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Builder, Council Join to Create Affordable Housing in U.K. City

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Leeds, U.K.--Starting this spring, homebuilder Bellway and the Leeds City Council will begin delivering new affordable rental and for-purchase homes to replace poor-quality housing in east and south Leeds.

Newcastle-based Bellway is building a variety of more than 700 new homes --including flats, villas and townhomes--for first-time, low-income and seasoned homebuyers. The homes will be priced below the average area home price, according to Judith Atkinson, Regional Director for Bellway City Solutions.

The first phase of development involves the construction of 742 new homes, marking the start of a 20-year renewal program across EASEL (East and South East Leeds), which will ultimately deliver more than 5,000 new affordable homes.

Two-bedroom apartments in the new development will start at £110,000 (\$172,339) and three- and four-bedroom homes will begin at £130,000 (\$203,732).

In addition, Bellway and the Leeds City Council will form a joint venture company to oversee construction and private development funding used to subsidize projects. The Leeds City Council will use some of the project funding to invest in school, training and job development.

"Over the lifetime of the initiative, the council is committed to make sure that local people have a big say in what happens in their area," says Michael Molcher, Leeds City Council press officer. "The changes we are undertaking have come about because local people told us this is what they want."

Homes in the first two sites--located in Gipton and Seacroft--will go on sale in the spring.

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