

Housing Leeds Jargon Buster

This Jargon Buster has been written by Housing Leeds, assisted by some tenants, to help you understand some of the terms used by us, Leeds City Council and other organisations.

It explains some of the many words, abbreviations and acronyms that tenants and residents may come across at meetings and forums, when reading reports, but also day to day.

We hope that you find it useful.

We want to keep this list as up-to-date and as helpful as possible. As terms change over time, we will look to update and re-publish this on a regular basis.

If there is something that you think we need to explain better, please let us know.

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Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

<p>ABC</p> <p>Acceptable Behaviour Contract</p>	<p>An ABC is a written agreement between a person who has been involved in antisocial behaviour and one or more local agencies whose role it is to prevent such behaviour. It is not legally binding.</p> <p>ABCs are most commonly used for young people but may also be used for adults.</p>
<p>Advocate</p>	<p>Someone that speaks or acts on behalf of another person with their permission.</p>
<p>Affordable housing</p>	<p>Housing built with subsidy from the Government, a housing association or other means, either for rent, outright sale, or shared ownership. The subsidy enables the cost of the rent / purchase to be affordable for households who cannot otherwise afford the market rent/ sale price in the area.</p>
<p>AHP</p> <p>Affordable Homes Programme</p>	<p>The Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) 2011-15 and 2015-18 aims to increase the supply of new affordable homes in England.</p>
<p>Allocations</p>	<p>The process of identifying, offering and letting properties to people, who then become tenants.</p>
<p>Allocations Policy</p>	<p>Sets down the rules for allocating (i.e. offering) housing, and should ensure that those most in need get offered a home first.</p>
<p>Annual Report</p>	<p>The report to tenants on the performance of their landlord.</p>
<p>Area Representative</p>	<p>In areas where the setting up of a Tenant and Resident Association (see TARA) is not supported, residents, individual tenants, residents or leaseholders can volunteer to be area representatives to represent the views of their area to us.</p>
<p>ASB</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour</p>	<p>Behaviour that goes against what is generally acceptable to society.</p> <p>Can include criminal acts and less serious behaviour such as general un-neighbourly behaviour.</p>

A

<p>ASBO</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour order</p>	<p>Allows a council and/or a housing association to apply to the court to stop an individual behaving in a particular way and/or from going to particular places.</p> <p>ASBOs can be issued against any individual over ten years old. Breaching the order can carry a five year prison sentence.</p>
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B

<p>Benchmarking</p>	<p>When organisations compare their performance to other organisations as part of the continuous improvement process.</p>
<p>Best Practice</p>	<p>An agreed and respected way of doing things.</p>
<p>Best Value</p>	<p>Used by councils to review services they provide, improve service quality and cost effectiveness.</p>
<p>BME</p>	<p>Term used to refer to Black and Minority Ethnic Communities.</p>
<p>Budget</p>	<p>The amount of money an organisation estimates it will spend over a year. Individual budgets may also be allocated to specific projects.</p>
<p>Business Plans</p>	<p>Set out key the objectives and proposals for running and developing organisations over a period of time. Plans are normally linked to budgets and key performance targets.</p>

Capital Expenditure	Money spent by landlords on buying land, or building and improving housing or the environment.
Capital Programme	A plan for building and improving housing or the environment.
Capital Receipts	Money received by councils when they sell homes or land either voluntarily or under the Right to Buy.
CBL Choice Based Lettings	The process commonly used by local authorities to allocate vacant properties. Under CBL, all HA and LA vacancies are advertised and people may 'bid' for their properties of choice. Properties are then offered to the highest ranked bidder.
CCCG Cross City Chairs Group	In Leeds, Chairs and Vice-Chairs of all HAPs (see HAPs) regularly meet at the Cross City Chairs Group to help develop how HAPs work across the city.
CEO Chief Executive Officer	The position of the most senior corporate officer, executive, or administrator in charge of managing an organisation.
CIH Chartered Institute of Housing	The organisation that awards professional qualifications to people who work in housing, and represents housing professionals.
Civil Partners	Civil partners are two people of the same sex who live together in a relationship similar to marriage. They form a civil partnership when they legally register their partnership in front of witnesses.
Code of Conduct	Sets out guidelines describing how members of a committee or group are expected to act and carry out their duties when at meetings, or acting on behalf of their organisation.

Community Cashback	An initiative to support tenant groups in making agreements with their landlord to take over the management of local services and cut costs.
Community Cohesion	<p>Refers to the togetherness and the bonding of a community. Local authorities play an important role in facilitating community cohesion, through engaging and listening to communities.</p> <p>Cohesive communities are in a state of wellbeing, harmony and stability.</p>
Community Development	Process of building active and sustainable communities by providing residents with access to information and training.
Community Hub “Extra”	<p>A range of council services in one location.</p> <p>Other services such as NHS, Police and Credit Union may also be located at the same location.</p> <p>Facilities are available for use by community / local groups.</p>
Community Hub “Local”	<p>A range of council services in one location.</p> <p>Other services may use the location for surgeries.</p> <p>Facilities are available for use by community / local groups.</p>
Community Hub “Mobile”	Council services provided depend on the location and demand.
Community Right to Challenge	Enables communities to challenge to take over local services if they think they can run differently and better.
Competitive Tendering	<p>Process of inviting offers from outside organisations to run a specific service, e.g. catering, grounds maintenance.</p> <p>The tendering process is competitive and usually a set of predetermined criteria covering the quality of service issues, price and value for money are used to decide who wins the contract.</p>

C

Contents Insurance	Insurance that covers personal belongings in a person's home.
Council Tax	Council tax is the local tax in England, Scotland and Wales. Residents pay it to the local council, and they use it to provide local services.
Credit Union	Locally based savings schemes providing low cost loans to people.

D

Data Protection	<p>Individuals have certain rights to access information being held about them by organisations and companies.</p> <p>Organisations and companies also have a responsibility under the Act to store and use the data that they hold in a responsible way.</p>
DCLG Department for Communities and Local Government	The central government department responsible for overseeing housing, planning regeneration and local government issues.
Decant	When Tenants are temporarily or permanently moved out of their homes to another dwelling if their landlord needs to carry out work that is disruptive or that would be difficult to do with the tenant 'in situ'.
DLA Disability Living Allowance	A tax-free benefit for children and adults who need help with personal care or have walking difficulties because they are physically or mentally disabled.
Draft	Any version of a document, such as a report, in which the ideas or wording have not yet been finally agreed is referred to as a draft.
DWP Department of Work and Pensions	The government department that is responsible for most state benefits in England, Scotland and Wales.

E

<p>E&D</p> <p>Equality and Diversity</p>	<p>Equality is about treating people fairly and with respect, and Diversity is recognising human qualities that are different from our own.</p> <p>Breaking down the barriers that can block opportunities for certain groups of people.</p> <p>Accepting and embracing people's differences, respecting and valuing individuals, and creating an environment in which people can thrive.</p>
<p>Emergency Repairs</p>	<p>A response within 24 hours to an emergency situation. To count as an emergency, the problem must pose a serious risk to life or property.</p>
<p>Environment and Housing</p>	<p>The part of the council that commissions and delivers a wide range of services including housing, environment, safety, parks, refuse and recycling.</p>
<p>Equal Access Group</p>	<p>This Housing Leeds group represents tenants and leaseholders with disabilities, long term health conditions, and Carers.</p>
<p>Equality Impact Assessment</p>	<p>A way of assessing the way the effect that a proposed policy or project is likely to have on different groups of people.</p>
<p>Eviction</p>	<p>Being removed from a property by a bailiff following the serving of a County Court issued Possession Order.</p>

F

<p>FE</p> <p>Further Education</p>	<p>The term used to refer to education in addition to that received at secondary school, from basic skills training to higher vocational qualifications.</p>
<p>Feasibility Study</p>	<p>A study carried out to see whether a suggested plan of action will work and what is needed to make it work.</p>
<p>Forum</p>	<p>A meeting or group designed to give people a voice.</p>
<p>Fuel Poverty</p>	<p>A household is said to be in fuel poverty when it cannot afford to keep adequately warm at a reasonable cost, given their income.</p>

G

<p>GF</p> <p>General Fund</p>	<p>The Council's revenue account that Council Tax is paid into.</p> <p>It provides some housing services such as housing homelessness advice that benefit the wider community rather than just council tenants.</p>
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H

<p>HA</p> <p>Housing Association</p>	<p>In the United Kingdom, housing associations are private, non-profit making organisations providing low-cost "social housing" for people in need of a home.</p> <p>Any trading surplus is used to maintain existing housing and to help finance new homes.</p>
<p>HAPs</p> <p>Housing Advisory Panels</p>	<p>Tenant led groups that are part of Housing Leeds Tenant Involvement framework</p> <p>They review the delivery of local housing services and monitor local performance. There are 11 HAPS across Leeds.</p>
<p>HB</p> <p>Housing Benefit</p>	<p>Means tested welfare benefit administered by the local authority.</p> <p>It helps residents to pay their rent. All council, housing association or private tenants, are eligible to apply.</p> <p>How much help anyone receives depends on their income and other circumstances.</p>
<p>HCA</p> <p>Homes and Communities Agency</p>	<p>The Agency helps create successful communities by making more homes and business premises available to the residents and businesses that need them.</p> <p>They also regulate social housing providers in England.</p>
<p>HMO</p> <p>Houses in Multiple Occupation</p>	<p>A single property divided into flats.</p>

HMRC HM Revenue & Customs	The part of the government that deals with tax, National Insurance contributions, working tax credit, child tax credit and child benefit.
Housing Leeds	Part of Housing Leeds responsible for providing the following services for Leeds City Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • managing property tenancies including rent payments and ASB • providing repairs and maintenance services community involvement capital programme • adaptations • helping tenants getting involved through community involvement • managing Leeds Homes for lettings and allocations • property and contracts
Housing Manager	Leads a team to deliver housing services. A Local Housing manager will be responsible for housing services in a specific area.
Housing Officer	Is responsible for the day to day management and support for tenancies in a specific area.
Housing Ombudsman	Can investigate complaints and other matters referred to them and make recommendations for action. They are independent of the people and organisations they investigate.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	Local authority account into which rents and any money from the Government are paid. It pays for repairs, managing and maintaining the housing stock and repaying any money borrowed for past building and improvements.
Housing Team Leader	Assists a Housing Manager to leads a team to deliver housing services.

H

Human Rights Act (1998)	<p>Legislation introduced by the UK Government. The Act was passed with cross-party support by Parliament. It does not belong to any one particular political party.</p> <p>It takes 16 of the fundamental human rights in the European Convention on Human Rights and pulls them into UK law. It covers rights such as the right to life, to liberty, to family life, freedom of expression and to not be subjected to slavery.</p>
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I

ICB Incapacity Benefit	A weekly payment for people who become incapable of work due to disability or illness, while under State Pension age.
Induction	Process of introduction and enrolment to something such as new membership of a group.
Introductory Tenancy	The Housing Act 1996 allows councils to offer introductory tenancies to new tenants. After one year the tenancy changes to a secure tenancy if the tenant has not broken the terms of the agreement.

J

Job Centre Plus	Part of the Department of Work and Pensions. They are responsible for some state benefits, including Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance.
Joint Tenancy	Where two or more people share a property and the tenancy agreement for the property.
Jointly and Severally	A legal expression where two or more persons are held responsible under one tenancy. Each can be held responsible for the whole of the tenancy as well as his share.

K

KPIs Key Performance Indicators	<p>Financial and non-financial measures used to help an organisation monitor progress toward organisational goals.</p> <p>Used for reporting on performance.</p>
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<p>LBS</p> <p>Leeds Building Services</p>	<p>Part of Property & Contracts</p> <p>Carry out construction and maintenance services for Housing Leeds and other council services. See also Property & Contracts</p>
<p>Leaseholder</p>	<p>Tenants who live in flats and buy them from their landlord are called leaseholders.</p> <p>They do not own the land their home is built on, and pay a ground rent for a fixed number of years.</p>
<p>Leeds High Rise Advisory Group</p>	<p>This Housing Leeds group represents tenants and leaseholders living in high rise multi-storey blocks.</p>
<p>LTF</p> <p>Leeds Tenant Federation</p>	<p>Represents Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs) and Area Reps at the highest level, championing their excellent work in local communities and supporting them to tackle issues that matter most to them.</p>
<p>LGB&T*</p>	<p>Term used to refer to people who identify themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans. The * after T is used to describe the various forms of Trans such as Transsexual or Transgender, but can also be refer to terms such as A-sexuality.</p>
<p>LGBTQ</p>	<p>Term used to refer to people who identify themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered or Questioning.</p>
<p>LGO</p> <p>Local Government Ombudsman</p>	<p>Works with the Department for Communities and Local Government</p> <p>*See DCLG</p> <p>Looks at complaints about councils and some other authorities and organisations, including education admissions appeal panels and adult social care providers (such as care homes and home care providers).</p>
<p>Loan Shark</p>	<p>Someone who lends money with very high interest rates. Often an illegal lender.</p>

L

Local Connection	<p>Term used in the council's lettings policy and has a legal definition.</p> <p>Describes when a person can establish a connection with the city or a particular area through residence, immediate family association or employment in the area.</p>
Local Lettings Policy	<p>Policy that gives preference for housing to certain groups. For instance applicants must have a local connection such as relatives or workplace and must not have a record of anti-social behaviour or crime.</p>

M

Mediation	<p>A voluntary process in which a skilled and impartial third party helps people, such as neighbours who are in dispute reach an acceptable agreement</p>
Members	<p>Term used to describe Local Councillors and MPs (Members of Parliament)</p>
Members' enquiries	<p>Enquiries received from or via Local Councillors and MPs.</p>
<p>MIC</p> <p>Money Information Centre</p>	<p>Money advice service in Leeds.</p>
Multi-Agency	<p>Several organisations working together, often from different sectors.</p>
Mutual exchange	<p>A tenant's right, under certain conditions, to exchange/ swap their tenancy with a tenant of the same landlord or another public sector landlord.</p> <p>Swaps of accommodation can be between two, three, four, or more tenants and relies on each party moving permanently into their exchange partner's property. A tenant cannot exchange into an empty property.</p>

M

Mystery Shopper	Someone who acts as a customer and reports back on the level of service they received.
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N

NEET	<p>Stands for young people aged 16-24 who are 'Not in Education, Employment or Training.'</p> <p>A person identified as NEET is either unemployed or economically inactive and is either looking for work or is inactive for reasons other than being a student or a Carer at home.</p>
<p>NISP</p> <p>Notice of Intention to Seek Possession</p>	<p>A notice served by a landlord on a tenant.</p> <p>It tells the tenant that the landlord intends to apply to court for possession of the tenancy.</p>
Nomination	When a housing association re-houses someone from the council's housing register.

O

Objectives	A set of targets or goals which guide an organisation. Performance can be measured against objectives.
One Stop Centre	A centre providing a variety of Council and partner services in one location.
Orchard	The name for the computerised system that the council uses for managing the housing register and tenancy management tasks such as rents.
Owner Occupier	<p>Someone who has purchased their home from the Council</p> <p>This does not apply to flats – See Leaseholder.</p>

Partnership	People, groups and / or Organisations which come together to provide a service.
Payday Loan	Short term loan with a very high-rate of interest, repaid using the borrower's next wage.
PayPoint	PayPoint provides a way for people to locally pay rent and household bills either at a stand-alone terminal or over the counter.
PFI Private Finance Initiative	<p>A public/private partnership using private sector finance to provide public services through joint working.</p> <p>A PFI arrangement for local government is that the private sector partner may own the capital assets (e.g. the properties in the case of housing PFI) as well as delivering the service.</p>
Possession Order	<p>A legal document obtained by landlords from the Courts to gain possession of a property from a tenant who has breached the terms of the tenancy agreement.</p> <p>Sometimes referred to as an Order for Possession.</p>
Procurement	Buying in other services that another organisation will then deliver, e.g. cleaning services.
Programmed Works / Maintenance	Maintenance scheduled in advance for works such as gas servicing, painting, replacement of heating systems, renewal of fabric of the building and modernisation.
Property and Contracts	Part of Housing Leeds delivering services relating to repairs, improvements and investment.
PRS	Private Rented Sector

Q

Quorum	The minimum number of members an organisation needs at any meeting to make any decision, as laid down in its constitution.
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R

Racial Harassment	Verbal or physical attacks on a person or on property. The violence is suffered by individuals or groups because of their colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins.
Rainbow Roofs	This Housing Leeds group represents Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender tenants and leaseholders.
Rechargeable Repairs	Repairs carried out by a landlord which the tenant must pay for, because they caused the damage.
Refurbishment	The renovation and/or improvement of a property.
(RSL) Registered Social Landlord	<p>This term was introduced by the Housing Act 1996 to describe a social landlord that is registered with the HCA. RSLs provide homes and housing services to people in housing need.</p> <p>There are various types of organisations - such as housing associations or housing co-operatives. Some are charitable and some are known as local housing companies.</p> <p>RSLs are non-profit making and are controlled by boards or management committees made up of unpaid volunteers.</p> <p>(Also see Housing Association)</p>
Rent	Money paid to a landlord by a tenant in exchange for occupying a property.

Rent Arrears	<p>An unpaid, overdue debt; money owed.</p> <p>If a tenant falls behind with their rent payments, whether paid by Housing Benefit or the tenant, they are said to be in rent arrears. Being in arrears is a breach of the tenancy agreement and can lead to eviction.</p> <p>Tenants who are in rent arrears would be advised to contact their landlord as soon as possible to try and sort the problem out, as being in arrears is a breach of the tenancy agreement and can lead to eviction.</p>
Rent Convergence / Restructuring	<p>Has been in place since 2002. The initial aim was to achieve the alignment of social sector rents by 2012.</p> <p>A revised target convergence date for local authorities is 2015-16. Rent convergence also sets a maximum annual rent rise for an individual tenant.</p>
Repairs Groups	<p>These Housing Leeds groups work with housing teams to ensure quality customer focussed services are delivered, such as repairs and maintenance, adaptations and improvements.</p> <p>There are currently three groups representing the East, West and South areas of Leeds.</p>
Responsive Repairs	<p>Day-to-day repairs to homes done in response to requests made by residents.</p>
Review	<p>A review is an evaluation, scrutiny, inspection or audit of a publication, service, or company.</p> <p>For instance Housing Leeds will review standard letters to ensure they are fit for purpose.</p> <p>We may also review a how particular service is delivered to ensure it is meeting the requirements of our tenants.</p>
RTB Right to Buy	<p>Some local authority and housing association tenants have the legal right to buy their home at a price lower than the full market value.</p>

R

Right to Repair	Local authorities are obliged to carry out certain small, urgent repairs which are likely to affect a tenants' health, safety or security, within a prescribed time limit. This is known as a tenant's Right to Repair.
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S

SAP	<p>The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the method used by the Government to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of dwellings.</p> <p>Its purpose is to provide accurate and reliable assessments of dwelling energy performances that are needed to underpin energy and environmental policy initiatives.</p>
Secure Tenancy	The vast majority of local authority and housing association tenants whose tenancies began before 15 January 1989 are secure tenants and have a range of additional rights covered in the Housing Act 1985.
Service charges	Tenants and leaseholders may incur additional charges for the provision of certain services. Service charges are paid in addition to rent (e.g. for communal lighting in a block of flats).
SIVs Service Improvement Volunteers	Housing Leeds tenants and leaseholders volunteering to take part in a range of activities to help us develop housing services.
Sheltered Housing	<p>Housing, mainly for elderly people, who wish to maintain their independent lifestyle with or without support.</p> <p>Homes can be linked to a 24-hour on-call alarm system in case of emergency.</p>
SLA Service Level Agreement	An agreement between departments or partners that state how certain services will be delivered.
Social Exclusion	The term used to describe individuals or groups of people who do not have the means to participate in social, economic, political or cultural life.

Social Inclusion	This is a position from where someone can access, experience and benefit the full range of opportunities available to members of society.
Social Media	Online communication via websites and other applications such as Twitter and Facebook. Housing Leeds has Twitter and Facebook sites, and web pages.
Spare Room Subsidiary	Also known as 'bedroom tax or 'under-occupation charge', it is a change to Housing Benefit entitlement that means housing benefits in social housing will be reduced if a tenant lives in a property that is deemed to be under-occupied. If there is one spare room, housing benefit is cut by 14% and by 25% for two or more spare rooms.
SSO Sheltered Support Officer	A member of Housing Leeds staff who helps sheltered housing tenants to live independently in their own home, by making referrals to agencies that would assist them to achieve this. They provide activities at sheltered schemes to promote health and wellbeing.
SSP Self Service Portal	Allows Housing Leeds tenants to access their tenancy details online and perform basic tasks such as updating personal details and viewing their rent account.
Stock Condition Survey	Help to assess the need for planned maintenance.
Sublet	The action of a tenant in letting their accommodation to be occupied by another person.
Supported Housing	Housing that can include specialist accommodation for those with particular needs, e.g. those with mental health problems, other disabilities, learning difficulties, h drug or substance abuse problems, and women fleeing violence.
Sure Start	A Government scheme which aims to achieve better outcomes for children, parents and communities.

T

Target rents	Rent levels for council and housing association properties. They are set by using a Government formula based on size, location and condition, local incomes and the value of homes.
Tenancy Agreement	A signed contract between a landlord and a tenant. A tenancy agreement sets out what is expected of each party, and what rights each has.
Tenant	A person who enjoys exclusive occupancy of a property owned by someone else in exchange for payment of rent.
TARA Tenants and Residents Association	A locally based group of residents who have joined together (formally or informally) to discuss and raise issues with local services, improve their area or organise social events.
Tenant Scrutiny Panel	A group of people have been appointed to examine housing services to ensure that they are right and fair. Leeds has a Tenant Scrutiny Panel.
Tenant Handbook	Handbook provided to new tenants. It contains useful information about the tenancy and Housing Leeds.
TMO Tenant Management Organisation	An organisation run by social housing tenants that takes on the management but not the ownership of their homes and estates.
TPAS Tenant Participation Advisory Service	A Tenant engagement organisation that brings tenants and landlords together through a wide range of services, independent and impartial advice, support, consultancy, and training.

U

Unacceptable Behaviour	Behaviour that goes against what is generally acceptable to society. Can include criminal acts as well as less serious behaviour such as general un-neighbourly behaviour.
Under Occupation	This occurs when the tenants in a property are not fully occupying it (for example, a couple in a 3 bedroom house).

U

<p>Universal Credit</p>	<p>A new means-tested benefit.</p> <p>It is a single payment that replaces income based Jobseekers Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Child Tax Credits, Working Tax Credits and Housing benefit payments.</p>
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V

<p>VFM</p> <p>Value For Money</p>	<p>The term used to assess whether or not an organisation has obtained the maximum benefit from the goods and services it acquires and/or provides, within the resources available to it.</p>
<p>VITAL</p> <p>Voice of Involved Tenants Across Leeds</p>	<p>VITAL is Housing Leeds' strategic tenant group which directs and oversees the overall Tenant Involvement Framework.</p> <p>Members of each of the main involvement groups are represented on VITAL, helping to ensure that all tenants have a voice and can influence housing services.</p>
<p>VOLT</p> <p>Voice of Older Leeds Tenants</p>	<p>This Housing Leeds group represents our older tenants, including those living in our sheltered properties.</p>
<p>Void Loss</p>	<p>Rents lost as a result of a property not being occupied.</p>
<p>Voids</p>	<p>Empty properties generating no income.</p>

W

Welfare Reform	The name given to recent changes that have been made to the welfare system, including changes to how various benefits are calculated.
<p>WTC</p> <p>Working Tax Credit</p>	<p>A welfare benefit. For a person to get Working Tax Credit either of the following must apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aged from 16 to 24 and have a child or a qualifying disability • 25 or over, with or without children <p>A person must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work a certain number of hours a week • get paid for the work they do (or expect to) • have an income below a certain level
Working Group	A small group set up to work on a particular task

Y

<p>YAgI</p> <p>Young Adults Getting Involved Group</p>	This Housing Leeds group encourages and supports tenants and leaseholders aged 16 to 35 to help shape housing services and improve neighbourhoods.
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