local authorities to bring forward further housing development – especially affordable housing development – in order to ensure that growing demand can be met.

Homelessness and rough sleeping

A 'main homelessness duty' is owed by the local authority when the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless, and falls within a specified priority need group. Figures are collected on the number of households in 'temporary accommodation' on the last day of each quarter, as arranged by local housing authorities. For rough sleeping, the government's definition includes those people sleeping, about to bed down, or actually bedded down in the open air. Figures can be based on a count or an estimate.

Despite the restrictions around the count, the most recent statistics published on 25 January 2017 recorded a 132% increase in the number of people sleeping rough in England since 2010. Factors identified as contributing to the ongoing flow of new rough sleepers to the streets include: welfare reforms, particularly reductions in entitlement to Housing Benefit / Local Housing Allowance; reduced investment by local authorities in homeless services; and flows of non-UK nationals who are unable to access benefits.

The number of households considered statutorily homeless is also rising, although there are differences area by area. The new Homelessness Reduction Act, to be implemented in April 2018, will require local housing authorities to help all eligible applicants, rather than just those with a priority need. To tackle the inevitable rise in homelessness numbers that we can expect to see over the coming months, we will need to see co-ordinated action, from the UK Government down. For GBSLEP, this will mean working with Local Authority partners and with the WMCA Mayor to tackle homelessness in the local area.

Stock management

Across the GBSLEP area, the percentage of properties that are long-term vacant is quite low, but the gross numbers are still significant. For example, across the Housing Market Area in 2016, over 12,000 properties were long-term vacant (with over 4,000 of these in Birmingham). Local authorities can, in theory, instigate a compulsory purchase order (CPO) for such properties. However, legal proceedings are expensive and authorities generally do not have funds available. GBSLEP could therefore explore the possibility of creating a recyclable loan fund that local authorities could borrow from in order to cover costs of acquisition.

Housing tenure

Home ownership – specifically home ownership through a mortgage or loan – is declining, and renting – particularly in the private sector – is increasing. Further, as the number of people wishing (or having) to rent grows, rental affordability declines. This increase in numbers in the rented sector, along with its declining affordability, represents a fundamental shift in the UK's housing market. Local Authorities are again finding themselves involved in direct housing delivery, and there will be a role here for GBSLEP in supporting local partners to bring forward housing schemes to meet those needs not being met by the market, as well encouraging an overall boost in supply of all housing.

Housing completions

Between the financial crash of 2008, and 2011/12, total completions almost halved. There has been a recovery since 2011/12, but it is relatively slight, as many construction firms are still reluctant to invest heavily in labour, materials etc., when the possibility of another housing crash cannot be ruled out entirely. This has left a significant gap between completions and the annual target required to meet need, and reinforces the need for GBSLEP to work with a wide range of partners to play its part to bring forward housing supply.

Funding and delivery

There is a range of funding and delivery options currently available. However, there is scope to do more. This could include GBSLEP involvement in a joint delivery vehicle, possibly as a funding partner, or other direct assistance through the WMCA and Homes England or through individual Local Authority partners.

Developing practice and innovation

Developing practice and innovation encompasses modern methods of construction, as well as alternative delivery models such as community-led housing development. Whilst such developments are relatively scarce within the GBSLEP area, the LEP could be well placed to take on the role of facilitator, bringing together good practice and enabling information exchange between authorities and other partners.

Barriers to delivery

A wide range of barriers to housing delivery exist across the GBSLEP area. They include (although they are not limited to):

- Rate of progress through the planning system is becoming an increasingly problematic issue for home builders of all sizes. This reflects the reduction in capacity within local planning teams, and related loss of planning expertise.
- SMEs are finding it difficult to secure small sites through local authority procurement processes.
- A high number of planning permissions have been granted, but are yet to be built out. The reasons for this are varied, and in some cases remain unclear. The UK Government has proposed work to explore this issue further.

GBSLEP could explore all of the above in order to exert its influence to best effect.

Recommendations for action

The tables below bring together the recommendations for action that have been put forward within the report as a whole. Recommendations have been split into a number of distinct categories, reflecting GBSLEP's role as lead facilitator, lead delivery partner, joint delivery partner, research lead, or supporting partner.

These categories have been divided amongst two tables – Table 1, which shows recommendations for action where GBSLEP will take a more active, leading role, and Table 2, which shows recommendations where the LEP will take a supporting role.

Table 1: GBSLEP to take an active role

No.	Recommendation
5	West Midlands housing associations are working with WMCA and Homes England to explore the potential for a joint delivery vehicle to increase the supply of new homes of all tenures, including affordable, across the Combined Authority area. These discussions have involved the LEP, through the Non-Executive Director for Place. **GBSLEP should continue to be involved in joint delivery vehicle discussions**, exploring options such as the LEP's role as an investment partner, possibly through a revolving capital loan fund.
8	Ensuring that local authorities have the ability to cover the costs of acquisition (such as Compulsory Purchase Orders and purchase of easements) of long-term vacant homes would enable such properties to be brought back into use. **GBSLEP should explore the possibility of creating a recyclable loan fund that local authorities can borrow from in order to cover acquisition costs.**
10	A number of authorities across the GBSLEP area, including Birmingham, Tamworth, and Wyre Forest, are progressing local authority housing schemes for market housing. **GBSLEP should, as a matter of principle, support such developments** in order to ensure that housing needs across the area can be met. The LEP's role could involve co-ordination / facilitation, or could be more direct and involve becoming a partner in a joint delivery vehicle.
13	There is potential for the **LEP to be more active in supporting councils and others to develop innovative solutions**, such as community-led developments and self-build. The LEP could be well placed to take on the role of facilitator, bringing together good practice and enabling information exchange between authorities and other partners.
16	The LEP could **bring together a pool of expertise to help local authorities to progress housing developments more quickly through the planning system.** The operational arrangements of such a pool would need to be discussed with all local authority partners in the first instance, in order to establish the feasibility of this idea. The LEP could also **support the pool to identify the barriers for schemes which have planning permission but have yet to build out, and begin to formulate solutions to these problems.**
18	The funding incentives provided through MHCLG for increasing the supply of new housing are noted, and **the LEP should engage directly with Homes England to investigate how the LEP can play an active role in facilitating funding proposals across the collective LEP geography**, in order to ensure more effective coordination of dialogue and potential outcomes.

Table 2: GBSLEP to take a supporting role

No.	Recommendation
1	The production of a Statement of Common Ground is not yet a statutory requirement of local authorities. However, if this does become a statutory requirement, then **GBSLEP should take an appropriate interest in assisting councils to produce statements of common ground**, especially in regard to cross-boundary housing delivery.
2	GBSLEP is supportive of the principles behind the six game changers identified by the WMCA's Land Commission. Further, we believe that the research undertaken by the Housing Framework task and finish group may be of use to the WMCA when further developing housing policy and practice across the patch. We therefore recommend that **representatives of the Housing Framework task and finish group meet with officers of the WMCA at the earliest opportunity in order to discuss joint working opportunities**.
3	**GBSLEP should support local partners in progressing their Housing Infrastructure Fund (FF and MV) bids**. The nature of this support will be dependent on which bids to the HIF are successful.
4	The data show that there are issues of affordability, especially lower quartile affordability, in all tenures and sizes of homes across the GBSLEP area. **The LEP should therefore support further housing development – especially affordable housing development – in order to ensure that growing demand can be met.** This support should reflect local authority priorities for their areas, and the LEP's input will therefore vary by local authority district. However, the LEP should accept in principle that public sector intervention *will* be required in order to meet housing demand, especially for social and affordable homes.
6	There is uncertainty regarding tenure demand in future. 'Generation Rent' may be a long-term market adjustment, and tenure needs for the next 10 or 20 or 30 years are therefore difficult to predict. **The LEP will therefore support, as appropriate, any further research on future tenure trends.**
7	Homelessness and rough sleeping is a significant and increasing problem across the area, which could be set to rise even further due to the incoming Homelessness Reduction Act. Solving this problem will necessitate multi-agency approach. **GBSLEP will support the Mayor's Taskforce as appropriate in order to tackle the issue of homelessness in the area**, and the LEP's role could include encouraging further private sector involvement in this issue.
9	The subject of under- and over-occupancy is complex, although there are some emerging patterns, e.g. under-occupation by older people in larger houses. **GBSLEP should work with partners to further understand these issues at a more localised level,** and to explore possible solutions. It is possible that the LEP could have a role in stimulating the market for homes for single older people, and older couples, ensuring that adequate numbers of high quality smaller accommodation units, that meet the needs of older people, are available.
11	The USHS programme has been a success: additional homes have been brought forward using the fund across the patch. **GBSLEP should work with local authority partners to ensure that there continues to be effective promotion of the USHS programme across the area**. Local authority partners can provide leads for Finance Birmingham to follow up on, e.g. by providing a list of small scale residential planning applications from the past three years that have not progressed to implementation. Finance Birmingham can then explore whether it is a good candidate for the programme or not.
12	**GBSLEP should support local authorities to implement the appropriate recommendations of the UCL Housing Research Project into local authority direct provision of housing.**
14	It is apparent that a lot more could be done to progress modern methods of construction (MMC) within the GBSLEP area. However, there is a limited role here for GBSLEP, as the scale

	of the task would require significant government intervention. However, **GBSLEP could play a supporting role as a partner, if the government chooses to pursue MMC developments**.
15	The rate of progress through the planning system is becoming an increasingly problematic issue for home builders of all sizes. This reflects the reduction in capacity within local planning teams, and related loss of planning expertise. **GBSLEP cannot influence this directly, but it should support local authorities in their requests for additional resource**.
17	SMEs are finding it difficult to secure small sites through local authority procurement processes. **GBSLEP should work with local authority partners and with Homes England to help with the development of procurement frameworks that more realistically meet the needs of SMEs.**
19	The data indicate a high number of permissions granted that are yet to be built out. However, the reasons for this remain unclear. **In its Autumn Budget, the government announced that it would be undertaking a review of stalled housing sites through the Letwin Review, and GBSLEP should contribute to this as appropriate** in order to formulate a plan of action to bring developments forward more rapidly. Following this, the LEP should then take a role in sharing identified good practice and intervention solutions across the area.

Section 1: Background to the project

High quality, affordable housing is crucial to attracting and retaining talented individuals, and improving quality of life across the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) area. Across the region, there is increasing pressure on housing land availability, with research[1] indicating that, if development continues at the current rate using land already identified, there will be a significant dwelling shortfall in the Housing Market Area (HMA) by 2031. This shortfall will mainly be located within the Birmingham urban area, and also Solihull and the Black Country (specifically Sandwell and Walsall).

Further, research undertaken by University College London for the Royal Town Planning Institute[2] (published in December 2017) indicated that housing is seen as the most significant economic weakness in the UK by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Commission, with the UK now 27th in the world on infrastructure provision.

On 7th February 2017 the Government launched its Housing White Paper – 'Fixing Our Broken Housing Market' – which set out a raft of proposals aimed at local authorities, housing providers, and consumers, with the aim of increasing the number of new homes constructed annually from the current average in England of 160,000 to 225,000 to 275,000 or more. Further, in the Autumn Statement the government suggested a new national target of 300,000 homes constructed per annum, based on a developing a standardised methodology for agreeing each authority's Objectively Assessed Housing Need. In February 2018 the government published proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and re-affirmed its commitment to publishing the standardised methodology which the NPPF will use.

The White Paper recognises, as we do locally, that any new developments will also need to provide the right tenure options to meet the needs and aspirations of the area, recognising our ambition to create 250,000 private sector jobs in a changing economy, and to improve the quality of life of those that live and work here. In tandem with this, we are also aware of the local rises in homelessness and rough sleeping, and as such we welcome the set-up of the Mayor's Taskforce to tackle these issues.

GBSLEP and its partners need to ensure that the current rate of house building is significantly accelerated, and that homes are built with an appropriate mix of tenure and affordability. Within the area, Local Authorities are starting to build again after a long hiatus, and can also exert some influence through planning powers. However, the substantive scale and nature of development is influenced and undertaken by the private sector.

The Government, as described in the White Paper, expects LEPs to play a significant part in creating the right conditions to encourage growth and to be pro-active in incentivising delivery as well as monitoring outcomes, and this is recognised within our Strategy for Growth and within our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). A key part of the challenge will be to ensure that growth is

---

[1] Strategic Housing Needs Study Stage 3 Report, Peter Brett Associates, August 2015
[2] http://www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/better-planning/better-planning-housing-affordability/local-authority-direct-provision-of-housing/

sustainable and that developments are brought forward in a manner that is considerate of the area's environmental assets and supported by the necessary physical and social infrastructure.

Much research is already underway within the housing sector across the GBSLEP area. Many local authorities routinely refresh their recording of housing needs within their areas as part of their statutory responsibilities around planning and housing functions, and are progressing local plans and neighbourhood plans using that information. In addition, a significant piece of work was commissioned by the Greater Birmingham HMA Technical Officers Working Group, to identify strategic locations for housing growth and their potential development capacity[3]. Many local authorities are also taking proactive steps to utilise alternative delivery models to deliver housing in their areas where they have identified market failure in meeting the needs of their communities.

To this end, GBSLEP proposed the development of a guidance framework or 'warehouse of information', which we named the Housing Framework. We understood that it was crucial that our Housing Framework avoided duplication of work that was already underway within the GBSLEP family, and instead added value to the information that is currently available or soon to be available. We felt that this would give us a richer understanding of housing needs within the area, particularly in terms of affordability and tenure, and also help us to look at alternative methods of delivery, such as modern methods of construction.

This report represents our Housing Framework for the GBSLEP area.

Please note that this report is not a statutory document. Control of housing and planning issues remains, clearly, with individual local planning authorities across the area. However, our hope is that the information contained within this Housing Framework will add context, depth, and additional view-points to consideration of housing development across the patch.

---

[3] https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1945/greater_birmingham_hma_strategic_growth_study

Section 2: About the project

2.1 Ownership and management structures of the project

In order to progress the Housing Framework, it was important that a sense of ownership of the work was established amongst a range of partners, all of whom would input to the final document. It was therefore decided to establish a small task and finish group, which would take responsibility for guiding the work, identifying issues for further exploration, and analysing information gathered. It was also necessary for a named individual to act as the senior responsible officer (SRO), driving the work forward and keeping progress on track. The SRO acted as the strategic co-ordinator of the project, taking overall responsibility for production of the Housing Framework, and chairing the task and finish group. In addition, it was also necessary for another individual to act as project manager, undertaking the day-to-day co-ordination of information and research, arranging meetings and workshops etc.

The GBSLEP Place Board was accountable for the delivery of the Housing Framework to the LEP Board, whilst the LEP Board acted as the ultimate owner of the Housing Framework, and was responsible for sign-off of the final product.

The personnel involved in the development of this Housing Framework were:

Project Executive: Simon Marks, LEP Board Director for Optimising Assets
Senior Responsible Officer: Mike Parker, Wyre Forest District Council
Project Manager: Sarah Hughes, LEP Executive
Task and finish group members: Craig Jordan, Lichfield District Council
                              Matthew Cloke, Birmingham City Council
                              Kevin Rodgers, WM Housing Group
                              Kate Warburton, National Housing Federation
                              Charlotte Hill, Homes England
                              Dan McGowan / Helen Chard, Taylor Wimpey

2.2 Aim of the project

In producing this Housing Framework, our aim was:

'to develop a Framework which will provide an overview of housing tenure, affordability, and need across the GBSLEP area, outline opportunities to develop the housing schemes that will be required to support the growth ambitions for the area, and present a series of recommendations identifying activities that partners and government can undertake to deliver housing in the area'

2.3 Research objectives of the project

In order to achieve the aim outlined, the task and finish group carried out research focussing on the following objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Establish a GBSLEP-wide baseline re: housing tenure and affordability / need, using local plans, housing studies, relevant Land Commission and HMA work.

- **Objective 2:** Identify current practices – confirm what all partners across the GBSLEP area are currently doing to bring the housing agenda forward, and how effective this has been.

- **Objective 3:** Summarise the government's policy approach and direction of travel, and the levers it plans to use as outlined in the White Paper.

- **Objective 4:** Bring together information relating to funding opportunities that are available to assist housing delivery in the GBSLEP area.

- **Objective 5:** Collate examples of good and best practice around housing delivery vehicles, including a review of innovative construction methods and community-led initiatives.

- **Objective 6:** Identify the barriers that the housing industry is facing in delivering housing, and outline how GBSLEP and partners can work more effectively with the industry to overcome those barriers.

- **Objective 7:** Outline any added value that can be brought by GBSLEP involvement.

- **Objective 8:** Develop a proposal for action / series of recommendations setting out what we believe our response should be to the housing situation, identifying areas of work that we can take forward.

The task and finish group accepted that – as the work was explorative in nature, and would inevitably be steered by different issues as they arose – all objectives may not be addressed in full within the final report. Where this is the case, the task and finish group has, if necessary, recommended that additional or related research be undertaken.

2.4 Deliverables of the project

The objectives identified above were intended to act as guidance only. The task and finish group approached the work with an open mind, with the intention of exploring existing evidence without prejudice and without undue influence of previous reports or studies. The group felt that, whilst a flexible and adaptive approach to the work was required, deliverables of the research would be likely to include:

- A data baseline providing a GBSLEP-level overview of pertinent issues such as housing tenure, affordability, and other key issues to be identified as the work progressed
- An outline of current policies and practices, and potential funding sources
- A proposal identifying specific actions that GBSLEP and partners could take forward

2.5   Timescale for the project

The start date for the project was April 2017, and the end date was January 2018.

2.6   Constraints and tolerances of the project

In producing and utilising this Housing Framework, there are a number of constraints and tolerances which must be kept in mind. These include, but are not limited to:

- This will be a non-statutory document, produced for guidance only
- There are political implications to consider
- Local plans across the area are in various stages of development / agreement
- There are significant interdependencies between this work, existing studies, and other work that is currently being commissioned
- The national picture is changing with ongoing work highlighted in the White Paper

2.7   Audience for this report

This report is intended for consideration by GBSLEP Place Board, and then by GBSLEP Board.

It is for the GBSLEP Board to accept or reject recommendations made within the action plan, and to act as it deems appropriate.

Section 3: Context – National and Regional Strategies

3.1   Introduction

Within this section of the report, the key points of a small number of relevant documents are noted. This section is not intended as a full literature review, it is merely to provide the overarching context within which the research was undertaken. Additional information relating to the documents discussed on the following pages is included within the appendix to this report.

3.2   The national picture – key documents

DCLG (now MHCLG) – Housing White Paper: Fixing Our Broken Housing Market – February 2017

The Housing White Paper was published by MHCLG in February 2017, consulting on new planning proposals which will involve amendments to the existing National Planning Policy Framework.

The White Paper stated that:

- The UK does not have enough homes – house building has not kept pace with the growing population
- By 2020, only a quarter of 30 year olds will own their own home
- In areas where supply is low and demand is particularly high, opportunities are created for exploitation and abuse
- The loss of a private sector tenancy is now the most common cause of homelessness
- The average house costs almost eight times average earnings
- The proportion of people living in the private rented sector has doubled since 2000
- More than 2.2 million working households with below average incomes spend a third or more of their disposable income on housing
- Responses from government so far have been piecemeal, rather than co-ordinated and strategic
- National Planning Policy will be amended to attach weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements
- Over 40% of local authorities do not have a plan that meets the projected growth in households in their area
- House building is too slow – there has been an increase in planning permissions granted, but there is a gap between permissions and new homes built (a third remain unbuilt)
- Problems are compounded by land banking
- The industry is too reliant on a small number of big players – Britain's 10 largest house building firms build about 60% of new homes – and there is little incentive to invest in innovative methods that could deliver more homes

The Government's proposed solutions included building more homes to slow the rise in housing costs, ensuring that homes are built more quickly, diversifying the housing market, and offering immediate support to those in need.

Many of the solutions which are noted within the White Paper must be taken forward by Government itself. However, there are some areas of development which can be taken forward through GBSLEP and its partners. These are picked up within Section 12 (Barriers to Delivery) of this report.

DCLG (now MHCLG) – Planning for the right homes in the right places: consultation proposal – September 2017

The Housing White Paper, published in February 2017, contained a number of proposals to reform planning. The Housing White Paper also stated that further consultation on specific issues would follow, and this consultation proposal carried forward that commitment. In February 2018 the Government published its response to the consultation proposal.

Within the consultation proposal, the government states that the existing approach to assessing housing need is too complex, leaves substantial room for interpretation, and leads to a costly and time-consuming process which lacks transparency. The government believes that a standard approach to assessing local housing need would be simpler, quicker, and more transparent. The proposed approach involves capping housing needs numbers if they are more than 40% larger than the number stated in the most up to date Local Plan for that specific area. For a number of local authority areas, this will result in significant changes to the accepted housing need numbers. For example, in Birmingham, following the government's proposed approach would reduce housing needs numbers by approximately 13,000 homes. It is unclear what would happen to this unallocated 13,000 need.

In addition, local planning authorities need to plan together, but the government believes that this has not been happening effectively, and failing the duty to co-operate is one of the most commonly occurring reasons why plans are not found sound by the Planning Inspectorate. Accordingly, the consultation proposal requires local authorities to produce a statement of common ground over their housing market area, or other agreed geographical area where justified.

DCLG (now MHCLG) & DWP – Funding Supported Housing: Policy Statement and Consultation – October 2017

In the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015, George Osborne announced an intention to restrict the level of Housing Benefit claimed by tenants in social housing to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate. Social sector landlords were concerned that this would result in shortfalls between the rent due and claimants' entitlement to Housing Benefit. This could, in turn, result in rent arrears and impact on landlords' revenue streams, in addition to increasing the risk of homelessness for affected tenants. The introduction of the Shared Accommodation Rate into the social rented sector for single people under-35 was also viewed as a key risk.

During Prime Minister's Questions on 25 October 2017, Theresa May announced that LHA rates would not be applied to supported housing, or to general needs social housing. The sector has welcomed the decision not to proceed with LHA caps in the supported and wider social housing sectors.

3.3   The regional picture – key documents

G L Hearn research

This study was commissioned by the 14 local authorities that comprise the Birmingham and the Black Country Housing Market Area. The study was undertaken by consultants GL Hearn[4], and sought to confirm the extent of the housing shortfall previously identified within the HMA to 2031and up to 2034, the published report is extensive but one of its key conclusions is that:

> *"1.101 Based on the evidence within this report, it does look likely that the HMA's housing needs to 2031 can be met in full within the Housing Market Area. Besides the Green Belt, there is relatively modest coverage of nationally-significant strategic development constraints in the HMA.*
>
> *1.102 In addition to this, there is a need to identify additional land to cater for development needs between 2031-36. There is a minimum shortfall of 32,700 homes over this period [calculated by subtracting the 28,150 shortfall for 2011-31 from the 60,855 shortfall for 2011-36]. Proportionate dispersal sites, and other smaller sites, will be able to meet some of this requirement, in line with the rates expected for the period up to 2031. There is a need for new strategic development options to be identified in particular to address housing needs over this period and beyond. If a number of strategic development options are taken forward there is the theoretical potential to meet the HMA's development needs in full."*

WMCA Land Commission – Final Report to the WMCA Board – February 2017

The WMCA Land Commission was set up in July 2016, and sought to address three major questions:

(i) What are the challenges associated with delivering the employment land and housing targets set out in the WMCA SEP?
(ii) What are the blockages to the delivery of developable land?
(iii) How can a sufficient supply of developable land in the West Midlands be secured?

As a result of its research and consultation, the Commission identified six 'game' changers. These are:

- The development of a Single Agreed Vision for the West Midlands.
- A prioritised list of Action Zones where employment and housing can be accommodated.
- Visible Unity of Purpose in delivering the vision.
- Further steps aimed at Transforming Brownfield Land.
- A Strategic Review of the Green Belt.
- Clarified Governance and Responsibility.

WMCA Housing and Land Steering Group – HIF priorities – September 2017

The Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) is an opportunity to secure additional Government investment in infrastructure for growth and housing. The HIF sought outline expressions of interest

---

[4] https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1945/greater_birmingham_hma_strategic_growth_study

for large scale schemes of up to £250m that could show a direct link between specific infrastructure investment and significant additional housing numbers.

The final HIF Forward Funding bids submitted from the WMCA were:

- Growth Areas (Coventry and UKC, Greater Icknield and Grove Lane, Perry Barr Growth Area) (acquisition of land, heat networks, utilities, highway improvements, new school)
- Metro Extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill
- Walsall to Wolverhampton Corridor
- Housing Delivery Package (land assembly fund to be utilised across the region by a WMCA-led team)

These FF bids could collectively unlock the development of 67,142 homes, and represent a total funding request of £740.58m

The final HIF Marginal Viability (MV) bids submitted from the WMCA were:

- Birmingham City Council – East Birmingham and North Solihull (Former Yardley Sewage Works - cable diversion and remediation; Acocks Green Sites – highway works, acquisition and connections / enhancements to rail stations; Bromford Estate - flood alleviation works
- Birmingham City Council – Druid's Heath
- Sandwell MBC – Friar Park Housing Site (land remediation)
- Dudley MBC – Bean Road Coseley (road and land remediation)
- Walsall MBC – Caparo / Reedswood (land remediation and new road)
- Walsall MBC – Former Goscote Works (land remediation)
- Coventry CC – Eastern Green (new road)
- Coventry CC – Junction 9 ring road (junction re-alignment; public realm possible land assembly)
- City of Wolverhampton Council – Heath Town Estate (utilities, remediation, blue infrastructure attenuation)
- City of Wolverhampton Council – Canalside, Cable Street and the Royal (land acquisition, public realm, connectivity)
- Shropshire County Council – Flaxmill Shrewsbury (unlock site including historic building being refurbished and brought back into use)
- Shropshire County Council – West Shropshire / Oswestry (infrastructure, utilities, new roundabout)
- Wyre Forest DC – Churchfields Urban Village (highway infrastructure)

These MV bids could collectively unlock the development of over 8,000 homes, and represent a total funding request of approximately £75m. However, the only successful bid was that from Wyre Forest DC.

Further, on 13 March 2018, as part of the Spring Statement the UK Government announced that it would make available to the WMCA £100 million for a Land Remediation Fund to buy and clean up land around priority sites, focused on the Walsall to Wolverhampton corridor. This is in addition to the approval for the WMCA's £250 million bid into the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to move to the next round of development with Government.

The Government has also agreed:

- Commitment from Government to work with Housing Associations on new ways to finance and build affordable housing to rent or buy in the West Midlands.
- A new Joint Delivery Team with Homes England which will develop a new "pipeline" of high-priority sites to be developed.
- Support for the creation of a new Centre of Excellence for Brownfield Remediation and Construction Skills in Wolverhampton, which will research new methods of construction such as modular housing, and provide construction skills training.
- Funding to deliver the Commonwealth Games Athletes' Village.

WMCA – Strategic Economic Plan 2016-2030

The WMCA's SEP sets out the organisation's vision for improving the quality of life for everyone in the West Midlands. It contains eight priority action areas, one of which is housing, which includes:

- Supporting the capacity locally for off-site construction
- Supporting local small- and medium-sized housebuilders for whom smaller sites will be more viable
- Supporting the development of low carbon and zero carbon homes
- Establishing a development arm to influence the shape of the local construction sector
- Exploring a mechanism to invest in social infrastructure
- Identifying the housebuilding industry as an early priority for the WMCA's productivity and skills commission

Peter Brett Associates – Strategic Housing Needs Study Stage 3 – August 2015

The purpose of the three-stage Peter Brett Associates (PBA) work was:

- To assess future housing needs across the region to 2031
- To assess those future needs against land supply
- To explore options for meeting any demand / supply shortfall

The PBA reports found that:

- Land is needed for up to 240,000 new dwellings, but is only identified for 180,000 dwellings – there is a shortfall of identified land for up to 60,000 dwellings
- Most accurate calculations indicate that a realistic figure is a 20 year shortfall of about 38,000 dwellings.
- Most of the shortfall is in Birmingham (up to 38,400) and to a lesser extent in Solihull (up to 2,700). (NB small area data is not completely reliable.)
- The remainder of the missing dwellings need to be sited within easy reach of Sandwell and Walsall (Black Country).
- (NB the current GL Hearn Study seeks to take this research further by identifying strategic development options capable of meeting the unmet housing needs in the HMA.)

GBSLEP – Strategic Economic Plan 2016-2030

The SEP sets out the LEP's ambition to become a top global city region by 2030, as well as the major driver of the UK economy outside of London. To do so, it focuses on a number of strategic priorities, including the development of high-quality housing. Supporting such housing growth is crucial to attracting and retaining quality individuals, and to improving quality of life, thereby sustaining the economic growth of Greater Birmingham.

Major housing priorities for GBSLEP are to ensure that the rate of housebuilding is significantly accelerated and that the homes that are built are of an appropriate mix of tenure and affordability to match the needs and ambitions of our community. The production of this Housing Framework is the first step for the LEP – along with its partners – in delivering against these ambitious priorities.

3.4   Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The production of a statement of common ground is not yet a statutory requirement of local authorities. However, if this does become a statutory requirement, then **GBSLEP should take an appropriate interest in assisting councils to produce statements of common ground**, especially in regard to cross-boundary delivery.

Recommendation 2: GBSLEP is supportive of the principles behind the six game changers identified by the WMCA's Land Commission. Further, we believe that the research undertaken by the Housing Framework task and finish group may be of use to the WMCA when further developing housing policy and practice across the patch. We therefore recommend that **representatives of the Housing Framework task and finish group meet with officers of the WMCA at the earliest opportunity in order to discuss joint working opportunities**.

Recommendation 3: **GBSLEP should support local partners in progressing their Housing Infrastructure Fund (FF and MV) bids**. The nature of this support will be dependent on which bids to the HIF are successful.

Section 4: Context – Local Plans

4.1   Introduction

This section contains a summary of some of the key planning issues in relation to housing in each of the LEP local authority areas. For more complete information relating to local plans and other relevant documents, please refer to the appendix to this report.

4.2   Key documents

Birmingham City Council	
Document: Birmingham Development Plan January 2017	
Theme	**Key issues**
Affordability	The City Council will seek 35% affordable homes as a developer contribution on residential developments of 15 dwellings or more (about 38% of the City's overall housing requirement is for affordable housing).
Sustainable neighbourhoods	New housing is expected to contribute to making sustainable places, characterised by: a wide choice of housing sizes, types and tenures; access to facilities such as shops, schools, leisure and work; convenient options to travel by foot, bicycle and public transport; a strong sense of place with high design quality; environmental sustainability and climate proofing; attractive, safe and multifunctional public spaces; opportunities for community stewardship.
Location of new housing	The majority of new housing provision will be located on previously developed land within the existing urban area – a minimum of 80% - and will be: adequately serviced by existing or new infrastructure; accessible to jobs, shops, and services by modes of transport other than the car; sympathetic to historic, cultural, and natural assets.
Housing trajectory	Over the period 2011-2031, 51,100 homes are planned to be delivered. This is insufficient to meet objectively assessed need and additional provision will be required beyond the city's boundary. The council will seek to stimulate house building in the short term, whilst in the longer term it is assumed that there will be stronger market growth in the city centre and other growth areas.
Type and tenure of housing	Proposals for new housing should seek to deliver a range of dwellings to meet local needs. Tenure needs are identified as 62% market housing, 22% affordable rent, 11% social rent, and 5% shared ownership.

Solihull MBC	
Documents: Housing Issues 2016 / Solihull Strategic Housing Market Assessment Part 2 Objectively Assessed Need for Affordable Housing 2016	
Theme	**Key issues**
Affordability	Affordability is a major challenge. MHCLG data shows that the ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings in 2015 was 8.45. At 31 March 2016 there were 13,944 'affordable' homes in Solihull, representing 15% of all housing in the Borough. This is a lower proportion of the housing stock than the West Midlands average. Rental levels vary significantly across the borough, and there is a marked difference between the north and south of the borough.
Private renting	Solihull's private rental sector (PRS) has been comparatively small although, in common with many areas, the Borough has seen a significant increase in the number of privately rented homes over recent years. Government policy on Housing Benefit has significant implications for the PRS. Since April 2011 the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate for all new Housing Benefit claimants has been set so that it only meets the rent of the cheapest 30% of properties.
Homelessness	Solihull's level of homelessness per 1,000 households is higher than the average for the West Midlands region and England as a whole. The main reasons for homelessness have traditionally been where parents, relatives or friends are no longer able or willing to accommodate a household. This is now the third main reason behind domestic violence (27%) and the ending of a private rented tenancy (25%).
Type and tenure of housing	Demand for social housing is shown by the number of households on Council's Housing Register. The increase in housing applications reflects the acute shortage of social housing and the difficulties households have in accessing home ownership and the PRS. Demand outstrips supply for all types of social housing and in all areas of the Borough. The only variable is the degree of excess demand. There are an average 8 cases on the Housing Register for every vacancy that arises. There is an increasing need to provide more accommodation for older persons and in particular for the very frail elderly. By 2033, new housing stock across Solihull should comprise: 49% owner-occupied, 25% private rented, 20% social rent / affordable rent, and 7% should be shared ownership.

Redditch Borough Council	
Documents: Local Plan January 2017 / Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment Appendix 4 Redditch SHMA Overview Report 2012	
Theme	**Key issues**
Affordability	Despite Redditch being the most 'affordable' Borough in the sub-region, the lower quartile multiplier implies even at this level, many people will be financially excluded from purchasing market housing. Redditch BC is keen to promote opportunities for its residents to access low cost housing, which presents opportunities to buy as well as rent. Contributions towards affordable housing will not normally be sought from developments of 10 units or less. On sites of 11 or more dwellings, a 30% contribution towards the provision of affordable housing will be expected. There is a need for social rented and intermediate products, with the greatest need being for social rented accommodation.
Availability of land	There is insufficient land within Redditch Borough Council to address the housing needs of its population up to 2030, therefore some cross boundary growth will be required in Bromsgrove District. It is acknowledged and accepted that some greenfield land must be used to meet development requirements, but there remains a need for prudent reuse of previously developed (brownfield) land within the Borough. Higher densities will be sought in locations close to public transport interchanges.
Type and tenure of housing	Long-term (to 2031), the breakdown of the tenure of properties required to respond to the changing population is 73% market housing and 27% affordable housing.

Bromsgrove District Council	
Documents: Local Plan January 2017 / Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment Appendix 2 Bromsgrove SHMA Overview Report 2012	
Theme	**Key issues**
Affordability	Bromsgrove has some of the highest house prices in Worcestershire and a very high level of homeownership, with only 10.6% of homes in the District socially rented. This combination of factors means that there is a significant unmet demand for affordable housing. 57% of households are unable to afford to purchase or rent on the open market in Bromsgrove District. This means that many local people have been forced to seek more affordable housing outside of the District. The knock-on effect of this is that many people who work in the District commute in daily, this is clearly not sustainable. Increased affordable housing provision will help to reduce this trend. The Council expects up to 40% affordable housing on greenfield sites or any sites accommodating 200 or more dwellings. The Council expects up to 30% affordable housing on brownfield sites accommodating less than 200 dwellings. The Council will support rural exception schemes where a need has been robustly identified through a recent local housing needs survey, and will generally expect schemes to be for 100% affordable housing.
Type and tenure of housing	Bromsgrove has an ageing population. There will be high demand for smaller properties suitable for meeting the needs of older person households, whilst the demand for family housing is also likely to be sustained. There is a need for (affordable) homes of all sizes with the greatest need for 1 and 2 bedroom properties, suitable for all ages. The rise in households where the head of household is aged over 85 will lead to greater requirements for different forms of supported housing which can meet the needs of elderly residents. Failure to provide alternatives for the rapidly increasing pensioner population will result in most people staying in their existing family homes - as is currently the case - with the effect of dramatically reducing the supply of such properties in the local housing market. Long-term (to 2031), the breakdown of the tenure of properties required to respond to the changing population is 80% market housing and 20% affordable housing.

Tamworth Borough Council	
Documents: Local Plan February 2016 / South-East Staffordshire Housing Needs Study Tamworth Housing Needs Assessment 2014	
Theme	**Key issues**
Affordability	For sites of 1 and 2 units there would be no on site provision and no commuted sum for affordable housing. On sites of 3 to 9 units a commuted sum for an equivalent of 20% affordable housing will be sought and for all sites of 10 units or more an on-site provision of 20% affordable housing. The supply from private developers secured by planning policy HG4 should be considered a minimum figure. There remains a significant need beyond this figure.
Type and tenure of housing	The significant growth in one-person households and the age of these new one-person households results in an increased requirement for smaller properties, but of sufficient size to accommodate overnight guests or space to work at home; therefore at least two bedrooms are preferable. There will also continue to be a substantial demand for 3-bed family properties. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment identified that the split of affordable housing tenure should be 50% Social Rented, 25% Affordable Rented and 25% Intermediate Tenure.

Cannock Chase District Council	
Document: Local Plan 2014	
Theme	**Key issues**
Affordability	Cannock Chase has a high proportion of households unable to afford social rents without benefits. 20% affordable housing will be provided by commercial house builders on developments of 15 or more units. On smaller sites of fewer than 15 units, financial contributions will be based on evidence of viability.
Location	Within all town centres housing proposals will be encouraged as part of mixed use developments or to provide effective use of upper floors of buildings. Housing proposals within a defined village settlement boundary will be limited to small infill sites. Housing proposals at locations within the Green Belt will be assessed against the NPPF. The release of land for housing will be managed in order to achieve the re-use of previously developed land within the built-up areas.
Planning	The Council will undertake measures to unlock existing planning permissions and bring forward sites. The council will actively consider joint working on Council-led ventures, where it is practicable.
Type and tenure of housing	Housing an ageing community will be an increasing issue for the District. Consultation has highlighted the need to ensure sufficient options are developed to allow effective choices between continued independent living, sheltered accommodation and 'extra care' communities offering a range of on-site services. The accommodation needs of people with disabilities, and in particular learning disabilities, in the District has become a more recognised issue in recent years. New housing development should provide for a mix of housing sizes, types, and tenure, including smaller dwellings suited to younger people, housing suitable for households with specific needs, and larger 3 and 4 bedroom houses, including those to meet aspirational needs.

Lichfield District Council	

Document: Local Plan 2015

Theme	Key issues
Affordability	Lichfield District is an area of high demand for housing, which has been exacerbated by significant levels of migration into the District, often from higher-income households. This has resulted in house prices that are higher than the average both nationally and in the wider West Midlands. The District Council will be seeking a target of up to 40% of new dwellings (including conversions) to be provided as affordable housing. The affordable housing requirement in the District is greater than the local housebuilding target proposed.
Type and tenure of housing	Housing within the District will need to reflect a very different demographic by 2029. The strategy needs to ensure the retention of younger people and the economically active, and to address the needs of an ageing population, which is currently exacerbated by older people moving in to the District. New residential developments will include an integrated mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures. The Council will actively promote the delivery of smaller properties including two bed apartments and two and three bed houses to increase local housing choice. The District Council will also promote the delivery of supported housing and care homes, and also dwellings built to lifetime homes standards. The provision of units which allow for home-working will also be supported. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment identifies the imbalance of housing types across the District with high concentrations of larger, detached homes, particularly in the rural areas. There is an issue of under occupation, with a desire for smaller properties to allow people to downsize within their own village.

East Staffordshire Borough Council	
Document: East Staffordshire Local Plan 2015	
Theme	**Key issues**
Planning	Key planning challenges include: meeting the housing needs of the growing number of households; accommodating an ageing population; improving access to services in all parts of the Borough; and meeting infrastructure needs of an increasing population.
Housing trajectory	The Council's updated Strategic Housing Market Area (SHMA) Assessment 2013 identifies that there is a trend towards smaller households, which will require more houses to accommodate the same population – as well as any new population – over the life time of the Local Plan. The SHMA identifies that 90% of the growth in households will be of single person and couple households.
Type and tenure of housing	The annual requirement for new affordable housing is around 18% of the total annual housing requirement for the Borough.

Wyre Forest District Council	
Document: Wyre Forest District Council Core Strategy 2010	
Theme	**Key issues**
Affordability	One of the key issues facing Wyre Forest District is the provision of housing to meet the needs of all. Although house prices are relatively low compared to other parts of the County, the supply of affordable housing is a particular issue within the District which has been exacerbated by rising house prices in recent years. The shortage of affordable housing is most apparent in the rural areas of the District where average house prices are highest.
Planning	The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) establishes that there has been a continuing increase in household formation within the District and indeed the West Midlands Region - this is projected to be maintained up until 2026. Within the District this will arise principally from the growth in one person households and to a lesser degree from the formation of multi-person households.
Type and tenure of housing	The SHMA evidenced a growing need for more affordable 2 and 4-bedroom dwellings within the District to accommodate the needs of families. The SHMA found that within the District there is a growing need for more suitable housing for older people and vulnerable groups in both private and public sectors. There is marked demand for sheltered housing for sale; greater provision of extra care housing for rent or sale and more residential care places.

4.3   Summary

The summaries on the previous pages indicate that, for all, authorities, affordability of homes is an ongoing issue. For all local authorities, one way to tackle this issue is through the implementation of affordable homes contributions on new developments. We also see that most local authorities are prioritising brownfield land for development, but a number are willing to consider greenfield site development in specific circumstances.

The required tenure split of homes does vary across the area, from 62% to 82% market housing (i.e. owner occupied and private rent) and 18% to 38% affordable and social rent. Some authorities also note the specific impact of the Local Housing Allowance, and rising homelessness.

We can therefore see that there are some common issues across the GBSLEP / HMA area, although the scale of these issues is different for each authority area.

Section 5: Data – Affordability

5.1 Introduction

A note about the data in general

The statistical geography across the West Midlands area is fairly complicated. In theory, this Housing Framework focuses on the GBSLEP geography, rather than on the wider Greater Birmingham HMA geography. However, where it is easily available, we have also used data for the local authorities that are in the HMA but not GBSLEP, as this may bring additional context to discussions.

For reference, the statistical geography of the area is:

In the GBSLEP area *and* the HMA
- Birmingham
- Solihull
- Cannock Chase
- Lichfield
- Tamworth
- Bromsgrove
- Redditch

In the GBSLEP area but *not* the HMA
- East Staffordshire
- Wyre Forest

In the HMA area but *not* the GBSLEP
- Dudley
- Sandwell
- Walsall
- Wolverhampton
- South Staffordshire
- North Warwickshire
- Stratford-on-Avon

A note about affordability

Home ownership in England has fallen to a level last seen in 1986, as a result of rising housing costs and static wages[5]. The levels of home ownership peaked in the early 2000s at around 71% of the population. In the West Midlands metropolitan area at its peak (April 2005), homeownership stood at 70.5% of the conurbation's total households. By February 2016, this figure had declined by 11.2% with only 59.3% of households in the conurbation owning their own home. The main consequence of this trend is the increase in private renting. The proportion of people renting

---

[5] Data taken from Housing Briefing for WMCA (produced by Sandwell MBC) – August 2016

privately across the conurbation has doubled between 2003 and 2015. In April 2005, 8% of households privately rented. By February 2016, this had increased to 17%.

For those households who do not yet own their own home but desire to buy, this ambition is becoming increasingly out of reach. National data suggests that private renters do not view it as tenure of choice (versus home ownership), with less than 10% choosing to rent because of the area and just 3% actively preferring the flexibility of renting. 65% say that never expect to buy because they cannot see themselves ever being able to afford to do so.

Over recent decades housing costs have escalated, accounting for an increasing share of household income. On average housing costs in the private rented sector account for 30% of income, compared with the 23% figure associated with mortgages.

Across the West Midlands area, house prices are below the national average of £211,230 (with the exception of Solihull which stands at £246,192). Incomes are also below the national average, and across the conurbation house prices have been climbing sharply and are easily outstripping any increase in earnings, meaning that house prices have continued to go beyond traditional levels of affordability.

Data analysis carried out by Sandwell MBC, using the UK House Price Index for May 2016 and the ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings for 2015 indicated the following affordability ratios:

Local authority	Affordability ratio
Birmingham	6.7
Solihull	10.1

Source: UK House Price Index England May 2016 / ONS 2015 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

It should be noted that these affordability ratios are worse than those the Housing Framework task and finish group found through their own research, which was based on Office of National Statistics data from 2015 . This indicates that the affordability problem is continuing to grow, rather than to decline.

On average, the deposit required by a first time buyer to purchase a house in the conurbation is approximately £23,000 and the average length of time that it would take to save for that deposit is as follows:

Local Authority	Couple working FT without children	Couple with one child (men working FT, women working PT)	Single person working FT
WM Conurbation	5.3 years	10.3 years	11.1 years
Birmingham	5.3 years	10.5 years	11.1 years
Solihull	6.3 years	11.2 years	12.8 years

Source: A Home of Their Own, Shelter, January 2015

A number of first time buyers have accessed the housing market through Government schemes aimed at providing assistance via equity loans or mortgages (Help to Buy Equity and Help to Buy Mortgage Guarantee). However some economic analysts[6] suggest that although initially the schemes led to an increase in the level of first time buyers entering the housing market, over time

---

[6] http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/who-is-helped-by-help-to-buy/

this could have led to an increase in prices. In addition, whilst Starter Homes will clearly help some prospective homeowners, it is felt that this will generally be households on average and higher incomes, whilst households on lower incomes will be excluded. There are therefore clear concerns for the conurbation that the promotion of Starter Homes at the expense of other options, such as affordable rent, may exacerbate housing affordability issues.

With home ownership out of the reach for many households in the conurbation, the need for social and affordable rented housing remains high. Across the conurbation, there are approximately 40,000 potential new households in need of some form of sub-market housing.

The Sandwell MBC research concludes that there is a general consensus that around one third of new housing provision should be non-market housing. Therefore products must be developed that provide alternative routes to home ownership, as well as finding effective ways to support a high quality private rented offer. The possible role for GBSLEP and partners in developing such options is explored further within the following section of this report.

5.2   Median Price

Chart 1: Median price GBSLEP area (£):
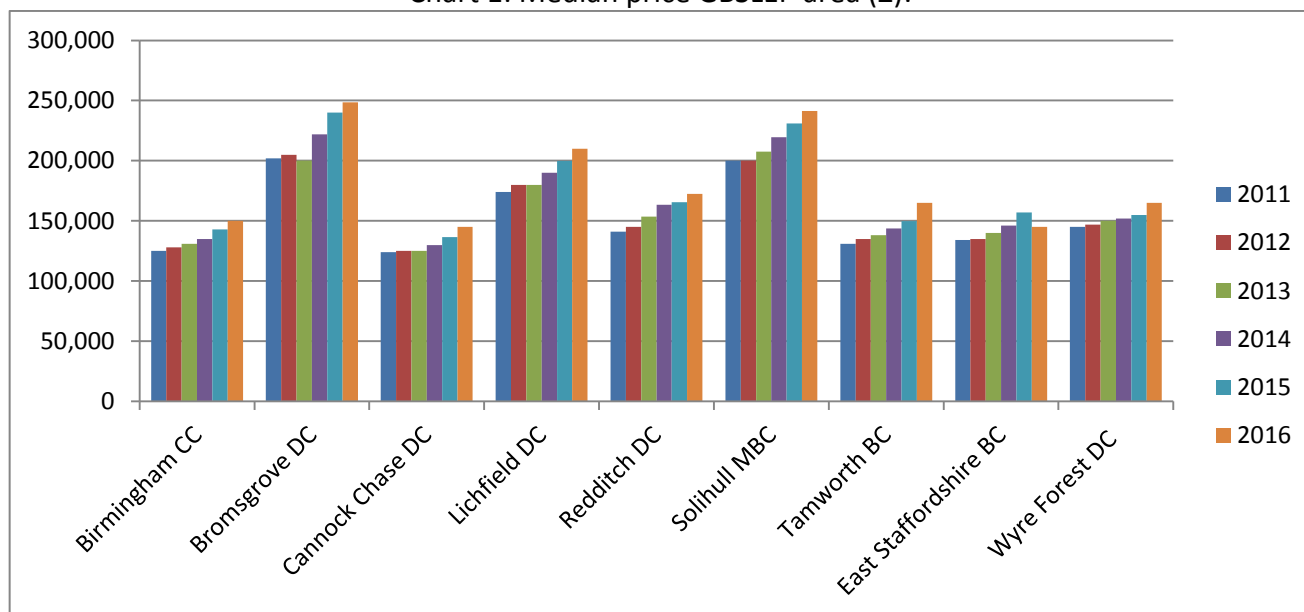
Source: Office for National Statistics - Median price paid for administrative geographies - HPSSA Dataset 9 - table 2a - Quarter 4 data
https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/medianhousepriceforn ationalandsubnationalgeographiesquarterlyrollingyearhpssadataset09

Median house price data indicates that, within the GBSLEP area, Bromsgrove, Solihull, and Lichfield are the most expensive districts. The data also indicates significant rises in median price over the past six years, with rises generally ranging between £25,000 and £50,000. With wages stagnating, this indicates that affordability is a growing problem.

5.3   Median Weekly Rent

Chart 2, below, shows average rent per week within the Private Registered Provider sector. Please note that, in 95%+ of cases, providers included under the PRP banner are housing associations.

Chart 2: Private Registered Providers (PRP) median rent (£ per week):
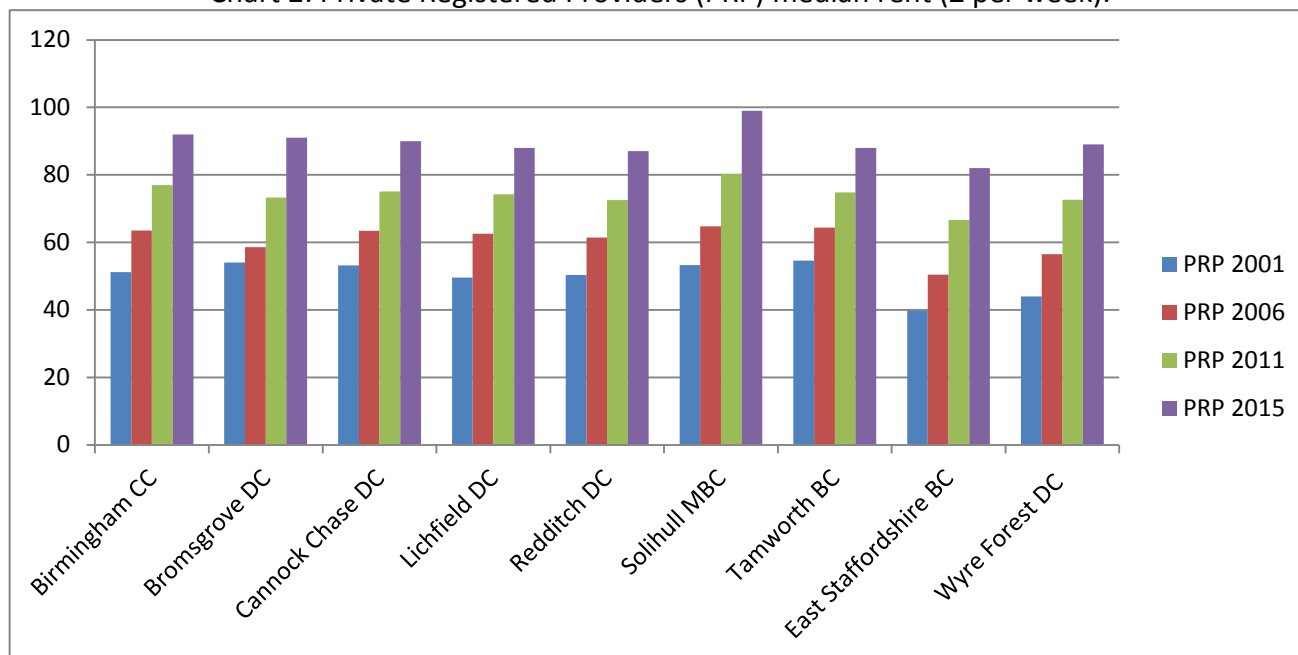
Chart 3: Local Authority median rent (£ per week)
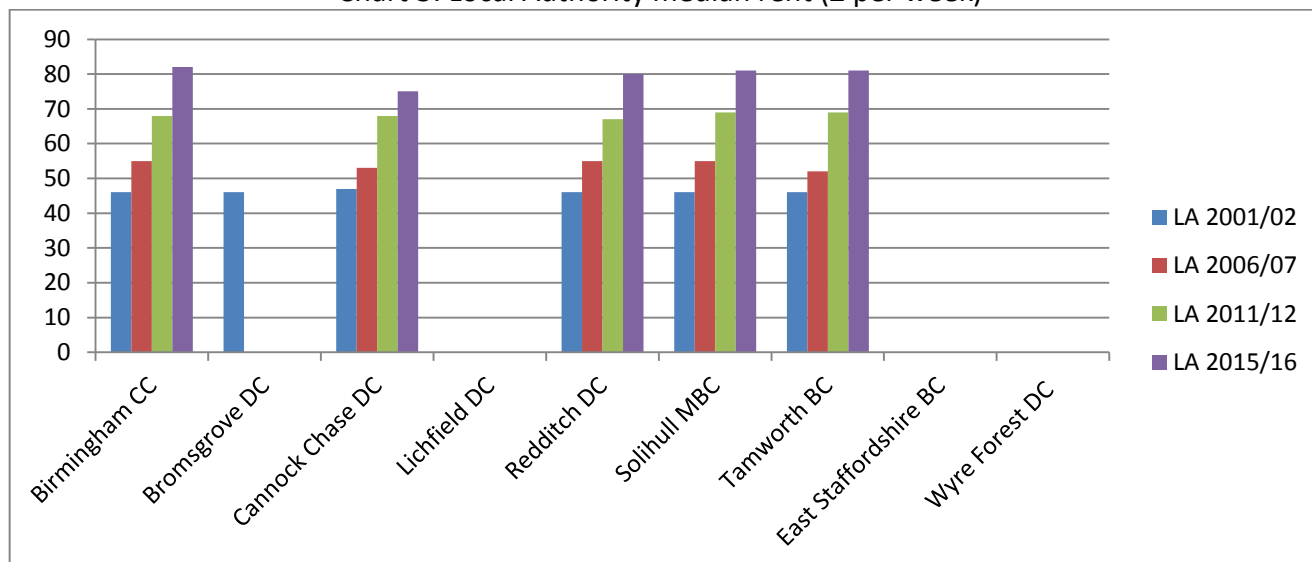
Source: Government Live Tables 702 and 704
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-rents-lettings-and-tenancies
Note: "private registered providers" – the "registered" in the name refers to registration with Homes England. The more common term "housing associations" refers to non-profit bodies that provide social housing. The vast majority of housing associations are registered with Homes England and so are PRPs. Conversely, there are some for-profit housing bodies that are registered as PRPs with the Homes England.

The data indicate that there have been significant PRP and local authority rent rises between 2001/02 and 2015/16 – these prices are set by the Government through the rent settlement. However, these rises pale in comparison to the (unregulated) increases in the private rented sector. Data for the private sector indicate that market rents have risen far above the level of affordability for many, and certainly above the help available through benefit payments. Whilst the data is not directly comparable to the government data used in charts 2 and 3, the data for 2 bedroom properties shows the difference between the actual price of renting a property, and the amount of local housing allowance that is actually claimed. It should be noted that this data is for **lower quartile** properties (i.e. those that should, in theory, be more affordable in relative terms).

Chart 4: lower quartile private sector two-bedroom property rent, and LHA rate available (£ pcm)
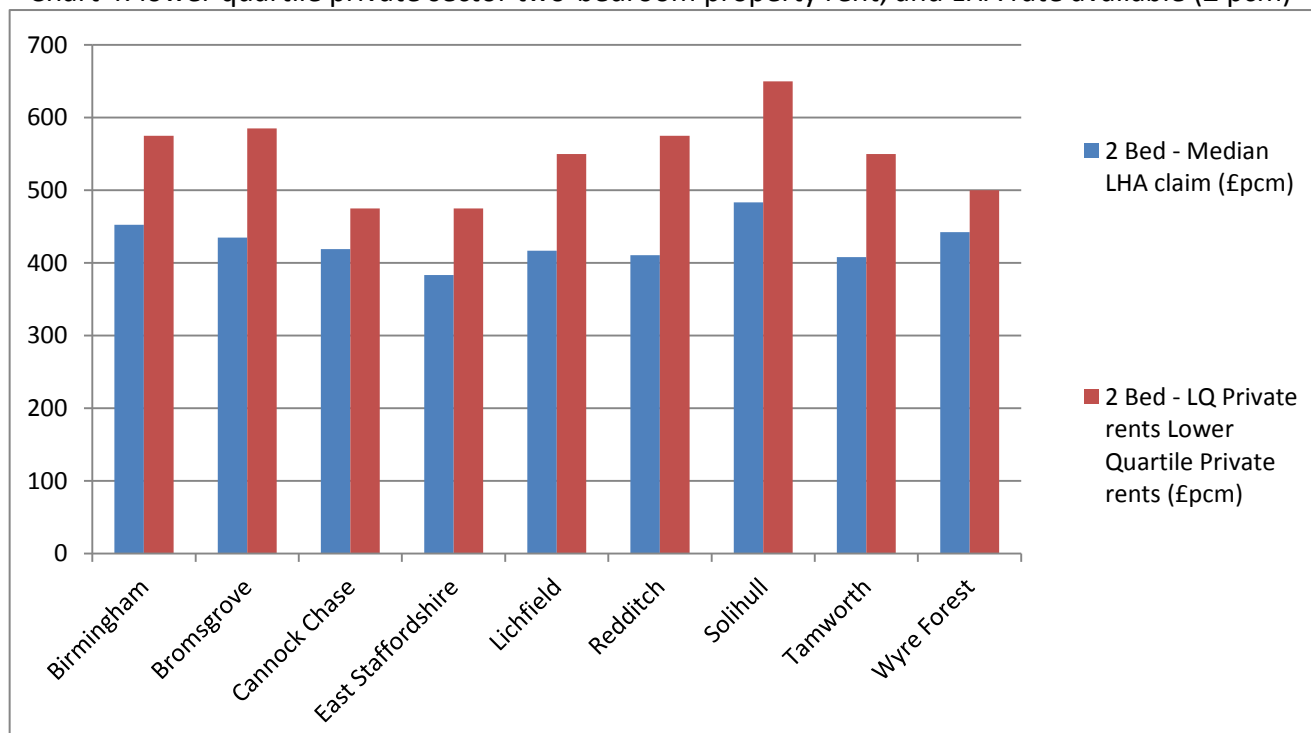
This chart clearly shows the shortfall between the Local Housing Allowance rate and the typical private sector rent for a lower-end two-bedroom property. This highlights the affordability gap that households have to bridge if they are unable to access affordable housing, but are still in need of state assistance to pay their (private) rent.

5.4   Lower quartile prices and earnings

Affordability of housing is an issue across the GBSLEP area. Affordability ratios (calculated using household income and house price statistics) can be used to show where there are particular problems. A ratio of less than 5 is considered to show that housing is (in strictly relative terms) affordable. A ratio of over 5 is considered to indicate a problem with levels of affordability, and a ratio of over 7.5 indicates that affordability is a significant problem. The data show that there is nowhere within the GBSLEP area that has an affordability ratio of less than 5.

The following charts show affordability statistics for the GBSLEP area, and for the English regions and Wales.

Chart 5: Ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings (HMA area):

Legend: 2007, 2011, 2012, 2016

Categories: Birmingham CC, Bromsgrove DC, Cannock Chase DC, Lichfield DC, Redditch DC, Solihull MBC, Tamworth BC, East Staffordshire DC, Wyre Forest DC
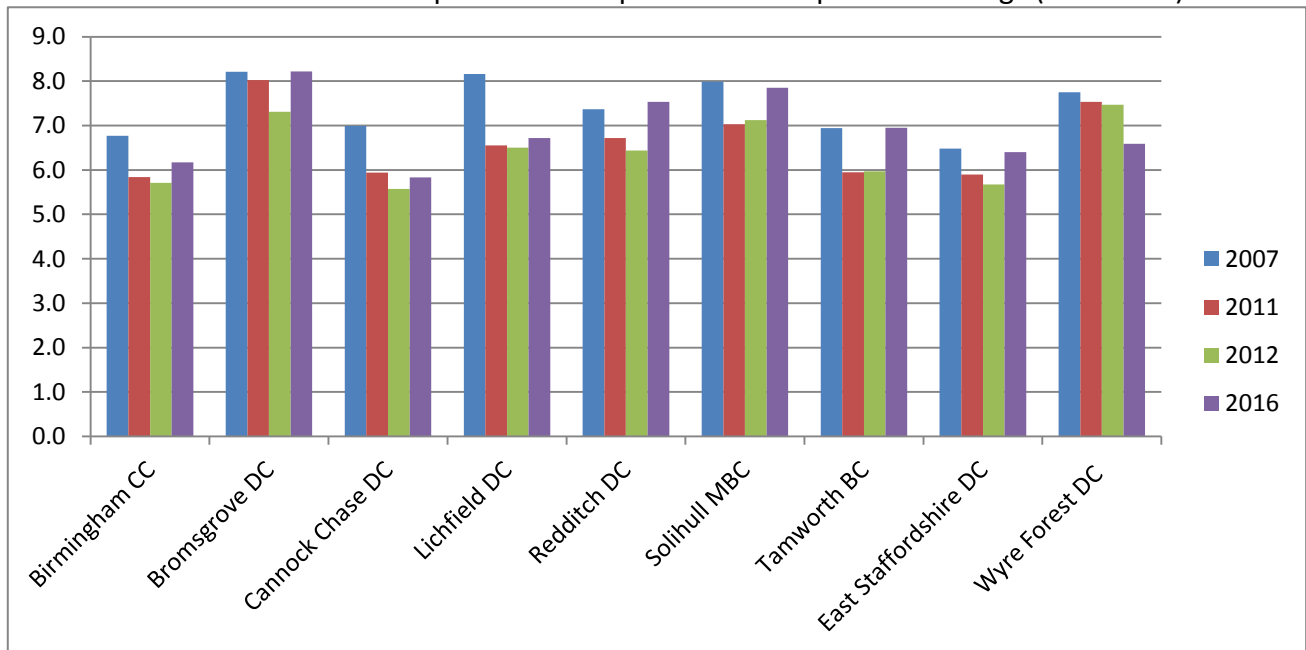
Chart 6: Ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings (English regions and Wales):

Legend: 2007, 2011, 2012, 2016

Categories: North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England, London, South East, South West, Wales
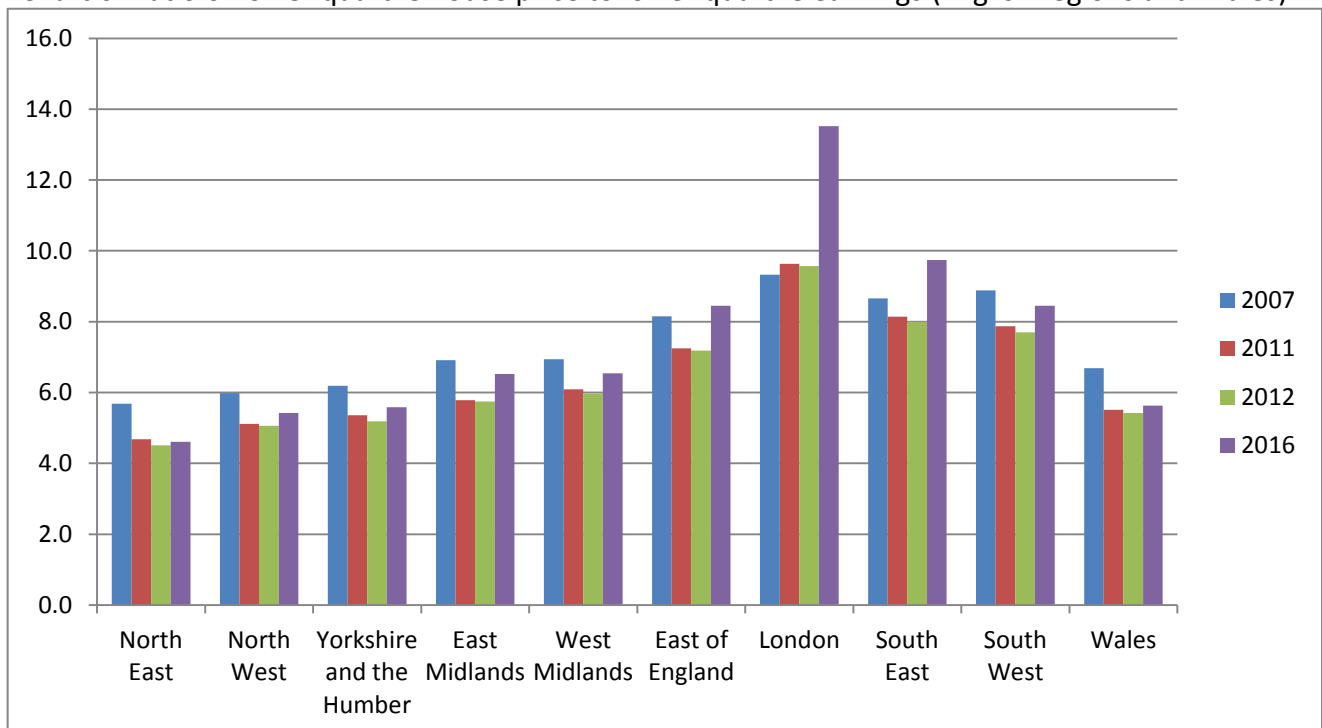
Source for charts 5 and 6: Office of National Statistics 2015 data (ratio of house price to residence-based earnings (lower quartile and median) - table 6c and table 2c
https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/ratioofhousepricetoresidencebasedearningslowerquartileandmedian
Note: a ratio of 3.5 to 5 is considered acceptable, a ratio over 5 is considered problematic, and a ratio over 7.5 is considered a significant problem. All calculations are based on individual earnings

Further, we can also look in more detail at property sales within the GBSLEP area, broken down into property price quartiles. This data is presented within charts 7 to 15 on the following pages.

Chart 7: Birmingham property sales:

Property Sales in Birmingham 2012-16
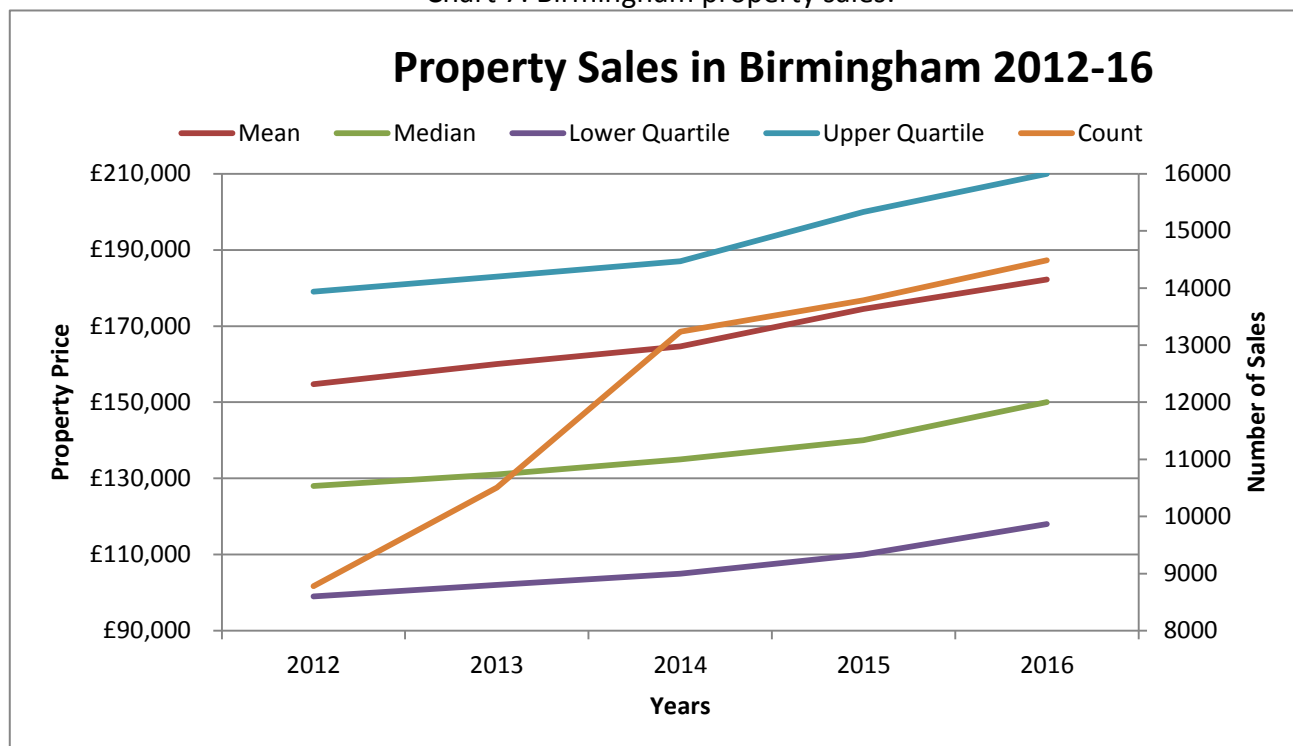
Chart 8: Bromsgrove property sales:
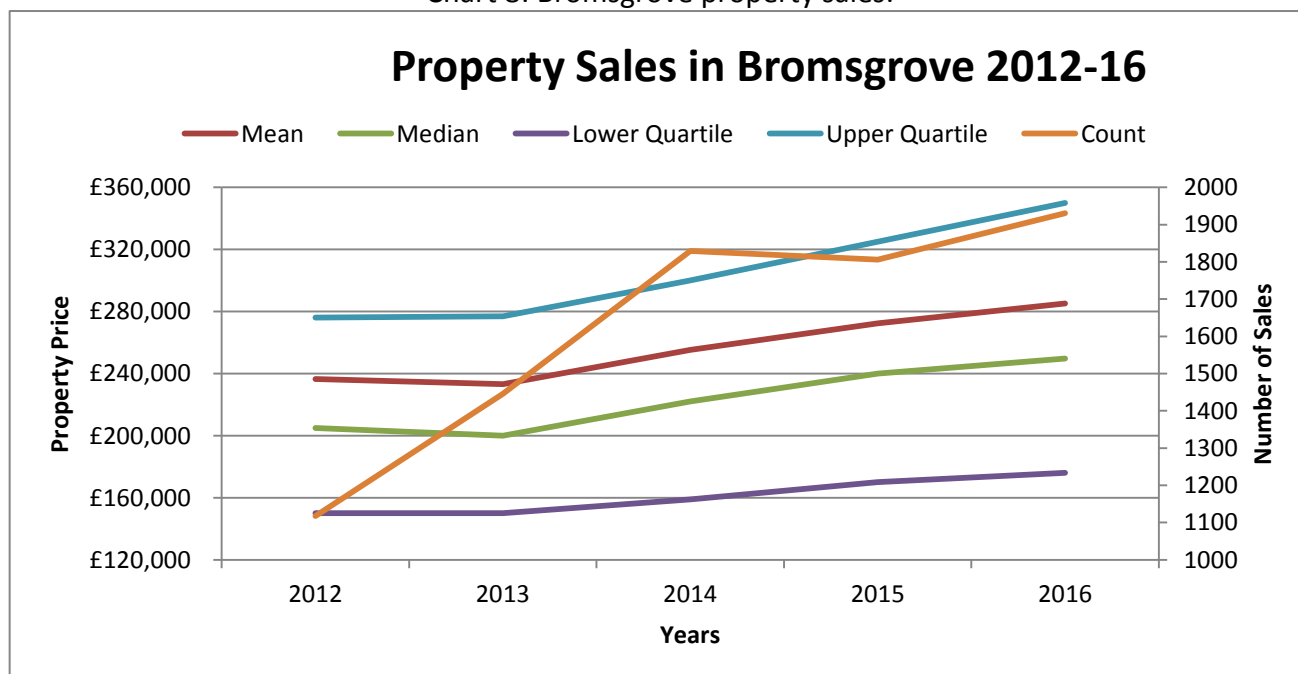
Property Sales in Bromsgrove 2012-16

Property Sales in Cannock Chase 2012-16
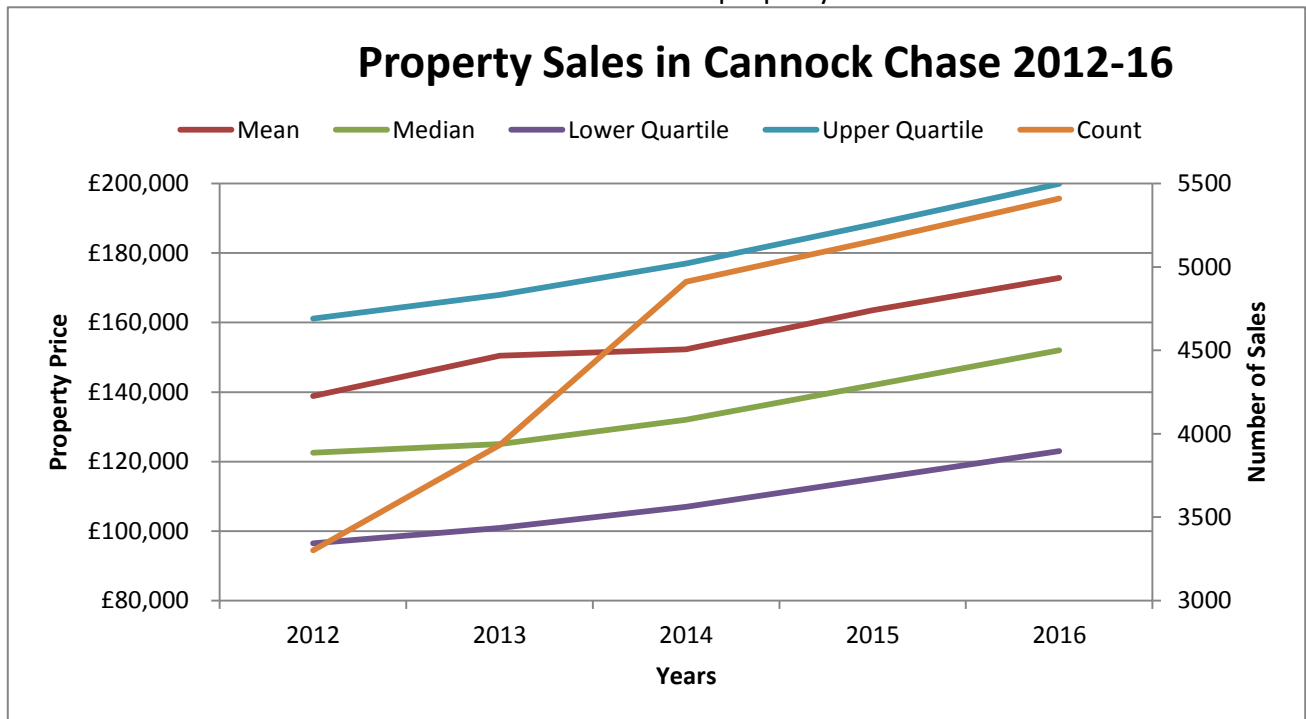
Property Sales in East Staffordshire 2012-16
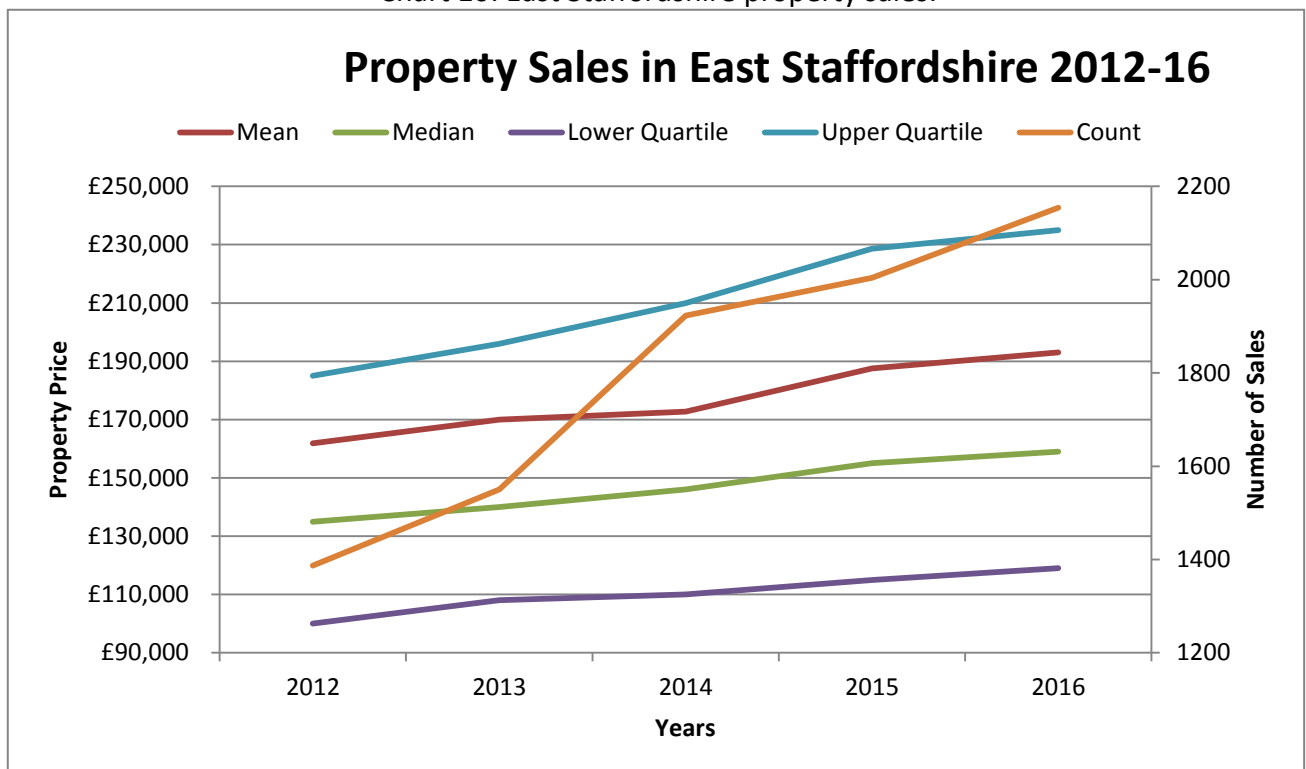
Chart 11: Lichfield property sales:

Property Sales in Lichfield 2012-16

Legend: Mean — Median — Lower Quartile — Upper Quartile — Count
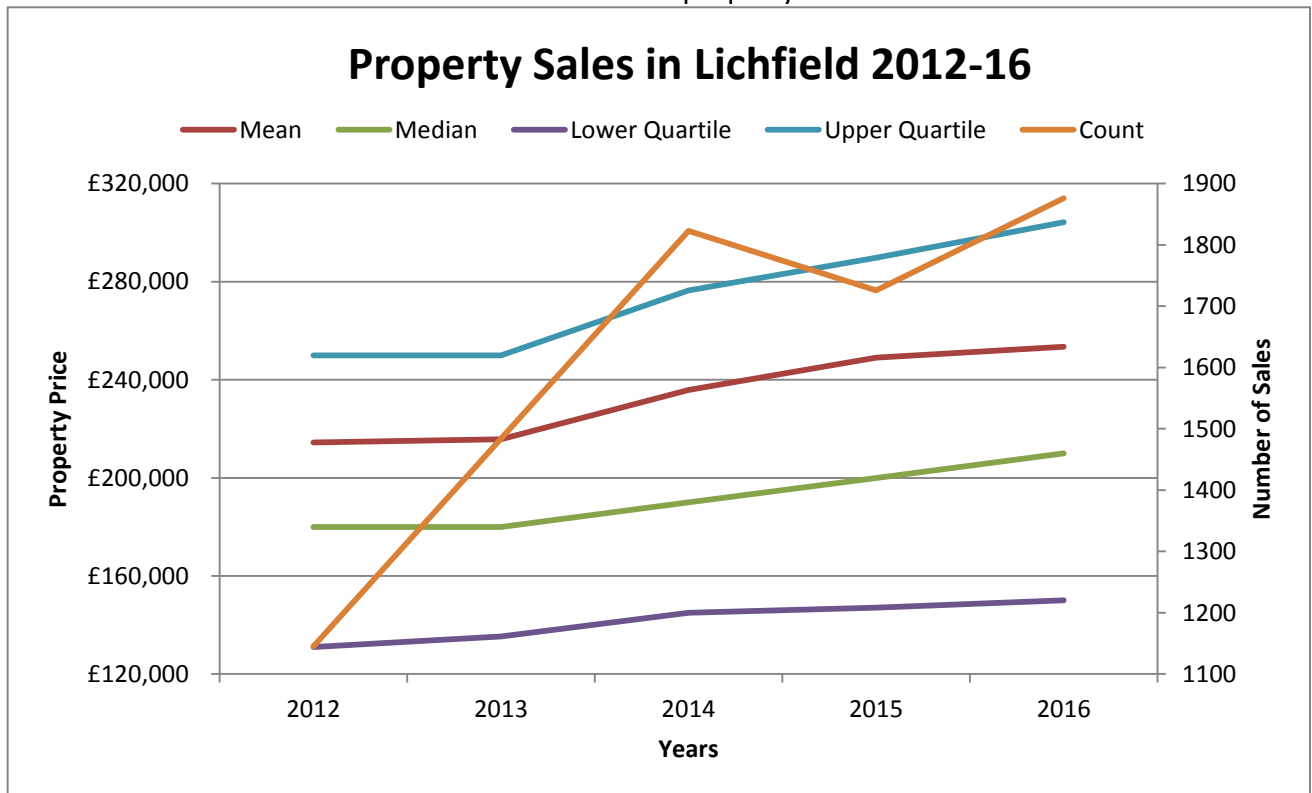
Chart 12: Redditch property sales:

Property Sales in Redditch 2012-16

Legend: Mean — Median — Lower Quartile — Upper Quartile — Count
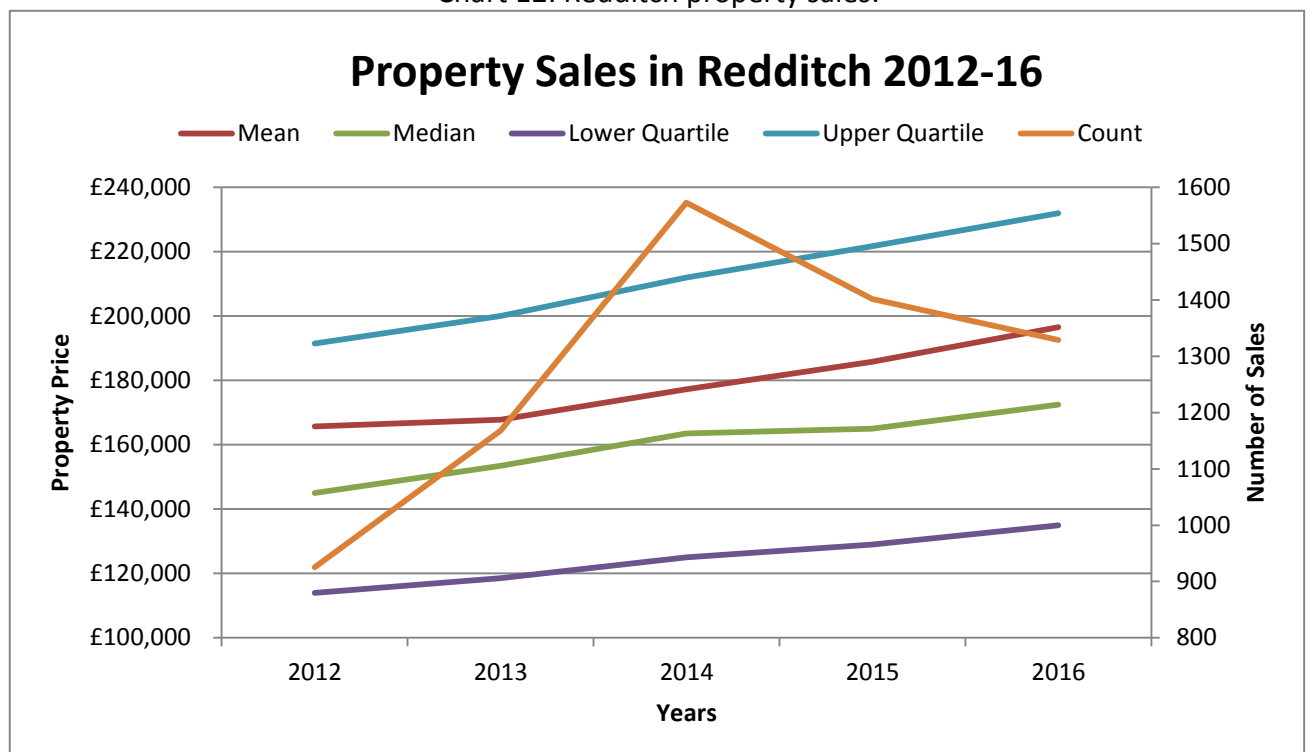
Chart 13: Solihull property sales:

Property Sales in Solihull 2012-16

Mean — Median — Lower Quartile — Upper Quartile — Count
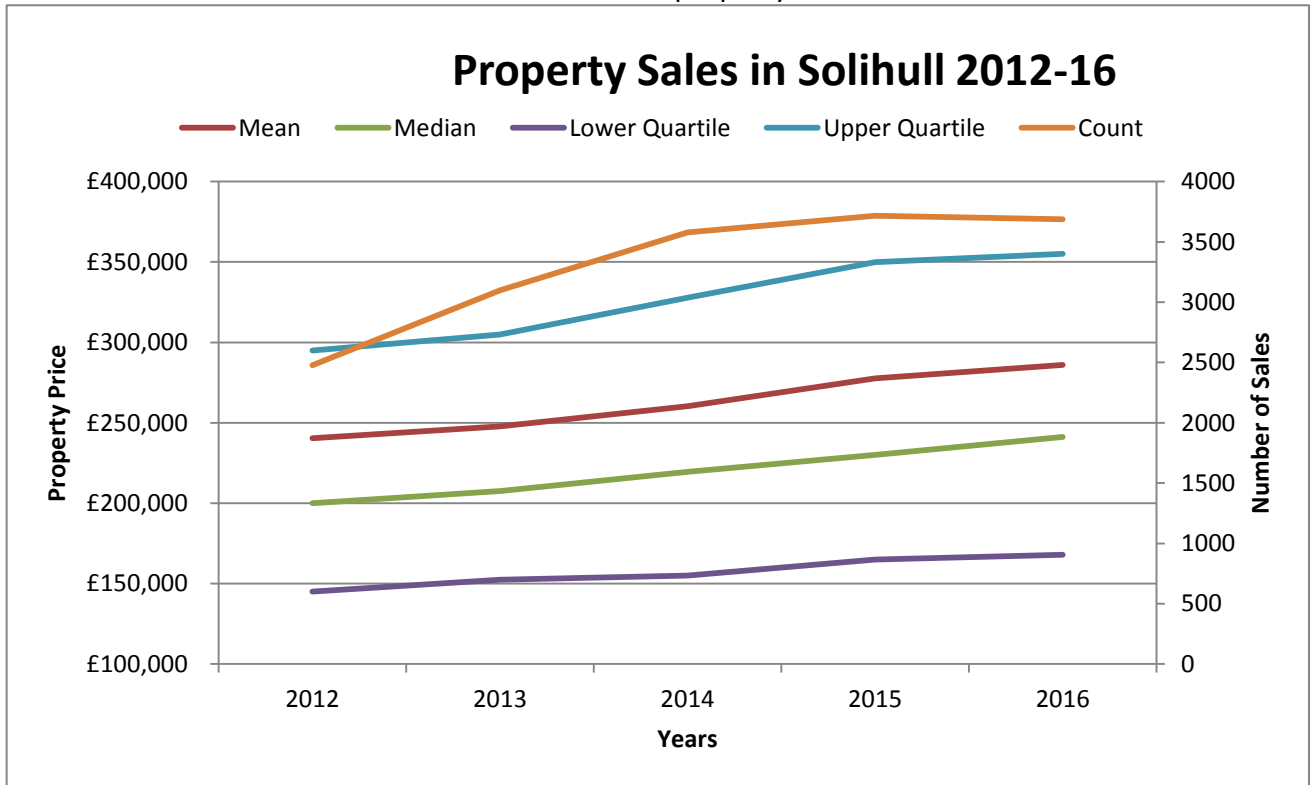
Chart 14: Tamworth property sales:

Property Sales in Tamworth 2012-16

Mean — Median — Lower Quartile — Upper Quartile — Count

Property Sales in Wyre Forest 2012-16

Legend: Mean — Median — Lower Quartile — Upper Quartile — Count
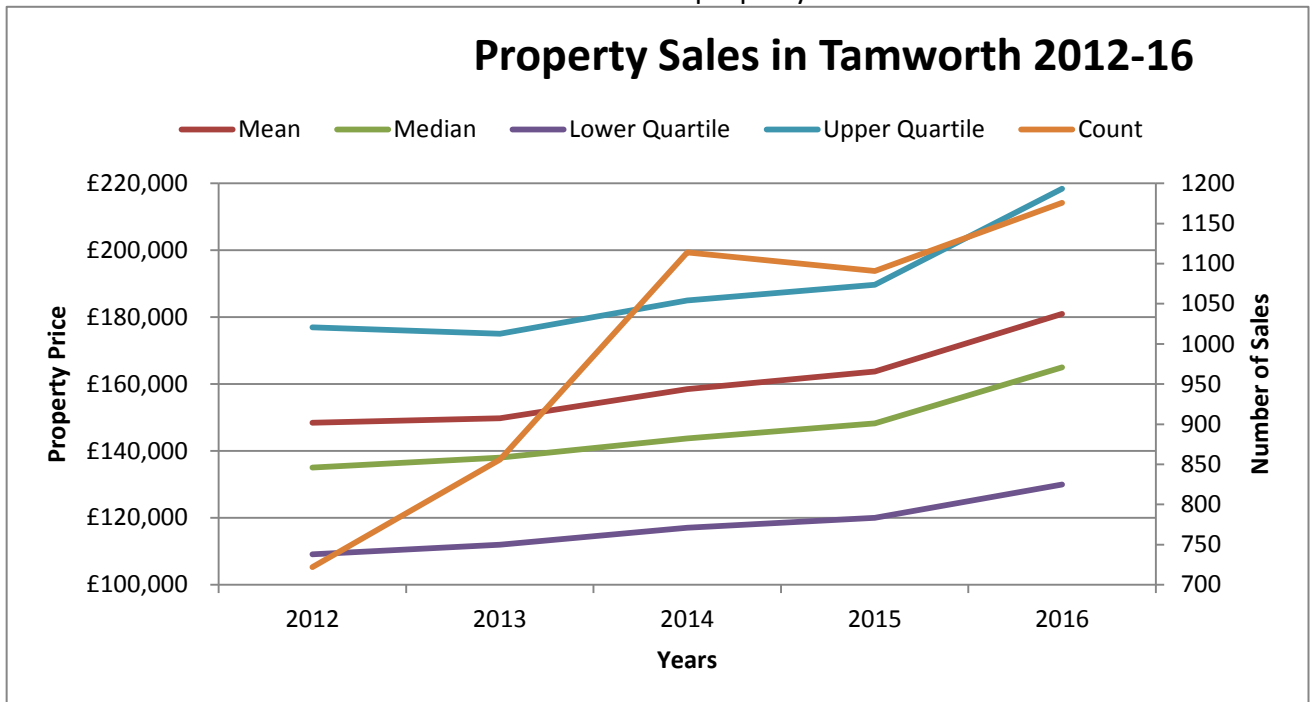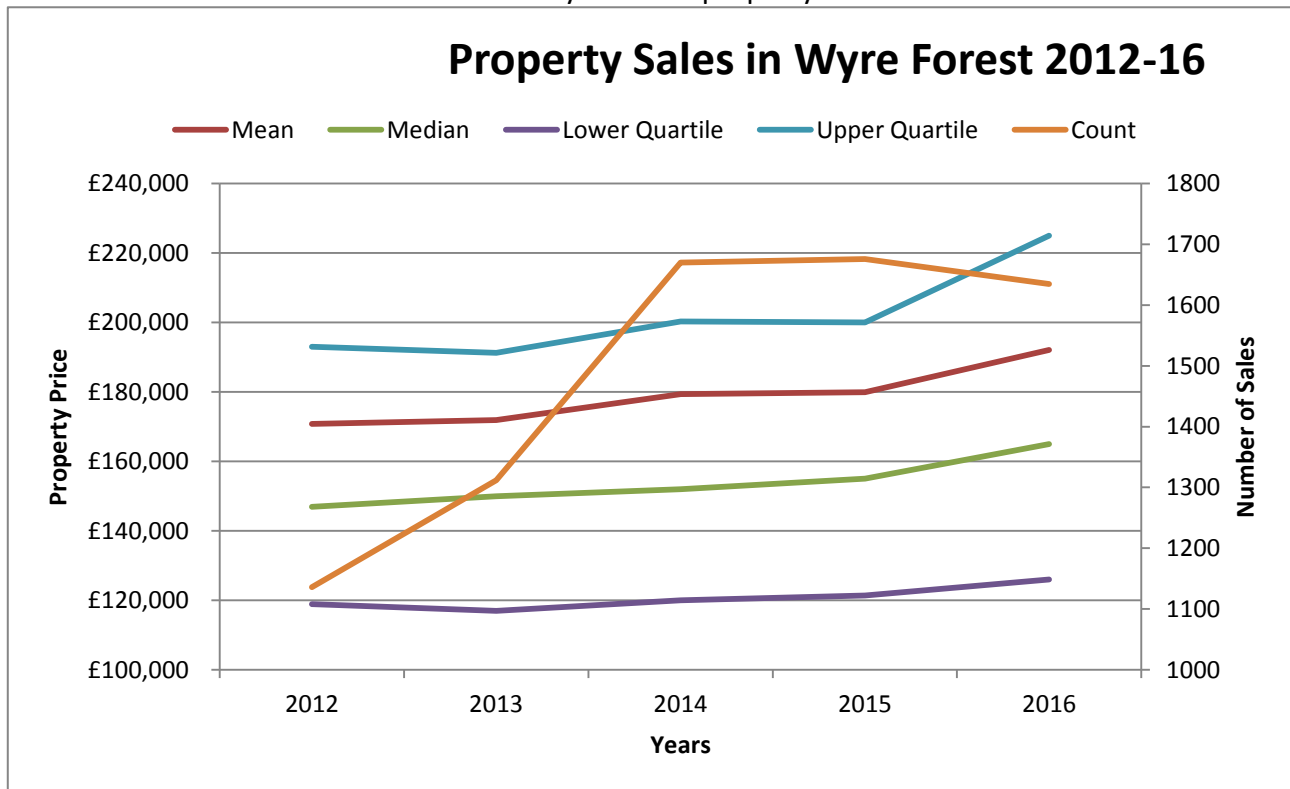
Within most of the property sales charts shown on the previous pages, the gap between lower quartile prices and upper quartile prices is widening. The lower quartile is moving more slowly than the upper quartile, producing a flatter line at the lower quartile. This indicates a growing price gap between quartiles. In practice, this could mean that expanding families cannot move to bigger properties, as they are priced out of the market. It is possible that, in time, prices will go up in the lower quartile as well, potentially forcing families to choose between moving into rented accommodation (where there already significant pressures) or staying in an overcrowded property.

Where we see atypical fluctuations, it is sometimes difficult to identify the precise cause. For example, the property sale count in Wyre Forest DC may have fallen as the supply from larger sites (c200-300 units) has tailed off. This may change again when the new Local Plan is adopted (expected 2019) as this is likely to require the release of some sizeable development sites. Meanwhile, in Cannock Chase DC, the higher number of sales may reflect the Council's role as a growth area, keen to facilitate the delivery of more affordable homes with the District.

5.5   Local Housing Allowance

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is the rate which is used to calculate Housing Benefit for tenants renting from private landlords. Different LHA caps apply to different areas, and there are often multiple rates within a single local authority area. LHA rates are based on private market rents being paid within the designated area. The LHA does not currently affect council tenancies, or most tenancies with registered social landlords.

The charts on the following pages shows the percentage of properties which are affected by a LHA shortfall within the GBSLP area. This data is split by property size.

Chart 16: percentage of properties affected by a LHA shortfall
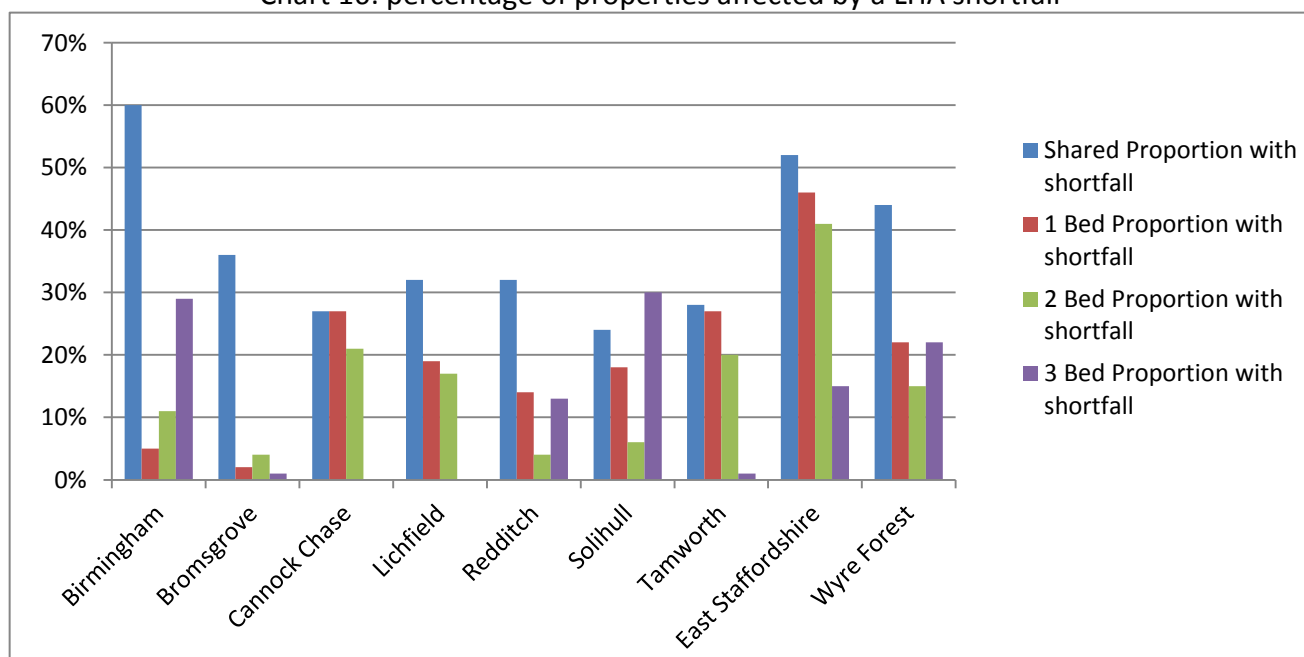
The chart shows that, across the GBSLEP area, all local authority areas include properties which are more expensive to rent than would be covered by the maximum LHA payment. There is little commonality across the patch in terms of the size of property and the extent to which there is a shortfall for that specific type. The fact that the problem manifests differently in different areas means that a one-size-fits-all solution will not be appropriate.

With the data indicating a significant affordability issue across the private rented market, it is likely that those in need of financial help to rent privately are having to find some of that rent money from their other income, beyond LHA. In most cases, that means diverting some income away from food / utilities / children etc. In the longer term, these households may have to move to more expensive areas – away from jobs, education, social and support networks etc. – and into (relatively) cheaper areas. There are two ways to deal with this issue – by raising LHA payments, and by providing additional rental properties to cater to demand.

As well as collating the above data relating to LHA shortfalls, the Housing Framework task and finish group also requested more in-depth information from local authorities regarding the impact of LHA changes within their area. Responses were as follows:

Birmingham CC	"Birmingham has seen a reduction of properties available for rent within the LHA rate across the board, in both size and type of property. In many property / size combination groups there are now virtually no properties available for rent within LHA rates."
Bromsgrove DC	"Regarding LHA for the social sector, it will be hard to tell until 2019. However, new housing options have been developed for those under 35 and single. For private rented, the LHA is really low, so it hard to find properties in the PRS that are within the LHA."
Lichfield DC	"LHA rates are inadequate in many parts of the district where rents are high, especially Lichfield city and some rural areas. It has had an impact on larger families in the private sector as LHA is only payable up to a maximum of 4 bedrooms. LHA rates have been capped in recent years, which has exacerbated the problem. This has meant that the disparity between private rents and LHA has widened. The raising of the age of eligibility for the one bedroomed rate from 25 to 35 has had a disproportionate impact on single people under 35 being able to access private rented accommodation."
Tamworth BC	"There is not a significant impact in Tamworth as our social rents are below LHA levels. However, this may have more of an impact as we move to charge affordable rent on new build properties either built or acquired by the Council. The impact of the LHA cap on our sheltered schemes is currently being assessed in preparation for its introduction in 2019."

5.6   Summary and recommendations

As can be seen from the previous tables, there is a wide range of issues to be considered in terms of affordability.

For those wishing to purchase a home, there have been significant price rises over the last few years, with these rises far outstripping wage growth. Affordability ratios are above 5 across the GBSLEP area, indicating a market issue, and there is a widening gap between prices in the lower and upper quartiles. For those who rent, there have been significant rent rises. In addition, LHA rates fall short of rental prices in a percentage of properties in each area, leading to further constraints.

These constraints are important to GBSLEP, because a housing market (including properties for both rent and purchase) which does not meet the needs of its local population is a housing market which will stifle economic growth. In order to grow, places need to be 'liveable', and adequate, affordable, appropriate housing is central to that.

However, despite issues being evident across the market, we should focus on those most in housing need from an affordability viewpoint, which means looking most closely at lower quartile figures, as these are more informative in terms of those facing the most acute affordability challenges. This data shows that nowhere in the HMA has a ratio of below 5 (which is the ratio at and above which affordability is considered to become an issue). Looking at the lower quartile figures, we can also see that this quartile of the market is moving more slowly than the upper quartile. This relative flatline indicates that there is a growing price gap between the upper and lower quartiles, and

property owners face a significant 'reach' every time they wish to move up in the housing market. This results in a market which is more static than it could be, with mobility becoming stratified.

Given these issues around lower quartile affordability, it is clear that we need to see increased provision of (good quality) rental properties at affordable prices. Longer tenancy agreements for these properties are likely to be popular, as they provide increased security for tenants. We also need to consider whether or not mindsets around home ownership versus renting are changing – for example, will 'generation rent' *choose* to keep renting, even if/when they can afford to buy?

Recommendation 4: The data show that there are issues of affordability, especially lower quartile affordability, in all tenures and sizes of homes across the GBSLEP area. **The LEP should therefore support further housing development – especially affordable housing development – in order to ensure that growing demand can be met.** This support should reflect local authority priorities for their areas, and the LEP's input will therefore vary by local authority district. However, the LEP should accept in principle that public sector intervention *will* be required in order to meet housing demand, especially for social and affordable homes.

Recommendation 5: West Midlands housing associations are working with WMCA and Homes England to explore the potential for a joint delivery vehicle to increase the supply of new homes of all tenures, including affordable, across the Combined Authority area. These discussions have involved the LEP, through the Non-Executive Director for Place. **GBSLEP should continue to be involved in joint delivery vehicle discussions**, exploring options such as the LEP's role as an investment partner, possibly through a revolving capital loan fund.

Recommendation 6: There is uncertainty regarding tenure demand in future. 'Generation Rent' may be a long-term market adjustment, and tenure needs for the next 10 or 20 or 30 years are therefore difficult to predict. **The LEP will therefore support, as appropriate, any further research on future tenure trends.**

Section 6: Data – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

6.1   Introduction

There are official definitions of both homelessness and rough sleeping.

Households which meet specific criteria of priority need set out in legislation, and to whom a homelessness duty has been accepted by a local authority, are said to be statutorily homeless. These households are generally not homeless in the literal sense of being without a roof over their heads, but are more likely to be threatened with the loss of, or are unable to continue with, their current accommodation. A 'main homelessness duty' is owed where the authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless, and falls within a specified priority need group.

In terms of rough sleeping, the UK Government's definition includes those people sleeping, about to bed down, or actually bedded down in the open air. Figures can be based on a count, undertaken within a specified timeframe on a single night, or can be based on an estimate using a variety of data.

Homelessness data and rough sleeper data for the GBSLEP area is considered on the following pages.

6.2   Rough Sleepers

Chart 17: Numbers of rough sleepers (figures are a mixture of counts and estimates):
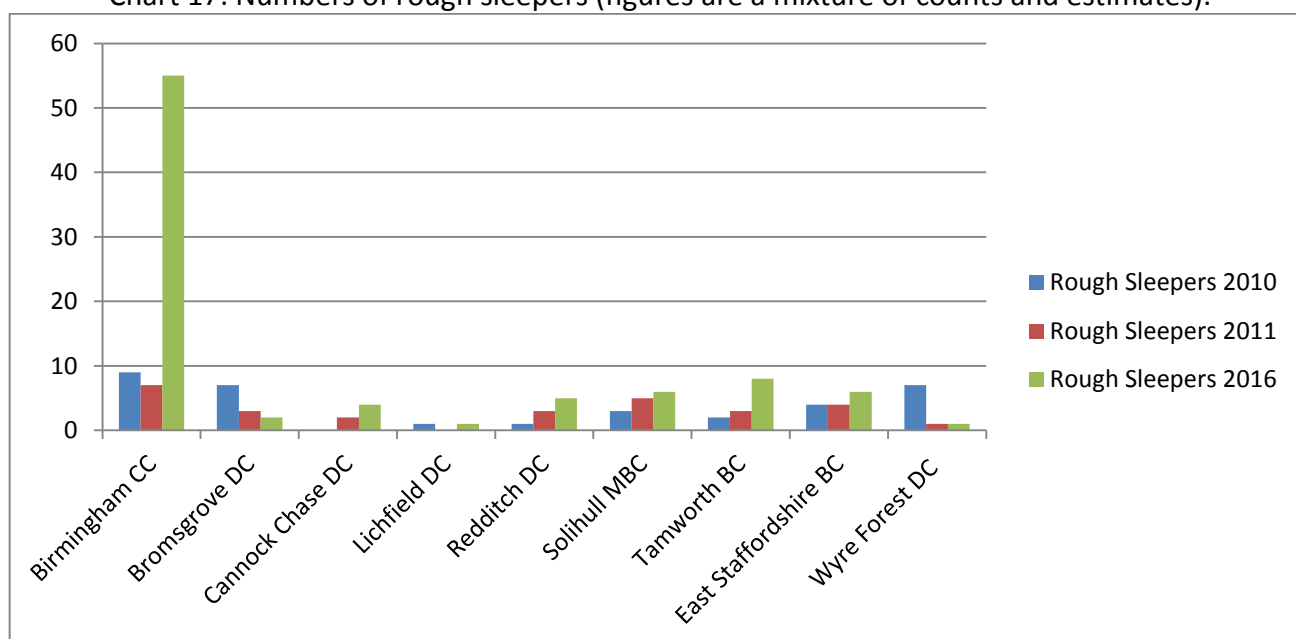
Chart 18: Rough sleepers per 1,000 households 2016
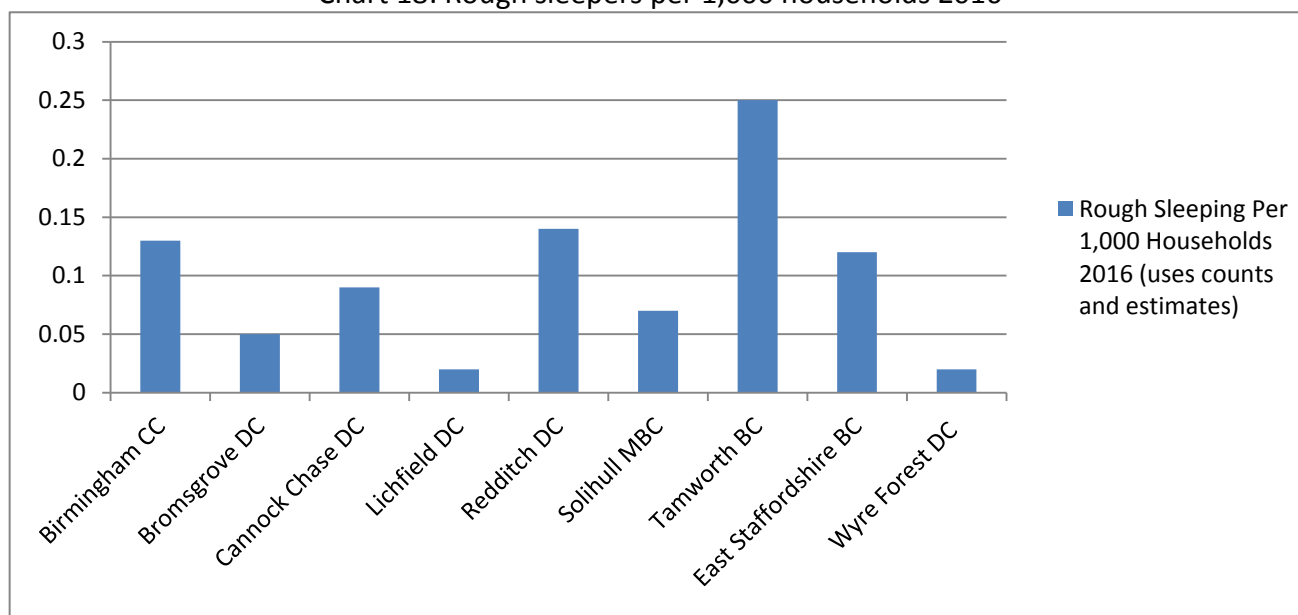
Source: DCLG (now MHCLG) Rough sleeping statistics England autumn 2016: tables 1 and 2
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2016
Note: rises in rough sleeper numbers over the past couple of years are largely fuelled by losses of Assured Shorthold Tenancies (AST)

The official rough sleeper counts have risen in each year since new methodology was introduced in autumn 2010. Only those people who meet the following criteria will be included within the rough sleeper count:

"People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or 'bashes')"[7]

The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, people in campsites, or squatters. It does not include people who were rough sleeping in the area on a previous night or earlier in the evening but who were not there at the time of the count. It does not include people wandering around or empty sleeping sites. Bedded down is taken to mean either lying down or sleeping. About to bed down includes those who are sitting in/on or near a sleeping bag or other bedding. The intention is to establish that they are or will be rough sleeping on the night of the count.

Despite the restrictions around the count, the most recent statistics published on 25 January 2017 recorded a 132% increase in the number of people sleeping rough in England since 2010. Factors identified as contributing to the ongoing flow of new rough sleepers to the streets include: welfare reforms, particularly reductions in entitlement to Housing Benefit / Local Housing Allowance; reduced investment by local authorities in homeless services; and flows of non-UK nationals who are unable to access benefits.

In Birmingham, the current unofficial number of individuals in the street community is believed to be about 350. By way of comparison, the official rough sleeper count for Birmingham in 2016 was 55. The unofficial street community figure was calculated from shared intelligence between

[7] Communities and Local Government, Evaluating the Extent of Rough Sleeping, September 2010

partners and stakeholders in the city centre, including the City Council, the third sector, the Police, local businesses, housing providers etc.

In addition to the existing problem of increasing homelessness, the new Homelessness Reduction Act, to be implemented in April 2018, will require local housing authorities to help all eligible applicants, rather than just those with a 'priority need'. This includes helping those at risk of losing suitable accommodation as soon as they are threatened with homelessness, and assisting those who are currently classed as 'intentionally homeless'. However, these additional requirements bring with them requirements for additional numbers of homes – councils are already struggling to rehouse those in priority need, due to the combined effects of rising rents and welfare benefit restrictions.

To tackle the inevitable rise in homelessness numbers that we can expect to see over the coming months, we will need to see co-ordinated action, from the UK Government down. For GBSLEP, this will mean working with Local Authority partners and with the WMCA Mayor to tackle homelessness in the local area.

6.3   Households accommodated by the authority

Chart 19: Homeless households accommodated by the local authority:
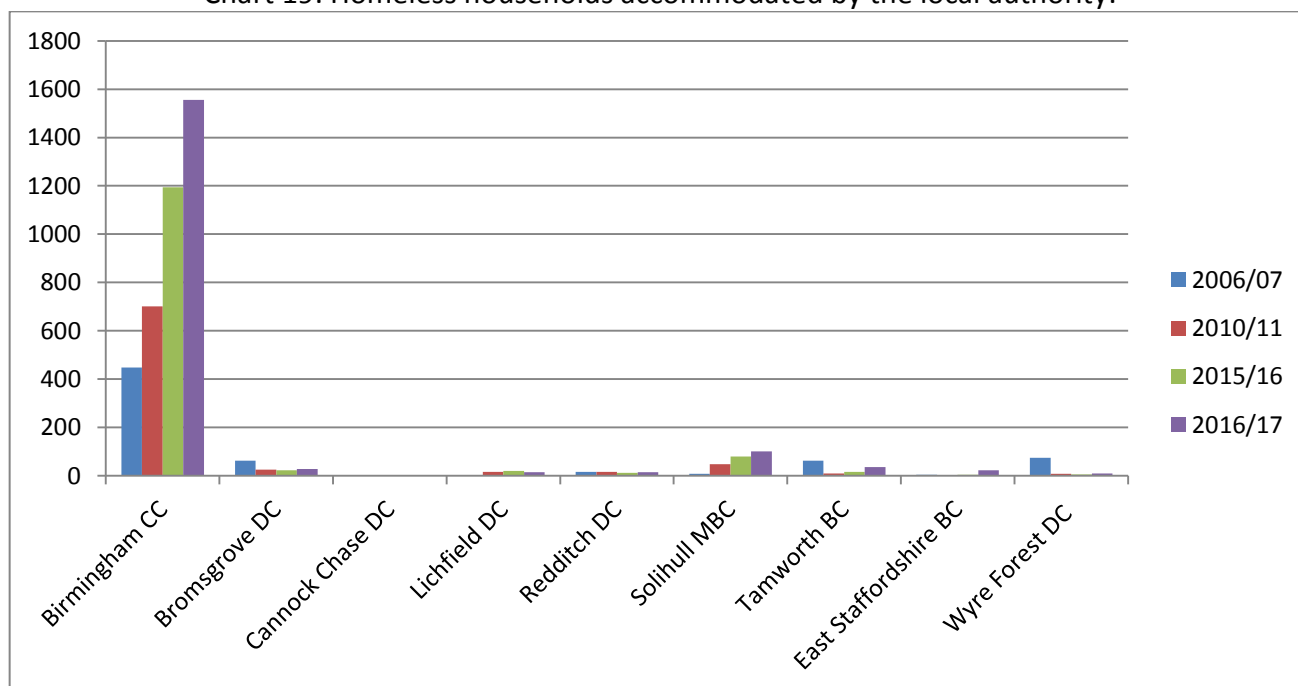
Chart 20: Homeless households accommodated by the local authority (rate per 1,000 households):
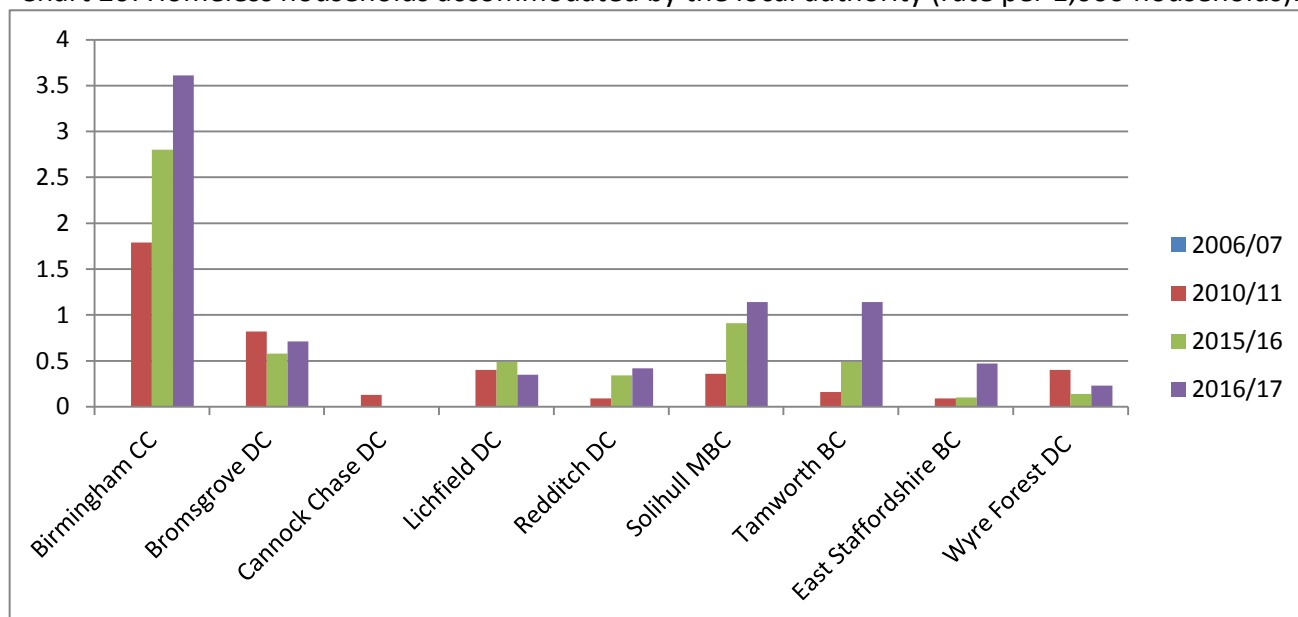
Source: Government Live Tables on Homelessness Table 784
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness

These statistics relate to the statutorily homeless, i.e. those households which meet specific criteria of priority need set out in legislation, and to whom a homelessness duty has been accepted by a local authority. Such households not generally homeless in the literal sense of being without a roof over their heads, but are more likely to be threatened with the loss of, or are unable to continue with, their current accommodation.

The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977, Housing Act 1996, and the Homelessness Act 2002, placed statutory duties on local housing authorities to ensure that advice and assistance to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness is available free of charge. A 'main homelessness duty' is owed where the authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless, and falls within a specified priority need group. Such statutorily homeless households are referred to as 'acceptances'. It should be noted that the number of acceptances is likely to rise further with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018, and this is currently a real concern for councils and housing providers.

Figures are collected on the number of households in 'temporary accommodation' on the last day of each quarter, as arranged by local housing authorities. In most cases, the authority is discharging a main homelessness duty to secure suitable accommodation until a settled home becomes available for the applicant household. However, the numbers also include households provided with accommodation pending a decision on their homelessness application, households pending a review or appeal to the county court of the decision on their case, or possible referral to another local authority, and households found to be intentionally homeless and in priority need who were being accommodated for such period as would give them a reasonable opportunity to find accommodation for themselves.

As with rough sleeper figures, the number of households considered statutorily homeless is also rising, although there are differences area by area. Some councils have very high rates of homeless prevention, which are not a like for like comparison with other local authorities due to administrative differences in recording interventions.

6.4   Recommendations

Recommendation 7: Homelessness and rough sleeping is a significant and increasing problem across the area, which could be set to rise even further due to the incoming Homelessness Reduction Act. Solving this problem will necessitate multi-agency approach. **GBSLEP will support the Mayor's Taskforce as appropriate in order to tackle the issue of homelessness in the area**, and the LEP's role could include encouraging further private sector involvement in this issue.

Section 7: Data – Stock Management

7.1   Introduction

Given pressures on affordability, along with the growing rates of homelessness and the rise in rough sleeper number, it is essential to consider how best to deal with management and supply of housing stock. Therefore, in this section, we look at vacancy and construction rates.

7.2   Vacant Properties

The tables below and overleaf show the rise in the number of vacant properties over the last 10 years.

Chart 21: vacant properties per 1,000 households 2006/07 to 20016/17
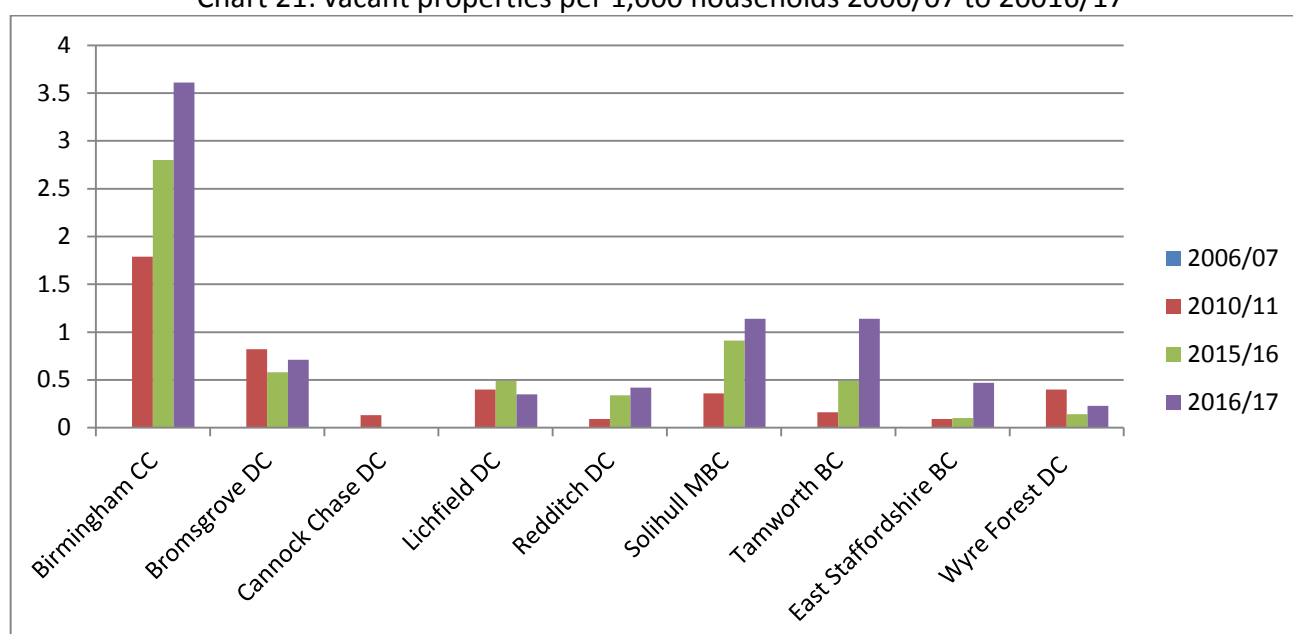
Chart 22: Vacant properties 2007 (count):
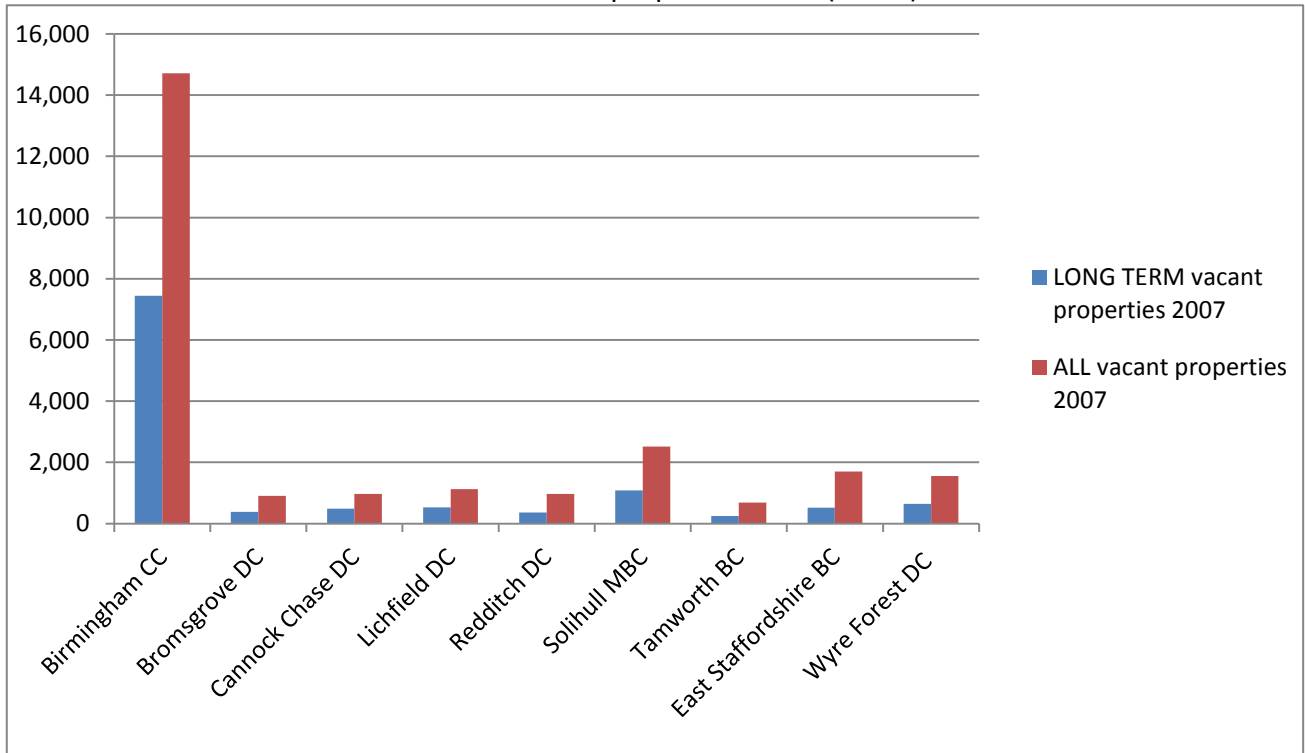
Chart 23: Vacant properties 2011 (count):
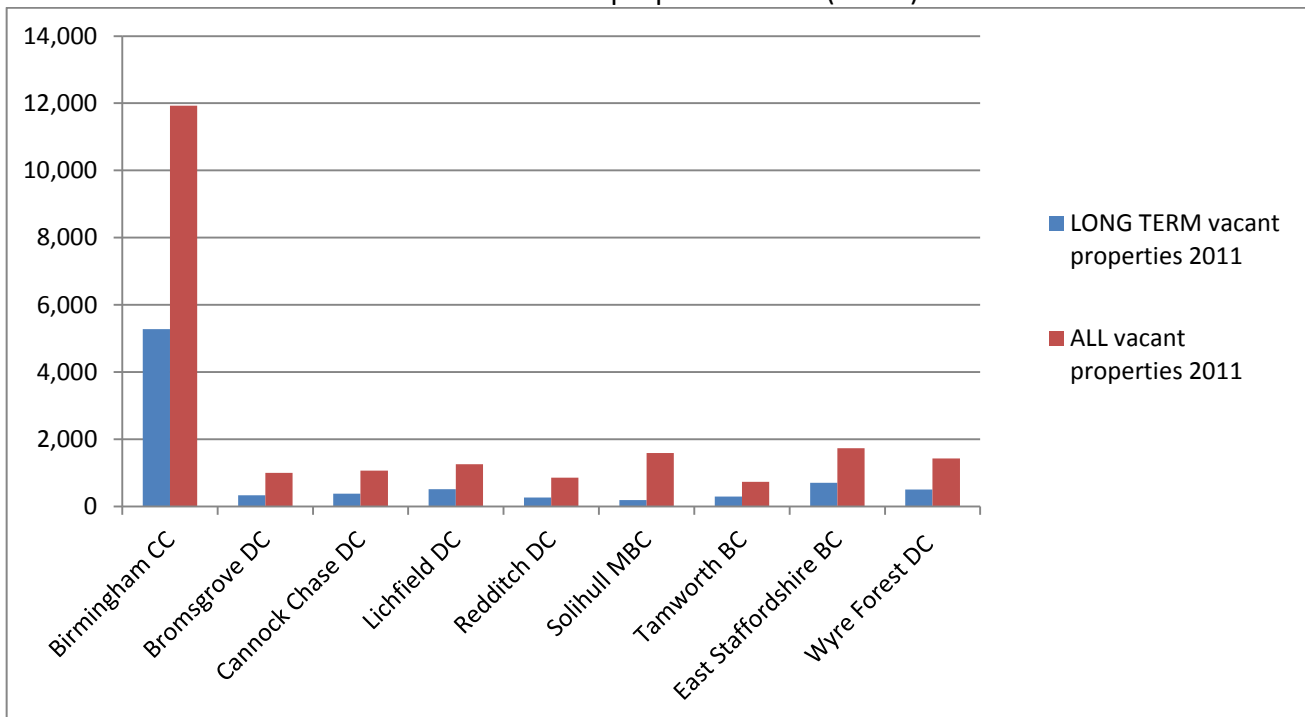
Chart 24: Vacant properties 2016 (count):

Legend: LONG TERM vacant properties 2016 (blue); ALL vacant properties 2016 (red)
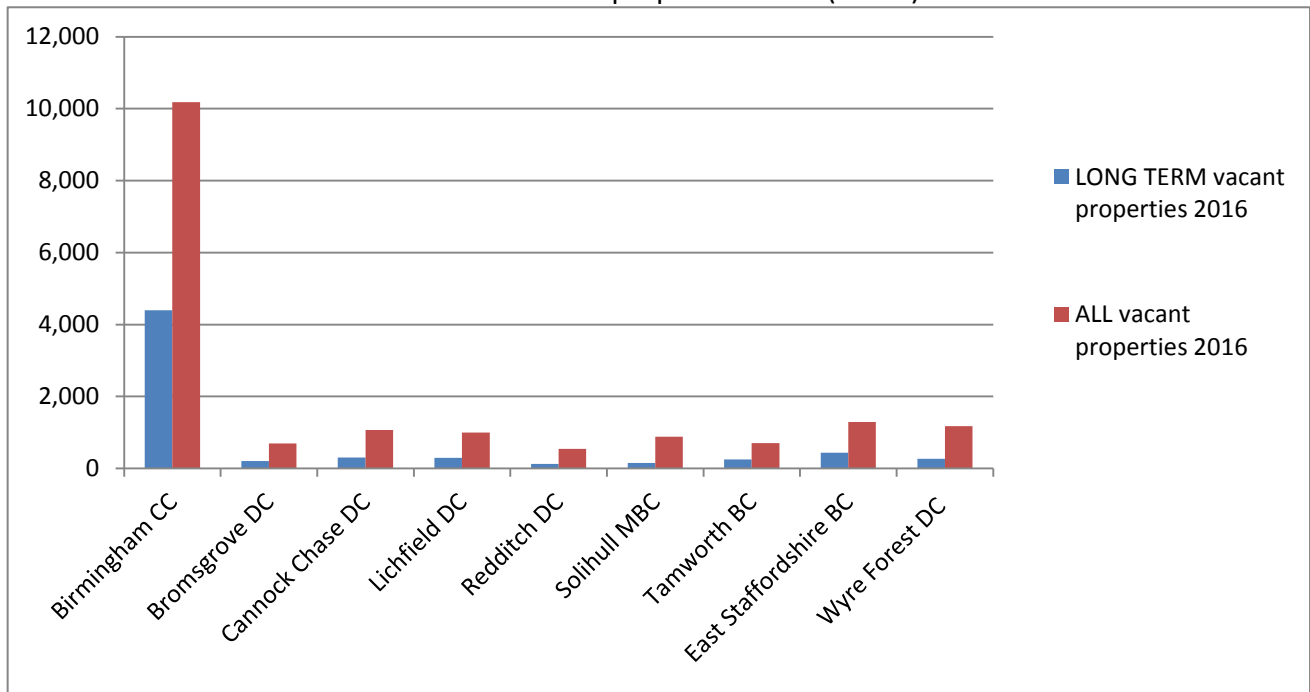
Source for all charts: Government Live Table 615 Vacant Dwellings by local authority - data taken from council tax base (CTB) statistical release and Government Live Table a125 Dwelling Stock Estimate by local authority.
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants

Long-term empty homes are those dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for over six months. These can become 'problem' properties, slipping into disrepair and blighting neighbourhoods. There are many reasons that properties can become long-term vacant, including the inability of the owner to meet the cost of repairs and upkeep (so that the property cannot be lived in, sold, or let), problems with mortgage lenders, problems with leaseholders, death of the owner with no clear beneficiary identified, difficulty finding tenants, residents going into care, family break up, problems with unpaid taxes, etc.

Across the GBSLEP area, in *percentage* terms, the level of long term vacancies seems low. For example, in 2016, between 0.2% and 1.1% of properties were long-term vacant across the area, and this is broadly comparable with other areas of the country. However, if we look at the gross figures, as in the three charts above, we will see that these low percentages still account for a high *number* of properties. For example, across the area in 2016, over 12,000 properties were long-term vacant (with over 4,000 of these in Birmingham).

Tackling these long-term vacancies could go a long way toward addressing housing supply issues in the region. Local authorities can, in theory, CPO such properties if officials can show that appropriate attempts have been made to encourage the owner to bring a building back to acceptable use. However, legal proceedings are expensive and authorities generally do not have funds available.

Recommendation 8: Ensuring that local authorities have the ability to cover the costs of acquisition (such as Compulsory Purchase Orders and purchase of easements) of long-term vacant homes would enable such properties to be brought back into use. **GBSLEP should explore the possibility of creating a recyclable loan fund that local authorities can borrow from in order to cover acquisition costs.**

7.3   Occupancy Ratings

Occupancy ratings give an indication of under- or overcrowding. To calculate an occupancy rating, the number of bedrooms required by the occupants of the property is subtracted from the number of bedrooms in the accommodation.

In practice, an occupancy rating of:

- -1 means one fewer bedrooms than standard requirement
- 0 means standard requirement is met
- +1 means one more bedroom than standard requirement
- +2 means two more bedrooms than standard requirement

The charts on the following pages give an indication of occupancy ratings in different tenures across the GBSLEP area.

Chart 25: occupancy rating (percentage) – ownership / shared ownership:
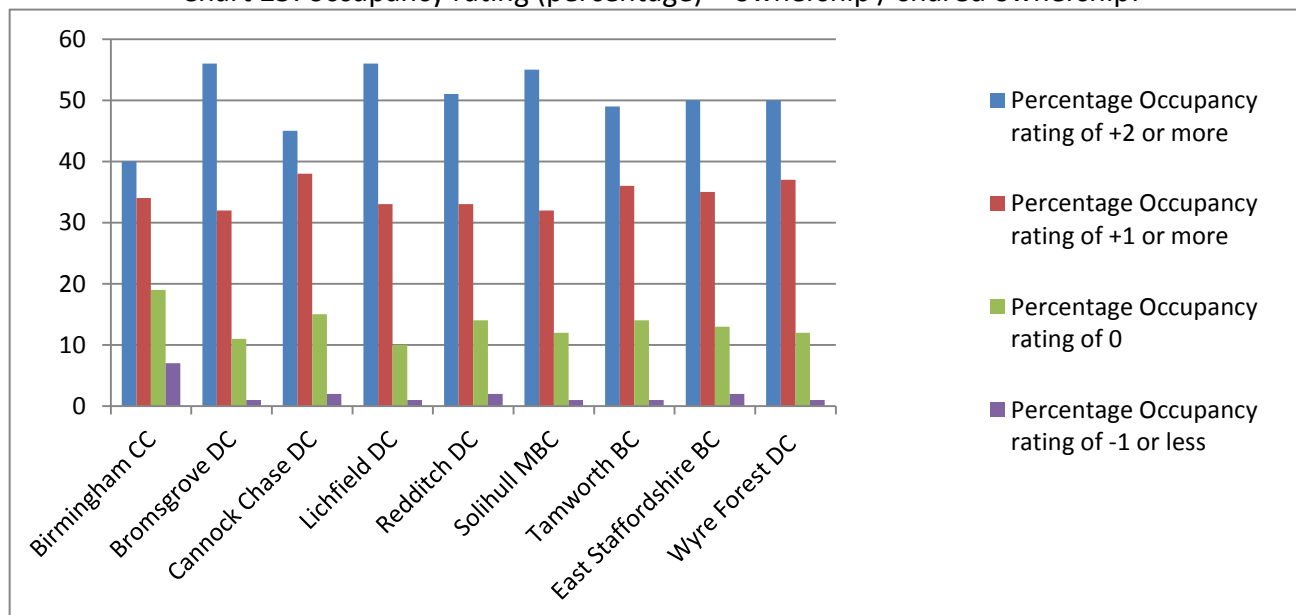
Chart 26: occupancy rating (percentage) – all tenures:

Legend:
- Percentage Occupancy rating of +2 or more
- Percentage Occupancy rating of +1 or more
- Percentage Occupancy rating of 0
- Percentage Occupancy rating of -1 or less
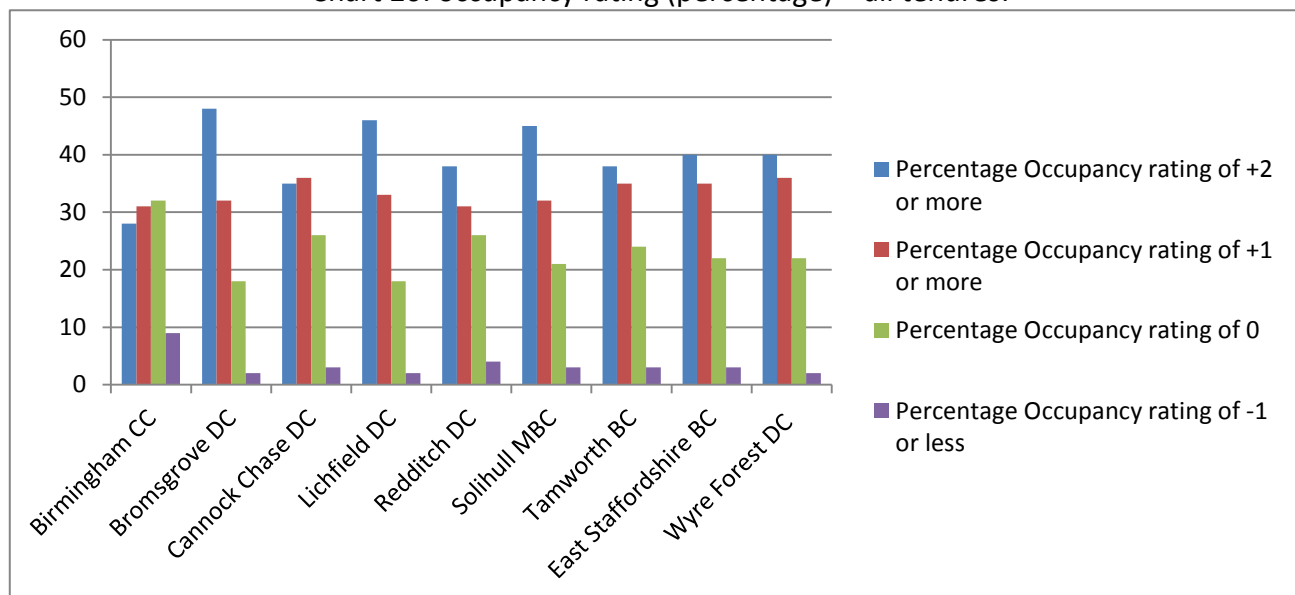
Chart 27: occupancy rating (count) – all tenures

Legend:
- COUNT Occupancy rating of +2 or more
- COUNT Occupancy rating of +1
- COUNT Occupancy rating of 0
- COUNT Occupancy rating of -1 or less
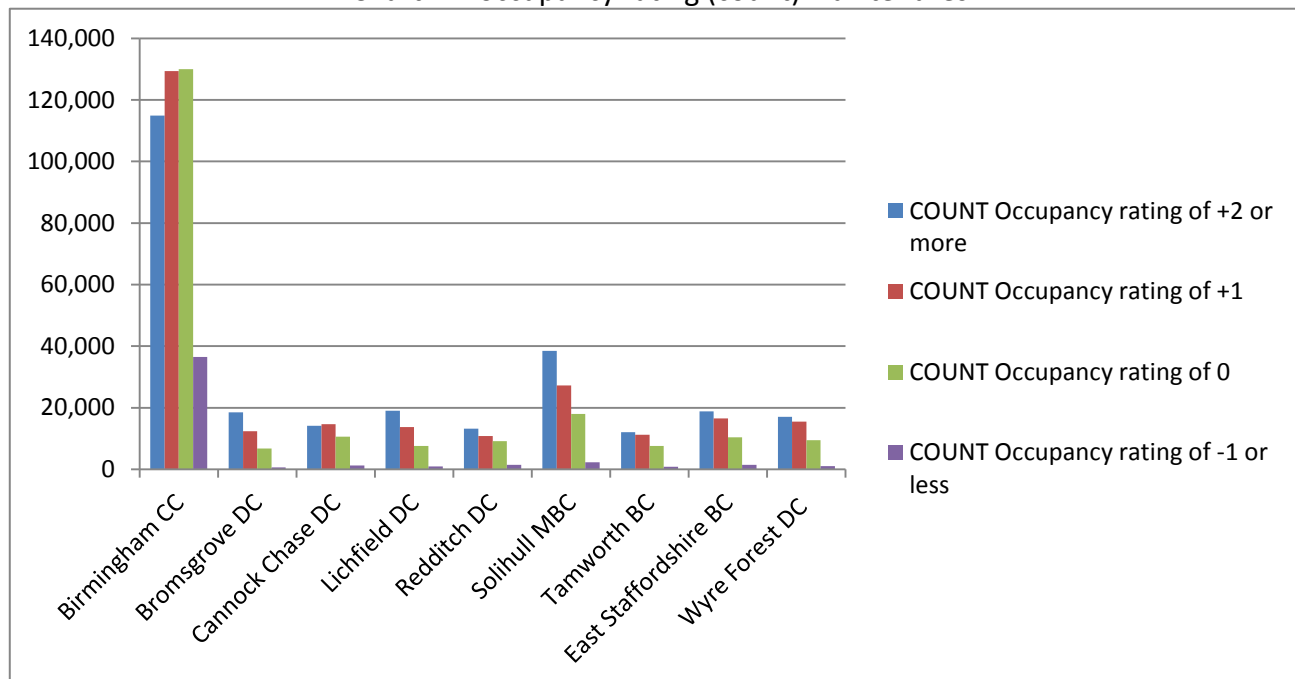
Source: Census 2011 Occupancy rating (bedrooms) by tenure
Note: occupancy rating is the number of bedrooms required subtracted from the number of bedrooms in the accommodation. An occupancy rating of -1 indicates that a household has one fewer bedrooms than required. An occupancy rating of +1 indicates it has one more room than the standard requirement.
https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/qs412ew

7.4   Summary and recommendations

The data reveal both under and over occupation issues in the GBSLEP area, but in different tenures and in different household sizes. In particular, there is under occupation in owner occupied properties, which leads to a knock-on shortage of family homes. However, the exact nature of under- and over-occupation issues, and the impact of such issues on the availability of appropriately-sized housing, remains unclear.

Recommendation 9: The subject of under- and over-occupancy is complex, although there are some emerging patterns, e.g. under-occupation by older people in larger houses. **GBSLEP should work with partners to further understand these issues at a more localised level,** and to explore possible solutions. It is possible that the LEP could have a role in stimulating the market for homes for single older people, and older couples, ensuring that adequate numbers of high quality smaller accommodation units, that meet the needs of older people, are available.

Section 8: Data – Housing Tenure

8.1   Introduction

There have been substantial tenure changes across the UK since the financial crash of 2008. Whilst the crash was a significant cause of these changes, there are also other factors in play. This section of the report looks in more detail at tenure across the GBSLEP patch.

8.2   Housing Tenure

Chart 28: Properties owned outright %:
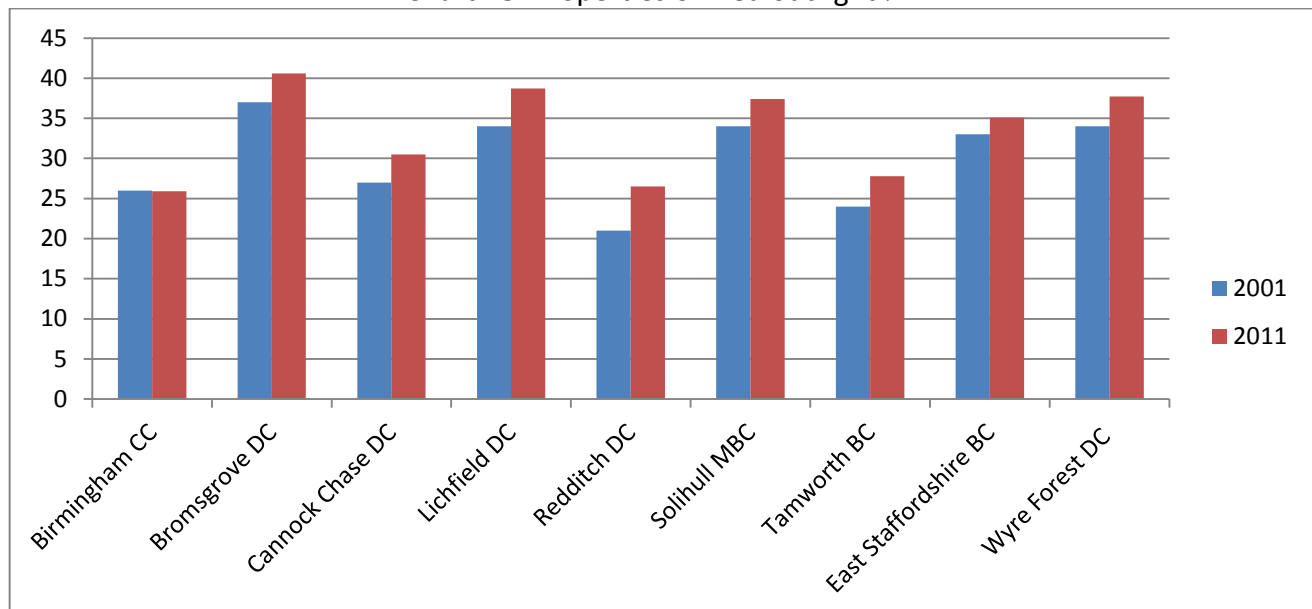
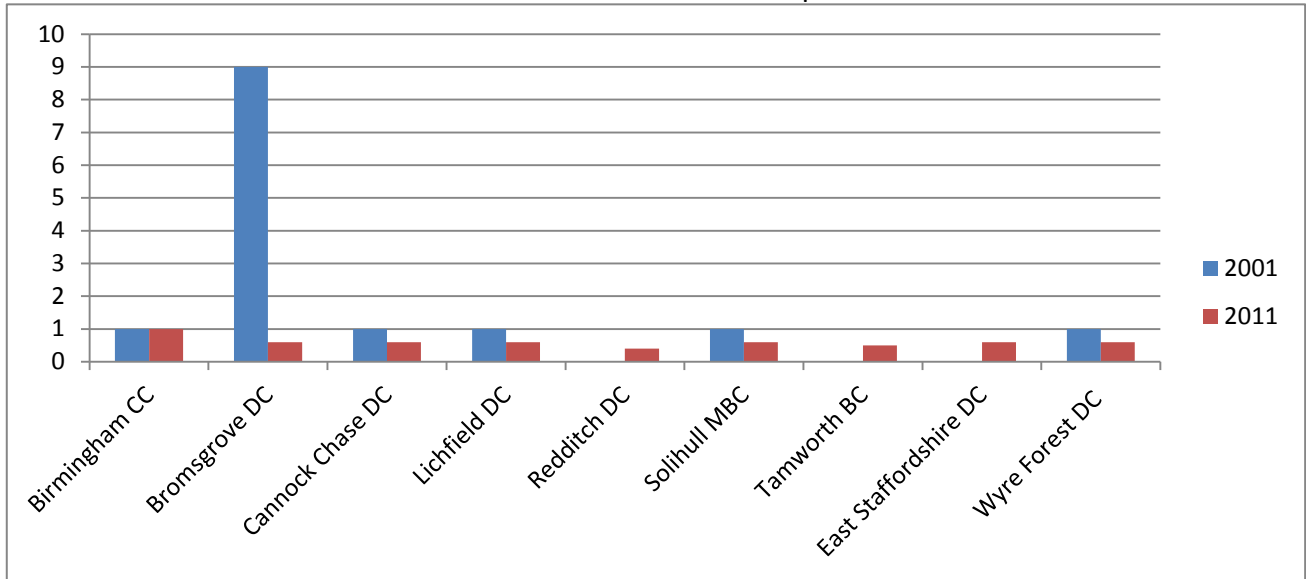Chart 29: properties owned with a mortgage / loan %:
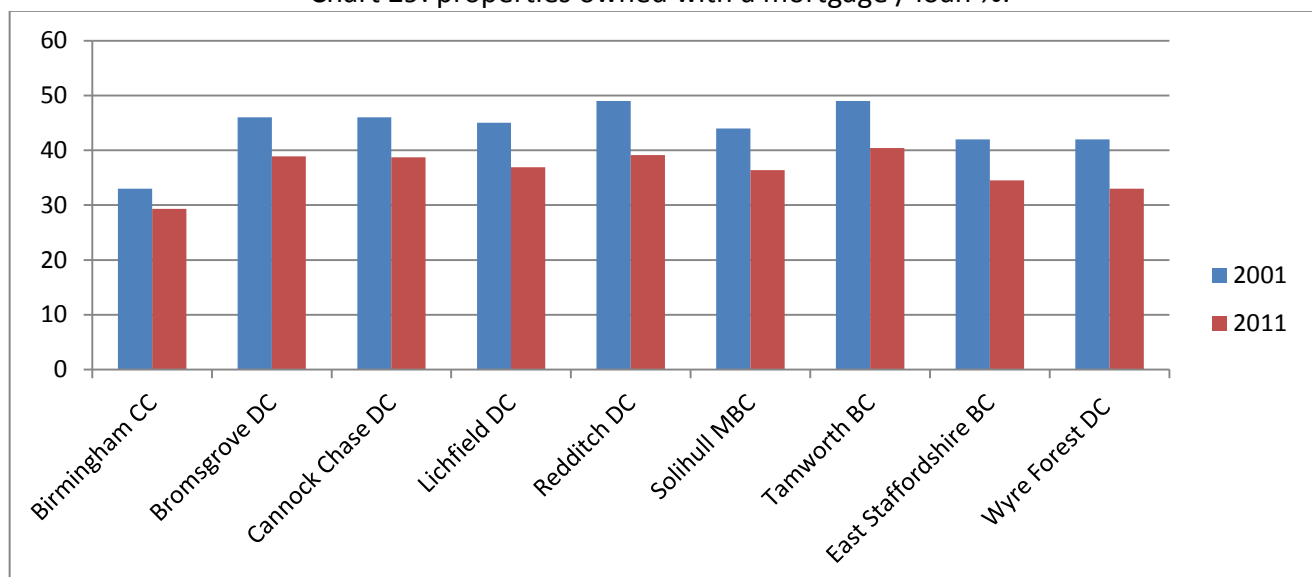
Chart 30: Shared ownership %:

Chart 31: Social rented from local authority %:
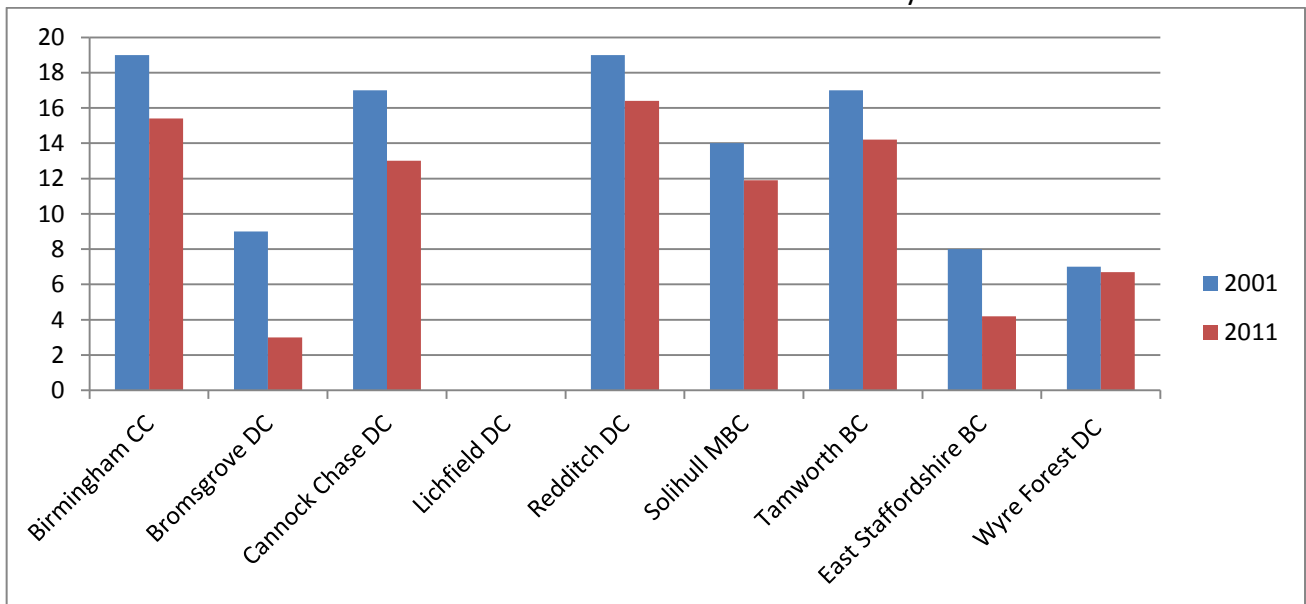
Chart 32: Social rented other %:

Chart showing "Social rented other %" for 2001 (blue) and 2011 (red):
- Birmingham CC: 2001 ≈ 8, 2011 ≈ 8.8
- Bromsgrove DC: 2001 ≈ 2, 2011 ≈ 7
- Cannock Chase DC: 2001 ≈ 3, 2011 ≈ 3.9
- Lichfield DC: 2001 ≈ 13, 2011 ≈ 13
- Redditch DC: 2001 ≈ 3, 2011 ≈ 4.7
- Solihull MBC: 2001 ≈ 3, 2011 ≈ 3.1
- Tamworth BC: 2001 ≈ 4, 2011 ≈ 5.1
- East Staffordshire BC: 2001 ≈ 6, 2011 ≈ 9.3
- Wyre Forest DC: 2001 ≈ 8, 2011 ≈ 7.7
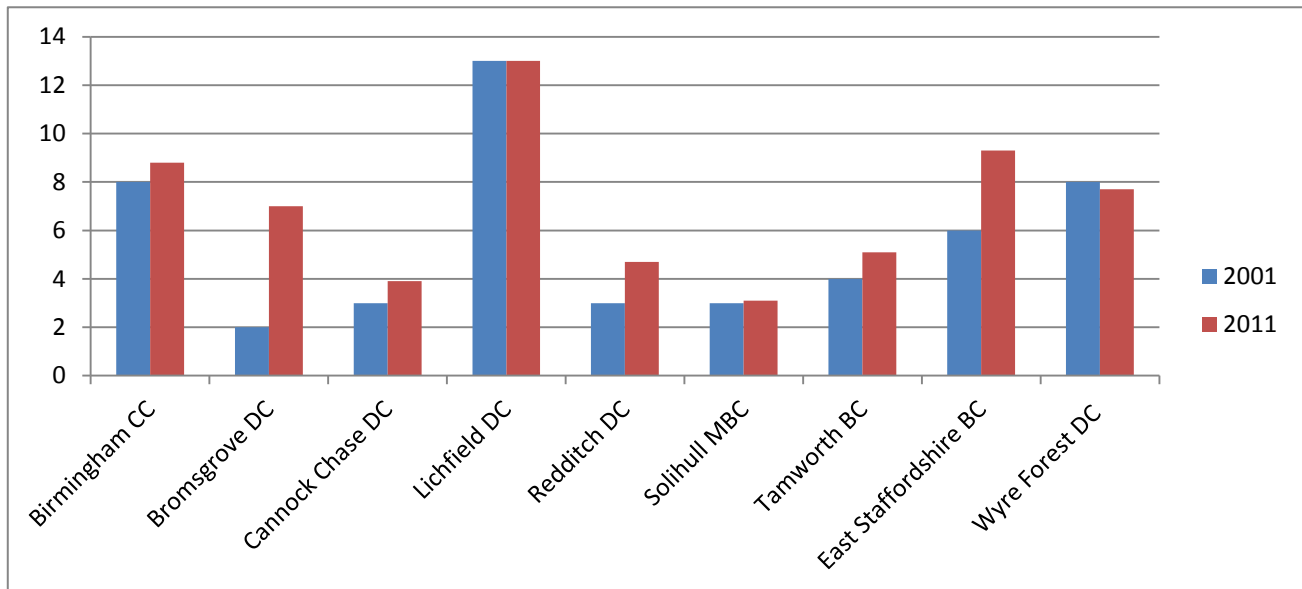
Chart 33: Private rented (private landlord or letting agent) %:

Chart showing "Private rented (private landlord or letting agent) %" for 2001 (blue) and 2011 (red):
- Birmingham CC: 2001 ≈ 8, 2011 ≈ 16.7
- Bromsgrove DC: 2001 ≈ 4, 2011 ≈ 7.9
- Cannock Chase DC: 2001 ≈ 5, 2011 ≈ 11.1
- Lichfield DC: 2001 ≈ 5, 2011 ≈ 8.4
- Redditch DC: 2001 ≈ 4, 2011 ≈ 10.7
- Solihull MBC: 2001 ≈ 4, 2011 ≈ 9.1
- Tamworth BC: 2001 ≈ 3, 2011 ≈ 10
- East Staffordshire BC: 2001 ≈ 7, 2011 ≈ 13.8
- Wyre Forest DC: 2001 ≈ 6, 2011 ≈ 12
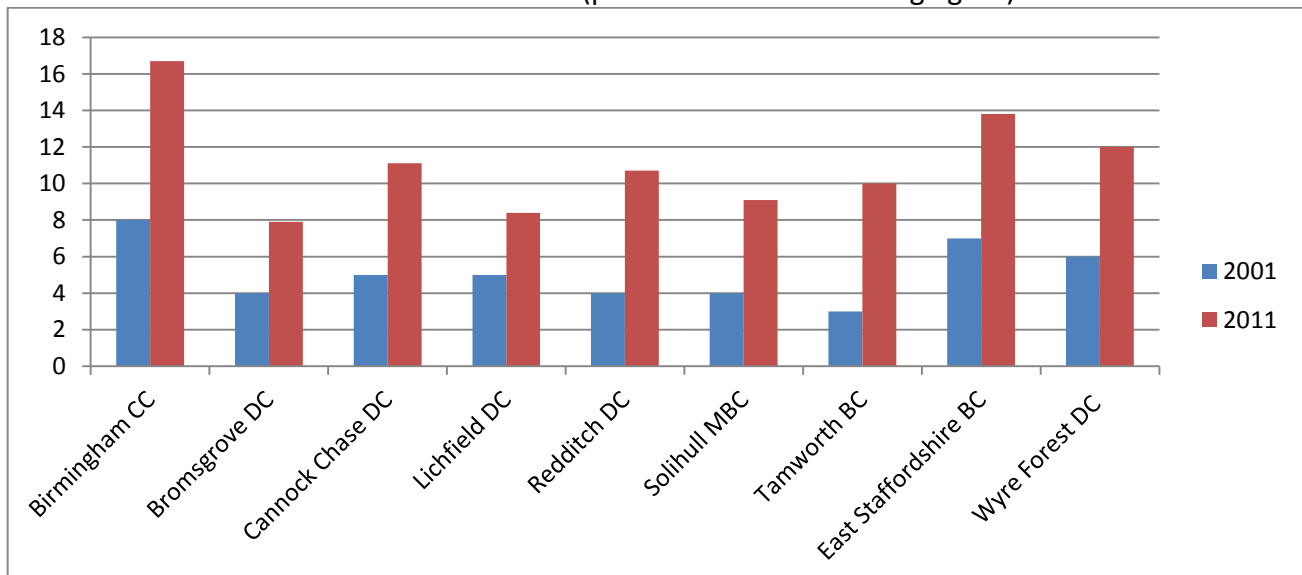
Source: 2001 data archived data from Birmingham City Council and 2011 data from ONS Census Data 2011 - KS402EW
https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/ks402ew

The data show a small increase in the percentage of people who own their homes outright. This may be due to baby boomers reaching the end of their mortgage term. The data also shows that the percentage of people owning their home with an outstanding mortgage or loan has decreased slightly. This is likely to reflect the increased difficulty for many people in obtaining a mortgage against a property since the financial crash of 2008. Shared ownership remains low, at below 1% of the tenure mix across the area, as it is not generally attractive to buyers. Social renting from the local authority has decreased slightly across the time series, whilst social renting from another source has increased slightly, although not quite enough to counteract the local authority decrease.

However, the most marked change between 2001 and 2011 has been in the private rented sector. Across the area as a whole, the rate of private renting has almost doubled. This clearly reflects the

decrease in ownership (via a mortgage) and the decreasing availability of social rented housing, particularly local authority properties.

8.3   Summary and recommendations

Home ownership – specifically home ownership through a mortgage or loan – is declining, and renting – particularly in the private sector – is increasing. Further, as the number of people wishing (or having) to rent grows, rental affordability declines.

This increase in numbers in the rented sector, along with its declining affordability, represents a fundamental shift in the UK's housing market. Local Authorities are again finding themselves involved in housing delivery as they seek to provide homes which their populations can afford, alongside delivery of market housing. There could be a role here for GBSLEP in supporting local partners to bring forward housing schemes to meet those needs not being met by the market, as well encouraging an overall boost in supply of all housing.

Recommendation 10: A number of authorities across the GBSLEP area, including Birmingham, Tamworth, and Wyre Forest, are progressing local authority housing schemes for market housing. **GBSLEP should, as a matter of principle, support such developments** in order to ensure that housing needs across the area can be met. The LEP's role could involve co-ordination / facilitation, or could be more direct and involve becoming a partner in a joint delivery vehicle.

Section 9: Data – Housing Completions

9.1   Introduction

This section of the report looks at numbers of new homes built each year across the GBSLEP area. The New Homes Bonus is a grant paid by central government to local councils to reflect and incentivise housing growth in their areas. It is based on the amount of extra Council Tax revenue raised for new-build homes, conversions, and long-term empty homes brought back into use. There is also an extra payment for providing affordable homes.

9.2   New Homes Bonus

Chart 34: New Homes Bonus – Year 7 Payments (£)
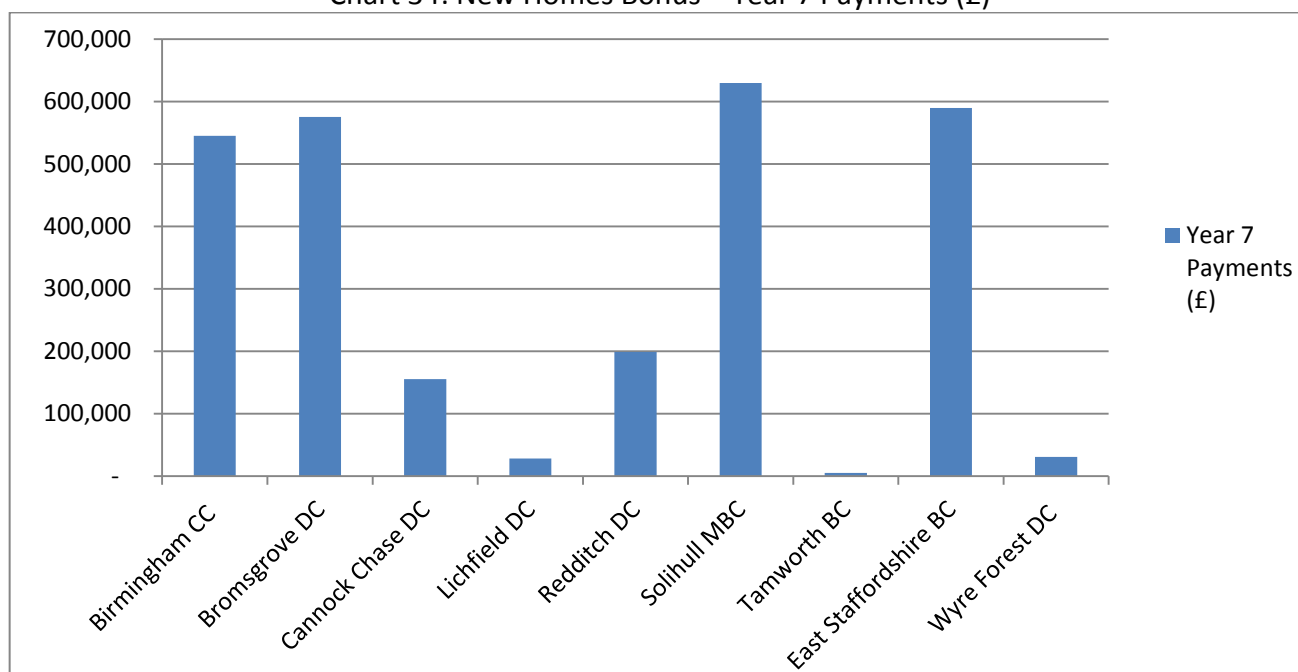
Source: DCLG (now MHCLG) Final Allocations New Homes Bonus 2017/18
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-homes-bonus-final-allocations-2017-to-2018

It must be noted that NHB payments fluctuate year to year, and can vary greatly depending on the number and size of schemes reaching completion in that year. In the most recent year for which data is available, Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Solihull, Stratford-on-Avon, Dudley, Walsall, Wolverhampton, and East Staffordshire have all received significant payments. In contrast, Cannock, Lichfield, Redditch, Tamworth, North Warwickshire, South Staffordshire, Sandwell, and Wyre Forest have all received much smaller payments.

When asked what NHB funds had been spent on, the majority of councils that responded indicated that monies were allocated to the general fund to support council activities across the board. One local authority indicated that part of the payment was reinvested in housing, and one indicated that part of the payment was invested in community projects. A further local authority indicated that it is currently exploring options to utilise NHB funds to support its strategic housing objectives.

9.3 Dwellings Completed

Chart 35: Completions 2007/8:
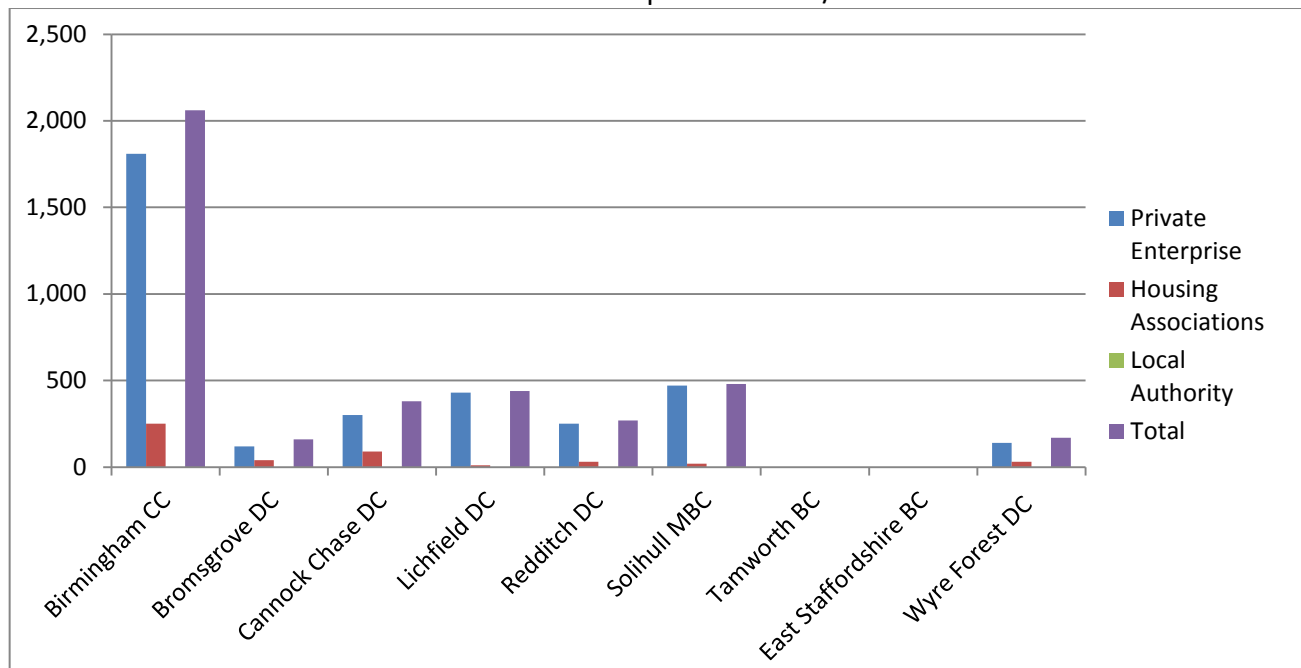
NB a value of zero in these charts indicates that a value of four or less was recorded in the source data.
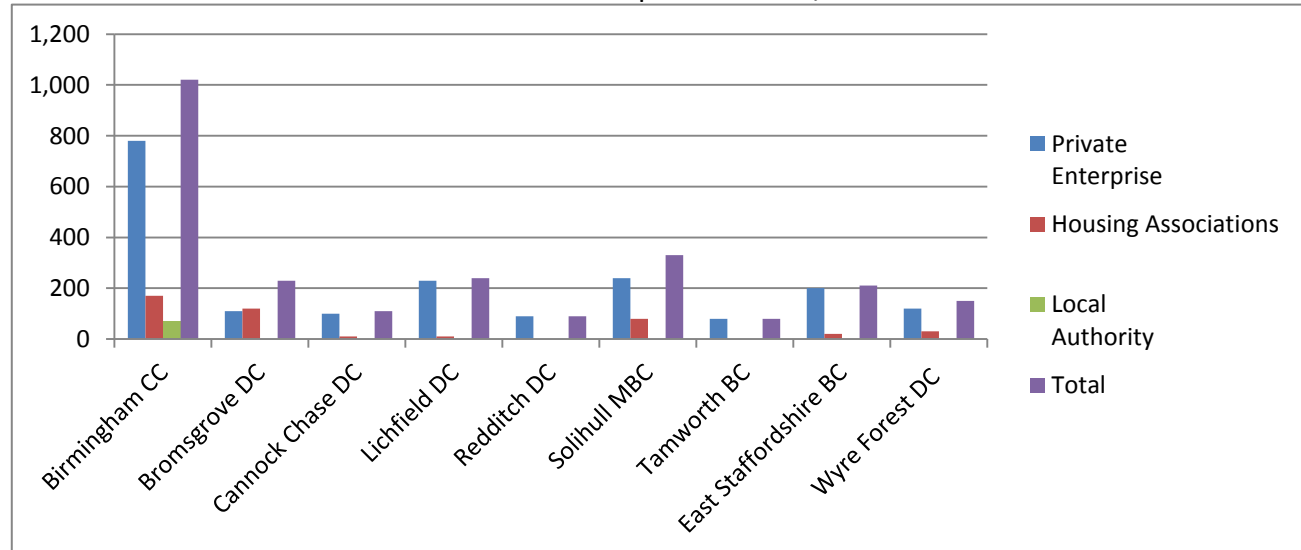
Chart 36: Completions 2011/12:
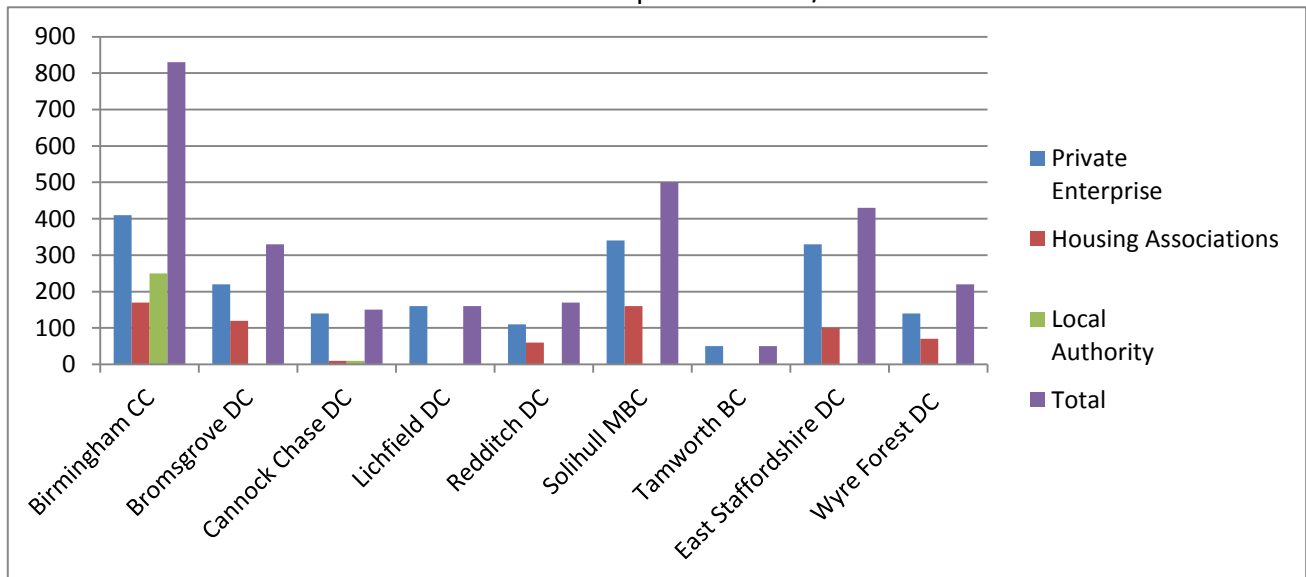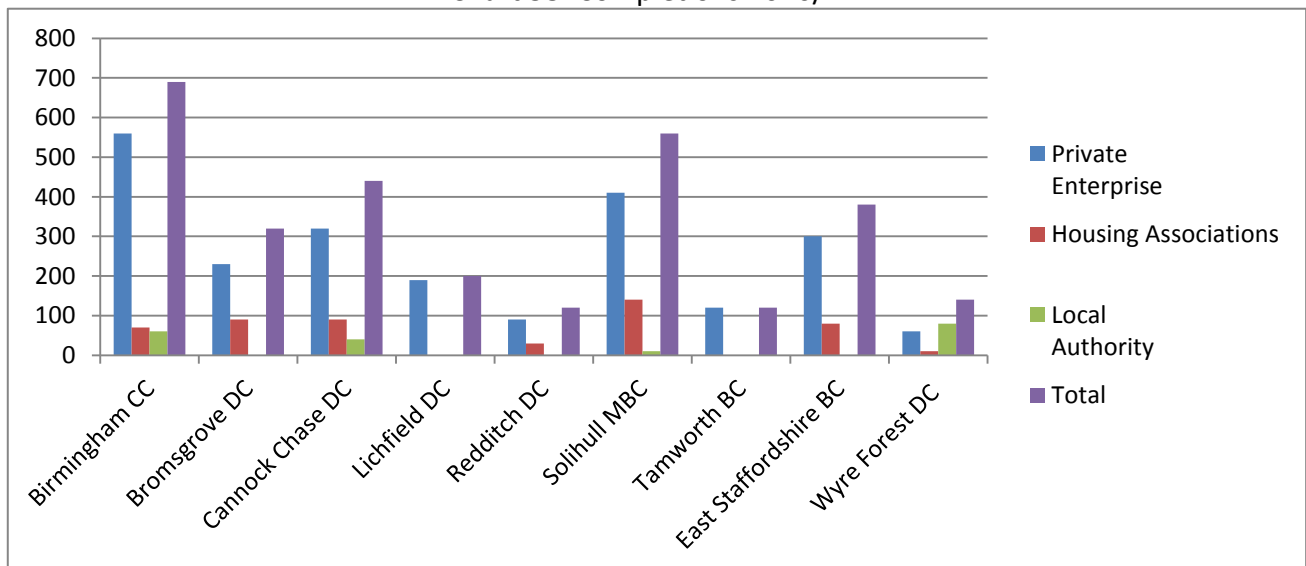
Chart 37: Completions 2015/16:

Chart 38: Completions 2016/17:

Source: DCLG (now MHCLG) Live Tables on Housebuilding Table 253 - Housebuilding: permanent dwellings completed, by tenure and district, Feb 2017 - NB USE THIS DATA WITH CAUTION AS THERE ARE DISCREPANCIES IN COLLATION
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-house-building

9.4   Summary

The data show that between the financial crash of 2008, and 2011/12, total completions almost halved. There has been a recovery since 2011/12, but it is relatively slight, as GBSLEP's interviews with a number of construction firms indicated that they are still reluctant to invest heavily in labour, materials etc., when the possibility of another housing crash cannot be ruled out entirely. This has left a significant gap between completions and the annual target required to meet need. It should also be noted that official government figures may be an underestimate, as only *net* additions to the housing stock are recorded within these figures. 'Unofficial' numbers may be higher, but will also be difficult to collate and verify.

Section 10:   Delivery and funding options

10.1   Introduction

Within this section of the report, we look at some of the delivery solutions that can be put in place, along with some of the most relevant funding options. Please note that this section is by no means meant to be exhaustive – this would be a significant piece of work – but it is intended to give a small flavour of the current situation.

10.2   The national and regional picture

DCLG (now MHCLG) – Housing Infrastructure Fund

The Housing Infrastructure Fund is a government capital grant programme. Funding will be awarded to local authorities, providing grant funding for infrastructure that will unlock new homes in the areas of greatest housing demand. Local authorities were invited to apply to the fund by Thursday 28 September 2017.

There are two elements to the HIF:
- Marginal Viability Funding: will provide the final piece of infrastructure funding to get additional sites allocated or existing sites unblocked quickly. Single and lower tier authorities can bid for this fund – this includes LEPs.
- Forward Funding: will support a small number of strategic and high-impact infrastructure schemes. The upper tier of authorities can bid for this fund – this includes the WMCA.

Homes England – various

- Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme 2016-2021: capital grant fund for new homes for affordable rent or affordable ownership. Any organisation that successfully qualifies for Homes England Investment Partner status, on its own or as a member of a wider consortium, can receive funding.
- Help to Buy: available to eligible purchasers and will be paid directly to registered house builders. Outside London, anyone with a household income of less than £80,000 is now eligible. The government wants to see greater involvement by the commercial housing sector in delivery, in particular of shared ownership. Innovative methods of construction can offer additional benefits in terms of quality, speed of delivery, cost efficiencies, and minimal disruption to communities.
- Rent to Buy – homes are let to working households at an intermediate rent for a minimum of 5 years to give them the opportunity to save for a deposit.
- Public Sector Land Programme: disposal of agency assets. Open to developers, housebuilders, SMEs.
- Starter Homes: supports the acquisition, remediation and de-risking of suitable land for starter home developments that can then be built out by developers by 2020. Open to local authorities.
- Home Building Fund: provides Development Finance (loan funding to meet the development costs of building homes for sale or rent) and Infrastructure Finance (loan funding for site

preparation and the infrastructure needed to enable housing to progress and to prepare land for development). Open to all private sector organisations delivering new homes.

- Estate Regeneration: designed to kickstart and accelerate the regeneration of deprived estates. Investment can be used to fund costs associated with land assembly including leaseholder buy-outs, decanting and rehousing costs, demolition, preparatory construction, and other works necessary to enable development or accelerate delivery. Open to private sector investors.
- Accelerated Construction: package of support to local authorities who would like to develop out surplus land holdings at pace. The intention is to support a range of proposals at different scales and in locations where there is sufficient demand for housing. £1.7 billion investment.
- Garden Villages: open to local authorities. Size range from 1,500 - 10,000 homes. Due to the high level of expressions of interest submitted in July 2016, the government made additional funds available for further development of other garden village proposals.

GBSLEP – Unlocking Stalled Housing Sites Programme

USHS is a GBSLEP programme launched in February 2016, with grant and loan funds designed to remove barriers to development and to bring forward at least 500 new homes within 3 years. The fund is open to the private sector, local authorities, and Registered Providers for schemes within the GBSLEP geographical area. The scheme has been successful in attracting bids for support with areas such as Cannock, Birmingham, Lichfield and Solihull being provided with finance to bring forward schemes. The initiative is on course to use up its LGF allocation.

10.3   The local picture – examples of local delivery models

Birmingham City Council Rent to Buy

Birmingham City Council (BCC) is considering the delivery of a Rent to Buy programme, where a registered provider will build a home which is let at an intermediate rent but with the ultimate aim of selling the home to the tenant after they have had time to save up for a deposit. There is limited take up of Rent to Buy in Birmingham, and it is a relatively new product; it is not clear how popular it will be. There would be some significant challenges to BCC providing Rent to Buy homes through the BMHT, as BCC's Housing Revenue Account cannot legally fund the construction of new affordable homes which not subject to a secure tenancy and the Right to Buy. It may be feasible to fund Rent to Buy homes through InReach. However, InReach cannot claim grant from the Homes and Communities Agency because it is not a Registered Provider. The Council could set up Housing Company to develop additional affordable housing tenures such as shared ownership and rent to buy alongside outright sale homes to compliment BMHT and InReach activities. This Housing Company would apply to the Homes and Communities Agency to become a registered provider capable of claiming grant to support parts of its development programme.

InReach (through Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust)

The Council has already commenced the development of new homes for the private rented sector (PRS) through its Wholly Owned Company (WOC), InReach. The Council sells land to InReach, generating a capital receipt. The council then borrows money (at Public Works Loan Board rates) to

lend on to InReach at a (higher) commercial rate, which InReach uses to fund the construction of new homes for market rent. Any surpluses generated are returned to the Council. The first scheme at St Vincent Street is now on site, with completion due by January 2018, and Cabinet has approved the principle of the sale of further sites to InReach to develop a potential 300 new additional homes.

WV Living

Wolverhampton City Council has set up a Wholly Owned Trading Company to develop market and sub-market housing for rent and sale. This makes use of council-owned land supply, and there is low-cost finance available from the council. Initial modelling showed that the model stacked up financially, producing a surplus of £1.3m. A pipeline of supply has been established across different markets to spread risk. Houses developed for market rent will be owned by the company. Affordable housing will be sold to the Council and let through the Housing Revenue Account. Phase 1 will deliver a mixture of new homes across 4 sites for market sale, market rent, and affordable rent, with the first homes completed by Spring 2018. The WOTC will deliver between 800 and 1,000 new homes over 5 years.

RTPI / National Planning Forum – UCL Housing Research Project – local authority direct provision of housing – December 2017

Nationally, local authorities are engaging in the provision of housing through a wide variety of mechanisms and means. During our research we have become aware of the momentum that is behind this engagement, with 30 local housing companies created in 2017 alone.

65% of authorities reported being directly engaged in housing delivery themselves. This includes house building through housing companies and those still building using the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It has also emerged that local authorities are using a wider range of means to provide housing. These interventions include building directly under the general fund, through Joint Ventures with developers, providing land for housing, giving loans to others to build housing or to bring it back into use, and building for social needs such as extra care housing.

This is a much wider engagement than anticipated. It reflects a growing appetite and capacity in local authorities to return to or increase their roles in providing housing as a core function. Local authorities are well placed to scale up their delivery of housing, if certain barriers can be addressed.

Barriers which are preventing Councils from providing more homes include: funding, land availability, and skills and expertise around housing development.

There is a general assumption that the 5-year land supply identified in the local plan is to be for private sector development, rather than for all types of housing need. There is a disconnect between the needs for market housing and other tenures. Indeed, even market housing limits provision for specific groups such as older people. Local authorities are stepping into this breach and many are providing housing that is not being delivered by the market and, in some locations, this includes housing for sale. Councils are also providing housing on sites that may not be attractive to other providers as they are small or need remedial works.

The role of local authorities should be recognized as a potentially major contributor to meeting housing need.

Recommendations to central government:

- To remove the debt cap on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for all local authorities
- To allow local authorities to retain all Right to Buy (RTB) receipts if they are using them to build replacement housing
- To review the relative weightings in the distribution of £44bn housing subsidy to give more priority to social and affordable housing and less to market housing for sale
- To clearly state that local authorities can build and provide housing using housing companies created under the Localism Act 2011
- To more clearly identify ways in which local plans can ensure delivery through direct agreements with applicants or successors to planning permissions
- To positively reinforce local plans' inclusion of housing for different need groups
- To use International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) accounting standards to allow local authorities with HRA stock to revalue them at market rates and raise investment against the value of these assets
- If the HRA debt cap is maintained, to consider using the debt cap in the HRA as a single figure across local government and allow local authorities to loan their unused cap to other local authorities
- In line with the NAO report on Local Authority capital expenditure,4 to offer local authorities a two-year holiday to pay off existing Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans that are at higher levels of interest if replaced by new housing loans at current lower levels. This could provide some headroom in the local authority revenue account and increase housing investment
- To allow local authorities to increase / change the bands for council tax, to fund infrastructure investment through capturing land value uplifts associated with housing development
- To encourage every local authority to provide assessments of their ROCE (return on capital employed) in their capital accounts
- To clarify how long the New Homes Bonus is likely to be available to local authorities

Recommendations to local authorities:

- To use the research published here to consider the range of potential initiatives available to provide housing
- To have a specific discussion and consideration of the issues so that the council position is agreed by Council – whichever way this is
- To include housing associations in the pool of organizations from which professional and technical assistance is sought
- To consider the five-year land supply in the local plan as being available for all housing tenures and types and not solely for market housing
- To consider how the local plan can be turned into a delivery programme for housing and how specific project delivery is to be secured
- To consider the role and condition of all housing within their area. Where appropriate, this should include the potential for retrofitting and capacity for conversion to meet specific needs
- To consider offering an independent service to support older people in moving to a new home
- To ensure specific housing needs are identified by site and location in the local plan including for social rent, older people, and other need groups

- To consider employing development surveyors where these are not already within the local authority to deal with viability and assessments of council's own developments, rather than relying always on external consultants
- Consider taking s106 affordable homes into the Council's own housing company or HRA
- Apply to Homes England for Help to Buy funds for any new housing that is private sale
- Include local authority planning professionals on Well Being Boards and Extra Care strategy groups

Recommendations to the Local Government Association:

- To encourage local authorities to learn from each other about the range of appropriate mechanisms that can be used to provide housing
- To widen its consideration and requests to government from just provisions for the HRA to include housing companies
- To set up a special task and finish group to give advice to local authorities considering establishing a housing company
- To review the operational effectiveness of One Public Estate and identify what is blocking local progress

10.4   Recommendations

Recommendation 11: The USHS programme has been a success: additional homes have been brought forward using the fund across the patch. **GBSLEP should work with local authority partners to ensure that there continues to be effective promotion of the USHS programme across the area**. Local authority partners can provide leads for Finance Birmingham to follow up on, e.g. by providing a list of small scale residential planning applications from the past three years that have not progressed to implementation. Finance Birmingham can then explore whether it is a good candidate for the programme or not.

Recommendation 12: GBSLEP should support local authorities to implement the appropriate recommendations of the UCL Housing Research Project into local authority direct provision of housing.

Section 11: Developing practice and innovation

11.1 Introduction

Within this section, we look at developing practice and innovation. This includes modern methods of construction (MMC). It should be noted that, for some builders and localities (e.g. Scotland) timber frame construction is not seen as a MMC. However, as its use is still relatively low in England, it has been included within this section.

11.2 Modern methods of construction

NHBC Foundation – Modern methods of construction: views from the industry – June 2016

We still see an industry that has largely continued to use masonry cavity wall construction for low-rise residential new build. The success of off-site manufactured homes seen in other parts of the world, such as Scandinavia and Japan, has not generally been replicated in volume in the UK.

The term modern methods of construction (MMC) embraces a number of approaches involving off-site manufacture or assembly, including: volumetric construction (three dimensional units which are fully fitted out off-site); pods (e.g. kitchen or bathroom pods); panelised systems – timber or steel frames (timber frame accounts for 15% of UK housing output, and three-quarters of output in Scotland, where it is no longer regarded as a modern method); sub-assemblies and components (e.g. roof and floor cassettes, pre-fabricated chimneys, porches, dormers); site-based MMC – innovative construction methods used on site.

In the UK, masonry construction continues to account for the majority of new residential build and the proportion has remained fairly constant over the last 8 years. The use of timber-framing or light steel-framing methods for the structure of homes represented about 16% of the new build market in 2015, having declined from a high of 24% in 2008. NHBC's statistics do not record the extent of use of sub-assemblies and components, which are used by more organisations involved in new build than structural forms of MMC.

The main reason for considering use of MMC is to achieve a faster build programme. The majority of house builders and housing associations identified this as their main drive. Fewer than half (44% of house builders and 27% of housing associations) reported that they had experienced reduced costs / improved profitability despite the potential for MMC to offer reduced preliminary costs, improved cash flow and lead to faster sales revenues. These benefits will only be available in a strong sales market.

Issues identified with volumetric construction include: the need to take design decisions and 'freeze' the design at an earlier stage, reducing flexibility on-site particularly for any last-minute changes; more comprehensive procurement planning of the whole development required at the outset; more work required on-site when the off-site units are delivered than was anticipated; cost benefits are not fulfilled in practice as logistics, weather delays and so on quickly erode savings; low capacity within the supply chain; higher capital cost; availability of the right labour skills for installation. Issues identified with pods include: higher capital cost; poor capacity within the supply

chain; suppliers unable to meet the delivery programme; suppliers going out of business; logistics of transporting pods to site.

Despite the above, it is expected that the use of all types of MMC is likely to grow over the next three years, with panelised systems and sub-assemblies expected to continue to be the most used. Significant differences are expected to continue by region, with anticipated use of volumetric construction and pods increasing predominantly in London / the South East.

In order to further increase the usage of MMC, we will need to see:

- Larger and more experienced companies supplying higher volumes of modular homes.
- A more developed supply chain generally, delivering more confidence.
- Dissemination by MMC manufacturers of cost / benefit models and best practice case studies.
- More suppliers entering the market.
- Grant-funded development.
- Improving awareness and understanding of MMC amongst potential homebuyers.

SME views on MMC:
- Have done some modular build, but it is more appropriate for bigger sites (100 or more units), as it is not cost effective on small sites.
- The supply chain is not effective at the moment, needs to develop further.
- Keen to progress with modular build, but the sector needs new skills to do this.
- The government is pushing timber frames, but that just means prices have gone up by 30%
- Timber frame construction is quicker, but everything around it (planning, roads, power etc.) is not, so there are no real benefits.

Please note that the views above were taken from a report by the NHBC Foundation[8], which consulted with over 160 sector representatives.

11.3   Community-Led Housing

Locality – understanding the potential of small scale community-led housing – July 2015

Community-led housing is a term commonly used to describe homes that are developed and/or managed by local people or residents, in not-for-private-profit organisational structures. Community housing generally refers to a small geographic identified area of belonging or association.

Two community housing approaches have a statutory UK definition – the co-operative Housing Model and the Community Land Trust Model. The two models have similar main objectives – that of local community ownership and management of housing for the benefit of the community. Other models include: self-help housing; co-housing; development trusts, settlements and social action centres.

---

[8] https://www.nhbcfoundation.org/publication/modern-methods-of-construction-views-from-the-industry/

Overall, less than 1% of UK housing is provided by small community housing providers. This compares less favourably with other European countries.

We need to:

- Raise the profile of community-led housing and challenge the myth that big is better
- Measure social value impact at different scales
- Provide long-term dedicated funding
- Value for money measures should more clearly recognise development and management projects with extensive social, economic and environmental impact
- Clearer engagement between Homes England and existing small scale community led organisations
- Clearer guidance and support
- Help successful projects to help others

In theory, now MHCLG's Community Housing Fund should assist with the above. The funding will be targeted at the community-led housing sector and distributed to groups via local councils who know their area's needs best. It will also offer an income stream to community organisations, in turn allowing them to reinvest in more housing or in other activities or services which will benefit their area.

So far, within the GBSLEP area, we are only aware of one local authority – Wyre Forest DC – having accessed this money. The authority has used the fund to appoint a Community Led Housing Coordinator on a 2 year fixed term contract to support community engagement and capacity building to deliver schemes.

11.4   Self-build housing

Self-build and custom build provides routes into home ownership for individuals and groups who want to play a role in developing their own homes. Activity in this area has increased in recent years and self-build schemes currently deliver around 10,000 homes per year in the UK. Criteria for approval of sites as suitable for self-build can include small sites owned by the Council which are uneconomic for the Council to develop itself.

Councils can enter into a development lease with any nominated group or individual, which would enable them to secure and develop land. Under such agreement, the group or individual would develop the site under licence. This provision would ensure that the Council would receive a land receipt no lower than the market value, and would also defer land costs to the group or individual developing, so mitigating initial entry costs and improving overall affordability.

Within the GBSLEP area, we are aware that most councils do have people on their self-build registers, but those numbers remain relatively low (under 200 to 300 at our best current estimate). Further, we are not currently aware of any councils within the GBSLEP area which have been able to find suitable sites for those on their register.

11.5   Micro homes

Micro homes are developed on a Ford-style production line, delivering turn-key homes complete with kitchen, bathroom, fitted carpets, curtains, and even furniture if requested. These micro homes are seen as useful (particularly in London and the south east) in providing accommodation for young, single, urban workers earning between £20,000 and £40,000 who do not qualify for conventional social housing, but who are priced out of buying.

The homes are high spec and energy efficient, they are tiny – just 26 sq metres. National space standards, introduced in 2011, demand that a one-bedroom flat should be a minimum of 37 sq metres. So far, no micro homes have full planning permission, with many councils determined to maintain existing space standards. Britain already has some of the smallest homes in Europe, and office-to-residential conversions, which fall outside normal planning rules, have produced some flats under 15 sq metres.

11.6   Recommendations

Recommendation 13: there is potential for the **LEP to be more active in taking a lead role in supporting councils and others to develop innovative solutions**, such as community-led developments and self-build. The LEP could be well placed to take on the role of facilitator, bringing together good practice and enabling information exchange between authorities and other partners.

Recommendation 14: It is apparent that a lot more could be done to progress modern methods of construction (MMC) within the GBSLEP area. However, there is a limited role here for GBSLEP, as the scale of the task would require significant government intervention. However, **GBSLEP could play a supporting role as a partner, if the government chooses to pursue MMC developments**.

Section 12:   Barriers to delivery

12.1   Introduction

There is widespread agreement that more needs to be done to increase the supply of housing across the area, and to increase the supply of affordable housing in particular. However, there is a range of barriers to delivering such an increase. These barriers to deliver are explored within this chapter.

12.2   General barriers

As previously referenced in Section 3 of this report, the Housing White Paper stated that the UK does not have enough homes. House building has not kept pace with the growing population, and the loss of a private sector tenancy is now the most common cause of homelessness. The average house costs almost eight times average earnings, and more than 2.2 million working households with below average incomes spend a third or more of their disposable income on housing

Within its consultation on the White Paper, opened in September 2017, the government went on to propose solutions including building more homes to slow the rise in housing costs, ensuring that homes are built more quickly, diversifying the housing market, and offering immediate support to those in need. Further, the consultation proposal required local authorities to produce a statement of common ground over their housing market area, in order to show that they are working effectively together.

12.3   Barriers to delivery in the GBSLEP area

As well as the above general barriers, the Housing Framework Task and finish group also looked at the specific problems that face SME house builders within our local area. To do this, the group SRO and the Project Manager met with local businesses to discuss their concerns and experiences. The following is a summary of some of the key issues raised during those conversations.

Availability of land	- Vendors have unrealistic expectations of what their land is worth. - There is a lack of pocket sites. - SMEs can't afford to do land bank sites. - Vendors are sitting on sites and waiting for prices to rise. This includes LAs. - Landowners have unrealistic expectations about what they can get for their land. - Bigger companies are able to work together to buy large sites, blocking out SMEs.
Skilled labour	- Shortage of skilled operatives. Train people up, and then they are head-hunted by bigger players who can pay more. It's a competitive market – recruiters are always calling up our staff. - Difficult to attract more academic young people into e.g. surveyor roles.

	• It is quite difficult to get local sub-contractors, we have to develop relationships, and they have to buy in to our way of doing things – it can be difficult. • We can get trades people, but if someone offers them more money, they're off.
Planning	• Gap sites fall to the bottom of the list in terms of processing applications, but are the main stay of the business. Delays things by months. Planning departments are overstretched. • Smaller sites are seen as 'premium' by planners. They want high quality high-spec developments on these sites, but are happier for lower quality developments on the big sites. This makes smaller sites even more unaffordable for SMEs. It is driven by political pressure. • Never had a problem with planning before, but now have four live planning appeals. • There is local opposition to developments. • The number of planners has fallen, so the process is slowed. • Quality of planners – some are not strong enough to take decisions and stand by their recommendations.
LA procurement processes	• Give jobs to the bigger national players, as they have a lower risk profile. LAs say they want to work with SMEs, but then go for the bigger companies. • Minimum turnover of £40m needed to get a place on the Worcester framework. Have done a lot of work for them over the years, but now can't get on their framework. • Only BCC has a framework that is specifically for SMEs.
Materials	• Comes in phases (e.g. last year it was facing bricks, this year it is roof tiles). • The cost of materials is going up because of Brexit – insulation has doubled in price over the last 12 months. Supply and demand • It takes 3 months to get tiles and bricks. Very difficult to get hold of any blocks at all.
Apprenticeships	• We do support these, but there is still an image problem with the industry. Some local colleges have stopped delivering courses. • Keen to do these, they tend to have more loyalty because we develop career plans with them.
Costs	• SMEs are generally working on small sites, but these are expensive to run – a small site needs a H&S manager for 2 houses, the same way a bigger site does for 20 houses. • Housing Associations don't make money on new builds, it costs more to build than any rent that can be generated. But stocks are being whittled away by RTB.
UK Government policy and action	• No connection between them and SMEs. They have aspirations, but are not acting on it.

Many of the issues raised above are well-recognised, and are not unique to the GBSLEP area by any means. However, there were differing views from larger construction companies on some issues. Specifically, the view from larger firms was that the perception of land-banking was inaccurate, and that this was not the common practice that many assumed it to be. The perception was caused, in

their view, by the extensive delays inherent within the planning system, which meant that sites lay dormant for long periods of time. These delays were caused by lack of capacity within planning departments, and local opposition to development. Without a widespread understanding of these reasons behind this lack of build progress, the perception of land banking had been established.

Whatever the cause, recent research[9] has indicated that, in 2015/16 the total number of unimplemented planning permissions in England and Wales was 365,146, rising to 423,544 in 2016/17. The figures also show that developers are taking longer to build new homes. It now takes 40 months, on average, from schemes receiving planning permission to building work being completed – eight months longer than in 2013/14. Councils are approving nine in every 10 planning applications, and granted planning permission in 2016/17 for 321,202 new homes – up from 204,989 new homes in 2015/16.

In order to assess this issue, we approached local authorities within the GBSLEP area for information on the numbers of major planning approvals (full or Reserved Matters) that had been granted from 2015 to the autumn of 2017, and how many of these had not yet been built out. This query, although not informed by complete data, indicated that several thousand homes (a best estimate of over 15,000) had been granted permission during this time period, with the units as yet unbuilt. However, without understanding the reasons behind these stalled sites in more detail, it is difficult to offer any recommendations for action (if any recommendations are required). This will be a useful area for further research and, in its Autumn Budget, the government announced that it would be undertaking a review of stalled housing sites through the Letwin Review[10]. GBSLEP should contribute to this as appropriate in order to formulate a plan of action to bring developments forward more rapidly.

12.4   Recommendations

Recommendation 15: The rate of progress through the planning system is becoming an increasingly problematic issue for home builders of all sizes. This reflects the reduction in capacity within local planning teams, and related loss of planning expertise. **GBSLEP cannot influence this directly, but it should support local authorities in their requests for additional resource**.

Recommendation 16: In addition to supporting local authorities in their request for additional resources, **the LEP could look to set up a planning task group to help housing developments to progress more quickly through the planning system.** The operational arrangements of such a task group would, or course, need to be discussed with all local authority partners in the first instance, in order to establish the feasibility of this idea.

---

[9] https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/more-423000-homes-planning-permission-waiting-be-built

[10]

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/673794/20180112_Terms_of_Reference_for_the_Review_of_Build-Out_.pdf

Recommendation 17: SMEs are finding it difficult to secure small sites through local authority procurement processes. **GBSLEP should work with local authority partners and with Homes England to help with the development of procurement frameworks that more realistically meet the needs of SMEs**.

Recommendation 18: The funding incentives provided through MHCLG for increasing the supply of new housing are noted, and **the LEP should engage directly with Homes England to investigate how the LEP can play an active role in facilitating funding proposals across the collective LEP geography**, in order to ensure more effective coordination of dialogue and potential outcomes.

Recommendation 19: The data indicate a high number of permissions granted that are yet to be built out. However, the reasons for this remain unclear. **In its Autumn Budget, the government announced that it would be undertaking a review of stalled housing sites through the Letwin Review, and GBSLEP should contribute to this as appropriate** in order to formulate a plan of action to bring developments forward more rapidly. Following this, the LEP should then take a role in sharing identified good practice and intervention solutions across the area.

Section 13:   Action Plan

This section of the report brings together the recommendations for action that have been put forward within previous sections. We have kept the focus on what GBSLEP and its local partners *can do.*

Actions have been split into a number of distinct categories, reflecting GBSLEP's role as:

- **lead facilitator** – GBSLEP will act as a focal point and conduit, helping partners to work together
- **lead delivery partner** – GBSLEP will lead on delivery
- **joint delivery partner** – GBSLEP will be a partner to delivery, but will not lead
- **lead further research** – GBSLEB will take the lead on further research
- **supporting partner** – GBSLEP will seek to amplify the voice of partners where practicable

These categories have been divided amongst two tables – Table 1, which shows recommendations for action where GBSLEP will take a more active, leading role, and Table 2, which shows recommendations where the LEP will take a supporting role. It should be noted that GBSLEP is still likely to have only a degree of control over those actions where it is listed as lead.

In terms of timescales;

- Short = next 6 months
- Medium = next 1 to 2 years
- Long = 2 years plus

Table 1: GBSLEP to take an active role

No.	Recommendation	GBSLEP role	Lead	Timeframe S/M/L
5	West Midlands housing associations are working with WMCA and Homes England to explore the potential for a joint delivery vehicle to increase the supply of new homes of all tenures, including affordable, across the Combined Authority area. These discussions have involved the LEP, through the Non-Executive Director for Place. **GBSLEP should continue to be involved in joint delivery vehicle discussions**, exploring options such as the LEP's role as an investment partner, possibly through a revolving capital loan fund.	Supporting partner	WMCA, HAs, LAs	Short / Medium / Long
8	Ensuring that local authorities have the ability to cover the costs of acquisition (such as Compulsory Purchase Orders and purchase of easements) of long-term vacant homes would enable such properties to be brought back into use. **GBSLEP should explore the possibility of creating a recyclable loan fund that local authorities can borrow from in order to cover acquisition costs.**	Lead delivery partner	GBSLEP	Short / Medium
10	A number of authorities across the GBSLEP area, including Birmingham, Tamworth, and Wyre Forest, are progressing local authority housing schemes for market housing. **GBSLEP should, as a matter of principle, support such developments** in order to ensure that housing needs across the area can be met. The LEP's role could involve co-ordination / facilitation, or could be more direct and involve becoming a partner in a joint delivery vehicle.	Supporting partner	LAs	Short / Medium / Long
13	There is potential for the **LEP to be more active in taking a lead role in supporting councils and others to develop innovative solutions**, such as community-led developments and self-build. The LEP could be well placed to take on the role of facilitator, bringing together good practice and enabling information exchange between authorities and other partners.	Lead facilitator	GBSLEP	Short / Medium
16	The LEP could **bring together a pool of expertise to help local authorities to progress housing developments more quickly through the planning system.** The operational arrangements of such a pool would need to be discussed with all local authority partners in the first instance, in order to establish the feasibility of this idea. The LEP could also **support the pool to identify the barriers for schemes which have planning permission but have yet to build out, and begin to formulate**	Lead facilitator	GBSLEP	Short / Medium

	solutions to these problems.			
18	The funding incentives provided through MHCLG for increasing the supply of new housing are noted, and **the LEP should engage directly with Homes England to investigate how the LEP can play an active role in facilitating funding proposals across the collective LEP geography**, in order to ensure more effective coordination of dialogue and potential outcomes.	Lead facilitator	GBSLEP	Short / Medium

Table 2: GBSLEP to take a supporting role

No.	Recommendation	GBSLEP role	Lead	Timeframe S/M/L
1	The production of a statement of common ground is not yet a statutory requirement of local authorities. However, if this does become a statutory requirement, then **GBSLEP should take an appropriate interest in assisting councils to produce statements of common ground**, especially in regard to cross-boundary delivery.	Supporting partner	LAs	Medium
2	GBSLEP is supportive of the principles behind the six game changers identified by the WMCA's Land Commission. Further, we believe that the research undertaken by the Housing Framework task and finish group may be of use to the WMCA when further developing housing policy and practice across the patch. We therefore recommend that **representatives of the Housing Framework task and finish group meet with officers of the WMCA at the earliest opportunity in order to discuss joint working opportunities**.	Supporting partner	WMCA	Short
3	**GBSLEP should support local partners in progressing their Housing Infrastructure Fund (FF and MV) bids.** The nature of tis support will be dependent on which bids to the HIF are successful.	Supporting partner	LAs, WMCA	Medium / Long
4	The data show that there are issues of affordability, especially lower quartile affordability, in all tenures and sizes of homes across the GBSLEP area. **The LEP should therefore support further housing development – especially affordable housing development – in order to ensure that growing demand can be met.** This support should reflect local authority priorities for their areas, and the LEP's input will therefore vary by local authority district. However, the LEP should accept in principle that public sector intervention *will* be required in order to meet housing demand, especially for social and affordable homes.	Supporting partner	LAs	Short / Medium / Long
6	There is uncertainty regarding tenure demand in future. 'Generation Rent' may be a long-term market adjustment, and tenure needs for the next 10 or 20 or 30 years are therefore difficult to predict. **The LEP will therefore support, as appropriate, any further research on future tenure trends.**	Supporting partner	LAs	Medium / Long
7	Homelessness and rough sleeping is a significant and increasing problem across the area, which could be set to rise even further due to the incoming Homelessness Reduction Act. Solving this problem will necessitate multi-agency approach. **GBSLEP**	Supporting partner	WMCA	Short / Medium / Long

	will support the Mayor's Taskforce as appropriate in order to tackle the issue of homelessness in the area, and the LEP's role could include encouraging further private sector involvement in this issue.			
9	The subject of under- and over-occupancy is complex, although there are some emerging patterns, e.g. under-occupation by older people in larger houses. **GBSLEP should work with partners to further understand these issues at a more localised level,** and to explore possible solutions. It is possible that the LEP could have a role in stimulating the market for homes for single older people, and older couples, ensuring that adequate numbers of high quality smaller accommodation units, that meet the needs of older people, are available.	Supporting partner	LAs	Short / Medium
11	The USHS programme has been a success: additional homes have been brought forward using the fund across the patch. **GBSLEP should work with local authority partners to ensure that there continues to be effective promotion of the USHS programme across the area**. Local authority partners can provide leads for Finance Birmingham to follow up on, e.g. by providing a list of small scale residential planning applications from the past three years that have not progressed to implementation. Finance Birmingham can then explore whether it is a good candidate for the programme or not.	Supporting partner	LAs	Short / Medium
12	**GBSLEP should support local authorities to implement the appropriate recommendations of the UCL Housing Research Project into local authority direct provision of housing**.	Supporting partner	LAs and UCL	Short / Medium
14	It is apparent that a lot more could be done to progress modern methods of construction (MMC) within the GBSLEP area. However, there is a limited role here for GBSLEP, as the scale of the task would require significant government intervention. However, **GBSLEP could play a supporting role as a partner, if the government chooses to pursue MMC developments**.	Supporting partner	UK Govt	Medium
15	The rate of progress through the planning system is becoming an increasingly problematic issue for home builders of all sizes. This reflects the reduction in capacity within local planning teams, and related loss of planning expertise. **GBSLEP cannot influence this directly, but it should support local authorities in their requests for additional resource**.	Supporting partner	LAs	Short / Medium
17	SMEs are finding it difficult to secure small sites through local authority procurement	Supporting partner	LAs	Short / Medium

	processes. **GBSLEP should work with local authority partners and with Homes England to help with the development of procurement frameworks that more realistically meet the needs of SMEs.**			
19	The data indicate a high number of permissions granted that are yet to be built out. However, the reasons for this remain unclear. **In its Autumn Budget, the government announced that it would be undertaking a review of stalled housing sites through the Letwin Review, and GBSLEP should contribute to this as appropriate** in order to formulate a plan of action to bring developments forward more rapidly. Following this, the LEP should then take a role in sharing identified good practice and intervention solutions across the area.	Supporting partner	UK Govt	Short / Medium

Section 14:   Bibliography

Arcadis – The Big Idea

Birmingham Development Plan – January 2017

Birmingham City Council – Incentivising Self-Build in the City

Birmingham City Council – Building Great Homes Creating Great Places – July 2017

Bromsgrove District Council – Local Plan – January 2017

Cannock Chase District Council – Local Plan – 2014

Department for Communities and Local Government – Evaluating the Extent of Rough Sleeping, September 2010

Department for Communities and Local Government – Housing Infrastructure Fund

Department for Communities and Local Government – Planning for the right homes in the right places: consultation proposal – September 2017

Department for Communities and Local Government – press release – 23 December 2016

Future Network West Midlands and the Human City Institute – Accelerating Prosperity through Housing – March 2017

Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP – Strategic Economic Plan 2016-2030

Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP – Unlocking Stalled Housing Sites Programme

The Guardian – Off the peg homes bid to solve the housing crisis –15 July 2017

Homes and Communities Agency – The Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme – 2016-2021

House of Commons Library Briefing Paper Number 07833 – Local Housing Allowance caps and the social rented sector – November 2017

KPMG and Shelter – Building the Homes we Need – 2015

Lepus Consulting – Sustainability Assessment of the GBSLEP and Black Country Strategic Housing Needs Study Scenarios – March 2017

Lichfield DC – Local Plan – 2015

Locality – understanding the potential of small scale community-led housing – July 2015

National House Building Council Foundation – Modern methods of construction: views from the industry – June 2016

National Policy Forum / Royal Town Planning Institute Housing Research Project – local authority direct provision of housing – December 2017

Peter Brett Associates – Strategic Housing Needs Study Stage 3 – August 2015

Peter Brett Associates – BCC Housing Targets 2011-31 Technical Paper – September 2013

Redditch Borough Council – Local Plan – January 2017

ResPublica – Going to Scale: How a National Housing Fund Can Unlock Britain's Housebuilding Capacity – November 2016

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council – Housing Briefing for WMCA – August 2016

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government – Housing White Paper: Fixing Our Broken Housing Market – February 2017

Sheffield Hallam University CRESR – Regeneration Revival? Making housing-led regeneration work across England – April 2016

The Smith Institute – Halfway House: the opportunities and limits of devo-housing in England – April 2017

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council – Housing Issues – 2016

Sustainable Housing Action Partnership / West Midlands Housing Officers Group – research underway – July 2017-May 2018

Tamworth Borough Council – Local Plan – February 2016

The Urban Institute, Heriot Watt University – How to increase affordable housing: six innovative options – January 2017

West Midlands Combined Authority Housing and Land Steering Group – HIF priorities – September 2017

West Midlands Combined Authority Land Commission – Final Report to the WMCA Board – February 2017

West Midlands Combined Authority – Strategic Economic Plan

Wolverhampton City Council – Neighbourhoods, Homes, and People: Wolverhampton Housing Strategy 2013-18

Report to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Supervisory Board

21st June 2018

GBSLEP Towns and Local Centres Framework

Purpose of the report

To note the GBSLEP Board's approval of the Towns & Local Centres Framework

Recommendations

The Supervisory Board is recommended to:

- Consider the attached Towns and Local Centres (TLC) Framework and note the good practice principles that have been identified.

- Note the LEP Board's approval of the proposed criteria for future investment in TLC projects.

- Note the LEP Board's approval of the five specific recommendations from the TLC Framework for GBSLEP to take forward.

- Note the LEP Board's approval of the official publication of the TLC Framework in an appropriate form.

- Note the LEP Board's approval that any unspent monies from the £500,000 already earmarked for TLC projects through the SEP Enabling Fund can be rolled over to 2019/20, if necessary.

Background to the TLC Framework

1. In our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), GBSLEP sets out the objective to 'develop thriving towns and local centres'. This objective recognises that, whilst Birmingham as a regional core city provides a natural focal point for increasing growth and investment, the surrounding towns and local centres also form a crucial part of the economic fabric of the region.

2. Place-based projects are interventions that focus on particular towns and local centres, rather than specific sectors or strategic infrastructure, and acknowledge that place attractiveness is a critical factor in underpinning continued growth across Greater Birmingham and Solihull.

3. There is a range of evidence which identifies that significant quantitative economic benefits can be derived from place-based public realm schemes, including:

- capital appreciation and/or rental increases for investors;

- increased footfall leading to increased turnover;

- a better performing economy leading to new and retained jobs.

4. Qualitative benefits also accrue from public realm regeneration, and include:

- improved perceptions of personal safety;

- improved rates of walking and cycling;

- increased well-being;

- increased civic pride;

- reduced rates of crime.

5. In 2017, local authority officers working in economic growth and regeneration were brought together to work as a task and finish group to produce a GBSLEP-wide TLC Framework. The Senior Responsible Officer for the group was Matt Bowers of Tamworth Borough Council, with oversight from the GBSLEP NED for Optimising Assets, and executive support from the LEP's Optimising Assets Officer.

6. The task and finish group agreed that the aim of its work would be:

    to develop investment criteria for towns and local centres projects that reflect the importance of place to the well-being of the GBSLEP area as a whole.

7. To achieve this aim, a number of objectives were identified:

    (a) to identify good practice in regeneration and how this feeds into inclusive economic growth in town centre projects

    (b) to develop criteria for investment of funds – i.e. the criteria that could be used to assess applications for LGF funds and SEP Enabling Funds in relation to town centre projects

    (c) to develop other specific actions / recommendations for GBSLEP to take forward in relation to TLCs

8. A first draft of the TLC Framework was completed by the end of February 2018. This draft progressed through a 'sense check' process with a range of partners, to ensure that the findings and recommendations were sound.

9. The sense check process included: review and refinement by the TLC task and finish group; discussion at the Local Authorities Chief Executives' meeting (held the week before LEP Board); and discussion and input from Place Board members. The draft Framework was also published on the GBSLEP website, and sent to partners in local Business Improvement Districts. Conversations will also take place with colleagues at WMCA in order to understand their views on our proposals.

Overview of good practice identified through TLC Framework research

10. The TLC Framework identified good practice in the following areas:

    a. Streets and spaces

    b. Diversity of use, creativity, and culture

    c. Technology

    d. Transport and accessibility

    e. Partnerships and structures

    f. Monitoring and evaluation.

Proposed criteria for investment in our towns and local centres

11. Once good practice and principles had been agreed, the task and finish group developed a set of project assessment criteria which would reflect that good practice, and enable the LEP to make sound decisions about the kinds of projects in which it could best invest its SEP Enabling Fund.

12. These criteria were then put through several 'test runs', focussed on potential projects currently under development by local authority partners. These test runs have shown the criteria to be simple to use, with the aid of an application form and a short guidance note.

13. Criteria are divided into two broad categories – those which all projects will have to successfully address in order to access funding, and those which are only applicable to different types of project. Projects therefore, do not have to meet all of the criteria below.

14. The projects that will be coming forward to access these funds will often be feasibility studies, masterplans, and other such early stage development work. As such, there is limited reference within the proposed criteria to evidencing economic growth, which will arise from the projects, as it is too early within the process for this to be feasible. The research that we have undertaken has generated evidence of positive economic impacts through TLC regeneration projects, but this case will be made more fully by each project at a later point within the development process (e.g. when the project comes forward to apply for capital funding).

SEP Enabling Fund (Revenue) – Proposed TLC Criteria for Assessment
Overarching / general criteria – ALL PROJECTS TO ADDRESS
1. The revenue project complements GBSLEP's strategic priorities 2. The revenue project has clearly identified what it aims to achieve through this piece of work – e.g. "production of a regeneration master plan for the town centre" 3. The project has conveyed its proposal with brevity and clarity 4. The project has identified why the LEP's financial support is required
Partnerships and structures criteria – ALL PROJECTS TO ADDRESS
1. The revenue project is being proposed by an organisation or group with a clear role in town centre regeneration, who have begun to bring together a wide range of views from across sectors 2. The project has the support of the local authority 3. The revenue project has provided a brief and realistic project plan 4. The revenue project has a clear leader / responsible officer in place, who will be responsible for driving the revenue project forward
Monitoring and evaluation criteria – ALL PROJECTS TO ADDRESS
1. The revenue project has begun to consider monitoring and evaluation issues as appropriate
Criteria for streets and spaces projects

1. The revenue project will explore options for some or all of the following:
  • creating more people-focussed welcoming environments, which put the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users to the fore
  • delivering a coherent and high-quality design approach which helps to protect or create a distinct identity and sense of place
  • protecting and enhancing existing valued spaces, buildings, and open and green spaces
  • developing a wider town centre plan, strategic plan, or master plan for the area
  • increasing footfall in the town centre
  • enhancing users' experiences of the town centre
  • exploring options for innovative, ambitious, and challenging regeneration projects
  • developing the centre and public realm in other ways

Criteria for diversity of use, creativity, and culture projects

1. The revenue project will explore options for some of the following:
  • bringing significant improvement to the town centre's offer across the day time and/or evening and/or night time
  • developing a coherent and cohesive approach to local cultural image-making and branding
  • enhancing available assets, building on the existing strengths, attractions, and resources of the area

• delivering additional residential accommodation of appropriate type, tenure, and size within town and local centre locations • delivering office space of appropriate quality and size within the town centre • developing other aspects of diversity of use, and the creative and cultural offer
Criteria for technology projects
1. The revenue project explores the options for developing technological solutions and initiatives that will contribute to the regeneration of a centre or centres, as part of a wider regeneration strategy for the area – this could be through digital infrastructure, hi-tech transport solutions, or other innovative approaches
Criteria for transport and accessibility projects
1. The revenue project will explore options for some of the following: • improving and increasing pedestrian and cycle access to / from / within centres, as part of a wider regeneration strategy • integrating improved public transport interchange facilities, complementing a wider town centre regeneration strategy • connecting people to jobs via sustainable transport, as part of a wider regeneration strategy • connecting people to cultural facilities, cultural offers, and leisure facilities as part of a wider regeneration strategy • connecting homes to sustainable transport, as part of a wider regeneration strategy

15. If the Board approves the criteria, the LEP Executive recommends that a proportion of the £500,000 of SEP Enabling Fund monies for 2018/19 already allocated to Towns and Local Centres work can be spent in 2019/20 if required. This will give partners time to commission and develop masterplans and studies of appropriate depth, scope, and quality.

Other Recommendations

16. As well as identifying good practice and developing criteria for investment, the task and finish group formulated a number of additional recommendations for action for the LEP to take forward. These are based on the research contained within the Framework.

17. The task and finish group developed ten recommendations in total. Of these, five are focussed on administration and delivery, and will be taken forward as part of everyday activities and LEP forward planning.

18. The other five recommendations focus on specific activities which will require additional resource. These recommendations are presented here, along with the potential activities, benefits, and resources associated with each.

19. These resources are identified in the Place Delivery Plan.

Recommendation 1	**Undertake additional research into town and local centre roles**, based on (i) a GBSLEP-wide geographical ecosystem approach and (ii) how individual towns and local centres can build on their inherent strengths and potential assets, possibly through the development of town-focussed master plans and regeneration strategies, in partnership with local authorities
What this means in practice	(i) we will commission a piece of ecosystem research which will look at the individual roles and unique selling points of the towns in the GBSLEP area, and how those towns currently compete and/or complement each other, and how they relate to Birmingham as the core city. (ii) we will work with local authorities to support those who already have town centre masterplans and strategies underway, and support those who wish to develop such strategies in the near future.
Potential benefits	(i) the ecosystem research will help us to identify and then build on the individual strengths of our towns, enabling us to concentrate our investments on activities which we can be sure will have the maximum impact on those locations. (ii) individual town masterplans will further clarify local strengths and opportunities, and allow the development of detailed and tailored delivery plans.
LEP resource implications	(i) £75,000 from the SEP Enabling Fund; LEP Executive time to commission and manage the research process. (ii) £1m from the SEP Enabling Fund (we have already earmarked £500,000 for such work, but we are aware that there is additional demand for support amongst local authority and other partners. The additional £500,000 ask would be subject to successful utilisation of the first tranche of funds); LEP Executive time to assess applications and to administer funds.

Recommendation 2	Undertake research into the **possibility of developing a town centre repayable fund for use by Local Authorities**, in order to help with the costs of assembling town centre sites (e.g. Compulsory Purchase Orders, purchase of easements, etc.), working with Homes England in order to share expertise.
What this means in practice	Local authority partners have expressed difficulty in progressing site assembly due to lack of upfront funds and lack of expertise. This is a cash flow problem as such costs would be repaid following development of the specified site. The LEP could therefore, usefully research the feasibility of developing a revolving loan fund, which councils could apply to in order to cover such costs.
Potential benefits	Local authority partners will be able to move forward with necessary site assembly, which would then act as a catalyst for further investment, and help to kick-start wider regeneration schemes. Repayments would be reinvested back into the loan fund, allowing for ongoing support for other projects.
LEP resource implications	**Preparation:** £10,000 to commission a small piece of research into the feasibility and practicality of the proposal (to cover both Housing and Towns and Local Centres proposals); LEP Executive time to commission and manage the research. **Delivery:** Subject to the findings of the research, we will come back to Board with more detailed proposals and recommendations, highlighting the need for £Xm to establish the fund and £Xk to administer the loan fund.

Recommendation 3	Where **gaps** are apparent in the **pipeline of town centre projects**, GBSLEP to explore opportunities for acting as a **project commissioner**.
What this means in practice	The research which underpins the TLC Framework has given us and our partners a clear steer on what we think good practice in regeneration entails. With this knowledge, and through conversations with our partners, we should be able to identify where there are any gaps – i.e. project opportunities that have yet to be explored – particularly projects that could have benefits for several towns and centres across the area. GBSLEP will then work with partners to develop and deliver these projects.
Potential benefits	Delivery of targeted and bespoke regeneration schemes which will bring specified benefits on a project-by-project basis. This will be complemented by support to partners to deliver appropriate TLC projects which are already included on the LEP's Local Growth Fund pipeline of projects.
LEP resource implications	Up to £XXm (majority capital spend) from the pipeline to identify, develop, and deliver projects. LEP Executive time to work with partners to identify schemes, and to take them forward as appropriate.

Recommendation 4	Act as a **co-ordinator / facilitator** to enable local authorities and other strategic organisations to work together and co-ordinate activities.
What this means in practice	Local authorities and other partners have expressed a wish to exchange ideas, share good practice, share lessons learned, co-ordinate complementary activities, avoid unnecessary competition, and generally develop networking opportunities related to town and local centre regeneration schemes. The first stage would be to work with partners to identify what form such co-ordination could take – e.g. network meetings, regular workshops on subjects of interest, an on-line resource, etc.
Potential benefits	Sharing of information will enable partners to avoid repeating the mistakes of others, increase value for money through joint purchasing, and to roll out successful projects more easily.
LEP resource implications	Up to £20,000 per year to facilitate activities. LEP Executive time to co-ordinate activities.

Recommendation 5	Work with the What Works Centre for Economic Growth on establishing an **evidence base for regeneration projects**
What this means in practice	The LEP Executive has already made links with the WWCEG. We would like to further explore options for putting forward one or more of our place projects to be developed as an exemplar in terms of evaluation of impacts.
Potential benefits	The LEP and the partner delivering the project could become recognised as a leader in setting the highest evaluation standards.
LEP resource implications	LEP Executive time to co-ordinate activities.

Conclusions

20. The Supervisory Board is asked note that the TLC Framework has been approved by the LEP Board at its meeting on 5 June 2018, and is attached alongside this covering report.

21. The draft Framework identifies:

- Good practice principles which GBSLEP will seek to promote as part of any TLC project that it supports.

- Criteria for investment of LEP funds in TLC projects

- Recommendations for action for GBSLEP to progress.

22. The Supervisory Board is asked to consider the TLC Framework and the associated recommendations.

Prepared by: Sarah Hughes (Executive Officer for Optimising Assets)

Contact: sarah.hughes@birmingham.gov.uk
                         07712 436694

Date: 12 June 2018

Towns and Local Centres Framework

Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership

June 2018

Contents

1.   Background to the project

In our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) sets out the objective to 'develop thriving towns and local centres'. This objective recognises that, whilst Birmingham as a regional core city provides a natural focal point for increasing growth and investment, the surrounding towns and local centres also form a crucial part of the economic fabric of the region.

The LEP therefore took the decision to develop a Towns and Local Centres (TLC) [1] Framework, that could act as a guidance document for partners and for the LEP itself, setting out good practice in centres regeneration, and setting some broad criteria for funding applications. The aim of the research was: *to develop investment criteria for towns and local centres projects that reflect the importance of place to the well-being of the GBSLEP area as a whole*.

The work was taken forward through the auspices of a small task and finish group, made up primarily of local authority planning and regeneration officers, with other views incorporated at appropriate times. This TLC Framework is the culmination of that work. It should be noted that this is not a statutory document – local authorities retain powers over planning across their areas – but it is intended to guide GBSLEP in its investment decisions, to add clarity to the reasons behind our investment decisions for our partners, and to provide the basis for us to give assistance to partners in bringing town centre regeneration projects forward.

2.   Strategic context

The TLC Framework has been produced within the context of a number of national, regional and local strategies. The GBSLEP covers nine local authority areas: Birmingham, Solihull, East Staffordshire, Cannock Chase, Lichfield, Tamworth, Redditch, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest. The LEP also shares a number of its district authorities with the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP and the Worcestershire LEP, and we also share borders with the Black Country LEP and the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP. Above the LEP geography sits the West Midlands Combined Authority, a body with legal status and powers of decision making. Finally, there is the Midlands Engine, which is a coalition of Councils, Combined Authorities, and LEPs, which works to build a collective identity to market the area.

Within this complex geography, GBSLEP is seeking to identify, through this Framework, where it can add value to TLC regeneration activities, and to help build a sense of place within our communities.

We also recognise that the role of centres is changing. Out-of-town retail sites have had a significant impact on many town centres, and within centres we have seen adjustments in the retail, leisure, and services provided. There has been a gradual withdrawal of multiple retailers from non-prime destinations, and there is higher turnover of premises.

---

[1] For readability and brevity, we use the abbreviated terms "centres" and "TLCs" throughout this document, rather than using the full "towns, district centres, and local centres" nomenclature.

These changes reflect the fact that residents want different things from towns today, which means that centres need to look at what they can offer that is *different* to the out of town retail parks. With shopping habits changing, high streets need to evolve – to build on their strengths and offer a viable and exciting alternative to out-of-town and internet shopping.

3.   Good growth in TLCs

Ensuring that the benefits of regeneration (jobs, additional opportunities, greater connectivity etc.) filter through to the people who live in some of our most deprived neighbourhoods has always been a significant challenge. Over many years, and many cycles of regeneration programmes, we have seen that 'trickle down' does not work equitably for all. By investing in a wider range of projects, we can support the communities that underpin our large scale investment projects, and help to develop a place for everyone. If more people can access the benefits of growth, then that gives our businesses a wider pool of talent to draw on, which will help their bottom line. These concepts of sustainable and inclusive growth are complex, and mean slightly different if complementary things. However, we have used the shorthand of "good growth"[2] to cover both aspects.

4.   GBSLEP's role in good growth through TLC regeneration

Place based TLC regeneration projects are the kinds of interventions that focus on particular towns and local centres, rather than specific sectors or strategic infrastructure, and acknowledge that place attractiveness is a critical factor in underpinning our large scale investment projects. There is a range of evidence which identifies that significant quantitative economic benefits can be derived from place-based public realm schemes, including: capital appreciation and/or rental increases for investors; reduced voids; increased footfall leading to increased turnover; a better performing economy leading to new and retained jobs. Qualitative benefits also accrue from public realm regeneration works, and include: improved perceptions of personal safety; improved rates of walking and cycling; increased well-being; increased civic pride; and reduced rates of crime.

If we accept that TLC regeneration is a 'good' thing, then we need to be clear on what constitutes best practice in regeneration projects, so that we can deliver effective schemes. This report therefore brings together some of the common ideas and processes that are considered to be good practice in TLC regeneration. A range of reference documents were reviewed, and these are listed within the bibliography. The recurring key points have been gathered together under loosely themed sub-headings, with a narrative around each theme. At the end of each narrative section, there is a review of what this good practice evidence could mean for the LEP in practice, and how place-based or place-focussed regeneration can impact upon good growth.

Through extensive research, we found that the evidence shows a number of key elements to successful place based regeneration, and different areas will take a different approach, based on local needs and local opportunities. In order to help to identify where the LEP could have a role, we have grouped elements of identified good practice into place-focussed categories. These include:

---

[2] https://www.pwc.co.uk/industries/government-public-sector/good-growth.html

Streets and spaces – including the public realm, a sense of place, high quality environments, urban design, people-friendly centres, planning issues, and safety and security. In relation to streets and spaces, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Create more people-focussed and welcoming environments, which put the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users to the fore.
- Improve the connectivity and flow of the area for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Have a clear strategy or master plan in place, or will deliver a coherent design approach.
- Protect and enhance existing valued spaces and buildings, as well as recognising the importance of green and open central spaces in regeneration schemes.
- Are challenging and bold, and show ambition and innovation in their approach to the public realm as a whole.
- Enhance users' experiences of the centre through such aspects as improved lighting, layout improvements, public art, and safety measures.
- Take a representative approach, involving a wide range of partners, encouraging community input, and building consensus and buy-in.

Diversity of use, creativity, and culture – including a distinctive and diverse offer and brand, local culture, office accommodation, and housing. In relation to diversity of use, creativity, and culture, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Seek to bring significant change to the existing diversity of a town centre's offer across the day, evening, and night time.
- Show a coherent approach to local cultural image-making and branding.
- Enhance available assets, building on the existing strengths, attractions, and resources of the area.
- Involve a group of towns and local centres working together to develop offers and co-ordinate actions that complement rather than compete with each other – the LEP can take a co-ordinating role here to encourage collaboration.
- Help to deliver additional residential accommodation of appropriate type, tenure, and size within town and local centre locations, reflecting the changing nature of town centres across the UK.
- Complement the principles set out within GBSLEP's Cultural Strategy. *(NB this strategy is currently under development.)*
- Help to deliver additional office accommodation of appropriate size and quality in town centre locations.
- Take a broadly representative approach, involving a wide range of partners and stakeholders, encouraging community input, and building consensus and buy-in.

Technology – including digital, broadband, and Wi-Fi, and other technology with regeneration implications. In relation to technology, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Seek to address the changing nature of the high street through future forecasting, developing appropriate technologies such as AI and AR, integrating suitable digital tools and technological infrastructure into their offer as part of a wider regeneration strategy.
- Connect people and places through innovative transport technologies.
- Take a broadly representative approach, involving a wide range of partners and stakeholders, encouraging community input, and building consensus and buy-in.

Transport and accessibility – connecting people with places and opportunities. In relation to transport and accessibility, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Improve and increase pedestrian and cycle access, where this forms an integral part of a wider regeneration strategy for a specific TLC.
- Integrate improved public transport interchange facilities – be they rail or bus – into the wider regeneration strategy for the specific town or centre.
- Provide people with better access to centres via public transport.
- Look at how to connect people to jobs via sustainable transport, where this is an integral part of a wider regeneration strategy for a specific town and local centre.
- Take a broadly representative approach, involving a wide range of partners and stakeholders, encouraging community input, and building consensus and buy-in.

Partnerships and structures – leadership, engagement, delivery structures, and action plans. In relation to partnerships and structures, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Come from town centre based groups (in whatever form) that can evidence that they have brought together (or begun to bring together) a wide range of interests from across the public, private, and third sectors, and where community input has been secured (or is being secured).
- Have a well-researched and evidenced action plan / project plan.
- Have strong and effective leadership in place, and that have the capacity to deliver effectively.
- Undertake activities and actions that will complement rather than compete with projects in other towns.

Monitoring and evaluation – what happened, what worked, and what we can learn. In relation to M&E, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Evidence that they have considered monitoring and evaluation issues from the inception of the project – evaluation, even if only small scale for smaller projects, will be considered an essential part of all projects. (NB: GBSLEP will develop a specific monitoring and evaluation framework for town and local centre regeneration projects.)

5.   Criteria for investment

Within this section of the report, we take the key learning from the research, and use it to develop a bespoke set of investment criteria for TLC investment through GBSLEP's Strategic Economic Plan Enabling Fund (for revenue spend). We also look at how the criteria complement the Local Growth Fund assurance framework that we have in place for capital spend. We are aware that the criteria can never suit all projects in their entirety: however, we feel that they give us a fair and balanced assessment tool for the kinds of projects that we, and our partners, would like to see coming forward.

Please note that projects will not have to meet ALL criteria: they will have to meet the criteria which are appropriate for and applicable to the project that they are proposing.

SEP Enabling Fund – <u>Revenue</u> Spend	Local Growth Fund – <u>Capital</u> Spend
Overarching / general criteria – ALL PROJECTS TO ADDRESS	

1. The revenue project complements GBSLEP's strategic priorities
2. The revenue project has clearly identified what it aims to achieve through this piece of work – e.g. "production of a regeneration master plan for the town centre"
3. The project has conveyed its proposal with brevity and clarity
4. The project has identified why the LEP's financial support is required
	1. The project addresses necessary questions through the EoI, OBC and FBC process (standard process for allocation of LGF). These include, but are not limited to:
	   • Fit with GBSLEP's strategic priorities
	   • A clearly identified need for the project
	   • Clearly identified outputs and outcomes
	   • Identification of why the LEP's financial support is required
	   • Appropriate notice of the Green Book (5 case business model) approach
	2. Please note that we will be proportionate in asking projects to adhere to the Green Book approach

Partnerships and structures criteria – ALL PROJECTS TO ADDRESS	

1. The revenue project is being proposed by an organisation or group with a clear role in town centre regeneration, who have begun to bring together a wide range of views from across sectors
2. The project has the support of the local authority
3. The revenue project has provided a brief and realistic project plan
4. The revenue project has a clear leader / responsible officer in place, who will be responsible for driving the revenue project forward
	1. The project addresses necessary questions through the EoI, OBC and FBC process (standard process for allocation of LGF). These include, but are not limited to:
	   • Support from appropriate organisations
	   • A realistic project plan
	   • A strong leadership team
	2. Please note that we will be proportionate in asking projects to adhere to the Green Book approach

Monitoring and evaluation criteria – ALL PROJECTS TO ADDRESS	
1. The revenue project has begun to consider monitoring and evaluation issues as appropriate	1. The project, through the EoI, OBC and FBC process (standard process for allocation of LGF), will provide a suitable monitoring and

	evaluation plan of appropriate depth and quality
Criteria for streets and spaces projects	
1. The revenue project will explore options for some or all of the following: • creating more people-focussed welcoming environments, which put the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users to the fore • delivering a coherent and high-quality design approach which helps to protect or create a distinct identity and sense of place • protecting and enhancing existing valued spaces, buildings, and open and green spaces • developing a wider town centre plan, strategic plan, or master plan for the area • increasing footfall in the town centre • enhancing users' experiences of the town centre • exploring options for innovative, ambitious, and challenging regeneration projects • developing the centre and public realm in other ways	If appropriate and applicable: 1. The project will create more people-focussed welcoming environments, which put the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users to the fore, and improve the 'flow' of the area 2. The project will deliver a coherent and high-quality design approach which helps to protect or create a distinct identity and sense of place, blending any new developments with any existing valued infrastructure 3. The project will protect and enhance existing valued spaces, buildings, and open and green spaces 4. The project complements a wider town centre plan, strategic plan, or master plan for the area 5. The project builds on the current use and recognised role of the area 6. The project will increase footfall in the town centre 7. The project will enhance users' experiences of the town centre through aspects such as improved lighting, layout improvements, public art, and safety measures 8. The project shows ambition and innovation 9. The project will enhance other elements of the public realm
Criteria for diversity of use, creativity, and culture projects	
1. The revenue project will explore options for some of the following: • bringing significant improvement to the town centre's offer across the day time and/or evening and/or night time • developing a coherent and cohesive approach to local cultural image-making and branding • enhancing available assets, building on the existing strengths, attractions, and resources of the area • delivering additional residential accommodation of appropriate type, tenure, and size within town and local centre locations • delivering office space of appropriate quality and size within the town centre	If appropriate and applicable: 1. The project will bring significant improvement to the town centre's offer across the day time and/or evening and/or night time depending on the specific needs of the area in question 2. The project shows a coherent and cohesive approach to local cultural image-making and branding 3. The project will enhance available assets, building on the existing strengths, attractions, and resources of the area 4. The project will involve a group of centres working together to develop offers and co-ordinate actions that complement rather than compete with each other 5. The project will help to deliver additional residential accommodation of appropriate

	type, tenure, and size within town and local centre locations
• developing other aspects of diversity of use, and the creative and cultural offer	6. The project will help to provide office space of appropriate quality and size within the town centre
	7. The project will seek to address over-supply of particular types of floor-space within a centre (e.g. retail)
	8. The project will develop other aspects of diversity of use, and the creative and cultural offer

Criteria for technology projects	
1. The revenue project explores the options for developing technological solutions and initiatives that will contribute to the regeneration of a centre or centres, as part of a wider regeneration strategy for the area – this could be through digital infrastructure, hi-tech transport solutions, or other innovative approaches	1. The project clearly demonstrates that it will contribute to the regeneration of a centre or centres through the use of technology, as part of a wider regeneration strategy for the area – this could be through digital infrastructure, hi-tech transport solutions, or other innovative approaches

Criteria for transport and accessibility projects	
1. The revenue project will explore options for some of the following: • improving and increasing pedestrian and cycle access to / from / within centres, as part of a wider regeneration strategy • integrating improved public transport interchange facilities, complementing a wider town centre regeneration strategy • connecting people to jobs via sustainable transport, as part of a wider regeneration strategy • connecting people to cultural facilities, cultural offers, and leisure facilities as part of a wider regeneration strategy • connecting homes to sustainable transport, as part of a wider regeneration strategy	If appropriate and applicable: 1. The project will improve and increase pedestrian and cycle access to / from / within centres, as part of a wider regeneration strategy 2. The project will integrate improved public transport interchange facilities, complementing a wider town centre regeneration strategy 3. The project will connect people to jobs via sustainable transport, as part of a wider regeneration strategy 4. The project will connect people to cultural facilities, cultural offers, and leisure facilities as part of a wider regeneration strategy 5. The project will connect homes to sustainable transport, as part of a wider regeneration strategy

6. The ecosystem approach

Over the past two years, submissions have been received into both the LGF (capital) and SEP (revenue) funds from across the GBSLEP area. When receiving these applications, the task for the LEP is two-fold: (1) to assess the suitability of the project for funding as a stand-alone intervention, and (2) to assess how projects complement / co-ordinate / compete with each other. Historically, the LEP has not focussed extensively on the second element, and has tended to fund projects which work well as stand-alone applications. The LEP would like to do more in terms of assessing projects as part of a GBSLEP-wide

ecosystem, and to this end has looked at how other areas are beginning to tackle this issue. We therefore recommend the development of a more detailed piece of work, which looks at the individual roles and assets and opportunities of specific towns and local centres within the GBSLEP region. There would be two facets to this work – (1) how the TLC ecosystem works together across the region, and (2) how the towns and local centres can build on their inherent strengths, possibly through the development of town-focussed master plans and regeneration strategies.

7.   Recommendations for action

Within this final section of the report, we have absorbed the key messages from the previous sections, and from them produced a series of recommendations. It should be stressed that these are recommendations for action for GBSLEP, working in conjunction with partners – they are about what we as a LEP *can* do, rather than what *might* happen in terms of future policy etc.

Recommendations for action for GBSLEP
Clearly **communicate GBSLEP's role and responsibilities** in terms of TLC regeneration (as described in Section 4) and our criteria for investment (as described in Section 5).
Develop a specific, tailored, light-touch **monitoring and evaluation guidance note** and template for TLC regeneration projects.
Work with the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth on **establishing an evidence base for regeneration projects.**
Undertake additional **research into town and local centre roles**, based on (1) a GBSLEP-wide geographical ecosystem approach and (2) how individual towns and local centres can build on their inherent strengths and potential assets, possibly through the development of town-focussed master plans and regeneration strategies, in partnership with local authorities.
Undertake research into the possibility of developing a town centre **Compulsory Purchase Order repayable fund** for use by Local Authorities, working with Homes England in order to share expertise.
Secure SEP EF **revenue funding** options for the longer term in order to deliver TLC projects.
Administer the SEP EF TLC elements using the criteria set out within this Framework.
Establish a pipeline of TLC projects – both revenue and capital – which are ready to move forward, and review it on a regular basis to ensure fair access to funds and support. This review should include advice on signposting and on accessing other sources of funding if appropriate.
Where gaps are apparent in the pipeline, GBSLEP to explore opportunities for acting as a **project commissioner.**
Act as a **co-ordinator / facilitator** to enable local authorities and other strategic organisations to work together and co-ordinate activities.

Section 1: Background to the project

1.1   Introduction

In our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) sets out the objective to 'develop thriving towns and local centres'. This objective recognises that, whilst Birmingham as a regional core city provides a natural focal point for increasing growth and investment, the surrounding towns and local centres also form a crucial part of the economic fabric of the region. As well as playing a key role in accommodating an expected growth in population, the local towns and centres of the GBSLEP region need to be attractive places to live and work in their own right. The benefits of this growth need to be distributed across the region to ensure sustainable economic development for all.

Over the past eight years GBSLEP has invested extensively in a wide range of regeneration projects. These investments have come primarily from the Growing Places programme, and from the Local Growth Fund. Projects have been spread across the GBSLEP area, but it is fair to say that there has been greater investment in Birmingham city centre than elsewhere, and that investments have focussed on larger strategic infrastructure projects.

At the end of 2016, a call was issued to GBSLEP's partners for applications to the third round of the Local Growth Fund. The LEP received a number of applications for what could be called 'traditional' town centre regeneration projects, focussing on streetscape, frontages, usability etc. These applications, whilst important to the applicant, and crucial to protecting and developing a sense of place in each town, did not compare favourably to large-scale infrastructure investment opportunities, such as HS2.

The LEP therefore took the decision to develop a Towns and Local Centres (TLC) Framework[3] that could act as a guidance document for partners and for the LEP itself, setting out good practice in centres regeneration, and setting some broad criteria for funding applications. The TLC Framework would take a co-ordinated view of regeneration activity in centres across the GBSLEP area, ensuring maximum benefit from the range of projects being delivered. This approach recognises the GBSLEP area as an ecosystem – whilst Birmingham is the focal point, the surrounding towns and local centres provide distinct, complementary, and supporting offers to the city centre. We felt that such a document would also enable us to be more transparent in our decision making, enable more centres projects to come forward to us successfully, and help us to make the best use of the limited funds that we have available.

This TLC Framework is the culmination of that work. It puts our potential investment decisions into a wider context – that of place making. The TLC Framework is designed to support the smaller, more focussed town and local centre projects that add to a sense of place, supporting the communities that underpin our larger-scale investment projects – after all, an inclusive, liveable, sustainable community is a good place to invest.

---

[3] For readability and brevity, we use the abbreviated terms "centres" and "TLCs" throughout this document, rather than using the full "towns, district centres, and local centres" nomenclature.

1.2   About the project

In 2017, GBSLEP began work on the development of the TLC Framework. In order to progress the Framework, it was important that a sense of ownership of the work was established amongst a range of partners, all of whom would input to the final document. It was therefore decided to establish a small task and finish group, which would take responsibility for guiding the work, identifying issues for further exploration, and analysing information gathered. It was also necessary for a named individual to act as the senior responsible officer (SRO), driving the work forward and keeping progress on track. The SRO acted as the strategic co-ordinator of the project, taking overall responsibility for production of the TLC Framework, and chairing the task and finish group. In addition, it was also necessary for another individual to act as project manager, undertaking the day-to-day co-ordination of information and research, arranging meetings and workshops etc.

The GBSLEP Place Board was accountable for the delivery of the TLC Framework to the LEP Board, whilst the LEP Board acted as the ultimate owner of the TLC Framework, and was responsible for sign-off of the final product.

The personnel involved in the development of this TLC Framework were:

Project Executive: Simon Marks, LEP Board Director for Optimising Assets
Senior Responsible Officer: Matt Bowers, Tamworth Borough Council
Project Manager: Sarah Hughes, LEP Executive
Task and finish group attendees: Dean Piper, NWEDR
                              Jonathan Elmer, NWEDR
                              Uyen-Phan Han, Birmingham City Council
                              Alexa O'Neill, Birmingham City Council
                              Thomas Deery, East Staffordshire Borough Council
                              Craig Jordan, Lichfield District Council
                              Ashley Baldwin, Lichfield District Council
                              Jonathan Percival, Lichfield District Council
                              Rachel Westwood, Solihull MBC
                              Michael Tichford, Cannock Chase District Council
                              Ann Oldnall, Cannock Chase District Council

The task and finish group agreed that the aim of the project was:

"to develop investment criteria for towns and local centres projects that reflect the importance of place to the well-being of the GBSLEP area as a whole"

Following on from this aim, the research objectives of the project were:

- To review general principles and good practice in town and local centre regeneration
- To look at opportunities for sustainable economic growth through town and local centre regeneration
- To look at the importance of place making
- To develop criteria for investing in town and local centre regeneration projects, based on the above, to make best and balanced use of available funds
- To develop recommendations for action for GBSLEP and partners to take forward

This document represents the results of a focussed and targeted suite of research objectives. It should be noted that this is not a statutory document – local authorities retain powers over planning across their areas – but it is intended to guide GBSLEP in its investment decisions, to add clarity to the reasons behind our investment decisions for our partners, and to provide the basis for us to give assistance to partners in bringing town centre regeneration projects forward.

Section 2: Strategic context

2.1   Introduction

Within this section of the report, the key points of a small number of relevant documents are noted, in order to provide a very brief overview of the overarching context within which this report has been produced.

It should also be noted at this stage that the geography of the GBSLEP region is complex. The GBSLEP covers nine local authority areas: Birmingham, Solihull, East Staffordshire, Cannock Chase, Lichfield, Tamworth, Redditch, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest. The LEP also shares a number of its district authorities with the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP and the Worcestershire LEP, and we also share borders with the Black Country LEP and the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP. Above the LEP geography sits the West Midlands Combined Authority, a body with legal status and powers of decision making. Finally, there is the Midlands Engine, which is a coalition of Councils, Combined Authorities, and LEPs, which works to build a collective identity to market the area.

Within this complex geography, GBSLEP is seeking to identify, through this Framework, where it can add value to regeneration activities, and to help build a sense of place within our communities.

2.2   What we mean by Towns and Local Centres

Within the UK Government's National Planning Policy Framework[4], specific reference is made to "ensuring the vitality of town centres". The Policy states that:

Planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:

- Recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality;
- Define a network and hierarchy of centres;
- Define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations;
- Promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres;
- Retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re‑introduce or create new ones;
- Allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres;
- Allocate appropriate edge of centre sites for main town centre uses that are well connected to the town centre where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available;
- Set policies for the consideration of proposals for main town centre uses which cannot be accommodated in or adjacent to town centres;

---

[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

- Recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and set out policies to encourage residential development on appropriate sites; and
- Where town centres are in decline, local planning authorities should plan positively for their future to encourage economic activity.

Within Annexe 2 of the Policy, a town centre is defined as an "area defined on the local authority's proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres".

For the purposes of this report, we have used use the abbreviated terms "centres" and "TLCs" throughout, rather than using the full "towns, district centres, and local centres" nomenclature. When referring to centres and TLCs, we are encompassing town centres, district centres, and local centres only.

2.3 Changing role of town centres

The causes of city, town, and local centre changes are well known and well documented. They include structural changes, such as recession or economic restructuring and changes in consumer behaviour, and more local factors, such as land use changes. Here, we outline briefly the more local factors that can bring about decline, and which can potentially be influenced by the LEP and partners.

There is no doubt that the development of out-of-town retail sites over the last few years has had a detrimental effect on many town centres. These new developments are often easily accessed, especially by car, and usually have free parking. They feature leisure as well as retail options, giving a broad choice to the consumer and encouraging dwell time, and have often gained at the expense of town centres.

Within town centres, we have seen increasing vacancies, which sometimes reflect out of town developments, but may also be an indicator of a fundamental change in the role of the centre (e.g. large-scale industrial closures) and the growth of on-line shopping.

Adjustments in the retail, leisure, and services sectors are occurring across the whole of the country and are complex and ongoing. The gradual withdrawal of multiple retailers from non-prime destinations, and their replacement with other commercial and employment uses, poses serious challenges to town centres. Lower-rented, shorter-leased premises occupied by local companies are not suitable for major investors, such as life assurance companies and pension funds. There is likely to be a higher turnover of less experienced occupiers in these premises, rather than national companies taking premises for the long term. This means that residents will see more change on our high streets than previously.

In addition to the above changes in retail, leisure, and service provision / use, some centres have also experienced a decline in local population within the centre's catchment area. In such circumstances, there may be no realistic prospect of the centre regaining its former status, and if this is not recognised and appropriate action taken, problems of decline, vacancies, and poorly maintained property are likely to persist. Many underperforming places are characterised by small populations, and not having the critical mass to sustain the range and quality of private and public sector service provision common to more successful locations.

Retail is an important part of the town centre mix, but people also come for many other reasons, such as to visit cafes, restaurants, pubs, galleries, museums, cinemas, parks, hairdressers, beauty parlours, doctors and dentists, libraries, 'click and collect' facilities, banks, solicitors, and estate agents. Consumers have rising expectations and are seeking more choice, greater security and easier access – needs which are not met in many of these smaller locations. Shoppers are prepared to travel longer distances to meet these needs in larger towns and out-of-town locations, which are attracting increasing proportions of retail spend.

Residents want different things from towns today, which means that towns and local centres need to look at what they can offer that is *different* to the out of town retail parks. With shopping habits changing, high streets need to evolve – to build on their strengths and offer a viable and exciting alternative to out-of-town and internet shopping. High streets and town centres that are fit for the 21st century need to offer a different mix of retail, services, and facilities, a different style of interaction, and a variety of experiences that are about more than shopping.

2.4   UK Government approach to regeneration – the devolution agenda

From a UK Government perspective, regeneration policy refers to the broad process of reversing economic, social, and physical decline in areas where market forces will not do this without public sector intervention and leadership. Since 2010, the UK Government's approach to regeneration has been largely targeted at supporting local growth.

Features of this support include creating the conditions for local growth through a competitive, deal-making approach which offers incentives (e.g. Local Growth Fund, Enterprise Zones), empowering strong and accountable local decision–making and giving a voice to the private sector (e.g. Local Enterprise Partnerships, Mayors, Combined Authorities), agreeing place-based approaches to driving economic growth, regeneration and housing development – including pan-region models (e.g. Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine), and supporting the development of Devolution Deals to devolve powers and funding to city regions or county-regions to support local economic growth and regeneration.

This is a challenging time for the Government, local government, LEPs and the UK economy. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) has reduced its forecast of GDP growth, which is now expected to weaken further through to 2020. It is within this context that the government is taking further steps towards devolution of powers to key cities and places.

In the Midlands, the Government announced in its 2017 Autumn Budget that it has agreed a second devolution deal in principle with the West Midlands Mayor and Combined Authority, which includes £6m for a Housing Delivery Taskforce, £5m for a Construction Skills Training Scheme, and a £250m allocation for the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro. The Government is also continuing Housing Deal negotiations with the West Midlands Combined Authority.

Further, as part of the development of a Local Industrial Strategy for the West Midlands, substantial consideration is being given to the development of places as part of the overall attractiveness of the region as a place to work, live, and play. There is a clear focus within this on employment sites, housing and transport. Our work on TLCs will expand on this and provide focus around ensuring centres across the West Midlands add to the quality of life of everyone who lives and works here. GBSLEP is currently in discussion with the WMCA regarding the best way forward for any joint TLC work.

2.5   GBSLEP approach and funding streams

GBSLEP's Strategic Economic Plan

Within its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)[5], GBSLEP sets out its ambition to develop thriving towns and local centres. The SEP recognises that the GBSLEP area is a rich and varied geography, with a network of places that collectively provide for jobs, housing, leisure and cultural opportunities, and overall good quality of life. While Birmingham city centre is the regional economic hub and a natural focal point for growth and investment, the surrounding towns and local centres are vital parts of our social and economic fabric, and provide distinct and complementary offers to the city centre.

Our ambition is to strengthen all parts of the GBSLEP area and to create a network of vibrant, thriving strategic town and local centres that people take pride in, with excellent connections to residential, commercial and leisure opportunities as well as the region's major economic opportunity areas. With significant economic growth forecast, and with associated housing growth needing to be developed outside of Birmingham's administrative boundaries, demand for movement between Birmingham and the surrounding towns and local centres will only increase.

A key part of the challenge will be to ensure that growth is sustainable (see Section 3 for further information on sustainable growth) and that development is brought forward in such a way as to maximise the benefits of our existing assets. GBSLEP therefore states in its SEP that it will work with partners to:

- Undertake research to inform an investment strategy to support local centres
- Develop a package of investment to support the development of new opportunities in our towns and local centres, ensuring that they can play their part in our ongoing economic success story

This TLC Framework is a key part of that work, and provides important context for how we plan to proceed.

GBSLEP's funding streams

GBSLEP has agreed three Growth Deals with government, levering in £433m of Local Growth Fund (LGF) for our Growth Programme. This is a pipeline of capital investments across the area, which generates jobs, improves transport links, creates houses, and upskills people. The Growth Programme is designed to directly support the LEP's overall ambition for Greater Birmingham to be recognised as a global city region by 2030.

The LGF accepts applications through an Expression of Interest (EoI) form at any time. If that EoI is considered to be a good strategic fit for the LEP, then the project is invited to come forward with an Outline Business Case (OBC). If this OBC is judged to be an investible proposition, then the project is formally granted entry to the LGF programme, and invited to come forward with a Full Business Case (FBC). If this FBC is approved, then the project is awarded funding.

As mentioned within the introduction to this report, the LEP received a number of EoIs for traditional town and local centre regeneration projects. These included:

---

[5] https://gbslep.co.uk/resources/reports/strategic-economic-plan-2016-30

- Burntwood Town Centre Enhancement, Lichfield DC, £0.5m (A)
- Redditch Town Centre Transformation, NWEDR, £5m (A)
- Derby Road Regeneration, East Staffordshire BC, £1m (B)
- Horsefair, NWEDR, £6.5m (B)
- Kidderminster Town Centre Western Gateway, NWEDR, £2.5m (B)
- Kingshurst Village Centre, Solihull MBC, £2.1m (B)
- Chelmsley Wood Town Centre, Solihull MBC, £20.2m (B)
- Tamworth Gungate Regeneration, Henry Boot Development Ltd, £4.7m (B)
- Tamworth Castle Walls, Tamworth BC, £2m (B)
- Burton Town Centre and Flood Defence Regeneration, East Staffordshire BC and Environment Agency, £2.8m (B)
- Kings Heath High Street Enhancement, Birmingham CC, £2m (C)
- Solihull Town Centre Public Realm Improvements, Solihull MBC, £4m (C)
- Solihull Town Centre Rail Station Integration Package, Solihull MBC, £4.7m (C)
- Cannock Station Gateway Package, Cannock Chase DC, £1.3m (C)
- Burton Town Centre Regeneration, East Staffordshire BC, £0.5m (D) (now superseded by the Burton Town Centre and Flood Defence Regeneration project)
- Tamworth Town Centre Streetscape, Tamworth BC, £1m (D)

The figures above are the indicative ask of the LEP's LGF fund, totalling over £60m. The letter in brackets indicates the strategic fit assessment awarded to the project, which is broken down as follows:

> A = project is essential to the achievement of GBSLEP's SEP
> B = project is a strong strategic fit, which directly supports GBSLEP's vision and core objectives
> C = project is a good strategic fit, but will have a limited impact on the realisation of our ambitions
> D = project is an unclear strategic fit

As can be seen from the list above, almost half of all the EoIs submitted for regeneration projects failed to be assessed as an A or B strategic fit, often because they compared poorly to much larger strategic infrastructure projects which are considered vital to the economic development of the LEP area. As the LEP is only asking A or B rated projects to come forward with an OBC, a C or D rating essentially meant that the project could not access LGF support.

As well as seeing traditional town and local centre regeneration projects struggle in terms of EoI assessment, the LEP also became aware that there was some demand amongst partners for revenue support. This type of funding is often required in order to carry out pre-development work, such as master plans, appraisals, feasibility studies etc. before capital project ideas can be more fully developed. Access to such revenue funds is always difficult, but after some consideration, the LEP felt it would be able to provide some funding for revenue activities through the business rates pool.

In order to understand more clearly what the level of demand for revenue funds might look like, the LEP issued a call for submission of very light touch EoIs in December 2017, requesting details of revenue projects which partners would like to take forward. These EoIs were taken into account when developing the TLC Framework, and the proposal was then to review these ideas in the light of the final TLC Framework.

Over 30 EoIs were received, totalling almost £2m, against an indicative LEP funding pot of £500,000. Given this level of demand, it was clear to the LEP that a co-ordinated approach to TLC support was required,

taking into account both revenue and capital needs and reflecting the difference between TLC projects and strategic infrastructure projects. It will be important to continue to reflect this in any future funding programmes, and it is intended that this TLC Framework will give clarity on how future funding bids are assessed in line with LEP objectives.

2.6   Local planning and corporate approaches

Below is a brief summary of the planning direction and corporate regeneration priorities for each Local Authority in the GBSLEP area. This is designed to give a brief pen picture of local priorities and concerns, and to build a basic understanding of towns and local centres in the area.

The **Birmingham City Council** area contains a network of over 70 centres ranging from the city centre which is a national destination to local centres which meet immediate day to day needs. These centres provide a focus for growth in the retail, office, and leisure sectors.

The network and hierarchy of centres and anticipated amount of new comparison retail and office floorspace for each centre is set out in Policy TP21 of the Birmingham Development Plan. The network and hierarchy of centres are the preferred location for retail and office development over the plan period. The focus for significant growth will be the City Centre, Sutton Coldfield, Selly Oak, Perry Barr and Meadway, but there is also potential for growth in Erdington, Mere Green and Northfield.

To ensure centres will remain vibrant and successful into the future, a diverse range of facilities and uses, including residential, are supported, consistent with the scale and function of the centre. However, the BDP also seeks to protect and maintain the predominantly retail function of centres, by avoiding concentrations of non-retail uses such as hot-food takeaways.

A number of centres have developed specific niche roles (such as the Jewellery Quarter and the Balti Triangle in Sparkbrook) which will continue to be supported. Proposals which promote and encourage independent and niche retailers in other locations are also encouraged, such as the provision of smaller units and provision for other forms of retailing such as markets.

For **Bromsgrove District Council**, a likely need for additional comparison floorspace up to 2030 is recognised. Bromsgrove town centre will continue to be the main retail centre of the District, and A1 uses will remain the predominant use for ground floor premises in the primary shopping zone, in order to maintain retail vitality and viability. Other A-class uses will be supported throughout the secondary shopping zone, and development outside A-class uses in these areas will be considered where there is no adverse impact to the retail viability of the town centre. Retail development will be generally resisted in other areas of the designated town centre, and a wide range of appropriate uses would be supported at first floor level in the town centre, such as office, retail, and residential.

The district is currently in the process of considering its economic priorities and looking at the potential to shift focus towards economic development to ensure a more sustainable future. There are specific issues which will need to be tackled, including low income levels and an ageing population. Unaffordable housing is also a major issue for the borough, with 57% of households unable to afford to purchase or rent on the open market in Bromsgrove District. However, ambitions to promote growth and tackle some of these issues are constrained by the district being 90% Green Belt.

For **Cannock Chase District Council**, a series of projects identified within the Corporate Plan will capitalise on investment opportunities currently available in the District. Whilst physical regeneration projects are important to the District, the Council also acknowledges the need for investment in skills and training for its residents.

The Council also aims to build on recent progress to make sure it can attract more opportunities for local communities. The Mill Green Designer Outlet Village, due to open in 2020/21, has the potential to transform the economy and reputation of the District, bringing in additional investment, jobs, and visitors to the area. The Council will endeavour to bring forward more strategic employment sites to maintain the levels of investment that it has recently experienced. For example, the former Rugeley Power Station site is the largest brownfield site in the West Midlands, and has significant potential for housing, employment, and leisure developments.

The Council would like to attract inward investment with a broader range of planning uses in town centres, such as leisure related activities to provide a quality visitor experience during the day and evening. Linked trips from key transport nodes to the town centre to improve accessibility and footfall are also a key ambition.

For **East Staffordshire Borough Council**, the established town and local centres hierarchy recognises Burton as the centre for additional comparison goods. For all towns, an impact assessment will be required for planning applications for town centre uses outside the defined town centre boundary when the floorspace proposed exceeds specific limits. Within the primary retail frontages, the Council will only permit Class A1 (retail) use at ground floor level unless it can be demonstrated that the proposed use will enhance the vitality of the area, and does not lead to the overconcentration of non-A1 uses. In secondary frontages, the Council will accept a wider range of changes at ground floor level if the proposed change complements the function of the town centre as a whole.

The Council is currently taking forwards the Burton Town Regeneration Programme which will co-ordinate a range of projects and activities aimed at the regeneration of the town centre and wider area. This regeneration programme will see significant investment directed towards enhancing the prosperity of Burton town centre and providing a more appealing public realm and shopping centre for those who live, visit and work in the area.

For **Lichfield District Council**, the aim is to create an attractive, multi-faceted yet coherent city centre, which encourages visitors to explore the historic city, and businesses to locate. Lichfield city centre will be the focus for new office, leisure and shopping development. The primary shopping area is the retail heart of Lichfield, and its protection is key to the vitality and viability of the city centre. The provision of new office space will be supported within the city centre boundary in order to meet evidence-based annual floorspace requirements.

The Friarsgate mixed used scheme will be the focus of new retail development in the city centre, and accounts for its retail floorspace requirement in the short and medium term, whilst also having the provision of residential accommodation. Other specific projects include establishing a new 'people-place' for Bird Street car park, restoring Stowe Pool, enhancing the main pedestrian routes and public spaces within the city centre, supporting the re-development of key vacant units, re-positioning St Mary's in the Market Square as a focal attraction and orientation point in the city, and identifying potential sites for new hotel accommodation.

Lichfield District is an area of high demand for housing, which has been exacerbated by significant levels of migration into the District, often from higher-income households. This has resulted in house prices that are higher than the average both nationally and in the wider West Midlands.

Outside of Lichfield city, key projects include the redevelopment of the former Rugeley Power Station site, the completion of the Lichfield Southern Bypass, and the regeneration of Burntwood town centre. The expansion of Burntwood town centre's retail offering is being created through retail development on key regeneration sites with additional housing provision within close proximity to the town centre.

For **Redditch Borough Council**, Redditch town centre is the focus for shopping in the Borough and the surrounding area. The Kingfisher Shopping Centre is the home to a number of national chains as well as a range of smaller, independently run shops. There are a number of District Centres situated throughout the urban area. Redditch Borough has a high proportion of manufacturing businesses when compared with the rest of the County and region. There are a number of overseas companies established in the Borough such as AT&T and Marubeni-Komatsu and the headquarters of GKN are located in Redditch. Key projects in the pipeline include the development of the Redditch Gateway employment site, and the transformation of Redditch town centre.

Within the retail core of Redditch town centre, planning permission for change of use from Class A1 to any other use will only be acceptable if the proposed use does not result in a continuous frontage of more than two non-retail units. Proposals for non-A1 uses that demonstrably contribute to the vitality and viability of the centre will be assessed on their own merits.

For **Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council**, town centres will be the focus for all new developments, including retail and other commercial development, in line with the town centre first approach of the National Planning Policy Framework. Further, the Council will expect development proposals that generate significant numbers of jobs to demonstrate measures to improve access to employment from parts of the Borough where unemployment persists, such as in north Solihull.

In general, the council recognises that there are issues with unequal levels of prosperity across the district, and there are some very wealthy areas, but also some pockets of notable deprivation which need targeted support. Uncertainty over the proposed town centre retail and leisure developments at Touchwood and at Mell Square are having a negative impact, and there is a need to maximise the positive *local* impact of HS2. Connectivity within the district, and to other regional centres, can be difficult, and so support for the north Solihull metro link and other accessible transport schemes is required. There is also an acute shortage of social housing, and households face significant difficulty in accessing quality affordable homes.

For **Tamworth Borough Council**, the town centre will be promoted as the preferred location for the development of town centre uses, along with higher density, high quality residential developments. In particular, the Gungate Redevelopment Scheme is proposed for completion prior to 2021. If substantial progress has not been made towards securing the Gungate Scheme by 2021, the Council will review its retail requirement and will consider the potential for retail developments on other sites in accordance with the 'town centre first' hierarchy.

After 2021, in addition to the Gungate scheme, planning permission will be granted for development such as retail, leisure, tourism, cultural, and office development that support and enhance Tamworth's dual function as both the Borough's town centre, and its growing status as a sub-regional tourism and leisure hub. However, it is expected that in terms of primary frontages, 75% of the number of units should fall

within the A1 (retail) use class. Planning policy will also seek to support the expansion of the Assembly Rooms as the centrepiece of the emerging Creative Quarter.

In general, Tamworth is recognised as a town with a strong dormitory function, due to its close links with Birmingham. However, the town centre is somewhat underutilised, and there is significant heritage potential, although there are the typical question marks for this size of centre over its long-term retail and destination future. Town centre improvements could support the town's position as a destination, particularly through the Castle Walls and town centre enhancements projects, as well as the Gungate development.

For **Wyre Forest District Council**, Kidderminster, being at the top of the retail hierarchy, will be the preferred location for major leisure, office and retail developments and other uses that attract large numbers of people. Stourport-on-Severn offers leisure and shopping facilities to its residents and its canal and riverside assets continue to be a key visitor attraction. Its public realm is enhanced through the restoration of its unique heritage including the canal basins. Bewdley remains a thriving market town which meets the local community's needs. Other centres are suitable for day-to-day food and non-food shopping, small-scale leisure uses and local service and facility provision. Retail development will be focussed on existing centres in order to strengthen and, where necessary, regenerate them. Wherever possible, growth should be accommodated by more efficient use of land and buildings within existing centres

Across the District, house prices are relatively low compared to other parts of the County, but low incomes mean that the supply of affordable housing remains a particular issue. In general, Wyre Forest is a growth-focused district, proactively pushing a number of schemes including Kidderminster town centre regeneration, the development of 'Lion Fields', the Churchfields / Horsefair housing-led regeneration project, and Kidderminster Railway Station improvements.

2.7   Business Improvement Districts

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are formed when businesses consult on, and vote for, a self-imposed levy to undertake activities that support the business community in a defined area, such as a town centre, high street, or industrial estate. These are usually activities that individual businesses cannot take forward in isolation and are additional to public services. By law, the levy remains in place for a maximum of five years before businesses vote on whether the BID should continue or not.

There are a number of BIDs (and a handful of proposed BIDs) across the GBSLEP area. For the purposes of this report, city centre BIDs (e.g. Colmore, Westside / Broad Street, Retail) are considered outside the scope of the TLC Framework, as their geographical focus is on designated districts of the city centre, rather than on stand-alone local centres.

For information, the BIDs that we currently consider to be in scope of the TLC Framework are:

- Acocks Green Village BID
- Erdington BID
- Kings Heath BID
- Lichfield BID
- Northfield BID
- Soho Road BID

- Solihull BID
- Sutton Coldfield BID
- Harborne BID (proposed)
- Shirley BID (proposed)
- Sheldon BID (proposed)

We acknowledge that there are other BIDs in formation across the GBSLEP area which are not listed here. However, the BIDs above are those with which we have had some contact.

As part of the development of the TLC Framework, it was important to carefully consider the role of BIDs across the area. Members of the LEP Executive Team therefore met with individual BIDs, as well as attending group / forum events, such as the Birmingham BID Manager's Forum and BID Central. From these discussions, the following issues were summarised as the key concerns from town and local centre BIDs in the GBSLEP area. It should be noted that these concerns do not always match those of Local Authority colleagues who also work within the town centre regeneration agenda. However, they give a flavour of the concerns that BID colleagues have, and some of the problems that they are dealing with.

Built environment:
- The approach to void properties must be firmer, with premises CPO'd if required.
- Street lighting needs increasing / improving.
- Street surfaces need repair and on-going maintenance.
- Patches of council-owned land are under-used or left derelict, and become a blight.
- Office and service premises are being converted to residential and other uses, which is not always good for town centres.

Role of BIDs:
- Council services are decreasing, and BIDs are being expected to take on responsibilities that belong to the local authority, such as cleaning, security, lighting etc – this is mission creep, but without additional funding.
- Economic development now does not exist in many local authorities as it is not a statutory function and so can be cut.
- There is no funding support for newly emerging BIDs.

Differences between BIDs:
- All BIDs are different. For example, some are value centres, and the focus should be on developing this role rather than trying to fundamentally alter it.
- Not every centre can be saved, and some will need to go through managed decline.
- There are different proportions of retail members and office / service members in each BID.
- There are different proportions of SMEs and larger companies (although SMEs tend to make up the majority in towns and local centres, with some small multiples).

The leisure economy / evening and night-time economy:
- Good policing and security is essential, and some BIDs now fund street patrols.
- A quality and varied leisure offer is essential.
- The food and drink offer is lacking in a number of local centres, and needs significant development and enhancement.

Digital:
- Government policy is to develop Broadband, but funding is not available.
- Most centres do not have functioning public Wi-Fi.

Transport:
- Town centre car parking is an issue for many BIDs – the feeling is that Councils see this as an income stream, rather than a public service.

Alongside local authorities, BIDs were also invited to submit EoIs for revenue funding support during the project call of December 2017. Unfortunately, of the 11 EoIs received, only four were clearly eligible for the fund (the rest contained an element of capital funding, which could not be supported through this particular funding round). Of the eligible EoIs that were submitted, one was a proposal to research the feasibility of setting up a Greater Birmingham Office of BIDs, which would act as a management company for the BIDs across the LEP area. For GBSLEP, a co-ordinated approach of this type would be an important part of the future relationship between the LEP and BIDs.

Section 3: Sustainable and inclusive economic growth

3.1   Introduction

GBSLEP has a key role to play in investing in large-scale, strategic, physical regeneration projects, such as transport schemes and infrastructure. These projects are often focussed on the larger centres (Birmingham city centre, Solihull / UK Central) and work with large employers and companies. These projects are undoubtedly the backbone of the LEP's work, and are crucial to delivering large-scale economic growth in the area.

However, it has historically been difficult to ensure that the benefits of those projects (jobs, additional opportunities, better connectivity etc.) filter through to the people who live in some of our most deprived neighbourhoods. Over many years, and many previous cycles of regeneration programmes, we have seen that 'trickle down' does not work equitably for all, and we therefore need to be more proactive and make some specific recommendations about sustainable and inclusive economic growth. By investing in a wider range of projects, we can support the communities that underpin our large scale investment projects, and help to develop a place for everyone, not just those with the largest disposable income. This will give us a virtuous circle: an inclusive, liveable, sustainable community is a good place to invest, which leads to more growth.

We must not overlook the economic importance of including the widest possible breadth of people in economic growth – if more people can access the benefits of growth, then that gives our businesses a wider pool of talent to draw on, which will help their bottom line. What's good for deprived communities is also good for business. The importance of inclusive economic growth is also being recognised through the developing work of the WMCA, who are exploring how they can link the development of high growth companies with deprived communities across the Combined Authority area.

The concepts of sustainable and inclusive growth are complex, and mean slightly different if complementary things. We have included both of these aspects of economic growth within this section, and have used the shorthand of **"good growth"**[6] to cover both aspects.

3.2   About good growth

International and national bodies have set out broad principles of sustainable development. The United Nations defines sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Meanwhile, the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, Securing the Future, set out five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development: living within the planet's environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

Within the planning and economic growth sphere, the focus is slightly different, and encompasses a broader agenda which relates to regeneration activity. For example, within the UK Government's National Planning Policy Framework, three dimensions to sustainable development are recognised – economic, social and environmental:

---

[6] https://www.pwc.co.uk/industries/government-public-sector/good-growth.html

- economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure

- social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being

- environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy

Organisations such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation[7] (recognised leaders in the field of inclusive economic growth) take the idea further, and consider several different aspects. These include:

(i) Setting an inclusive growth agenda – inclusive growth becomes an organising principle for cities, with city leaders such as mayors championing inclusive growth, defining economic success in terms of inclusivity and engaging citizens and local anchor institutions.

(ii) Education and skills system – ensuring that people have the basic skills that are required in order to obtain work, increasing the training available to workers in low-wage jobs, improving attainment for children from low-income backgrounds, and strengthening the FE and adult skills system.

(iii) Shaping a more inclusive economy – creating a better labour market with opportunities for those currently out of work or on precarious contracts or low pay, addressing persistent skill shortages, creating more productive local economies through local industrial strategies, raising productivity and job quality in low-pay sectors (this is a major cause of low pay, and the productivity gap is larger for low-wage than high-wage sectors).

(iv) Connecting people to economic opportunities – by providing employment support, by promoting progression from low pay, by reforming childcare, by providing transport options which link people in poverty to employment opportunities, and by securing social value through procurement and planning.

(v) Working locally as required – forming an Inclusive Growth Fund, 'job-proofing' local regeneration strategies and programmes to maximise the number of direct employment opportunities, ensuring job-creating initiatives carefully target sectors and groups least likely to generate displacement effects, providing training and employment provision to help residents access jobs created, and implementing large scale Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) schemes to create new jobs in areas of high worklessness.

JRF's approach states that the economy is not working for many people across the country, most clearly demonstrated by the fact that work is no longer a sure route out of poverty, and four fifths of those that

---

[7] www.jrf.org.uk

enter low-paid work have failed to escape low pay 10 years later. The flip side is untapped economic potential that prevents the economy as a whole from growing, and contributes to the UK's productivity problem.

Inclusive growth is a 'win-win' formulation – a more inclusive economy will reduce poverty and inequality, and the inclusion of more people in the economy will enable stronger and more sustainable growth and reduce the demands on government spending and services.

Whilst the above shows a clear focus on skills, employment, and advancement, JRF's research also recognises the important role that place-based regeneration can play in improving conditions in deprived areas, indicating that such interventions should remain priorities within regeneration strategies.

Further, PWC also looked at the issue of sustainable economic growth, and developed the PWC Good Growth for Cities annual index[8]. PWC's index recognises that place-based inclusive growth is now firmly on the Government's agenda, and incorporates health, housing affordability and quality of life alongside jobs, skills and incomes when we measure growth. The results from the 2017 index highlighted a number of implications for local leaders, including:

- Shape identities and economic development strategies to achieve inclusive, place-based growth through local industrial strategies.
- Understand local strengths and weaknesses and use the existing assets of a place to bring in investment and attract talent – what do you want your town to be famous for?

As can be seen from the above, the principles of sustainable and inclusive growth are wide ranging and complex, and can be applied in different contexts. This is why we will use the term 'good growth' as this encompasses a range of perspectives and options, which we can then tailor to suit our local needs.

3.3   The role of TLC regeneration in good growth

The key focus of GBSLEP is on delivering sustainable economic growth. Whilst the LEP has, since its inception, invested in large-scale and strategic projects, it has taken less of a role in place making projects. Place based projects are the kinds of interventions that focus on particular towns and local centres, rather than specific sectors or strategic infrastructure, and acknowledge that place attractiveness is a critical factor in giving a town a competitive advantage in a discretionary market. By supporting place based projects, we can support the communities that underpin our large scale investment projects, and help to develop a place for everyone.

There is a range of evidence which identifies that significant economic benefits can be derived from place-based public realm schemes, including:

- Capital appreciation and/or rental increases for investors
- Reduced voids
- Increased footfall leading to increased turnover
- Increased prestige for those in improved surroundings, generating more / higher value business
- A better performing economy leading to new and retained jobs
- Increased economic performance leading to an increase in business rates for Local Authorities

---

[8] https://www.pwc.co.uk/industries/government-public-sector/good-growth.html

Various research studies have shown that improved environments can lead to 15-20% increases in rental and capital values, 15-25% increases in retail sales, increased footfall of 10-45%, and a 20% decline in vacancy rates. These increases will also lead to direct job creation and increased GVA, depending on the size of the scheme. Further, the Valuing Urban Realm Toolkit[9] which has been developed by Transport for London to provide objective, evidence-based justifications for investment in the public realm by monetising some of the less tangible benefits of better streets and spaces, also comes complete with a toolkit which local authorities and others can use to assess their own proposed or delivered projects.

A range of further reports which evidence such impacts are listed within the bibliography of this report. Amongst these studies is a piece of research carried out by Kada Research and AspinallVerdi[10], looking at the economic impacts of public realm improvements in Kidderminster. This is of particular interest, as the study is recent (February 2018) and focussed on a town within the GBSLEP area.

The report considers the economic and land value uplift impacts of regeneration activities in Kidderminster town centre. The aim of the project was to regenerate the town's central shopping core, which had suffered from a shift in gravity resulting from the Weavers Wharf development, by completely redesigning the pedestrian areas, public squares, and key highway routes. The new designs:

- Prioritised the movement of pedestrians and cyclists
- Used high quality design principles
- Used high quality products and materials
- Maximised the potential of public squares and focal points
- Co-ordinated key design finishes such as colours
- Minimised street clutter

The project was carried out between 2015 and 2017, at a cost of £2m. The Kada report of February 2018 found that, in terms of impacts over 10 years, the project would deliver:

- 81 net jobs (18 temporary during the construction phase, 63 for the operational phase)
- Total NPV GVA of £14.4m
- A Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 1:7.6 (i.e. for every £1 invested £7.60 would be generated in economic benefits)

As well as the above quantitative benefits, a number of qualitative benefits are expected to accrue from public realm regeneration works (usually evidenced through qualitative surveys with residents, visitors, businesses etc.). These include:

- Improved perceptions of personal safety
- Improved rates of walking and cycling
- Increased well-being
- Increased civic pride
- Reduced rates of crime

---

[9] https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/urban-planning-and-construction/urban-design
[10] http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/news/2018-news/february-2018/town-centre-improvements-have-created-multiple-economic-benefits-for-kidderminster.aspx

Further, Living Streets research, carried out in 2014, found that whilst quantitative evidence of the economic impacts of public realm investments is not particularly easy to find, the anecdotal and case study evidence is more readily available. The Living Streets work indicated:

- The impact of public realm improvements on existing business performance: increases in footfall and trading directly associated with walking and cycling improvements.

- The importance of public realm improvements for urban regeneration: increases in employment; job creation; increases in property prices and yields for investors; increased land values; raised self-esteem of residents through better streets; more walking (poor quality urban environments, especially in poorer areas, are a disincentive to walking).

- Public realm improvements and consumer and business satisfaction: quality public spaces contribute directly to quality of life; restricting traffic does not reduce customer numbers; residents and visitors have higher expectations of their town centres and high streets.

Finally, the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth[11] is currently leading on research to develop a high quality evidence base for measuring the impact of regeneration projects. GBSLEP will explore options for further involvement in this research project.

---

[11] http://www.whatworksgrowth.org/

Section 4: GBSLEP's role in good growth through TLC regeneration

4.1   Introduction

If we accept that TLC regeneration is a 'good' thing, then we need to be clear on what constitutes good practice in regeneration projects, so that we can deliver effective schemes. This section of the report is therefore built upon research into regeneration practices across the UK, and seeks to bring together some of the common ideas and processes that are considered to be good practice. A range of reference documents were reviewed, and these are listed within the bibliography.

Rather than present the research findings document by document, the recurring and key points have instead been gathered together under loosely themed sub-headings, with a narrative around each theme. At the end of each narrative section, there is a brief summary of what this good practice evidence could mean for the LEP and partners in practice. Our purpose here is to build on a broad evidence base to understand general principles of good practice, and to look at what these could mean for the LEP going forward.

Through the research process, we found that the evidence shows that there are a number of key elements to successful place based regeneration, and different areas will take a different approach, based on local needs and local opportunities. In order to help to identify where the LEP could have a role, we have grouped elements of identified good practice into place-focussed categories. These include:

- **Streets and spaces** – including the public realm, a sense of place, high quality environments, urban design, people-friendly centres, planning issues, and safety and security
- **Diversity of use, creativity, and culture** – including a distinctive and diverse offer and brand, local culture, office accommodation, and housing
- **Technology** – including digital, broadband, and Wi-Fi, and other technology with regeneration implications
- **Transport and accessibility** – connecting people with places and opportunities
- **Partnerships and structures** – leadership, engagement, delivery structures, and action plans
- **Monitoring and evaluation** – what happened, what worked, and what we can learn

We are aware that the LEP does not have the same role across all of these different aspects. In some, the LEP may be able to take a key role, co-ordinating strategic policy or providing a broad framework within which to work. In other aspects, the LEP may play only a minor role, or play no role at all, with other partners taking the lead.

On the following pages, we take each aspect of place based regeneration in turn, and try to identify the role of the LEP within that specific aspect. For additional information on these issues, please refer to the documents that are listed in the bibliography at the end of this report.

4.2   Streets and spaces

What the research tells us

The value of conventional urban regeneration schemes which focus on streets, spaces, and the urban and public realm, are generally understood (see Section 3 of this report). There are many different elements to regeneration schemes, some or all of which may be encompassed by specific projects. Some of the key elements, drawn from our research into good practice, are presented below.

The character of any town or local centre is defined by the activities and purposes of the people who occupy and move through it. These activities and purposes derive from the uses of surrounding buildings, particularly their ground floors, and from the uses of any open and public spaces. When considering the overall aspiration for a particular place, it is crucial to **take into account how people use a particular place** at the moment, and to build on this for the future.

Those who use town centres on a regular basis generally wish to see **wider pavements, pedestrian priority, and traffic-calming measures**. Managing traffic and prioritising pedestrians and cyclists improves the feel of an environment, and encourages dwell time. Maps, planters, trees, water features, wireless internet access, art and sculpture can all be used to create such a welcoming environment, where people want to spend time. Street seating and pavement cafés are important, as is a high quality walking environment – people who walk to their high street have been shown to spend more, and in a wider range of shops, than visitors arriving by car, bus or bike. Features such as planting, waterways, and pocket parks along the routes to the town centre can help make walking a more attractive alternative to driving. Provision of good quality green landscaping and blue infrastructure will help to underpin the success of any development.

Good place based regeneration will help to create places that **provide opportunities for community interaction**, in a safe and vibrant environment, on a day-to-day basis. Attention to the maintenance and management of such places is key, and **connectivity of destinations by use of pedestrian pathways**, and amenities like shade and shelter, are also important.

Streets are usually the most prevalent part of town and city public spaces, so they often define the character of a community. Their street furnishings and building materials often link back to history and culture, and the **overall design of the streetscape can project a particular identity and create a particular sense of place**. Key elements of streetscape include paving, plantings, lighting, and street furniture including benches and bike racks. Ideas which can differentiate one town from another – such as including locally-themed street furniture or well-designed high quality modern street furniture in a traditional environment – will all add to a feeling of uniqueness and a strong sense of place. To develop such a coherent and connected street scape, a street audit may be useful, identifying what type of improvements may help to make the town's streets and spaces safer, more unified, and more attractive.

It may also be appropriate to go further and produce a design guide for a designated regeneration area, or to develop a wider regeneration brief such as an **area action plan, or master plan, or regeneration strategy**. This could set out policies and practices for a coordinated approach to the design, choice of materials, types and sizes of street furniture and signage, shop fronts, shutters, lighting, etc. as well as looking at functions, flows of people, and roles of particular areas. Such design guides and master plans can

help to view an area as a whole, take a cohesive view of functions, protect the unique identity of a specific area, and maintain the attractiveness and protect buildings that are important to local heritage and history. They also recognise that good design often offers the best value in the long term.

Integrating new developments with any existing valued infrastructure is a critical element of place based regeneration, which supports growth without compromising the unique identity of the area. Protection of established and unique neighbourhoods from the negative impact of surrounding redevelopment is important. To accomplish this, those existing features that help bring identity and a sense of place to area residents need to be clearly identified, and the potential impact of any redevelopment on those features assessed. An eclectic mix of architecture that represents the history of the area, mixed with high quality new developments and good design, should be encouraged if it meets the needs of the community.

Whenever possible, **regeneration schemes should be ambitious.** Where physical developments are proposed, these ought to be bold and innovative, capable of attracting people to live, work, study, shop and play. Further, premises which meet the requirements of potential occupants need to be available, and if they are not, partners may have to **consider the potential for radical change within a centre**. For example, if a centre's role has reduced, there will be an over-supply of retail floorspace, and this will need to be decreased. This will allow local authorities to be proactive in assembling town centre sites.

On a practical note, it is acknowledged that local planning authorities are often the key players in town centre regeneration schemes. There are many elements to council involvement, but **site assembly is often crucial to ensuring that projects move forward**, and whilst this may be a clear ambition for councils, it is often difficult for them to progress. Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers do exist, but are expensive and time-consuming to put into action, and require expertise which may not be available in all councils' teams.

Lighting is a particularly important element of creating a distinctive feel to a place. This can include decorative or festive lighting but should certainly include architectural lighting to accentuate notable or distinctive local buildings or monuments. A public realm lighting strategy will add to the appeal of a town centre – particularly during the darker winter months – as well as increasing perceptions of safety.

We know that **fear regarding security and personal safety** is one of the biggest disincentives to visiting some local centres and, as well as the contribution of lighting, there are also a range of other solutions for specific local circumstances. This could include introduction of CCTV cameras, street wardens, more visible policing, alcohol-free zones, measures to improve the design and layout of centres, and removal of particular facilities or features which attract anti-social activity. Local organisations, partnerships, and businesses also now have to pay attention to the Crowded Places guidance, issued by the UK Government in 2017, which gives guidance for places and premises which are easily accessible to the public.

Public art is a key part of a street scene, and can encompass a wide range of forms including sculptures, murals, public display screens, and digital art. 'Good' public art relates in some way to the setting in which it is placed, contributing to a sense of place by reinforcing existing themes and character. Widespread and varied public art can also encourage pedestrians to explore more than the core shopping streets, thereby increasing dwell time and penetration. **Temporary installations** can provide additional reasons for people to visit a specific town centre rather than a neighbouring town.

Finally, when striving to support and create place based regeneration schemes **funders, such as LEPs, should apply the 'town centres first' principle to their investments.** This will reflect the proven value of town centre investments to the economy, and the role that regeneration schemes play in kick-starting

further economic growth.

In relation to streets and spaces, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Create more people-focussed and welcoming environments, which put the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users to the fore.

- Improve the connectivity and flow of the area for pedestrians and cyclists.

- Have a clear strategy or master plan in place, or will deliver a coherent design approach.

- Protect and enhance existing valued spaces and buildings, as well as recognising the importance of green and open central spaces in regeneration schemes.

- Are challenging and bold, and show ambition and innovation in their approach to the public realm as a whole.

- Enhance users' experiences of the centre through such aspects as improved lighting, layout improvements, public art, and safety measures.

- Take a representative approach, involving a wide range of partners, encouraging community input, and building consensus and buy-in.

Examples

Kidderminster: an ambitious and co-ordinated approach

Picture: (C) Hardscape

Wyre Forest District Council led on the development of a Regeneration Prospectus for Kidderminster. The Prospectus aims to highlight the town's challenges and opportunities in order to attract support and investment to transform the town. It is an ambitious 30 year vision for the future containing projects and initiatives that will be delivered in the short, medium, and long term timescales, providing a bigger, strategic picture for the town's development, bringing the right people together to make projects happen.

The Prospectus identifies four key themes that apply across the whole town:
- Transport – creating a highly accessible town
- Jobs – creating an entrepreneurial and business friendly town
- Homes and communities – delivering affordable homes and stronger communities
- Design and environmental quality – a town that capitalises on its natural and cultural assets

Regeneration plans for the town centre focussed on recognised good practice, such as prioritising the movement of pedestrians and cyclists, using high quality design principles, using high quality products and materials, maximising the potential of public squares and focal points, co-ordinating key design finishes such as colours, and minimising street clutter.

The Prospectus led to further research highlighting the economic impact of the town centre regeneration scheme, and found significant positive impacts in terms of jobs, Gross Value Added, and the Benefit Cost Ratio.

The Prospectus projects continue, with Phase One of the Lion Fields development in Kidderminster now progressing. This element of the wider scheme includes a new leisure destination, encompassing a multi-screen cinema complex, restaurants and cafés, a gym, and car parking.

For further details, go to: http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/regeneration-and-major-developments.aspx

Kings Heath: creation of a public space

Kings Heath Village Square was created through investment in the area in front of All Saints Church. This has created a focal point in the high street, a place for people to relax and meet, and a location for events and markets. The space was designed by the local community to meet their own identified needs, and opened in 2011.

The Square has many of the qualities of open, park-like space, whilst being just steps away from buses and shops. The Square hosts events of all kinds, such as a regular Farmers' Market, a Craft Market, musical and arts events, Tai Chi, carols, barbecues, weddings etc. The scheme cost £660,000 and has won two national design awards.

For further details, go to: https://www.allsaintscentrekh.co.uk/village-square/

**Lichfield: maximising the use of green spaces**
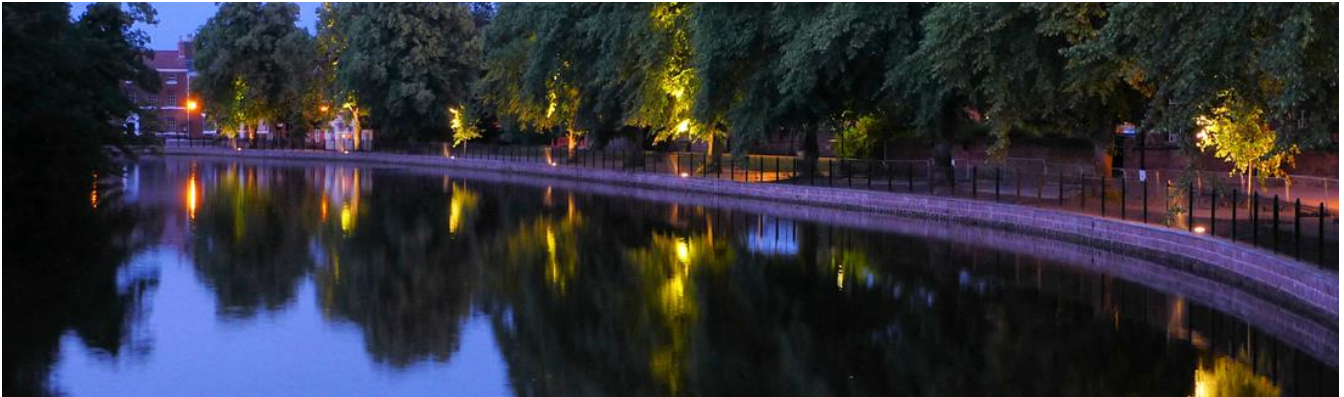
Minster Pool, Lichfield

The Lichfield Historic Parks project was led by Lichfield District Council and Lichfield City Council. Its aim was to restore the historic features and develop new facilities at four city parks, and to create a distinctive brand for the parks as a whole. For example, work at Minster Pool, Minster Pool Walk and Memorial Gardens included: up-lighting trees to provide ambient lighting along Pool Walk, a new footpath surface running along the pool, and new and refurbished street furniture. For Beacon Park and Museum Gardens, work involved restoring Beacon Park's pool, a new café and refreshment kiosk, creating an enclosed junior play area and a new play area for older children, new public toilets and sports changing rooms, creating a community garden area, statue and stonework restoration, and tree planting.

For further details, go to: http://lichfieldhistoricparks.co.uk/

Piece Hall, Halifax: heritage-led regeneration
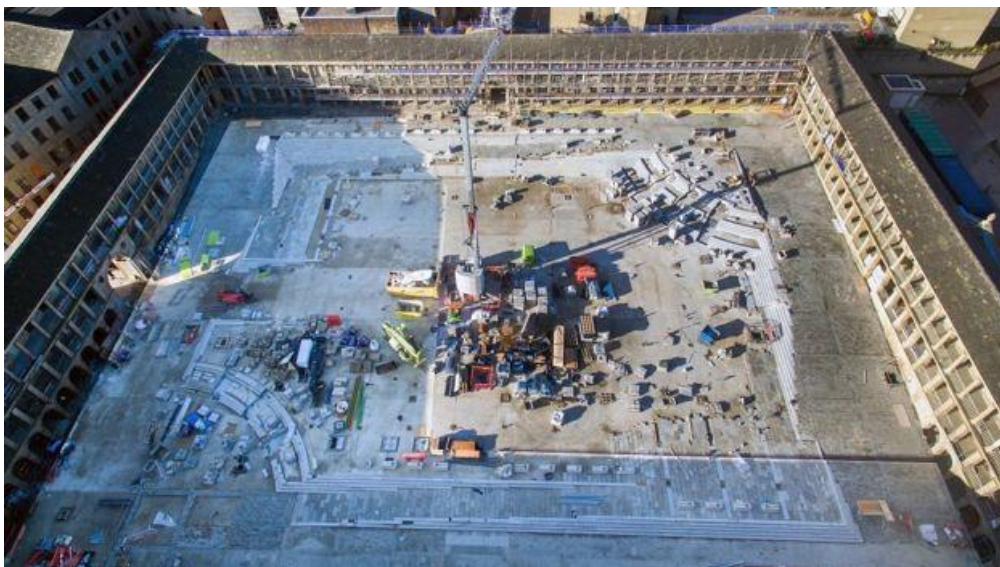
The Piece Hall in Halifax is the UK's only surviving 18th Century cloth trading hall, but fell into disuse at the start of the 21st Century. Following a £19m restoration project, the central courtyard has been levelled to create a new piazza with capacity for up to 7,500 people, and now contains new lighting, seating and water features. The stonework has been cleaned and renovated, and the original 315 units in the arcades (once used for storing and trading "pieces" of cloth) now contain new shops, cafes and offices.

An estimated 1.6m visitors are expected through the gates annually, and it is hoped the Piece Hall, with its links to the nearby Square Chapel Arts Centre and Calderdale Industrial Museum, will form a new cultural quarter for the town.

For further details, go to: http://www.thepiecehall.co.uk/

St Gallen, Switzerland: bold and ambitious urban design

The St Galler Bleichi district in St Gallen is the first 'public lounge' in Switzerland. The St Galler Bleichi district is a shopping and office area, which is also used by residents and visitors in the evening. The central square of the district has been furnished with sofas, chairs, and tables, all covered in bright red rubber granulate.

During the day, children use the unusual city landscape for play, while the employees from the surrounding businesses take breaks on the comfortable seating. In the evening, artistic lighting elements which hang above the square like floating boulders light the scene, and draw in additional visitors, creating a vibrant night-time environment. The city lounge was created by artist Pipilotti Rist and architect Carlos Martinez.

For further details, go to: https://www.myswitzerland.com/en-gb/city-lounge-red-square.html

4.3   Diversity of use, creativity, and culture

What the research tells us

As noted in Section 2 of this report, **our town centres are changing**. They need to be flexible, ready to adapt to change and to grasp new opportunities. Some towns – for example Hay-on-Wye (books) and Ludlow (food) – are able to thrive by promoting a single facet of their offer above all others. However, **for most towns and local centres, diversity of offer and use is essential**. This can cover a whole range of aspects, from retail (multiples through to market traders and pop-ups), to the night time economy, culture, leisure, health, housing, and access to services. The best small towns often have a core of high street multiple stores, complemented by high quality independent shops; a choice of places to eat and drink; a regular programme of events and festivals; arts, crafts and culture and; a diverse economic base (business and professional services, civic functions, public services). **Meanwhile use** of empty units can enable artistic displays and galleries, pop-up shops or market stalls, and can nip area decline in the bud by maintaining a sense of energy as well as adding to local diversity.

In terms of the evening and night time economy, towns and local centres **must support a wide range of different types of 'out of hours' growth**. This means not focussing solely on pubs, bars and restaurants, but also on events such as night markets, outdoor concerts and theatre, firework displays, and night-time street performances. A broader offer will attract a wider range of visitors, not just the 18 to 25 market, with an associated increase in spend. In addition, a very specific night-time reputation concentrated on a drinking culture can lead to a centre proving unattractive, and can also deter efficient day time functioning. Where the night time economy is a particularly strong focus, then the importance of Purple Flag status (ATCM's award for towns that have a positive assessment for crime rates, hygiene standards and range of visitor attractions) should be recognised. Finally, Light Night schemes are important to showcase town centres, encouraging people who may not normally venture into the centre at night to do so, to see what is on offer.

Mixed use of public buildings such as libraries and community halls can provide public space to house cafés, galleries, stalls, internet access, and host community gatherings. Some of these might take place after usual closing hours, increasing local footfall and supporting a more diverse social scene into the evening.

In terms of general planning issues, previously much regeneration has been led by retail, with more diverse and mixed use possibilities not properly explored. Through planning, **town centres can become more interesting destinations, if planning policy encourages A3 and leisure uses** on the high street, building an experience for residents and visitors.

A sense of place is developed through image making. To do this, towns and local centres must market their 'softer' unique selling points which focus on their communities and people, such as local produce and local culture. Town centres can compete with out-of-town developments by providing and marketing a unique offer, and as such **local cultural image-making and branding is a fundamental aspect of the regeneration of town centres**. A part of this may include encouraging independent stores and retail markets which can offer different products and a shopping experience that is not available in the larger centres. Partners could work together to identify the demographic(s) which they can target in order to create a distinct experience, which could also include culture and heritage. Small towns may not be able to compete with

out of town developments, but they can differentiate themselves by offering an experience that other places cannot replicate, and marketing this unique selling point in an appropriate way. Further, it may be appropriate for groups of towns within a region to work together, so that their different offers can complement each other. As part of image making, a **logo and brand must be distinct and recognisable**, and they must ensure the town centre offer is clearly communicated. Towns should have a dedicated website, and marketing material such as leaflets should be made available to encourage people to explore the town. Major marketing may not be affordable or appropriate for local centres, but lower key promotional activity can include: installation of clear signposting; development of attractive gateway features; production of a directory of local shops and services; promotion of local events, festivals, or niche markets.

Housing-led regeneration still provides considerable economic and social benefits relative to the cost. All regeneration projects need to be based on research to understand the housing needs of existing residents, including whether or not the needs and aspirations of local communities can be met by private provision alone. For towns and local centres, partners should consider whether it is possible to deliver additional housing supply through densification, through the return of vacant accommodation over shops, and in secondary and tertiary shopping frontages, to residential use in order to create sustainable urban dwellings as part of the wider trend of changing uses of town centres and high streets across the UK. Housing for the elderly should also be in or close to town and district centres where possible, complemented by a range of different types of housing to attract all income groups. As a general principle, all developments, whether new or repurposed, should be located close to public transport hubs or routes. The important role of increased residential provision in terms of providing natural surveillance, and therefore improving safety, should also be taken into account. Within the GBSLEP area, the WMCA is leading on the housing agenda, but the LEP aims to play a part through its recently developed Housing Framework, and through other initiatives.

The **development and re-development of appropriate office accommodation** is also a key element of diversity of use within centres. Such developments need to be tailored to the local market, and to reflect changing workplace needs. This could include start-up offices and incubation units, serviced offices, and other forms of flexible work space which can encourage innovation and enterprise. It should be noted that office and work-place developments are a means of increasing footfall within town centres, and councils should therefore carefully consider central alternatives to out-of-town office development proposals.

Finally, we should also make reference to the planning system. Whilst this TLC Framework is not by any means intended as a planning document, we recognise that **planning issues and priorities can impact significantly on TLC regeneration projects**. For future town centres, this will mean ensuring the availability of premises which meet the operational requirements of a range of businesses and users, which may involve **considering the potential for radical change within a centre**, perhaps involving significant redevelopment of outmoded commercial areas. If a centre's role has reduced, there will be an over-supply of retail floorspace, and consideration will have to be given for reducing this. Given sufficient time, this is likely to happen through the operation of market forces, although experience indicates that this can sometimes take many years, and can happen in a way which fragments and weakens the centre as a whole. It may therefore be appropriate to identify a 'core' area within the centre and to seek to concentrate retail and commercial activity within that core. Further, councils can also utilise other statutory powers such as repairs notices, Compulsory Purchase Orders, protectionist policies where required, etc. Councils can be proactive, and actively assemble town centre retail sites, considering town and local centre plans within a broad spatial economic development context for the wider area. Funders, such as LEPs, should follow the lead of local authority planning partners, and follow a 'town centres first' principle to their investments.

In relation to diversity of use, creativity, and culture, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Bring significant change to the existing diversity of a town centre's offer across the day, evening, and night time.

- Show a coherent approach to local cultural image-making and branding.

- Enhance available assets, building on the existing strengths, attractions, and resources of the area.

- Look to invest in TLC projects which involve a group of towns and local centres working together to develop offers and co-ordinate actions that complement rather than compete with each other – the LEP can take a co-ordinating role here to encourage collaboration.

- Help to deliver additional residential accommodation of appropriate type, tenure, and size within town and local centre locations, reflecting the changing nature of town centres across the UK.

- Complement the principles set out within GBSLEP's Cultural Strategy. *(NB this strategy is currently under development).*

- Help to deliver additional office accommodation of appropriate size and quality in town centre locations.

- Take a broadly representative approach, involving a wide range of partners and stakeholders, encouraging community input, and building consensus and buy-in.

Examples

Tamworth: small-scale office development

The former Philip Dix Centre in Tamworth town centre is owned by Tamworth Borough Council. Formerly under-used as a space for voluntary and community sector organisations, the building was converted to a serviced office space in 2017. It is now known as Philip Dix House, and is home to the Tamworth Enterprise Centre, ran by the Borough Council's Economic Development and Regeneration (EDR) Team. There is a dedicated full time Enterprise Centre Officer who manages all day to day aspects of the operation and the development of its services.

The building has seen an investment of £575,000 and is part of the £6.2m wider Enterprise Quarter project in Tamworth town centre, which includes the Assembly Rooms, Library, Carnegie Centre, and associated public realm areas. The funding for the Centre has come from the support of the Stoke and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

The aim of the Centre is to support small businesses to locate into Tamworth and grow, successfully creating jobs and having a positive impact on the local economy. It also contributes to the Councils wider ambitions to enhance and improve the offer in the town centre. The Council EDR team also provides business support to tenants and promotes and signposts a wide range of available schemes to the tenants and users of the Centre, and works closely with the two local Growth Hubs that cover Tamworth.

The Tamworth Enterprise Centre consists of:
- 16 offices
- 3 meetings rooms
- An executive business lounge with hot desking and collaborative working space
- Superfast broadband and Wi-Fi
- Car parking for tenants
- 28 post boxes for virtual tenants, who have a registered business address at the Centre

The Centre was at capacity within two months of opening, with 16 offices taken by 15 tenants, employing 45 people directly at the Centre. Business based in the Centre include recruitment firms, security companies, data research, credit risk analysis, Web design, and brand marketing. Hire of meeting rooms is also proving to be popular, particularly with training organisations and businesses that want small professional meeting room space in a town centre location.

For more details, go to: http://www.tamworthenterprisecentre.co.uk/

Lichfield: events and festivals

Lichfield is a heritage city, and has built a programme of large scale nationally recognised festivals through to more intimate events. Information on upcoming events is easily accessible via a dedicated website, and there is a wide range of options, including the Lichfield Food and Drink Festival (which attracted 100,000 visitors in 2017), the Lichfield Festival (50,000 visitors) and The Cathedral Illuminated (16,500 visitors). Other events scheduled for 2018 include Lichfield Literature Festival, Lichfield Half Marathon, drive-in movies in the park, Lichfield Home and Garden Festival, Lichfield Blues and Jazz Festival, Lichfield Gin, Ale and Cheese Festival, Cars in the Park, and Lichfield District Community Games.

For more details, go to: visit www.visitlichfield.co.uk

Tamworth: cultural image-making

The St George's Day extravaganza is one of the highlights in Tamworth's events calendar. In 2017, an estimated 13,000 people attended, with events and entertainment including a Medieval joust, street walkers, medieval workshops, children's activity zones, archery try-outs, battles, falconry shows, a medieval themed children's zone, and fair ground rides.

Of the visitors questioned about their experience of the day, 100% rated the event good to excellent. 84% of those surveyed came specifically for the event – this means that almost 11,000 extra visitors came into the town centre purely for St George's Day celebrations. The average visitor spend was £19 per head, meaning that overall an estimated spend of all visitors was £250,421. For every £1 Tamworth Borough Council spent, £29.46 was put back into the local economy. Marketing for the event included a social media campaign, press releases, posters and flyers, a presence on various local websites, and a presence in What's On publications.

For more details, go to: http://www.tamworthcastle.co.uk/st-georges-day

4.4   Technology

<table>
<tr><td align="center">**What the research tells us**</td></tr>
<tr><td>

People expect to have fast, reliable and secure internet access whilst out and about in our town centres, with consistent coverage and no black spots. Such access helps residents, workers, and visitors to access a wide range of information which they can utilise immediately. Businesses can also benefit from the technological implications of widespread free Wi-Fi access, including detailed customer information which can be gathered through the use of new technology. Apps can also be used to enhance rewards for customers, and to allow them to make immediate reservations, book transport, pay for goods etc.

The Digital High Street Report[12] makes recommendations for the revitalisation of high streets in the impending digitally dominated world, including:

- Sufficient access through infrastructure – raise infrastructure and connectivity standards for 2020, including universal fixed connectivity of not less than 24 Mbps, high speed mobile data coverage to 98% of the population across both indoor and outdoor geographies, and clear public access Wi-Fi standards

- High Street Digital Health Index – adopt the index concept, which assesses the competitiveness of a particular local high street, and provides insight into the digital health and fitness of centres, as well as identification of areas for investment and development

In addition to developments which fall under the digital high street heading, there are also a number of **innovative tech-driven transport developments** which have significant future potential. These include autonomous vehicles, alternative fuel sources (such as hydrogen) and improved battery technology with increased provision of charging points for electric vehicles.

Finally, **virtual reality software** also has significant potential within the regeneration field. This involves the capability to utilise digital 3D models for design, review, and consultation activities, helping to build awareness and engagement across all sectors of the population.

Across the GBSLEP area, the WMCA is leading on the digital tech agenda. The LEP has a role to play in specific areas, such as supporting emerging technologies and facilitating their use, through its business support and innovation support functions.

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

In relation to technology, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Seek to address the changing nature of the high street through future forecasting, developing appropriate technologies such as AI and AR, integrating suitable digital tools and technological infrastructure into their offer as part of a wider regeneration strategy.

- Connect people and places through innovative transport technologies.

</td></tr>
</table>

---

[12] Digital High Street Advisory Board – Digital High Street 2020 Report – March 2015

- Take a broadly representative approach, involving a wide range of partners and stakeholders, encouraging community input, and building consensus and buy-in.

Examples

Birmingham: virtual reality software

As part of Birmingham City Council's commitment to design quality, the council has developed the capability to utilise digital 3D models for design review and consultation activities. This service is presently only available within Birmingham's Enterprise Zone but the Council aims to have the whole city covered in the near future and will use it in the following ways:

- Digital 3D models of major development proposals will be generated and incorporated into the overall digital model of Birmingham, allowing proposals to be viewed from any angle and position and evaluated in the context of the surrounding townscape.
- The City Council's master plans will become primarily digital models which, in addition to presenting an initial vision, will be updated and used to facilitate the design process throughout the implementation phase.
- Highly detailed and realistic "showcase" models will be created to enhance public consultation on strategic developments.

This will be particularly useful for centres in the city which will undergo significant transformation such as Perry Barr which is central to the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Birmingham: transport technology

Birmingham's Clean Air Hydrogen Bus Project will deliver the city's first 100% zero emission hydrogen buses by March 2019. The project is part of an integrated strategy that is being set up to ascertain the commercial viability of producing hydrogen from locally produced renewable electricity and using it to re-fuel hydrogen buses. The Hydrogen Bus project is integrated with the Tyseley Energy Park project, where

hydrogen fuel will be produced and dispensed. The overall project will provide the kick-start for new supply chain business development for bus servicing and maintenance, new education and apprenticeship / training facilities developed through vehicle / engineering companies, in collaboration with the Energy Capital initiative.

4.5   Transport and accessibility

What the research tells us

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) co-ordinates investment to improve the region's transport infrastructure to create a fully integrated, safe and secure network. It is also responsible for assessing and planning for the region's future transport needs so the network can meet the demands of businesses and a growing population. At the most local level, TfWM is investing to ensure that short distance trips can be safely made by walking, cycling, and public transport. GBSLEP will look to work with TfWM to support good projects that will add to economic growth in our towns and centres.

Pedestrian movement and cycle access can be severely hampered by highly engineered road infrastructure, railway lines, and through severance by main roads and buildings. Safe cycling provision can be extremely limited, and pedestrian provision is often not integrated and not linked to and from key points. Options to set aside road space for wider pavements, bus lanes and cycle lanes should be explored, along with options to restrict vehicle access and impose road-user charging, traffic calming measures, and safe routes to schools, hospitals and stations. The **improvement of access by rail and bus**, as well as cycling and walking, must be made an integral part of any town centre regeneration plan, as not doing so is likely to undermine the regeneration objectives in the long term. The local community, particularly those with **accessibility issues** due to disabling conditions or impaired mobility, must be involved in the decision-making process to ensure that all members of the community can access town and local centres. New developments should include ramps and easy access routes, and be Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant. Finally, the roll-out of the Swift card in the area, which should help to co-ordinate journeys and integrate payment methods, may also bring additional opportunities for developing a well-linked system.

Good **quality interchange facilities should be required as a component of regeneration schemes**, and not as an afterthought. **Railway stations** are often in need of investment, and are sometimes not centrally located. In addition, by no means all town and local centres have a train station. Older **bus stations** can be unattractive and lacking in facilities, and are sometimes not well integrated with the rest of the centre. Access by bus can generally be significantly improved, if attention is paid to frequency and comprehensiveness of services, location of bus stopping points, and the safety and convenience of pedestrian routes from bus stops to the centre.

Car access is important to smaller town centres but its impact needs to be managed with parking strategies and well identified pedestrian routes. New developments present opportunities to review parking provision across the town centre. Removing charges for parking in town centres can perpetuate the dominance of the car in the town centre, and ignores the fact that a large number of people do not use a car to access the town centre (retailers tended to overestimate the importance of car-borne trade in terms of footfall by almost 100%). There is no such thing as 'free' parking: the costs of developing and maintaining parking spaces and then enforcing proper use to ensure good traffic flow have to be borne by somebody. In the case of local authority operated parking, any costs that are not covered by parking revenue falls to local Council Tax payers. In addition, more parking does not necessarily mean greater commercial success. A well-managed parking scheme, where spaces 'turn over' frequently, can help to increase the number of visitors coming to a town centre and thereby help business. Finally, a good mix of shops and services and a quality environment are amongst the most important factors in attracting visitors to town centres. If both these are poor, then changes to parking or accessibility are very unlikely to make a

town centre more attractive.

Finally, businesses need to access markets and people need to access jobs. This means **providing businesses and people with faster, more reliable and more affordable access** to customers and workplaces. This means government playing a role in ensuring that infrastructure is in place at a local level and operated in a way which serves public interests more than private interests. Better connections between underperforming centres and more successful local economies will help businesses seeking new markets and people seeking jobs.

In relation to transport and accessibility, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Improve and increase pedestrian and cycle access, where this forms an integral part of a wider regeneration strategy for a specific town and local centre.

- Integrate improved public transport interchange facilities – be they rail or bus – into the wider regeneration strategy for the specific town or centre.

- Provide people with better access to centres via public transport

- Look at how to connect people to jobs via sustainable transport, where this is an integral part of a wider regeneration strategy for a specific town and local centre.

- Take a broadly representative approach, involving a wide range of partners and stakeholders, encouraging community input, and building consensus and buy-in.

Examples

Leicester: walking route from the university to the town centre

New Walk in Leicester is a late 18th Century urban public walk which extends for some 1,100 metres connecting to Welford Place in the town centre, and the racecourse (now Victoria Park) to the south-east. Houses along the route have no vehicular access from New Walk, and are set back at least 10m from the footway. In 1969 New Walk was designated a Conservation Area. Since then, considerable repair and improvement works have been undertaken along the route, including the replanting of trees. New Walk demonstrates that such a route can be pleasant and vibrant without being opened to vehicular traffic.

For more details, go to: https://www.friendsofnewwalk.com/

Tamworth: Gateways project

Tamworth Borough Council has identified a number of gateways into Tamworth centre, including phase 1 and 2: routes from the retail parks to the town centre, and from the train station and bus stations to the town centre. The project also includes improvements to Tamworth Station car park and forecourt.

The Gateways project sought to address physical, social, and environmental issues affecting visitors' experiences of Tamworth. The project prioritised pedestrians over vehicles, and improved waymarking, heritage interpretation, and public art. Phase 1 and 2 have been completed, and included resurfacing, cycleway construction, cycle stands, tree felling, street furniture, architectural lighting, and improvements to the bus interchange.

4.6 Partnerships and structures

<table>
<tr><td align="center">What the research tells us</td></tr>
</table>

There is a strong case in favour of the **formation of steering groups and partnerships** that bring together a manageable number of relevant interests from across the public, private, and third sectors, reflecting the variety of people who use the public realm. It is important that no single organisation or group has a veto over what happens in the town centre. If one organisation leads, they must encourage participation rather than dominate, and inspire rather than control. A project will never please all partners all of the time: steering groups and partnerships must manage the views and expectations of different partners and disparate groups.

Local Authorities are lead actors in terms of developing local partnerships, and they are well placed to facilitate town centre regeneration as a "fair broker" in bringing together a range of partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors, taking a broad approach to regeneration and economic development within their area. This can include all aspects of regeneration, from master planning through to specific advice on regulatory requirements (e.g. through www.talktoreg.co.uk). Other local partnership structures include **Business Improvement Districts** (BIDs), which are led by local businesses in a clearly defined geographical area. BIDs pursue a wide range of projects, but have a particular mandate to support the business community within their designated area.

Community buy-in is critical to successful partnerships and other structures, and there is a **need to genuinely involve communities** beyond general 'consultation' and to empower them to make decisions on the future of their neighbourhoods. In addition, **strong, effective leadership** is essential to the success of town centre regeneration schemes – a 'champion' can take on the role of bringing together the different aspects and players in town centre regeneration. Lead organisations (often but not always the local authority) need to evidence that they have the capacity to deliver effectively, ensuring that plans move forward to delivery on time and to budget.

For all partnerships, it is essential to **develop a plan of action** with an associated monitoring framework. Inconsistency and change in Government financial support for town centres had made long-term regeneration planning more difficult, but centres still need to develop a longer-term overall framework for regeneration, with a supporting shorter-term implementation or action plan. **Individual town and local centre plans** should set out what kind of place each town wants to be and how this vision would be achieved, including a list of priority projects. Clear links would need to be established between activities outlined in the plan and the most pressing issues faced in that particular town or local centre. This local centre plan could then form the basis of any bidding documents for support.

Finally, it is clear that **LEPs need to focus: they cannot support activities in every town**. A towns and local centres framework can help to clarify where the LEP should invest its limited funds.

In relation to partnerships and structures, GBSLEP will look to invest in TLC projects that:

- Come forward from town centre based groups (in whatever form) that can evidence that they have brought together (or begun to bring together) a wide range of interests from across the public, private, and third sectors, and where community input has been secured (or is being secured).

- Have a well-researched and evidenced action plan / project plan.

- Have strong and effective leadership in place, and that have the capacity to deliver effectively.

- Undertake activities and actions that will complement rather than compete with projects in other towns

---

Examples

Rugeley town centre: partnership scheme to deliver improvements within a conservation area

Cannock Chase Council formed a Partnership with English Heritage to establish a grant scheme working with owners of properties in the Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area. Objectives included carrying out conservation area compliant repairs to historic commercial buildings to both protect and enhance the existing character and attractiveness of the town centre. The demand from local businesses for the grants was such that the scheme was extended by the Council.

Repairs included: rooftops stripped, underlay and new timber battens fixed then clay tiles re-laid; brickwork to walls and chimneys carefully raked out and repointed with lime mortar; stone window sills and lintels repaired; bowed walls tied back; new cast iron guttering and downpipes installed; timber sash windows refurbished and redecorated.

4.7   Monitoring and evaluation

What the research tells us

Monitoring and evaluation of projects is essential in order to understand **what happened, what worked, what did not work, what the impacts were, and what can we learn from the experience**. Effective monitoring and evaluation also allows project successes to be celebrated, which can help to build momentum for future activities.

Town and local centre projects must clearly set out their aims, objectives, outputs, and outcomes. This will enable relevant monitoring data to be collected, ensure that more qualitative outcomes and impacts can be measured, and overall performance and success evaluated and compared. However, it is recognised that there is a lack of agreed key performance indicators to measure successful town centre regeneration projects, and it is difficult to quantify some of the benefits that accrue.

GBSLEP is currently developing an evaluation framework for the projects that it supports. It is anticipated that this framework will provide guidance on how to undertake evaluation, simple good practice steps, links to further information etc.

In relation to monitoring and evaluation, GBSLEP will look to invest in projects that:

- Evidence that they have considered monitoring and evaluation issues from the inception of the project – evaluation, even if only small scale for smaller projects, will be considered an essential part of all projects. (NB: GBSLEP will develop a specific monitoring and evaluation framework for town and local centre regeneration projects.)

Section 5: Criteria for investment

5.1   Introduction

Within this section of the report, we look briefly at what other areas and other organisations have done to set criteria for investment in town and local centre regeneration. We have then taken this information and tailored it for the GBSLEP area. We have also taken some of the key learning from the previous sections of this report (e.g. the importance of place making, the importance of inclusivity) and factored these into our thinking. In this way, we have developed a bespoke set of GBSLEP criteria for town and local centre investment.

5.2   Criteria used in other areas

Welsh Government

The Welsh Government launched its £100m three-year Targeted Regeneration Investment Scheme (TRI) in October 2017, with investment in projects due to start in April 2018. The aim of the programme is to support projects that promote economic regeneration, with activities focussed at individuals and areas most in need. Investment is targeted in a small number of Regeneration Areas, rather than spreading resources thinly in all parts of Wales.

Assessment criteria for the programme include:

- Contextual analysis and strategic fit – alignment with Welsh Government objectives and regional priorities; awareness of local challenges and opportunities
- Well-being of Future Generations assessment – evidence of contributing to Welsh Government's overarching well-being goals
- Project rationale and approach – clear reasoning and strategy; evidence of need for project; general quality and clarity of proposal
- Benefit and impact – contribution to economic regeneration; contribution to tackling deprivation; clear outputs and outcomes; clear evaluation proposal
- Project costs and value for money – clear financial proposal; overall value for money when considering benefits and impact
- Deliverability – robust governance; strong partnership approach; experienced project team; clear delivery plan; exit strategy

Within these criteria, projects are scored from 0 to 5, where 0 fails to address the criterion under examination, and 5 is excellent, with the proposal successfully addressing all relevant aspects of the criterion.

Scottish Government

The Scottish Government aims to support sustainable economic growth through a wide range of interventions, ranging from large scale development focussed on economic opportunity to more localised activity intended to address needs. The nature and scale of regeneration interventions is different in different areas, and the type of intervention needed varies depending on local circumstances.

A number of assessment tools (positive and negative aspects) are used. These include:

- Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Levels of vacant and derelict land
- Levels of vacant and derelict property
- Worklessness statistics
- Economic assets
- Physical assets
- Social assets
- Opportunities to deliver change

UK Government – Transforming places; changing lives: a framework for regeneration (previous policy)

The aim of regeneration activity through the Transforming Places programme was to tackle economic inactivity and barriers to work, improve places and attract inward investment, and unlock local economic potential. Regeneration investment decisions were determined by the extent of deprivation and the opportunity to deliver long-term change.

Four criteria were used to assess potential projects:

- The Index of Multiple Deprivation
- The strength of the wider sub-regional economy, based on headline indicators of economic performance
- The economic and social characteristics of the area
- The dynamics of the area, and how deprivation has changed over time

Metro Dynamics Inclusive Growth Toolkit

January 2018 saw the launch of the Metro-Dynamics Inclusive Growth Toolkit[13], in partnership with JRF, Sheffield City Region and Cardiff City Council. The toolkit recognises that places need a simple methodology which can help organisations such as LEPs to determine whether and how an investment or intervention supports inclusive growth.

The Metro-Dynamics framework is designed to supplement existing assessment frameworks, such as Treasury Green Book, and be used alongside them, rather than acting as an alternative. Most significant projects and investments are assessed using the Green Book methodology, based around the five business cases[14], which seeks to ensure the government is funding net additional outcomes at a cost that can be deemed objectively as good value for money. However, this approach does not assess the impact of a project on individuals, or whether the impact of the intervention is shared amongst particular groups within society who have been less likely to benefit from economic growth in the past. In other words, interventions are assessed from the perspective of the government, rather from the perspective of target individuals.

---

[13] http://www.metrodynamics.co.uk/blog/2018/1/17/metro-dynamics-launch-inclusive-growth-toolkit
[14] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-governent

The table overleaf modifies and summarises the steps that Metro-Dynamics suggest in order to assess an innovation for inclusivity and sustainability and, where appropriate, places this alongside the standard Green Book approach.

Table 1: Green Book Approach (Strategic Case and Management Case only) + Good Growth Approach

Green Book Approach	Good Growth Approach
Strategic case: • Background • Rationale – what is the case for change? • What problem is being solved? • What is the best investment option? • SMART Objectives • Strategic context • Dependencies • High level risks	• How will the investment support inclusive growth? • How will the project promote equality of access and opportunity? • How does the problem you are trying to solve impact on particular elements of the population? • What data can be collected to assess the impact of the project on those particular groups? • What are the estimates for the salaries of any new jobs that are being created? • Will the intervention move out-of-work people into employment? • Will the investment increase the number of people with vocational qualifications? • Will the investment increase the availability of quality affordable housing? • Will the investment provide space for retailers and employers that provide jobs and hire locally? • Will the investment provide access to better quality public space? • Will the investment link under-served areas of low incomes with employment areas through new, direct transport links?
Management case: • Assessment of deliverability • Is there adequate capacity to manage the intervention? • Management responsibilities • Governance arrangements • Milestones • Contract management plan • Can risks to the funder be mitigated? • Post-implementation evaluation	• Can the operation of the project be managed to maximise inclusive growth? • How can procurement processes be used to ensure social value? • How can contractors and providers be persuaded to consider social value? • Can the operation of the project be managed so that there is an increase in the number of local people who access employment opportunities? • Can the operation of the project be managed so that there is an increase in the number of apprenticeships provided to local people? • Can the operation of the project be managed so that a stipulated proportion of the total contract cost is awarded to local SMEs? • Can the operation of the project be managed so that SMEs and/or social enterprises can receive mentoring and support from larger firms?

The above list is (a) not exhaustive and (b) not relevant to all projects. However, it provides a useful tool for assessing the potential for investment in a project to contribute to good growth. Within the next section, we look at how such tools can be incorporated into our own criteria for assessing projects.

5.3 Developing our criteria for investing in TLCs

On the following page is the bespoke set of investment criteria for town and local centre investment through GBSLEP's Strategic Economic Plan Enabling Fund (for revenue projects). We also look at how the criteria complement the Local Growth Fund assurance framework that we have in place for capital projects.

These criteria are drawn from the findings of the good practice research, presented in Section 4 of this report, from discussions with partners, and from the LEP's own views of regeneration priorities within the GBSLEP area as a whole. We are aware that the criteria can never suit all projects in their entirety: however, we feel that they give us a fair and balanced assessment tool for the kinds of projects that we, and our partners, would like to see coming forward.

Please note that projects do not have to meet ALL criteria: they will have to meet the criteria which are appropriate for and applicable to the project that they are proposing. GBSLEP staff will guide projects through this process.

SEP Enabling Fund – **Revenue** Spend	Local Growth Fund – **Capital** Spend
Overarching / general criteria – ALL PROJECTS TO ADDRESS	

• The revenue project complements GBSLEP's strategic priorities
• The revenue project has clearly identified what it aims to achieve through this piece of work – e.g. "production of a regeneration master plan for the town centre"
• The project has conveyed its proposal with brevity and clarity
• The project has identified why the LEP's financial support is required
	• The project addresses a number of points through the EoI, OBC and FBC process (standard process for allocation of LGF). These include, but are not limited to:
	    o Fit with GBSLEP's strategic priorities
	    o A clearly identified need for the project
	    o Clearly identified outputs and outcomes
	    o Identification of why the LEP's financial support is required
	    o Appropriate notice of the Green Book (5 case business model) approach
	• Please note that we will be proportionate in asking projects to adhere to the Green Book approach

Partnerships and structures criteria – ALL PROJECTS TO ADDRESS	

• The revenue project is being proposed by an organisation or group with a clear role in town centre regeneration, and who have begun to bring together a wide range of views from across sectors
• The project has the support of the local authority
• The revenue project has provided a brief and realistic project plan
• The revenue project has a clear leader / responsible officer in place, who will be responsible for driving the revenue project forward
	• The project addresses a number of points through the EoI, OBC and FBC process (standard process for allocation of LGF). These include, but are not limited to:
	    o Support from a wide range of organisations, including the local authority
	    o Community involvement and buy-in
	    o A realistic project plan
	    o A strong leadership team
	• Please note that we will be proportionate in asking projects to adhere to the Green Book approach

SEP Enabling Fund – <u>Revenue</u> Spend	Local Growth Fund – <u>Capital</u> Spend
Monitoring and evaluation criteria – ALL PROJECTS TO ADDRESS	
The revenue project has begun to consider monitoring and evaluation issues as appropriate	The project, through the EoI, OBC and FBC process (standard process for allocation of LGF), will provide a suitable monitoring and evaluation plan of appropriate depth and quality
Criteria for streets and spaces projects	
- The revenue project will explore options for some or all of the following: - creating more people-focussed welcoming environments, which put the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users to the fore - delivering a coherent and high-quality design approach which helps to protect or create a distinct identity and sense of place - protecting and enhancing existing valued spaces, buildings, and open and green spaces - developing a wider town centre plan, strategic plan, or master plan for the area - increasing footfall in the town centre - enhancing users' experiences of the town centre - exploring options for innovative, ambitious, and challenging regeneration projects - developing the centre and public realm in other ways	- If appropriate and applicable: - The project will create more people-focussed welcoming environments, which put the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users to the fore, and improve the 'flow' of the area - The project will deliver a coherent and high-quality design approach which helps to protect or create a distinct identity and sense of place, blending new developments with any existing valued infrastructure - The project will protect and enhance existing valued spaces, buildings, and open and green spaces - The project complements a wider town centre plan, strategic plan, or master plan for the area - The project builds on the current use and recognised role of the area - The project will increase footfall in the town centre - The project will enhance users' experiences of the town centre through aspects such as improved lighting, layout improvements, public art, and safety measures - The project shows ambition and innovation - The project will enhance other elements of the public realm

SEP Enabling Fund – **Revenue** Spend	Local Growth Fund – **Capital** Spend
Criteria for diversity of use, creativity, and culture projects	
- The revenue project will explore options for some of the following: - bringing significant improvement to the town centre's offer across the day time and/or evening and/or night time - developing a coherent and cohesive approach to local cultural image-making and branding - enhancing available assets, building on the existing strengths, attractions, and resources of the area - delivering additional residential accommodation of appropriate type, tenure, and size within town and local centre locations - delivering office space of appropriate quality and size within the town centre - developing other aspects of diversity of use, and the creative and cultural offer	- If appropriate and applicable: - The project will bring significant improvement to the town centre's offer across the day time and/or evening and/or night time depending on the specific needs of the area in question - The project shows a coherent and cohesive approach to local cultural image-making and branding - The project will enhance available assets, building on the existing strengths, attractions, and resources of the area - The project will involve a group of centres working together to develop offers and co-ordinate actions that complement rather than compete with each other - The project will help to deliver additional residential accommodation of appropriate type, tenure, and size within town and local centre locations - The project will help to provide office space of appropriate quality and size within the town centre - The project will seek to address over-supply of particular types of floor-space within a centre (e.g. retail) - The project will develop other aspects of diversity of use, and the creative and cultural offer

SEP Enabling Fund – <u>Revenue</u> Spend	Local Growth Fund – <u>Capital</u> Spend
Criteria for technology projects	
• The revenue project explores the options for developing technological solutions and initiatives that will contribute to the regeneration of a centre or centres, as part of a wider regeneration strategy for the area – this could be through digital infrastructure, hi-tech transport solutions, or other innovative approaches	• The project clearly demonstrates that it will contribute to the regeneration of a centre or centres through the use of technology, as part of a wider regeneration strategy for the area – this could be through digital infrastructure, hi-tech transport solutions, or other innovative approaches
Criteria for transport and accessibility projects	

• The revenue project will explore options for some of the following:
    o improving and increasing pedestrian and cycle access to / from / within centres, as part of a wider regeneration strategy
    o integrating improved public transport interchange facilities, complementing a wider town centre regeneration strategy
    o connecting people to jobs via sustainable transport, as part of a wider regeneration strategy
    o connecting people to cultural facilities, cultural offers, and leisure facilities as part of a wider regeneration strategy
    o connecting homes to sustainable transport, as part of a wider regeneration strategy
	• If appropriate and applicable:
	    o The project will improve and increase pedestrian and cycle access to / from / within centres, as part of a wider regeneration strategy
	    o The project will integrate improved public transport interchange facilities, complementing a wider town centre regeneration strategy
	    o The project will connect people to jobs via sustainable transport, as part of a wider regeneration strategy
	    o The project will connect people to cultural facilities, cultural offers, and leisure facilities as part of a wider regeneration strategy
	    o The project will connect homes to sustainable transport, as part of a wider regeneration strategy

5.4   Using our criteria

Currently, the LEP has two distinct funding streams for supporting TLC projects. As discussed in Section 2 of this report, these are the SEP Enabling Fund (which is for revenue spend) and the Local Growth Fund (which is for capital spend).

These two funds have two distinct application processes:

The **application process for the SEP EF** is to be based on the criteria and recommendations within this framework, and is light touch, reflecting the fact that applications to this fund are likely to be relatively small (i.e. generally under £100,000). GBSLEP has a great deal of independence regarding how it allocates SEP EF monies, hence the development within this document of the criteria for awarding funds to projects, a process which has been developed with local authority partners across the LEP area. To access SEP EF, projects will simply fill in a light touch Expression of Interest form, and the award of the funds will be based on an assessment of this form.

The **application process for the LGF** is more prescribed, and follows a set Assurance Framework, as well as the Green Book principles as laid out by the UK Government: as previously noted, this is not a process which has been particularly suitable for TLC projects, especially at the initial strategic fit (Expression of Interest) stage. However, the production of this TLC Framework means that we now have guiding criteria to help us to assess which TLC projects will deliver good practice in place-based regeneration and economic growth, and we anticipate that more projects will be able to successfully apply for LGF monies with this clarity in place.

In addition, we will also be developing a pipeline of projects with a TLC focus. This will enable us to review our approach to TLC projects on a regular basis, to ensure that they are given fair access to funds and support.

As applications are received and assessed, it will become apparent if there are 'gaps' in terms of project delivery. If this proves to be the case, the LEP has the potential to act as a commissioner, requesting that specific types of projects come forward from nominated partners. If the LEP Board agrees to this role, the process for such commissioning of project applications will need to be discussed and refined with partners. It may be appropriate that commissioning could be taken forward through a Programme approach, or the LEP could act as a lead partner on hard-to-deliver projects, pulling in appropriate external expertise, or the LEP could pilot new and innovative approaches.

Despite the above, we should also be clear that funding is finite: although we have developed criteria to suit TLC applications, this does not guarantee that all TLC projects that are of an appropriate quality can be funded through the LEP. There will still be projects that we cannot allocate resources to, and we will have to work with these projects to secure funding from other sources wherever possible.

Section 6: The ecosystem approach

6.1 About the ecosystem approach

Over the past two years, submissions have been received into both the LGF (capital) and SEP (revenue) funds from across the GBSLEP area. When receiving these applications, the task for the LEP is two-fold: (1) to assess the suitability of the project for funding as a stand-alone intervention, and (2) to assess how projects complement and co-ordinate, rather than compete with each other.

Historically, the LEP has not focussed extensively on the second element, and has tended to fund projects which work well as stand-alone applications. The LEP would like to do more in terms of assessing projects as part of a GBSLEP-wide ecosystem, and to this end has looked at how other areas (notably the Northern Powerhouse) are beginning to tackle this issue, and we have noted some of the findings later within this section.

Given that most towns will have a dominant function (although all towns will display some part of each function to some extent) it makes sense to consider TLC regeneration projects and proposals as taking place within a network of complementary centres, rather than within individual centres that are competing with each other. It is intended that all towns and local centres should play their part in the sustainable development of the GBSLEP area, with growth and development shared between them in a way which is appropriate for each specific town. By doing this we will enable a more effective network of centres to be maintained.

Northern Powerhouse research[15] found that UK urban policy tends to define places by their size, which invariably leads to the development of hierarchies in which the biggest cities are prioritised. However, there are significant concerns in relation to city-centric approaches, and recent studies have shown that:

- productivity and employment growth rates in the majority of core cities have remained consistently below national growth rates
- there is no clear relationship between urban scale or density and urban productivity for the UK's 14 largest cities other than London

Conversely, the research shows that within small and medium sized towns (SMCs) there has been gross value added (GVA) growth of 34% since 2009. Many have growth rates that exceed their core city neighbours, and some have higher labour productivity rates than larger cities. In most cases, this is because they have local economic clusters that complement urban hubs, but benefit from non-urban locations.

The research indicates that strengthening the economic links between places has the potential to contribute to sustainable economic growth, higher individual prosperity, the attraction and retention of higher skilled workers and the reduction of deprivation. Cities and their hinterlands are interdependent; many jobs located in cities are directly supported by demand from businesses and consumers in surrounding areas, and the city follows what is happening elsewhere rather than drives growth itself.

---

[15] The role of small and medium-sized towns and cities in growing the Northern Powerhouse, Ed Cox and Sarah Longlands, Institute for Public Policy Research, June 2016

Table 2: The relative economic strengths of a large city (e.g. the Birmingham and Solihull agglomeration) and its hinterland

Large city – economic strengths	Hinterland – economic strengths
• Consumption-based activities such as retailing and leisure • Providing regional facilities such as big public buildings and cultural assets • Networked industries (particularly where innovation is involved) • Specialised services requiring large and accessible markets • Large employers that require a large pool of labour • Firms that require a locational brand or international recognition	• Space-intensive industries • Logistics and distribution hubs • Industries with negative externalities* • Firms where labour and other factor costs need to be low • Firms seeking environmental quality, and lifestyle businesses • Firms that benefit from big city overspill or nearby urban consumers

* a negative externality is an economic activity that imposes a negative effect on an unrelated third party, for which no appropriate compensation is paid. This causes social costs to exceed private costs. (Examples include noise pollution, waste, increased traffic etc.)

Six broad categories of key city economies are identified within the report, based on a high clustering of businesses in important industries. These are:

- Regional service economies: Peterborough, Preston, Milton Keynes
- Advanced manufacturing economies: Sunderland, Derby, Coventry, Tees Valley
- Visitor economies: Blackpool, Bournemouth, Southend-on-Sea, Bath
- Marine economies: Portsmouth, Southampton, Plymouth, Hull
- Knowledge economies: Cambridge, Oxford
- Creative-digital economies: Brighton, Norwich

Further, research by the European Spatial Planning Observation Network[16] into small and medium-sized towns has identified the following functional roles:

- Supply function – provision of a region's population with necessary goods and services.
- Housing function – provision of sufficient land for accommodation, sometimes in the form of dormitory towns for larger neighbouring labour market centres.
- Labour market function – where a town is able to keep and renew small local economic entities.
- Cultural function – provision of leisure and tourism offers, often reinforced by marketing and branding. This is often a major untapped opportunity for towns, as all will have natural and/or cultural assets, as well as heritage features.

6.2   Building on ecosystem strengths

As can be seen from Section 6.1, smaller towns and cities can derive huge strengths from understanding their roles within the wider key city and regional economic geographies, as well as understanding their own role in servicing their local hinterlands. Understanding their role within the wider economy should

---

[16] https://www.espon.eu/

also be supported by an understanding of their own, independent historical role – what is their identity, what do their historical buildings say, what resources do they embody?

The Northern Powerhouse research identifies four facets of an approach to further grow and develop SMCs. They are:

- Building local economic resilience – SMCs must become key growth hubs within wider urban systems, offering comparative advantages in particular clusters, and providing economic functions that cannot be located in large cities. They must also offer high quality residential environments and drive up standards in local schools and colleges.

- Maximising the benefits of local assets – most places have very specific assets and advantages, including: industrial capabilities and specialisms (i.e. existing sectoral strengths such as distribution); land supply for residential and employment use; natural assets; historical and cultural assets; community assets; quality-of-life assets.

- Enhancing connectivity – SMCs might be thought of as falling into three physical connectivity categories: commuter SMCs; hub SMCs with connectivity to local hinterlands; economic cluster SMCs with good connectivity to national and international markets (e.g. logistics clusters will require good road and rail connectivity).

- Addressing institutional weaknesses – one of the biggest challenges facing local authorities in SMC areas has been the effect of spending cuts on policy and economic development capacity, and significant political instability. There are also challenges relating to the ways in which combined authorities and LEPs have been formed, and even those SMCs that are part of core city LEP areas often feel that their interests are not as well served by LEPs as the major cities are.

Building on the four points above, the research recommends that policymaking must do more to reflect the economic coherence of all places and areas, adequately capturing the wider economic benefits generated by investment beyond big cities. Specifically, the research recommends that:

1. HM Treasury and the National Infrastructure Commission should reappraise the methodologies set out in the Green Book, taking proper account of the contributions that SMCs make to the urban ecosystem.

2. Transport bodies should ensure that future strategy development takes account of the complexity of the urban ecosystem, and the diverse nature of economic capabilities, rather than relying too heavily on the dominant role of big cities.

3. LEPs and combined authorities should do more to acknowledge the role of SMCs in relation to bigger cities, and pursue specific initiatives aimed at building on their local assets and enhancing connectivity between places.

4. The chairs of the LEPs should meet on a regular basis and work together to identify opportunities for collaboration across boundaries to support the development of particular SMCs.

5. SMCs themselves must take the lead in identifying and articulating their unique role within the wider urban ecosystem, focussing in particular on maximising the value of local assets, enhancing

human potential and re-evaluate how they can best provide services in ways that suit their population.

6. SMCs must identify and address their current institutional weaknesses through more extensive training and support for local councillors to help and encourage them to engage more fully with sub-regional affairs, and by more effectively pooling their policy capacity with neighbouring councils, and with city-regions as a whole.

By developing this TLC Framework, we feel that GBSLEP is going some way to building on these recommendations. However, we recognise that further work is necessary. In particular, we feel that recommendations 3 and 5 could be taken forward through a more detailed piece of work, which looks at the individual roles and assets and opportunities of towns and local centres within the GBSLEP region.

There would be two facets to this work – (1) how the TLC ecosystem works together across the region, and (2) how the towns and local centres can build on their inherent strengths, possibly through the development of town-focussed master plans and regeneration strategies. For some towns, these master plans and strategies are already completed, or are currently under development. For others, there are ambitions to take such work forward, but lack of funds has prevented progress so far. This is where the LEP could step in, using funds from the SEP Enabling Fund, and acting as a co-ordinator for the wider ecosystem element of the work.

Section 7: Recommendations for action

7.1 Introduction

Within this section of the report, we have absorbed key messages from the previous sections, and from them produced a series of recommendations. It should be stressed that these are recommendations for action for GBSLEP, working in conjunction with partners – they are about what we as a LEP *can* do, rather than what *might* happen in terms of future policy etc.

7.2 Recommendations for action

Please note: short term = 6 months, medium term = 6 months to 18 months, long term = longer than 18 months

Table 3: action plan

Recommendations for action for GBSLEP	Timescale
Clearly **communicate GBSLEP's role and priorities** in terms of TLC regeneration (as described in Section 4) and our criteria for investment (as described in Section 5).	Short term
Develop a specific, tailored, light-touch **monitoring and evaluation guidance note** and template for TLC regeneration projects.	Short term
Work with the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth on **establishing an evidence base for regeneration projects.**	Short to medium term
Undertake additional **research into town and local centre roles**, based on (1) a GBSLEP-wide geographical ecosystem approach and (2) how individual towns and local centres can build on their inherent strengths and potential assets, possibly through the development of town-focussed master plans and regeneration strategies, in partnership with local authorities	Medium term
Undertake research into the possibility of developing a town centre **Compulsory Purchase Order repayable fund** for use by Local Authorities, working with Homes England in order to share expertise.	Medium term
Secure SEP EF **revenue funding** options for the longer term in order to deliver TLC projects.	Medium to long term
Administer the SEP EF TLC elements using the criteria set out within this Framework.	Ongoing
Establish a pipeline of TLC projects – both revenue and capital – which are ready to move forward, and review it on a regular basis to ensure fair access to funds and support. This review should include advice on signposting and on accessing other sources of funding if appropriate.	Ongoing
Where gaps are apparent in the pipeline, GBSLEP to explore opportunities for acting as a **project commissioner.**	Ongoing
Act as a **co-ordinator / facilitator** to enable local authorities and other strategic organisations to work together and co-ordinate activities.	Ongoing

Bibliography

AMION Consulting and Taylor Young – The Economic Value of Public Realm for North West Development Agency & RENEW Northwest – 2007

ATCM – Successful Town Centres: developing effective strategies – 2013

British Council of Shopping Centres / Revo – Medium-sized and Smaller Towns –

CABE / DETR – the value of urban design – 2001

Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam Uni – Valuing the Benefits of Regeneration – 2010

Commission for Underperforming Towns and Cities – A Brighter Future for Our Towns and Cities – May 2015

Countryside Agency – Assessment of the Market Towns Initiative – September 2004

Department for Communities and Local Government – Reimagining Urban Spaces to help Revitalise our High Streets – July 2012

Department of Planning OBU – Townscape Heritage Initiative Evaluation – 2013

ECOTEC – Economic Impact of the Public Realm: A Final Report to the East Midlands Development Agency – 2007

Future High Streets Forum – Digital high streets report – 2015

Genecon – Research and Evaluation of Public Realm Schemes – 2010

Government Office for Science – The Evolving Economic Performance of UK Cities – 2014

Inclusive Growth Analysis Unit, University of Manchester – Inclusive Growth Opportunities and Challenges for Greater Manchester – 2016

Institute for Public Policy Research – The role of Small and Medium-Sized Towns and Cities in Growing the Northern Powerhouse – 2016

Kada Research / Aspinall Verdi – Kidderminster Centre Public Realm Improvements: Economic Impaxt Assessment – February 2018

Living Streets – Making the case for investment in the public realm – 2015

Living Streets – The pedestrian Pound: the business case for better streets and places – 2014

Mary Portas – The Portas Review – 2011

Metro-Dynamics – Towards an Inclusive Growth Decision Making Framework – 2018

National Assembly for Wales Enterprise and Business Committee – Regeneration of Town Centres – January 2012

Places Matter – The economic value of design – 2011

Regenerate East Midlands – Public Realm Toolkit – 2008

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors – Successful Regeneration – 2010

Royal Town Planning Institute – economic resilience in small and medium sized towns – September 2014

S Tyler, G Semper, P Guest, B Fieldhouse – The relevance of parking in the success of urban centres – 2012

Scottish Borders Council – Town Centre Regeneration – 2016

Scottish Government – Town Centre Toolkit – 2015

What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth – Public Realm Briefing – 2014

www.100ways.org.uk

Yellow Book – Best Practice in Small Town Regeneration – 2008

Yorkshire Forward – Car Parking Research: A detailed report on how parking can be managed in the region's market towns – 2007