

# towns & Villages

## County Durham Housing Strategy: Targeted Delivery Plan **Blackhall Colliery South**

March 2021

**Durham**  
County Council



# Targeted Delivery Plan: **Blackhall Colliery South**

## Context

The County Durham Housing Strategy sets out that the Council will seek to improve the quality of the existing housing stock and the wider residential environment. The Strategy notes that the Council will develop localised and Targeted Delivery Plans (TDP) to outline activities to support the creation and maintenance of mixed and balanced communities.

This draft TDP has been developed by Durham County Council with input from Believe Housing, the Registered Housing Provider.

## Location

Blackhall Colliery South is an area in south east Durham, south of Horden. This TDP relates to Blackhall Colliery South as defined on the map on page 8. This boundary is based on the Lower Super Output area, however in practice, actions will not be limited at this boundary if there is a rationale to extend interventions to adjacent sites and nearby streets.

## What are we trying to achieve in Blackhall Colliery South?

Blackhall Colliery South experiences a relatively high proportion of empty homes, this is indicative of low demand in the area. There is an opportunity through the TDPs to undertake a range of measures to focus on addressing the empty homes to reduce the proportion of empty properties in locality to improve the living environment for existing and future residents.

Blackhall Colliery South is also associated with a relatively very high proportion of stock with solid walls this reflects the property type in the area. Through interventions, the intention is to undertake energy efficiency improvements to properties where this is possible. This will have the benefit of providing warm and healthy homes for residents which are more cost effective to heat.

The TDP seeks to improve the appearance of the public realm and street scene. The intention is to further increase the confidence in the housing market and improve the wider amenity of the area for existing and future residents.



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## What will be the outcome for Blackhall Colliery South?

Delivering the TDP will have a positive impact on the housing market and the wider sense of place for Blackhall Colliery South. By reducing the proportion of long term empty homes and improving the wider environment, the TDP will stem issues associated with low demand. Improvements in the street scene will be complementary to the reduction in empty homes having an overall improvement in the appearance of the area and would result in an improved living environment for residents.

The focused interventions with the intention of addressing poverty, will have a direct benefit for the residents of the area improving financial and health wellbeing. Furthermore, it is recognised that the residents of Blackhall Colliery South are susceptible to fuel poverty. This is on the basis that there is a higher proportion of properties with solid walls combined with a high proportion of households experiencing economic deprivation. The measures implemented as part of the TDP will reduce the future incidence of fuel poverty.

## Past and ongoing interventions

The Council and its partners have undertaken a series of interventions in this area including:

- Warm Front and Warm up North fuel poverty grant programmes providing home energy efficiency measures to low income households.
- Community Action Team intervention programme.
- Discussions with Accent around its stock disposal programme.
- In a health context, Blackhall Colliery South benefits from a range of general and specialist health services, which are available across the County. Full details of these are available on the Locate portal. In addition to these services:
  - Black Hall Community Centre provides Men's and Women's CREES and a variety of advice organisation provide support.
  - The East Durham Trust covers the whole of the East to support the local community.
  - A specialist stop smoking advisor is available in Blackhall Community Centre.
- Energy Company Obligation boiler and insulation grants for low income and fuel poor households.

- Warm and Healthy Homes project with GP surgeries to provide warmer homes for patients with a cold related illness.
- Managing Money Better service providing energy bill saving and fuel debt advice and support.
- Warm Homes Fund providing grants for first time central heating measures.

## Evidence base

The Council has developed an evidence base to identify which communities would benefit from intervention to maintain and improve the existing housing stock and the wider housing environment and to inform the actions in those areas.

In addition, the Housing Strategy notes that the Council will ensure that housing is provided specifically to meet the needs of the older people within our communities. It is recognised that the population of County Durham is already ageing and over the next few decades, there will be a 'demographic shift' with the number (and proportion) of older people increasing. This TDP therefore contains an action to identify opportunities to deliver accommodation for older people.



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## Evidence and monitoring

Blackhall Colliery South is in the top 10% for deprivation, the data shows that there are issues in this LSOA regarding empty homes, solid walls, income, employment and health.

The percentage of long-term empty homes is 3.1% compared with the county average of 1.7% (2018). This indicates low demand for houses in this area, long term empty homes can blight areas which can add to the problem of low demand. There are also associated issues regarding environmental health, and anti-social behaviour which have a negative impact on an area and the community.

There is a relatively very high proportion of stock with solid walls in this area, homes with solid walls are not

as energy efficient as cannot benefit from cavity wall insulation which makes them more expensive to heat and keep warm. This can have an impact on the health of residents.

Employment is ranked in the worst performing 10% of the County. The area is also associated with lower than average incomes and a high percentage of income deprivation affecting children. Poor health can also have an impact upon the ability to participate in work.

The Council will continue to develop and monitor evidence to understand issues associated with balance and potential decline across the County.

Issue	Context	Blackhall Colliery South
Long-term empty homes	Long term empty homes are those which have been empty for 6 months or more. The county average is 1.7% of stock as Long term empties (2018).	3.1% of stock are long term empties (2018).
Solid Walls	Households with solid walls are unable to benefit from cavity insulation to make the household more energy efficient and to reduce fuel costs. Solid walls can therefore be an indicator of fuel poverty.	Within County Durham Blackhall Colliery South is ranked 4th out of 324 LSOAs with 1 having the highest proportion of households with solid walls.
Employment IMD 2019	The Employment Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market.	Within County Durham Blackhall Colliery South is ranked 6th out of 324 LSOAs with 1 being the most deprived.
Income deprivation IMD 2019	The Income Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income.	Within County Durham Blackhall Colliery South is ranked 22nd out of 324 LSOAs with 1 being the most deprived.
Income deprivation affecting children IMD 2019	The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families.	Within County Durham Blackhall Colliery South is ranked 17th out of 324 LSOAs with 1 being the most deprived.
Health IMD 2019	The Health Deprivation and Disability Domain measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health.	Within County Durham Blackhall Colliery South is ranked 28th out of 324 LSOAs with 1 being the most deprived.
Demographics and housing stock profile	In County Durham, 20.6% of the population is aged 65 and over. County Durham has a relatively low proportion of bungalows (13.7%) compared to other housing stock. This highest proportion of housing stock in terraced at 36.9%. (MHCLG 2017)	Within Blackhall Colliery South 27.2% of the population are aged 65 and over. 17.7% of the housing stock are bungalows and 64.6% are terraced.

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## Action Plan

The TDP action plans bring together actions from across the Council's range of functions and that of partners to address the issues identified in the evidence base. In TDPs the actions are identified as having the following timescales:

- Mainstream activity / core offer: These are Council or partner activities that are undertaken routinely, but opportunities will be sought to focus these within the TDP area to bring an intensive approach to addressing issues.
- Short term: New actions which will be undertaken within 2 years. Some of these actions will be delivered in a substantially shorter timeframe, depending on their nature.
- Medium term: New actions to be undertaken within 5 years
- Longer term: New actions to be undertaken in over than 5 years, in recognition of the scale of the intervention.

The Action Plan notes the status of individual actions, to note some of these will be undertaken as ongoing actions, others will be associated with existing funding streams however others will require funding. The Council and its partners will make use of the TDPs to support applications for funding.

## Support and maintain mixed and balanced communities across County Durham

Ref	What	Lead (and Partners)	Timescale / Notes
A1	Selective licencing Low Demand, Anti-Social Behaviour, Deprivation Area Designation.	DCC Selective Licencing team.	Mainstream activity.
A2	Monitor, update and develop evidence at a localised level to understand stock condition, demand and supply and associated issues.	DCC Empty Homes team.	Mainstream activity.
A3	Work with Registered Providers to encourage use of their 'buy back' option to bring former right to buy stock back into the market as affordable housing and to assist in supporting and maintaining mixed and balanced communities, where appropriate.	DCC Housing Regeneration team, Believe Housing.	Mainstream activity.
A4	Work with DCC Community Action Team to programme regular targeted interventions to address environmental issues, identified in areas such as the Pit Wheel area of Middle Street.	DCC Environmental Health team.	Mainstream activity.
A5	Continuous liaison with private landlords.	DCC Private Landlords team	Mainstream activity.
A6	In line with Cabinet's September 2020 decision to agree to begin a Council house building programme of up to 500 homes over the period 2021-26 opportunities will be explored for homes across the county, including this TDP area.	DCC Housing Development	Long term. Project to progress in line with Cabinet approval.

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## Support and maintain mixed and balanced communities across County Durham (continued)

Ref	What	Lead (and Partners)	Timescale / Notes
A7	Work to deliver potential development site identified on the Blackhall Colliery South boundary, land south of Hesleden road (SHLAA 5/BC/14).	DCC Housing Development, Spatial Policy, Development Management.	Medium/Long-term. Site deemed developable in 6-10 yrs.
A8	Scoping targeted business improvements to support shop front improvements, benefiting the wider street scene along areas such as Middle Street.	Scoped and coordinated by Community Economic Development.	Medium term. Identified following Autumn 2020 initial scoping.
A9	Scoping improvement to retail area including street furniture and cleaning of public realm in areas such as Middle Street including the Pit Wheel area.	Scoped and coordinated by Community Economic Development.	Medium term. Identified following Autumn 2020 initial scoping.
A10	Promote County Durham Lettings Agency and leasehold scheme.	DCC County Durham Lettings Agency Team.	Mainstream activity.
A11	Facilitating new housing development including the opportunity for the delivery of homes to meet the needs of older people.	DCC Planning and Housing Development and Regeneration team.	Mainstream activity.

## Addressing poverty in a Housing context and the impacts of welfare reform in a housing context

Ref	What	Lead (and Partners)	Timescale / Notes
B1	Work with landlords to enable greater understanding of the impact of poverty.	DCC Housing Regeneration team, Head of Transformation and Partnerships and Childrens Services.	Mainstream activity.
B2	Enable delivery of the Council's Poverty Plan and Child Poverty Plan, within a housing context.	DCC Housing Regeneration team, Head of Transformation and Partnerships and Childrens Services.	Mainstream activity.
B3	Review and extend and raise awareness of the Financial Assistance Programme.	DCC Housing Regeneration team, Head of Transformation and Partnerships and Childrens Services.	Short/Medium term.



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## Provide care and support for older and vulnerable people

Ref	What	Lead (and Partners)	Timescale / Notes
C1	Consider requirement for support packages to meet needs in County Durham.	DCC Housing Solutions, DCC Commissioning, Registered Housing providers.	Short/Medium term.
C2	Continue to widen wrap around support to support vulnerable people to achieve and sustain tenancies.	DCC Housing Solutions, DCC Commissioning, Registered Housing providers.	Short/Medium term.
C3	Encourage uptake of Disabled Facilities Grants in order to enable individuals to remain in their home.	DCC Housing Solutions, DCC Commissioning, Registered Housing providers.	Mainstream activity.

## Improve energy efficiency of properties to ensure County Durham has a stock of warm, healthy and energy efficient homes

Ref	What	Lead (and Partners)	Timescale / Notes
D1	Ensure integration between various advice schemes and programmes.	DCC Housing Regeneration team.	Mainstream activity.
D2	Raise awareness for warm homes campaign using area based promoting.	DCC Housing Regeneration team.	Mainstream activity.
D3	Promote DCC's External Wall Insulation ECO 'Top UP' loan fund.	DCC Housing Regeneration team.	Mainstream activity.

## Address empty homes to support communities

Ref	What	Lead (and Partners)	Timescale / Notes
E1	Working with property owners to help them sell or rent properties (via Durham Key Options).	DCC Empty Homes team.	Mainstream activity.
E2	Financial assistance loans and grants to potential purchasers and empty home owners of long term empty properties.	DCC Empty Homes team.	Mainstream activity.

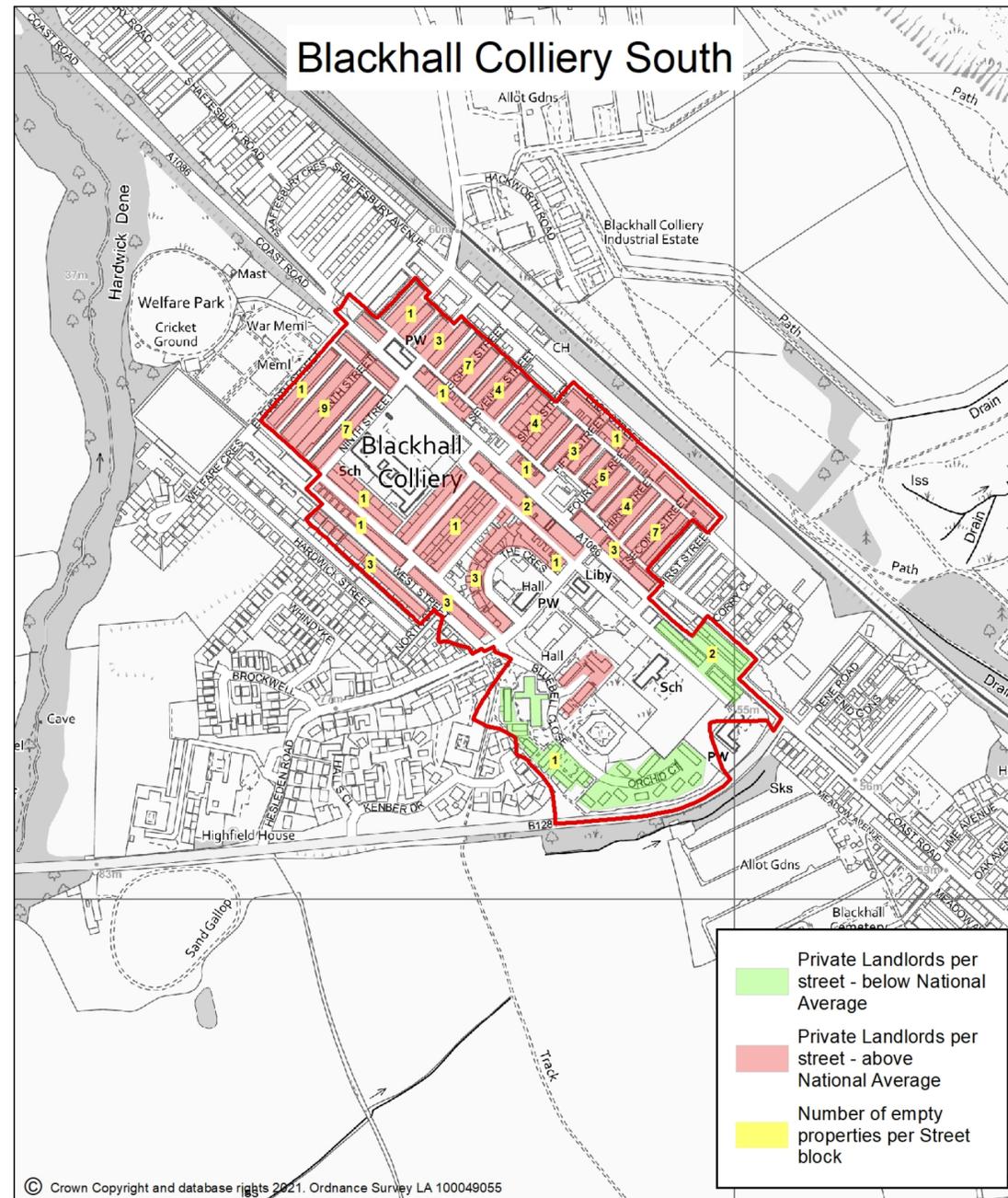


# Targeted Delivery Plan: Blackhall Colliery South map of evidence and interventions

## Context

The map confirms the boundary of the Blackhall Colliery South Lower Super Output Area. The map complements the action plan and provides an overview of evidence and issues to be addressed in the area.

This boundary is based on the Lower Super Output Area, however in practice, actions will not be limited at this boundary if there is a rationale to extend interventions to adjacent sites and nearby streets.





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