

What if Leeds ...

Talk today. Shape tomorrow.

What if Leeds ... is your chance to shape the long-term future of the city through our public consultation to develop a Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030.

The Leeds Initiative is the city's local strategic partnership. Founded in 1990, we bring together a wide range of people and organisations from the public, private, community, voluntary and faith sectors to work together to improve the city and overcome problems for the benefit for everyone.

Our partners include:

Leeds City Council
Leeds, York and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Third Sector Leeds
Arts Council
Education Leeds
English Heritage
Environment Agency
Government Office Yorkshire and The Humber
Highways Agency
Jobcentre Plus
Leeds City College
Leeds Civic Trust
Leeds Faiths Forum
Leeds Metropolitan University
Leeds Partnership Foundation Trust
Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust
Leeds Voice
Museums Libraries Archives Yorkshire
NHS Leeds
Natural England
Skills Funding Agency
Sport England
University of Leeds
West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service
West Yorkshire Metro
West Yorkshire Police
West Yorkshire Police Authority
West Yorkshire Probation Service
Yorkshire Forward
Youth Offending Service

All our documents, and the notes of all our meetings, are on our website at www.leedsinitiative.org

We can make this document available in Braille, large print and audio format on request.

A new Vision for Leeds

The Leeds Initiative, the partnership organisation for the city led by Leeds City Council, is developing a new, long-term plan for the future of the city. It is called Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030, which is also the *sustainable community strategy* for the Leeds area. This Vision will also help to decide the shorter term priorities that need to be delivered for the city over the next three years.

This document is a consultation and sets out principles and broad aims. It provides an opportunity to debate, raise issues and challenges as we seek to gain agreement. The Leeds Initiative will engage with the people of Leeds to develop this Vision. Each place and community can and will benefit from thinking through how the Vision will be made real for them, for example, in individual neighbourhoods or places of business, in the city centre or our market towns.

A Vision for all of Leeds

This Vision is for everyone who lives and works in the Leeds Metropolitan District, an area covering 217 square miles. Leeds is the second largest metropolitan authority in the country and the largest in the north of England. It is a rich and varied place, including a vibrant city centre - well known for its shopping and nightlife – with built-up areas surrounding it, some more rural areas, and several towns and villages. These stretch from Otley in the north-west, Wetherby in the north-east, the rural areas of Bramham and Aberford to the east, Rothwell, Allerton Bywater and Methley to the south and south-east, and Pudsey and Morley to the west and south-west. A unique and distinctive place, two-thirds of the district is green belt and is in easy reach of two national parks.

Leeds is a city of 750,200 people¹. In general, people are living longer and Leeds has as many people over 60 as under 16. There is a higher proportion of young people than the national average, including a large student population. Leeds is also a city with many cultures, languages, races and faiths. 11% of our population is made up of people from black and ethnic-minority communities².

Leeds is the regional capital and the main economic driver for Yorkshire with major road, rail and air connections to neighbouring towns and cities and to national and international networks. The city is home to some of the largest financial institutions in the country and is known as the leading financial and legal centre in the UK outside London. It has a varied economy, excellent universities and world-class culture and sport.

Despite becoming wealthier as a city over the last 20 years, Leeds still has too many deprived areas, where there is a poor quality of life, low educational performance, too much crime and anti-social behaviour, poor housing, and families where no-one has worked for generations. We need to continue to tackle the multiple problems of poverty and to improve all parts of Leeds.

¹ Office of National Statistics, 2006

² Census of Population 2001

A changing environment

We last published a long-term plan for the city in 2004. This set out a plan to 2020, much of which has been achieved or is underway. But since then much has changed both globally and locally, which is why we are now revising this plan. We are facing a series of major challenges following the global recession, which has led to a significant fall in the public money available to spend. Nevertheless, we still have to think ahead and plan for future success. We have set out some of the other main changes below.

Tackling climate change

In 2004 there was little public information on how climate change would affect our city. Regardless of the reasons for our changing weather patterns, it is generally accepted that climate change is a fact. In Leeds we have already seen how small changes can have a dramatic impact on our daily lives – such as the flooding which caused havoc to our communities and businesses. We are also using up the planet's natural resources at an alarming speed – as early as 2020 our demand for oil could exceed supply. We need to plan for this and look at alternatives.

Responding to the global recession

Over the last ten years, Leeds has gained a national reputation as a city of economic growth, creating jobs in a range of industries and sectors. But the recession has posed a number of serious questions about the future of our local economy. There has been a real impact on some of Leeds' key sectors, including construction, and business and financial services. Combined with the challenge of tackling climate change, we will also need to find new ways to remain competitive.

Anticipating changes to our population

Leeds' population is forecast to grow. This growth will include:

- greater numbers of children and young people;
- more people aged 75 years and over; and
- more people from black, ethnic-minority and mixed race backgrounds

Like other successful big cities, it is also likely we will attract a larger number of people from elsewhere in the UK and EU. We need to start planning now to make sure that the city can manage these predicted changes to our population.

What we have achieved since 2004

In 2004 we set the direction for the future of Leeds.

“Our Vision for Leeds is an internationally competitive European city at the heart of a prosperous region where everyone can enjoy a high quality of life.”

The three aims of the current Vision are:

“Going up a league as city – making Leeds an internationally competitive city – the best place in the country to live, work and learn, with a high quality of life for everyone.”

This aimed to capture the magical mixture of economic development, quality of life and competitiveness that makes cities great, and makes them recognised in the world. We are now firmly established as an international city and are named as one of the top 30 European cities in which to do business³. But there is still more to do, and the current economic situation has given us new challenges.

“Narrowing the gap between the most disadvantaged people and communities and the rest of the city.”

We have ‘narrowed the gap’ – but not enough and not always with lasting results. We have made good progress in achieving some targets – our young people are getting better exam results, the number of people smoking has fallen, and fewer of our neighbourhoods are in the 3% most deprived in the country.

But progress remains slow in other areas such as the health gap between our richer and poorer areas. Despite all our efforts, one in five people in Leeds still lives in poverty. Many people are unable to afford to heat their homes adequately, live in poor quality housing, and lose out further because they cannot access basic financial services that many of us take for granted.

“Developing Leeds’ role as the regional capital, contributing to the national economy as a competitive European city, supporting and supported by a region that is becoming increasingly prosperous.”

Leeds is now firmly established as the regional capital. We are working closely together with ten other local authorities to develop a regional approach, which recognises the impact of Leeds’ economic strength on the wider Leeds area, and have created ways of planning more effectively at that level.

The Vision for Leeds 2004 to 2020 also set out twelve priority projects, based on what the people of Leeds told us was important, to improve the quality of life in the city and the region. You can read more about our progress on these projects on our website - www.leedsinitiative.org.

³ Cushman & Wakefield’s European Cities Monitor

Our challenge for the future

Our challenge now in 2010 is to look to the future beyond the plans we have set to think through the big issues affecting Leeds and how we tackle them.

We need to look again at where the city is going and ask ourselves where we want to be in 2030. For example:

- what if Leeds has the best quality of life in the UK?
- what if Leeds is the UK's most family friendly city?
- what if Leeds has the strongest and most sustainable economy in the country?
- what if Leeds ...? You tell us!

Developing our new Vision

The Leeds Initiative's partners regularly listen to people's views on how we can improve. We have used these day-to-day insights to help us make a start on developing some new aims for the city. In addition, over the last year, we have held events and workshops with many of Leeds' organisations and people, who have also told us how they think Leeds should develop in the future. All of this has resulted in the following proposals about where we should aim to be as a city by 2030. We now want your views on these.

Our Vision

By 2030, Leeds will be internationally recognised as the best city in Britain - a city that is fair, open and welcoming with a prosperous and sustainable economy, a place where everyone can lead safe, healthy and successful lives.

Our aims

By 2030, Leeds will be fair, open and welcoming. Leeds will be a place where everyone has an equal chance to live their life successfully and realise their potential. Leeds will embrace new ideas, involve local people, and welcome visitors and those who come here to live, work and learn.

To do this Leeds will be a city where:

- people from different backgrounds and ages feel comfortable living together in communities;
- people are treated with dignity and respect at all stages of their lives;
- we all behave responsibly;
- people have a shared sense of belonging;
- there are good relations within and between communities;
- the causes of unfairness are understood and addressed;
- people feel confident about doing things for themselves and others;
- our services meet the diverse needs of our changing population;
- people can access support where and when it is needed;
- local people have the power to make decisions that affect us;
- people are active and involved in their local communities; and
- everyone is proud to live and work.

By 2030, Leeds' economy will be prosperous and sustainable. We will create a prosperous and sustainable economy, using our resources effectively. Leeds will be successful and well-connected offering a good standard of living. Our culture of being excellent at everything we do will create a great quality of life for all.

Leeds will be a city that has:

- a strong local economy driving sustainable economic growth;
- a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the local economy;
- a world-class cultural offer;
- built on its strengths in financial and business services, and manufacturing, and continued to grow its strong retail, leisure and tourism sectors;
- world-class, cultural, digital and creative industries;
- developed new opportunities for green manufacturing and for growing other new industries;
- improved levels of enterprise through creativity and innovation;
- work for everyone with secure, flexible employment and good wages;
- high-quality, accessible, affordable and reliable public transport;
- successfully achieved a 40% reduction in carbon emissions (by 2020);
- adapted to changing weather patterns;
- increased use of alternative energy supplies and locally produced food; and
- buildings that meet high sustainability standards in the way they are built and run.

By 2030, Leeds' communities will be safe, healthy and successful. Everyone has the opportunity to be safe, successful and secure and lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives. Leeds' communities will thrive and people will be confident, skilled, enterprising, active and involved.

To do this Leeds will be a city where:

- people have the opportunity to get out of poverty;
- education and training helps more people to achieve their potential;
- communities are safe and people feel safe;
- all Leeds' homes are of a decent standard and everyone can afford to stay warm;
- healthy life choices are easier to make;
- community-led businesses meet local needs;
- local services, including shops and healthcare, are easy to access and meet our needs;
- local cultural and sporting activities are available to all;
- there are high quality buildings, places and green spaces, and
- happiness forms the basis of a good quality of life.

How will our Vision affect different places?

Our Vision needs to be relevant to all our local communities and neighbourhoods, as well as the city centre, Yorkshire region, nationally and internationally.

We have outlined below a few examples of how some of the ideas in this Vision will affect these different places.

Leeds neighbourhoods

Each community will be unique, but they can all be safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, offering prosperity, good services and opportunities for all. We will work hard to release the potential of everyone in Leeds to make sure the Vision aims are achieved in every neighbourhood. To do this we will work with residents as equal partners who can determine their own and their communities' future. Services will be developed and delivered with local people, including older and younger people, and people of all abilities to be active and involved citizens.

Leeds city centre

Our city centre will be a key economic driver not just for the Yorkshire region, but for the country as a whole. It will remain one of the UK's leading retail destinations and a major draw for businesses and visitors alike, welcoming and well connected. It will be a place that is sustainable with a high quality environment and cultural offer, and a city that is safe, family-friendly and attractive to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Leeds Metropolitan District

Leeds is already committed to a 40% reduction in the carbon put into the atmosphere by 2020. This is a stretching target for the whole district, which requires Leeds' residents and organisations to work together to make it happen. The Leeds Climate Change Strategy has set the direction for the city. Now the partners are planning the actions in transport, and managing buildings, including homes, and business operations. We will need to challenge and support each other to develop the new ideas needed to achieve such a challenging target. We will also need to engage with the imagination and creativity of the people of Leeds so that they can contribute.

Leeds City Region

By working with the Leeds City Region⁴, we will create a sustainable and prosperous economy by engaging with business and our partners across the wider Leeds area. Working together we will achieve better results for our local economy, skills, housing, transport and innovation.

Leeds' role nationally and internationally

⁴ The Leeds City Region brings together the eleven local authorities of Barnsley, Bradford, Calderdale, Craven, Harrogate, Kirklees, Leeds, Selby, Wakefield, York and North Yorkshire County Council to work together on areas such as transport, skills, housing, planning and innovation.

Leeds will punch its weight as a leading city nationally, making sure that decision makers and opinion formers understand the city and what it offers and the needs of its communities. We will make sure that Leeds gets its fair share of investment and funding. We will work to improve the reputation of the city nationally and internationally as the natural alternative to London, for investment, employment and a great quality of life.

What if Leeds works together?

The success of our city depends on all of us working together to make sure that our Vision and all our plans and strategies are robust and have been tested and challenged. We will make sure that we continue to work in partnership and with local communities to achieve the best for the people of Leeds.

We will listen to different points of view, we will be honest, open and straightforward – saying what we mean, and meaning what we say. We will use evaluation and evidence to make sure we make progress with our priorities.

What if you had your say?

Before we finalise the Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030, we would like the views of as many people as possible that live or work in all parts of Leeds. We would also like your thoughts on the priorities for the next three years.

This questionnaire is one way of telling us your views. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions and return this sheet (together with any extra comments) to the address shown (you do not need a stamp).

Why not have a conversation about the ideas in this draft Vision with friends, at work, or in your clubs and associations and tell us what you think?

Visit www.whatifleeds.org

Send us a tweet @whatifleeds

Visit us at Facebook/whatifleeds

Questionnaire

Thinking to 2030 ...

What if Leeds ... becomes the best city in the UK?

What does this mean to you? How would you make this happen?

What if Leeds ... becomes fair, open and welcoming?

What does this mean to you? How would you make this happen?

What if Leeds ... has a prosperous and sustainable economy?

What does this mean to you? How would you make this happen?

What if Leeds' communities are safe, healthy and successful?

What does this mean to you? How would you make this happen?

Thinking about the next three years ...

What if you could choose ...?

What would the top priorities for the city be in the next few years?

What are the big issues you think we need to tackle as a city?

We want to make sure that the final version of the Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030 is accessible to people. Please tell us your favourite options.

A printed document

An online film or podcast

Other (please specify)

An online document

A DVD

Please tick the appropriate box to describe your religion or belief

Buddhist	Christian
Hindu	Jewish
Muslim	Sikh
No religion	Other (please specify)

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