**Fairer, Healthier Leeds. A Marmot Place.**

**September 2024**

Last year was a significant milestone in our collective efforts to address health inequality in Leeds, as we committed to be a Marmot place. We instigated a partnership with the Institute of Health Equity (IHE), led by Professor Sir Michael Marmot, with the aim of establishing measures and approaches that will enable us to be bolder in achieving our ambition to improve the health of the poorest the fastest. There has been great progress, which we are pleased to summarise for you below.

A two tall buildings in a city

Description automatically generated

**Whole system review**

Despite some successes in tackling health inequalities, they remain a persistent problem for the city. Through our partnership with the IHE, we requested a whole system review of our strategies and approaches to addressing inequalities. The review has been completed, resulting in the [Fairer, Healthier Leeds: Reducing Health Inequalities report.](https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/fairer-healthier-leeds-reducing-health-inequalities)

Many of you will have been involved in this, and the report really helps highlight what we do best in Leeds, namely our strong partnerships and innovative approaches. In the report, the IHE have put forward 15 high-level system recommendations in the areas of 'leadership and accountability', 'effective partnerships', and 'research and monitoring'. Implementing these recommendations will enable us take better advantage of what we do well, whilst also galvanising leaders behind a new bolder culture that delivers effective changes.

The Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board have put their full support behind the 15 recommendations and will continue to influence leaders across the city to work collaboratively in embedding them across the system. The Marmot City Strategic Delivery Partnership will be developing a city-wide action plan to deliver the recommendations.

**Fairer, Healthier Leeds (Marmot City) indicator set**

Another important outcome of our partnership with IHE has been the development of the [Fairer, Healthier Leeds (Marmot City) Indicator set](https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/fairer-healthier-leeds-reducing-health-inequalities/indicators-narrative.pdf), which provides a robust and consistent way of tracking our city-wide progress in tackling health inequity. The indicators have been drawn from those reported via the Social Progress Index, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Public Health performance report, and mapped against the Marmot 8 principles. Crucially, except for two developmental indicators they can all be disaggregated by either ward or Index of Multiple Deprivation decile. This enables close analysis of inequalities in the social determinants of health/building blocks and in health outcomes. These indicators have been adopted by the Best City Ambition (BCA) as central to the BCA scorecard.

**Focussed work: Housing, 0-to-5 years.**

In addition to the system-wide review, in the first year of our partnership we have also been doing more focussed work on housing and on children aged 0 to 5 years and their families/carers. Through a series of data and evidence reviews and workshops with colleagues, bold action plans are currently being developed which will enable us to tackle inequity in these areas more effectively. These action plans will be shared in due course.

**People’s voices**

It is important to note that throughout all the work highlighted above, the voices of local people have played a central role. As a city, this is an area where we particularly put a lot of time and effort as we strive to put people at the heart of decision making. We have worked closely with the People’s Voices Partnership and with the Council’s Consultation and Engagement Network and others, meaning we have been able to benefit from the rich insight that already exists. We have analysed this insight within the context of the 8 Marmot Principles, and this has fed into the whole system review and subsequent recommendations.

**A partnership making a difference: join up, scale up, be bold**

The work with the IHE has aimed to understand in more detail where and how we can go further and faster in addressing health inequalities in the city and is focused on bringing about a whole-system, culture change that embeds equity at the heart of every decision.

Part of the feedback from the IHE is the need to ‘join up’ (support better collaboration and transition from a culture of short-term pilot projects to longer-term sustained investment) ‘scale up’ (maximise where approaches are working to meet the size of the challenge in Leeds) and ‘be bold’ (continue to innovate across sectors and be ambitious in our goals).

We’re already seeing this new *join up, scale up and be bold* culture play out across the city:

* In housing, a business case is being developed to **scale up**selective licensing. Our partnership with IHE helped us to carry out a robust evaluation of the existing scheme. If approved, the new scaled-up programme will improve housing conditions in some of the poorest neighbourhoods in the city, helping to address health inequalities.
* Closer **joined up** working between housing and the NHS at strategic and operational levels. This has meant supporting primary care to understand the opportunities with social prescribing and feeding into joint training between housing and health.
* Being a Marmot City has led to the development of a new ‘social determinants template’ within primary care, which will enable practitioners to quickly signpost people to key services that can help them with issues like housing or benefits advice – an example of **bold** innovative cross-sector action.
* Embedding greater accountability for health equity across the system particularly in Economic Development, Asset Management and Regeneration and the Best City Ambition.

**Getting involved and next steps**

Our Fairer, Healthier Leeds programme and partnership with the Institute of Health Equity has already yielded fantastic outputs which will help transform the ways we tackle and measure health inequity moving forward. We’d like to thank everyone that has been involved in the work, it has been a real Team Leeds effort to get us to this point.

As already mentioned, attention will now turn to implementing the system recommendations that came out of the whole system review and creating a bolder culture right across Leeds that will reinvigorate our commitment to talking health inequity. With the reports on housing and 0–5-year-olds due soon, we have a framework in place to drive forward the transformational recommendations that come out of those reports.

Our partnership with IHE will be in place for another year, and they will be able to continue challenging and helping us to make a bigger difference. We have also asked them to work with us on another of the Marmot principles – addressing racism and discrimination and their outcomes.

But to make the bold changes that we need, and to truly put health inequity at the heart of *everything* we do in Leeds, we need all parts of the city to get involved. Here’s how you can be part of the change:

* Familiarise yourself with the reports mentioned in this briefing, especially the 15 recommendations in the Fairer, Healthier Leeds: Reducing Health Inequalities report.
* Host a conversation with people in your organisation or service about how you embed ‘equity approaches’ into your core business.
* Support the work being done through the [Marmot Strategic Delivery Group](https://docs.google.com/document/d/101BLKQ8vTuJQLveHH25T0Gur4IFSdyJ9/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=112244925626882714477&rtpof=true&sd=true) to produce and implement an Action Plan in response to the IHE System recommendations.

We have developed a series of slides and discussion points which you can use to bring your teams together to discuss the ways you can help make Leeds a fairer, healthier city. [These are available here](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/13uTS_O3HpJqDlHCZi71IHJzU33KMuWQl/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=112244925626882714477&rtpof=true&sd=true). We’d love to hear from you! Get in touch and let us know how you have used the toolkit, and what actions your team have come up with. Your stories may help inspire others, so please get in touch at: [marmotcity@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:marmotcity@leeds.gov.uk).

If you have any questions about the programme please contact Sarah Erskine (Head of Public Health – Health Inequalities [sarah.erskine@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.erskine@leeds.gov.uk))