



Co-operative Councils
Innovation Network

HOUSING

Oldham Council

How we build a Co-operative Housing offer in Oldham

Insight

Our insight and evidence tells us that having suitable, warm, stable housing underpins a number of key outcomes relating to health, work and happiness. Therefore, we know as a partnership we can't just concentrate on the supply of social housing and hope the rest will sort itself out. We need to support Oldham to have a vibrant, mixed housing market which meets the needs of everyone whether their aspiration is to live in shared accommodation with friends, or to own their own home. We also know that our approach to cooperative housing needs to cover more than just bricks and mortar and it must extend to the role that housing plays in building thriving communities.

As a result of this insight, we have developed a clear vision which is to ensure everyone has safe, suitable housing that meets their housing aspirations. This relates to the whole housing market from social to supported housing, private rented and owned and it also extends to community capacity building.

Leadership

#Ourbit The Oldham Cooperative Housing Charter provides real leadership across our borough describing our housing commitments and our expectation of residents. Oldham Housing Investment Partnership (OHIP) is another way we are providing leadership. It comprises the borough's main social housing providers who manage nearly 21,000 homes. OHIP was initially established to support development of homes; however, its role has broadened greatly to focus on leadership in the wider sense, including investment in neighbourhoods, communities and services.

#Yourbit Residents are taking a leadership role in housing through our strong network of Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs), through wider community engagement, influencing



People-centred councils
driving social innovation
putting people first

E: comms@councils.coop | T: [@CoopInnovation](https://www.coopinnovation.co.uk) | W: [councils.coop](https://www.councils.coop)

their neighbours to do their bit and shaping our long-term housing strategy through the Local Plan

Workforce

#Ourbit The role of the council and housing associations is to deliver a quality and safe social housing service. Our approach in Oldham is to work together as a single workforce across the council, housing associations, private developers and landlords taking a co-productive approach, and enabling residents to achieve their housing aspirations. The council, OHIP, other support agencies and private landlords work in partnership to support homeless households and to prevent homelessness where possible. All council staff have an annual opportunity to fundraise directly to help support homeless Oldham residents through a local charity developed by the Homeless Forum (Inside Out).

#Yourbit Residents contribute to the wider housing workforce through their vital role in taking responsibility for their neighbourhood. This includes formal roles on TRAs and neighbourhood forums and through volunteering (for example to help to operate the two new community centres at Primrose Bank and Crossley) a complimenting and augmenting public sector services. Recipients of Inside Out funding are encouraged to give back by volunteering to help generate further funding.

Social action and infrastructure

#Ourbit Our bit is about creating the infrastructure and conditions which enable a flourishing mixed housing economy including through the Cooperative Housing Charter, selective landlord licensing, and fair housing allocations policy. We introduced selective landlord licensing in Alexandra, Coldhurst, Hathershaw, Hollinwood, Oldham Edge, Primrose Bank, St Mary's and Waterhead to increase the quality of private sector housing in these areas by requiring private landlords to comply with requirements set out in a license. OHIP also plays a key role in enabling social action. The council and OHIP partners provide opportunities for volunteering, training and support into employment.

#Yourbit Residents are responsible for caring for and looking after their neighbourhoods, supported by Oldham through various community pride initiatives run by the council and housing associations. Your bit also includes meeting the commitments set out in the Cooperative Housing Charter, and being part of the 'Working Xtra' scheme which give residents who volunteer a higher priority on the housing register. Whilst Warm Homes has funded significant investment to improve homes, residents also have a role to play through behaviour change and energy supplier switching to reduce their fuel poverty.

Result

Our cooperative approach to housing is yielding real results. There are more affordable houses than ever before. Through the council's approach to underwriting risk, where Oldham Council enabled private developers to build out sites with no strong historic market viability, several new homes have now been built. The council continues to work with private developers like Keepmoat who are currently building out 16 homes for outright sale on Primrose Bank, with further phases currently being explored.



People-centred councils
driving social innovation
putting people first

E: comms@councils.coop | T: [@CoopInnovation](https://www.coopinnovation.co.uk) | W: [councils.coop](https://www.councils.coop)

Selective licensing measures have given private renters greater confidence in the quality of their homes. For council tenants and housing associations there has been significant investment over last ten years through decent homes, and Private Finance Initiatives (PFI). Many people have improved their position on the housing register by getting involved as volunteers in their local communities through the Working Xtra scheme.

For further information contact:

Jonathan Downs

Principal Policy Officer - Oldham Council

Jonathan.downs@oldham.gov.uk | 0161 770 5691