

Housing Asset Management Strategy

2025 to 2029

Contributors

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In consultation and collaboration with Housing and Community,
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Portfolio Holder's statement of support

The Housing Asset Management Strategy 2025 to 2029, sets out a clear, evidence-based plan for how we will manage and invest in our housing assets to deliver real and lasting benefits for our tenants.

Our housing portfolio is one of our most valuable community assets. With over 5,000 homes across the district, it provides secure, affordable housing for thousands of residents. To protect and strengthen this legacy, we must make smart, data-driven decisions about maintaining, investing in and growing our housing stock.

The strategy gives us the tools and framework to do exactly that. It's about ensuring we have accurate, up-to-date data about our homes and allows us to use that evidence to:

- Target investment where it will have the greatest impact for tenants and provide us with the best value for money.
- Reduce future maintenance costs and needs by targeting our investment.
- Ensure our homes remain safe, warm and well-maintained for the tenants that call them home.
- Support us in meeting our Net Zero aspirations and support reductions for our declared climate emergency.
- Support us as we strive to exceed our regulatory requirements.

Its goal is simple: to improve our tenants' daily lives by providing safe, high-quality, affordable homes that meet the needs of our tenants today and in the future



Introduction

This strategy has been developed to guide the council in the efficient and effective management of its assets as a core requirement in ensuring they are fit for purpose.

It sets out the top-level framework for managing our Housing Revenue Account residential and garage portfolio, and General Fund residential portfolio over the next five years.

It is intended to be a dynamic strategy which creates a roadmap of the challenges that lay ahead of us and recognises there will be a multitude of options for achieving the things we set out to do.

It will guide our future strategic property decisions to ensure we manage our asset portfolio sustainably and efficiently so that it can adapt to remain fit for the future.

It contributes to our commitment to provide safe and well maintained homes as set out in the Regulator for Social Housing's Consumer Standards.

It will also complement our other core strategies and ambitions.

The Housing Asset Management Strategy is not only required to direct our investment priorities but also demonstrate how we will deliver excellent services to our tenants, leaseholders and wider stakeholders.

The strategy outlines the approach and commitments the council is making under the following key themes:

1. Asset data and investment planning
2. Service delivery and performance management
3. Energy efficiency and decarbonisation
4. Compliance and building safety
5. Regeneration and new homes

We will manage our capital investment, cyclical maintenance, and repairs service to ensure our homes are safe, secure and well maintained for the benefit of our residents.

We will deliver a cost-effective service that makes the best use of resources and will prepare for a comprehensive approach to investment in housing for the longer term.

This strategy is part of a collection of asset management strategies being formed under a corporate landlord approach.

The scope of this strategy includes the following asset types:

- HRA (Housing Revenue Account) - general needs
- HRA - sheltered and sheltered plus
- GF (General Fund) - residential (held)
- HRA - garages

As a strategic plan, it assesses the current environment of the business, both internally and externally.

It establishes future goals and targets and describes the approaches it will implement to reach them to grow and be ready for the future.

The focus of the strategy is on the strategic and operational asset management outside of any larger-scale future housing needs and wider large-scale development plans.

This aspect will be dealt with under an emerging new homes development strategy for which there will need to be a collaboration of these strategies, both aligned to the HRA business plan.

Stock portfolio

As of 1 September 2025, we own and manage a total of 5,495 homes across the district, of which 5,108 are social housing and 387 are leaseholders.

These are located across the district as follows:

Table 1: Social housing numbers by postcode

Postcode	Number of social houses	Number of leaseholders
CT1	1,972	163
CT2	1,027	126
CT3	219	17
CT4	257	15
CT5	848	26
CT6	785	40
Total	5,108	387

Table 2: Characteristics of homes in the council's portfolio as of 1 September 2025

	House	Flat	Maisonette	Bungalow	Hostel	TOTAL
Studio	1	258	0	112	0	371
One bedroom	0	1,223	0	250	20	1,493
Two bedrooms	749	681	85	154	2	1,671
Three bedrooms	1,381	20	55	1	0	1,457
Four bedrooms	104	1	2	0	0	107
Five bedrooms	9	0	0	0	0	9
TOTAL	2,244	2,183	142	517	22	

A total of 4,181 council homes is for people of all ages while 927 properties are designated specifically for people aged 55 and over.

Table 3: Number of households in need shown by number of bedrooms required as of 29 September 2025

Property type	Housing Needs on Register
Studio / 1 bed	761
2 bed	193
3 bed	261
4 bed	94
5 bed	8
Total	1,317

Table 4: Council housing stock by age as recorded on asset management database as of 1 September 2025

Construction year	Number of properties	Percentage of stock
Pre 1919	837	16%
1920-1945	1,446	28%
1946-1964	353	7%
1965-1974	1,261	25%
1975-1985	687	13%
1986-2010	371	7%
2011 onwards	153	3%
Total	5,108	100%

Table 5: Designated classification of use as of 1 September 2025

Use classification	Percentage of housing stock
General Needs	81%
Older Persons Accommodation (Includes Sheltered, Semi-Sheltered, Sheltered Plus)	19%

We look after 387 leasehold properties and 1,214 garages.

Background

Following the decision to bring housing services back in house with the conclusion of East Kent Housing in 2020, it is essential time is taken to establish the strategic direction of the service and ensure its core operations merge into the wider council strategic aims.

Shortly after bringing the housing service back in house an Asset Management Interim Position Statement was produced to cover the period of April 2021 to March 2022.

This detailed 10 objectives to focus on while an overarching asset management strategy was produced.

These were:

Objective 1

Gap analysis on the benefits of property asset management

Objective 2

To ensure all property and asset data is consistent and, on a uniform, agreed recording hierarchy

Objective 3

Formulate an approach to ascertain stock condition on a progressive basis

Objective 4

Establish a cross-service approach for redevelopment opportunities, new-build, acquisitions and disposals

Objective 5

Undertake a review of the voids process

Objective 6

Deliver the statutory, regulatory and policy requirements for keeping residents safe in their homes

Objective 7

Appraise and deliver a range of solutions to improve the environmental impact of the housing stock

Objective 8

An interim and on-going Approach to Asset Maintenance and Repairs

Objective 9

Develop an asset categorisation approach

Objective 10

Develop the longer-term asset management strategy for 2022 onwards

A review of these objectives has been carried out to identify those which have been completed, those still in progress and that where further review or attention is required.

Relevant actions have been carried forward to this strategy.

Lessons learnt from the implementation of the Asset Management Interim Position Statement include:

- better communication of the asset management strategy across the council is needed at senior decision maker level
- better understanding of what an asset management strategy is needed across the council and at senior decision maker level
- detailed and aligned service action plans which can be disseminated into team plans and individual objectives with targets to enable a better cross-service approach
- using the strategy as a 'working document' which helps drive change, culture and communication across the organisation
- continual updating of strategy in line with external changes and financial priorities
- improved data and planning activities to ensure delivery as an on-going action

Financial background on expenditure:

Below is an illustration of expenditure, both capital and revenue for the maintenance of our housing stock over the last three financial years.

Further financial elements are covered in the HRA business plan which sets out our income and expenditure plans for delivering council housing services.

Financial Year	Revenue expenditure (£)	Capital expenditure (£)
2024/25	8,379,931	5,355,045
2023/24	8,797,884	5,340,203
2022/23	7,117,501	4,728,609



Strategic vision, dependencies and objectives

The Housing Asset Management Strategy provides a framework under which the investment detailed in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and strategic priorities within the Corporate Plan can be achieved.

This strategy sets out our asset management approach and key objectives to guide and monitor progress through the set period.

Our stated key themes illustrate our intentions and expectations.

Details around activities and investment required to deliver it will be monitored through individual projects, supporting plans and operational strategies.

This strategy is designed to be agile to accommodate further changes in the external environment as current thinking, regulation and technology evolves.

It also needs to adapt to reflect changes in wider investment priorities and strategic objectives of the council.

Corporate Plan:

We have a core strategic objective to meet the housing needs of our residents.

This is reflected in our Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028 key priorities.

The Corporate Plan is supported by the Net Zero Action Plan that will significantly influence how we deal with our assets.

The Net Zero Action Plan creates a golden thread running through council policies and actions as we play our part in tackling climate change, fuel poverty and caring for our environment.

The Corporate Plan is supported by the Local Plan and wider work on how the district will change over the next 20 years, an additional factor in the impact on our housing assets and derived strategy to manage these assets.

HRA Business Plan:

This is a significant document as it brings together the financial capacity for delivering the key aspects of housing provision and the longer-term ability of the service to achieve this.

The seven key strategic outcomes for the HRA Business are:

1. ensure the HRA's finances are robust and sustainable
2. provide safe, well-maintained homes for local people in housing need at prices they can afford
3. focus on the council's statutory housing responsibilities, particularly homelessness prevention
4. reduce the cost to the GF of accommodating homeless households.
5. build or buy enough homes each year to counteract the impact of the Right to Buy
6. proactively manage HRA assets
7. provide good quality generalist accommodation for rent that complements the work of other Registered Providers

To ensure the asset management strategy is deliverable, it is critical to understand this business plan and profile this against known and identified additional investment.

For the purposes of this strategy, the latest HRA Business Plan (2019) has been used as reference.

This document is available on the council's website.

Dependencies and prioritisations:

A key consideration and dependency on delivering this strategy will be the associated costs and investment needs.

To meet the energy decarbonisation targets and to address any historic component replacement will require additional investment and resourcing.

This will require financial capacity building through more efficient delivery, better data understanding and improved organisation for planned investment to maximise economies of scale and to avoid unnecessary expenditure in those properties where it does not add value.

The dependencies and considerations will need to be understood and addressed throughout the strategy period.

To help manage the budget to meet our priorities, we have set out below how we will allocate funds within the HRA when maintaining our assets.

The top three priorities are based on keeping people safe, tackling fuel poverty and climate change and adapting stock to meet the needs of residents.

The full prioritisation list is set out below in descending order:

1. Compliance and building safety

We expect all our homes to provide safe and healthy places for our tenants to live and meet all our statutory obligations as a landlord.

This covers areas such as gas safety, risk of fire, electrical safety, water hygiene, asbestos control and lift compliance.

This also covers ensuring that all our properties are free from any category 1 hazards under the housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS).

2. Energy saving measures

We are working towards all our housing and community assets to have an EPC (where applicable) of C rating or above by 2030. This will also ensure that our tenants in risk of fuel poverty are accounted for.

3. Disabled adaptations

We need to provide for our tenants with accessibility needs.

This is done on a case-by-case assessment of those tenants' needs.

4. Void Works

Void turn-around work is essential for maintaining rental and income from letting of our housing stock.

This is to reduce the number of properties we have empty at any one point in time.

5. Building fabric

To carry out work to ensure the protection of our housing assets building fabric. Outside of any of the other priorities above (numbers 1 to 4).

6. Mechanical and electrical works

To carry out work to our mechanical and electrical plant to ensure it is working at an optimal state. Outside of any of the other priorities above (numbers 1 to 4).

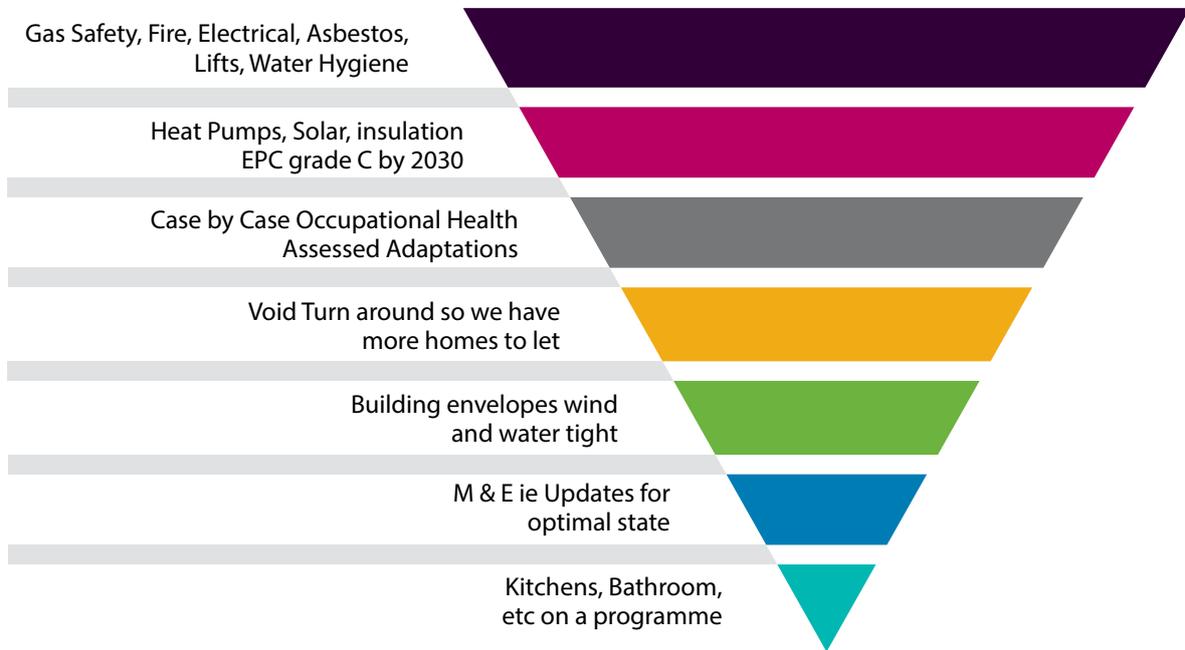
7. Building internal fit out

To carry out work such as kitchen and bathroom replacements based on life and condition. Outside of any of the other priorities above (numbers 1 to 4).

This priority list forms the basis of our approach to maintaining our housing assets and managing the HRA budget.

Other areas of exceptional investment such as acquisition, regeneration and remodelling of our stock will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and with due consideration to an emerging new homes development strategy.

Spending prioritisation



1 Compliance and Building Safety

2 Energy Saving Measures

3 Disabled Adaptations

4 Void Work

5 Building Fabric

6 Mechanical and Electrical

7 Building Internal Fit-out

Key themes:

The strategy is centred around five key themes (in no particular order), each with an overarching key objective.

The key themes will inform a range of operational activities, some of which will be day-to-day business as usual and others which will drive innovation, change and move the council to a more proactive asset management approach.

Each key theme is designed to be cross-cutting under a collaborative approach,

achieved by the services in the wider organisation working together.

Actions resulting from this strategy will be linked to one of the key themes with clear goals defined to align to the core aim.

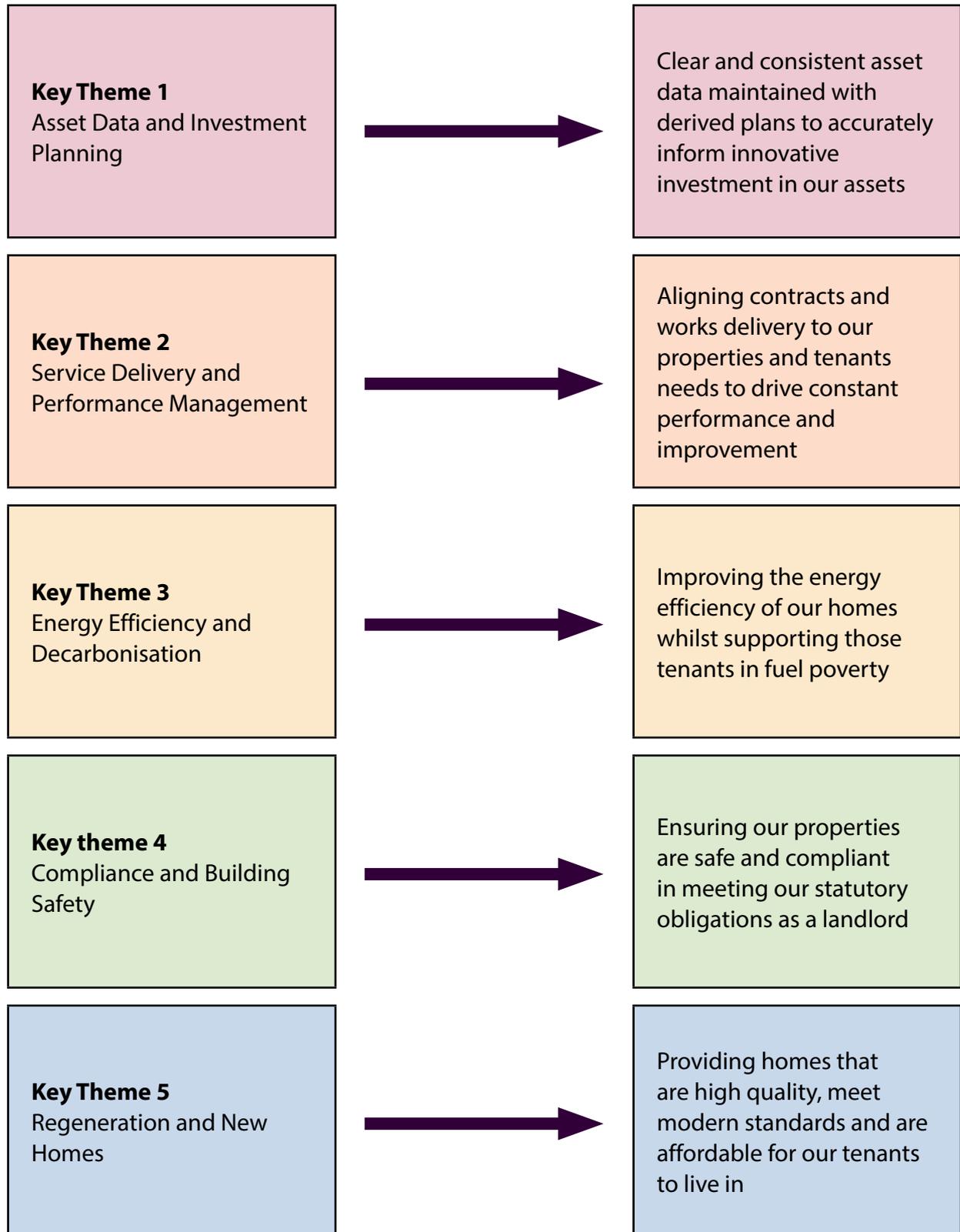
These actions will be reflected in service, team and individual objectives, giving clear responsibility and accountability for delivery.

To achieve this cross-service key working groups will be set up under the designated key theme lead officer.

The key themes are further explained in their sections below and the key theme and key objective are as follows:

Key themes

Key objectives



Key Theme 1

Asset data and investment planning

Key theme lead

Lead Strategic Assets Manager

Key objective

Clear and consistent asset data maintained with derived plans to accurately inform innovative investment in our assets

Sub objectives

1. Ensure all property and asset data is consistent and, on a uniform, agreed recording hierarchy aligned to the corporate systems and data strategy
2. Develop and deliver a rolling programme of stock condition and HHSRS surveys to improve data validity and confidence
3. Fully develop plans from the data to inform 30-year investment plans for finance and five-year works plans for delivery

Develop a plan to meet decent homes targets of 100% decency

There is a requirement for planned investment to improve energy efficiency, as well as the ongoing investment in key components (kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors and roofs) and building safety.

To effectively balance and manage these priorities we must ensure we have a strong approach to understanding our assets, the service expectations of our tenants as well as the data to support our decision making.

A large amount of ongoing validation of our asset data will ensure increased certainty in asset decision making and will inform our capital plans to improve homes.

Additionally, this must be clear and well communicated to ensure we take a co-ordinated and consistent approach to our investment in the housing stock.

We see this being managed through an improved approach to both asset and service data and intelligence, so we know as much as we possibly can about our tenants and their homes.

Sub objective 1 - ensure all property and asset data is consistent and, on a uniform, agreed recording hierarchy aligned to the corporate systems and data strategy

Our asset information continues to be held on a variety of IT systems with reliance on major intervention to extract, compile and interpret.

Information is also held on spreadsheets, where no bespoke system is in place, further compounding the problems.

Some core business data is held on external service providers systems with a reliance on them to extract and report.

Core data is not consistent with varying numbers and categories of property noted in different systems and a lack of routine data reconciliation being in place.

Digital has completed work in relation to establishing a single asset management database with the upgrade of the Northgate (NEC) computerised management system.

The creation of Northgate as the sole enterprise system improves visibility of data to all and leans towards a holistic approach to data management, informing all areas of the council.

There is a division between Digital and service delivery teams where Digital maintains the system and the service delivery teams input and maintain the data within the system.

Then, the Strategic Assets Team manages, validates and uploads data provided where direct input is not possible.

Goals:

- Our systems and data will be aligned under an approach led by Digital following its reviewing what we use and the needs across the services.
- Data entry and systems approach within Case, Locality and service will be aligned.
- Data validation will be an ongoing function integrated within the approach, undertaken by the Strategic Assets team when developing the work delivery plans, investment plans and strategies.

Targets:

- Above completed October 2026

Sub objective 2 – develop and deliver a rolling programme of stock condition and HHSRS surveys to improve data validity and confidence

Having accurate and up-to-date stock condition surveys will be vital to understanding the current standard of our properties, as well as being able to carefully project the requirements over the 30-year investment plan.

The data associated with our stock condition is not satisfactory to be used as a robust investment planning tool.

A stock survey was last undertaken in 2017/18, and the scope of data collection was constrained.

It is understood the levels of information

collected for properties internally was 30% and for external aspects 100%.

The validity of this data is concerning from samples of plans and programmes put together it has been found to be inaccurate.

A major improvement going forward is the digitisation of stock condition surveys wherein Locality officers can directly input data on site, improving the accuracy and retention of data immediately.

We have established in-house resources to carry out stock condition and HHSRS surveys and will also be contracting external resource to ensure we meet our deadline of July 2026 for completion of the surveys.

This will be targeted to our residential stock to get a full picture of the condition of our assets over the period of 2023 to 2026.

Programmes have been developed by the Strategic Assets team for delivery by the surveyors, focusing on those properties where we have the oldest or most incomplete data, or data which looks to be out –of line with the generality of assets under an on-going approach.

It should be recognised an assessment on condition and quality of assets is a subjective judgement, in part, by the surveyor at a point in time.

Identifying medium and long-term liabilities etc, investment programme formulation at property level must be driven by strategic asset management.

Goals:

- To have a rolling programme of stock condition and HHSRS surveys to improve data validity and confidence.
- Data cloning will be used for properties that cannot be accessed with a note added to the systems.
- To comply with the requirements set out within the consumer standards that

current asset data should be based on a current physical inspection.

Targets:

- 100% stock condition surveys by July 2026.
- From December 2026 onwards we will put in place surveys over a five- yearly (quinquennial) basis to ensure stock data validity and confidence is maintained and we remain compliant with the consumer standards.

Sub objective 3 - fully develop plans from the data to inform 30-year investment plans for finance and five-year works plans for delivery

We are currently operating to a more reactive approach due to the lack of data to plan from and create accurate forecasts for 30-year investment and five-year work delivery plans.

Using data from our stock condition surveys and analysis of existing data, there is a need to develop a five-year work delivery plan identifying the required packages of work.

This will be focused on our agreed spending and resource allocation priorities as described in our dependencies and prioritisation.

It will be alongside those areas such as compliance and building safety and energy saving measures first and foremost in terms of our asset priorities.

We will need to align these plans to areas of opportunity such as grant funding initiatives under a proactive approach.

Development of 30-year investment plans will align to our budget forecasting and financial approach.

This will give us valuable insight into our stock for good business planning and programming and the need to make decisions based on this.

Goals:

- To establish five-year work delivery plans for procurement and delivery following the stock condition survey data in 2027.
- To develop with finance 30-year investment plans following the stock condition survey data in 2026.

Targets:

- Above to start 2026.

Sub objective 4 - develop a plan to meet decent homes targets of 100% decency

This links back to our condition and HHSRS information held and the need to carry out further surveys to inform the accuracy and validity of this.

This uncertainty does put some doubt around the validity of the levels of compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements (HHSRS rating and Decent Homes standard).

We have a need to ensure that the information is correct so that we can develop our investment plans in line with ensuring our homes remain decent.

Goals:

- To use the data from the condition and HHSRS surveys validated against existing data held to align investment and work delivery plans to keep our properties decent.

Targets:

- From March 2027 onwards.

Key Theme 2

Service delivery and performance Management

Key theme lead

Lead Asset Works Delivery Manager

Key objective

Aligning contracts and works delivery to our properties and tenants needs to drive constant performance and improvement

Sub objectives

1. Create contract management and reporting frameworks to improve service delivery and feedback for all key contracts
2. Develop and deliver five-year works delivery and procurement plans
3. Develop an ongoing approach to asset maintenance and repairs, inclusive of voids works standards
4. Creating a clear management and resolution framework for disrepair, damp, mould and condensation

All activities relating to repairs, maintenance and investment are provided by council-appointed contractors.

All workstreams, activities and contracts are generally identified as being under the following categories:

- Maintenance – for example responsive maintenance, void works, communal cleaning
- Compliance - for example gas servicing, fire safety, electrical testing, lift maintenance;
- Investment - for example renewing kitchens, bathrooms, roofs, windows.

Existing contracts have been procured using competitive tendering.

The Responsive Repairs and Void contract with Cardo South has two cost streams ie price per property and schedule of rates (SoR) markup.

Sub objective 1 - create contract management and reporting frameworks to improve service delivery and feedback for all key contracts

We have secured new contracts to deliver responsive repairs and continue to procure new contracts for planned works investment and energy efficiency measures.

To support this, we will continue to develop a robust contract management and reporting framework which will provide a consistent and auditable measurement of our contractors' performance.

We will review our contract management processes, contractual performance indicators (PIs), key performance indicators (KPIs) and satisfaction feedback methods to improve the way in which we manage our contracts.

Working with our supply chain we will identify ways in which we can better use technology to capture tenant and leaseholder feedback, to improve contractor performance.

We will identify similar organisations where we can benchmark our services, costs and performance to gain best practice knowledge across the sector.

This will be used to create improvement plans for our key contracts and set realistic PIs within our contracts and as commitments to our tenants.

This information will be shared with our tenants and leaseholders to provide a transparent view of service delivery.

Goals:

- All externally sourced contracts will be procured and will be providing excellent benchmarked value for money and delivering an excellent service.
- Value for money will be maximised across all contracts ie be able to provide the best possible service to residents for the lowest possible price.
- Consideration will be given to the benefits of combining planned investment contracts with cyclical maintenance or response and void maintenance contracts.

Targets:

- On going improvement.

Sub objective 2 - develop and deliver five-year works delivery and procurement plans

From the strategic investment and work delivery plans established under strategic asset management these will need to be operationally developed and aligned to procurement and contracts for operational delivery.

Planned and cyclical improvement programmes are undertaken by contractors but there is good business sense in having a five-year work delivery plan to look at where possible contract consolidation or apportionment for best contract management.

Goals:

- Develop delivery of work which maximises our supply chain's economies of scale and productivity.

- To produce scheduled works plans from the strategic investment and works delivery plans

Targets:

- Above by April 2027.

Sub objective 3 - develop an ongoing approach to asset maintenance and repairs, inclusive of voids works standards

We will make an ongoing judgement on objective grounds about which maintenance can, at present, be deferred.

That might include assets for which there is an imminent capital replacement programme, assets which are scheduled to be disposed of and asset maintenance items which neither present a risk to life, health or a breach of compliance.

We will seek to minimise the problems by looking at refining procedures for reporting, ordering and establishing expectations (noise, mess, timing and interruptions).

We will refine our procedures for communication to make sure tenants and leaseholders are aware of our work schedules and impact and make sure our contractors know of the tenants, leaseholders and our expectations.

Goals:

- A separate Reactive and Planned Maintenance policy and plan will need to be worked on over the interim period linking the tactical approach to the strategic approach of an overarching asset management strategy.
- This will need to look at standards and response times. It will need to enable effective maintenance to ensure that needs are catered for and looking to maximise value for money in consideration of financial constraints.

- An approach to how we get specific deliverables so it's measurable and understand what is required on resourcing this will be developed.

Targets:

- Reactive and Planned Maintenance Policy – November 2026
- Remainder by March 2026

Sub objective 4 - creating a clear management and resolution framework for disrepair, damp, mould and condensation

As well as providing safe and suitable homes, we also need to ensure our homes are not detrimental to our tenant's health and wellbeing.

We have been actively managing and understanding the challenges we have within our homes around disrepair, damp, mould and condensation.

Given the renewed public spotlight on damp and mould issues, it is imperative that we double down efforts to improve stock condition and prevent any ill effects to tenant health from damp and mould.

We will create a range of remedial solutions which can be implemented quickly and easily, minimising disruption to tenants.

Through our asset data and repairs history we will identify property archetypes or trends which may lead to future disrepair cases and develop longer term plans to implement operational works pre-emptive maintenance.

Goals:

Compliance with our obligations under The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 using new processes.

We will investigate the use of technologies, such as sensors which can monitor levels of CO², damp and component life, to provide real time insight to the compliance and performance of our properties. This will allow us to formulate clear management and resolution plans for our approach.

Targets:

An approach for doing this will be established by April 2026



Key Theme 3

Energy efficiency and decarbonisation

Key theme lead

Lead Strategic Assets Manager

Key objective

Improving the energy efficiency of our homes whilst supporting those tenants in fuel poverty

Sub objectives

1. Appraise and deliver through investment plans a range of solutions to improve the environmental sustainability of the housing stock
2. Using our data, aim to secure funding for eligible projects leading to energy efficiency and decarbonisation
3. Working towards all of our homes having an EPC rating of C or above by 2030
4. The progressive replacement of fossil-fuel heating systems with low carbon, energy efficient alternatives

The council has taken a very proactive approach to energy efficiency and decarbonisation and declared a climate emergency in 2019.

We have set an ambitious target to be a carbon neutral council by 2030.

This means that our property portfolio, our contractors and our own operations will all need to work to rapidly decrease carbon emissions.

This corporate objective is also partly supported through the government's Clean Growth Strategy, which has set a target for social housing providers to attain the minimum rating of EPC Band C for rented properties by 2035, and 2030 for 'fuel poor' households.

The government sees this as an important milestone towards the longer-term requirement of all homes being carbon-zero by 2050, in the UK.

For our housing assets, to date, no systematic or specific policy approach to energy efficiency and decarbonisation, other than measures required by regulation, have been undertaken.

Historically piecemeal interventions were taken and centred on double glazing, insulation to roofs, external walls, lofts and heating.

Our focus is to ensure:

- Those improvements will be made to the least energy efficient buildings first.
- We put in place measures for the ongoing information gathering and review on energy performance of dwellings and EPCs held;
- Securing and delivery of schemes supported by grant regimes;
- Key skills are accessible to deliver grant supported initiatives, training in-house staff where needed;
- We work with our contractors to ensure they have the necessary skills to deliver sustainable decarbonisation across the portfolio.

Sub-objective 1 - appraise and deliver through investment plans a range of solutions to improve the environmental impact of the housing stock

Our aim will be to ensure the energy efficiency of all our properties is such that any new tenant who might occupy our homes will not suffer fuel poverty due solely to their home's energy inefficiency.

We will continue to target those properties most at risk through current and future investment programmes or through regeneration.

Where properties are awaiting investment or disposal, we will help customers wherever possible through the provision of targeted information, advice and education.

As with any financial projections relating to assets, detailed surveys, a strong understanding of the contractor market and identification of external funding is required.

As is identification of key skills and resources for delivery.

Our intention is to always take a Fabric First approach when investing in our properties, to meet a carbon neutral position. Fabric First describes an approach to improving the thermal performance of residential buildings by prioritising the improvement of fabric before mechanical and electrical improvements. Not only does this provide the most sustainable and cost-efficient improvements for our tenants but is also aligned to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund principles.

Examples of this may be cavity, loft or wall insulation, replacement windows and doors or more efficient lighting (especially in the case of communal areas).

To reach a carbon neutral position more intrusive and complex measures may need to be taken. This may include:

Replacement of gas heating/hot water systems and replacement with electrical/other low carbon fuels/systems

More extensive and complex insulation of roofs, walls, floors and external fenestration

A whole house retrofit strategy following the principles of PAS2035

Goals:

- To identify the properties that require improvement, establish budget costs and develop the detail and work on options to consider the optimal approach to delivery.
- When developing works and investment programmes we will review all measures to understand both their lifecycle and the whole carbon cost to the council and our tenants. This is to ensure we are achieving the best levels of improvements (in terms of carbon savings and EPC ratings) for the investment required.
- To project the impact any new or replacement measures will have on the end costs to our tenants.
- To identify the long-term maintenance, replacements (such as inverters on solar PV Panels) and lifecycles for any measures to embed this into our stock database and asset management system.
- We will have a PAS2035 compliant retrofit programme underway at scale and pace.

Targets:

- PAS2035 compliant retrofit programme and 818 retrofits (>15% of stock) completed by December 2028

Sub-objective 2 - using our data, aim to secure funding for eligible projects leading to energy efficiency and decarbonisation

We are working cross-service to access funding being provided by the central government to achieve the targets set for 2030.

Following success in our bid for funding from the Warm Homes; SOcial Housing Wave 3 Fund, Canterbury City Council will continue to pursue available funding for energy efficiency improvements by horizon scanning for opportunities. This may include

subsequent waves of Warm Homes Social Housing funding and the usage of Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding. We commit to keeping our data up to date through cyclical programmes such as stock condition surveys and will upskill our staff to facilitate data collection through appropriate training.

Goals:

- To attract funding to support investment and must develop designs, specifications, procurement and delivery models over the life of this strategy.

Targets:

- By December 2028
- Data to be recorded in a consistent manner in a centralised place to facilitate planning and identification of suitable properties for retrofit energy efficiency improvements
- Staff will be upskilled to facilitate data collection
- Stakeholders within the council will be informed and involved as necessary in the decisions to apply for funding, which may be subject to resource limitations including both staff and financial.

Sub-objective 3 - working towards all of our homes having an EPC rating of C or above by 2030

We are committed to being a carbon neutral council by 2030 and this is a clear priority within our asset management function.

Critical to meeting this target is to understand our current position and to develop a clear baseline which we can work against.

All properties are required to have a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) on reletting, and this service is currently undertaken by Cardo South as part of the voids contract.

It is noted not all the stock had an EPC recorded on the national database.

The information suggests approximately 30% are without an EPC.

It should be noted all landlords are required to have all their homes rated at rating C or above by 2030, this will be part of our longer-term asset management strategy consideration.

Where an EPC is required and valid:

An EPC is valid for 10 years from date of issue and a valid in-date EPC is needed when marketing and letting a property. If the EPC falls out of date with a tenant in-situ then it does not mean we need a new EPC, just that we need a new EPC when marketing to re-let.

If the renting of the property was before 2008 then no EPC would have been required.

Goals:

- To make sure that when either a void or mutual exchange leading to a change in tenancy arises, the EPC is checked and if out of date/expired then a new one is commissioned. Reflecting on lettings prior to 2008, although an EPC would not have been required, by not having one, we are still left with an issue in terms of our targets for energy efficiency, fuel poverty, damp and mould concerns and links to HHSRS on excess cold. That we endeavour to commission an EPC for properties where we do not have one and where no access is possible, we will clone and note this in our asset management system.
- There is the potential that a proportion of our homes can meet the EPC C government target, with the required investment. There will be properties which, largely due to their construction, regardless of investment will never meet the required standards or become carbon neutral. Therefore, we will need to

consider alternative long-term strategies with these properties.

Targets:

- By March 2029 we will be fully on track to achieve 100% compliance with EPC level C or better across the portfolio.

Sub-objective 4 - the progressive replacement of fossil-fuel heating systems with low carbon, energy efficient alternatives

A key element of meeting our carbon neutral target by 2030 will be the replacement of existing fossil-fuel heating systems.

The council is committed to phasing out fossil-fuel heating systems as soon as possible but recognises there needs to be a balance between provision of heating equipment to our residents and the short to medium term challenges of non-fossil-fuel alternatives.

These include cost, availability and deliverability at scale.

Goals:

- There are several considerations and impacts associated with changing our approach to the installation of gas boilers and we will develop a specific gas boiler replacement strategy to help inform our approach.
- We will have successfully migrated 50% of solid fuel heating and electrical resistive heating systems to low carbon alternatives.

Targets:

- Boiler replacement strategy will be developed by March 2027.
- Migration of solid fuel and electrical resistive heating systems by March 2028



Key Theme 4

Compliance and building safety

Key theme lead

Lead Compliance and Building Safety Manager

Key objective

Ensuring our properties are safe and compliant in meeting our statutory obligations as a landlord

Sub objectives

1. Assess the current roles and responsibilities, both internally and with our contractors, to ensure separation of responsibilities as well as qualifications and accreditations for oversight needed
2. Review our current management and reporting processes and understand the potential need for improved systems to better support compliance
3. Create a suite of communication templates to be provided to tenants and leaseholders detailing all relevant compliance documentation and assurance
4. Develop five-year servicing programmes with estimated remedial works creating a long-term financial projection for building compliance and safety

The focus on compliance and building safety has rightly been brought to the forefront of the housing sector.

Ensuring our properties are both safe and secure is our highest priority. We must maintain our compliance levels and monitor safety on an ongoing basis.

In January 2020, a plan of recovery was agreed with the Regulator for Social Housing

(RSH) and programmes of works were started with additional resources to existing programmes made available.

At the point of the transfer of services from East Kent Housing, progress had been made to regularise the position.

This work continued post transfer at Canterbury City Council under a dedicated Compliance and Building Safety team in the drive to leave regulation.

We categorise compliance into 'the big 6' key areas, plus Damp & Mould for monitoring:

- Fire safety - monitoring arrangements in place to prevent and mitigate the destruction of a building caused by fire.
- Water safety - hygiene and safety of water systems are monitored to ensure sufficiently low concentrations of harmful bacteria do not pose a significant risk to those in or around the building.
- Asbestos - safely monitoring asbestos containing materials in situ or facilitating their safe removal within a building to mitigate or eliminate the risk to occupants.
- Gas safety - arrangements are in place to monitor the inspection and maintenance of gas appliances and other equipment in homes.
- Electrical safety - monitoring arrangements to ensure electrical installations within a building meet the required safety standards under law.
- Lifts - occupant and user safety for lifts and associated lifting equipment is monitored through inspections and examinations to ensure safety standards under law are met.
- Damp & Mould – Monitoring arrangements in place to ensure CCC hit the strict deadlines for investigations and actions set out in Awaabs law.

Alongside these seven key areas we also ensure that our properties are free from any category 1 hazards or high scoring category 2 hazards under the HHSRS (Housing Health and Safety Rating System).

The work associated with achieving the necessary levels of assurance on the safety of homes will continue.

It is accepted this is an aspect of long-term commitment and, in the short term, is subject to significant change from emerging legislation and regulatory requirements.

Sub-objective 1 - assess the current roles and responsibilities, both internally and with our contractors, to ensure separation of responsibilities as well as qualifications and accreditations for oversight needed

It is imperative we ensure our teams and services are fit for purpose in delivering compliance and building safety for the benefit of our residents.

This is in looking at the role of the Compliance and Building Safety team for the oversight needed to maintain clear and suitable controls.

The requirement of this team to interface both with the strategic element and operational delivery requirements.

Liaising with those teams for contractual delivery and work oversight in a clear way.

Ensuring the necessary qualifications and accreditations are in place throughout the areas needed in service areas such as FM, Case and Technical Locality.

For our contractors we will also need to ensure that there is appropriate separation of responsibilities and accountabilities in place.

Goals:

- Under continuous improvement, to review the roles and responsibilities central to the Compliance and Building Safety team in line with other teams and services focused on work delivery.
- Review training needs within supporting teams and services relevant to Compliance and Building Safety.
- We will review all our core compliance areas to ensure that there is the appropriate separation of responsibilities between the council and contractors. This is to make sure that the relevant checks and balances are in place to mitigate further risk.
- We will assess both our internal processes and that of our contractors to confirm all relevant qualifications, accreditations and quality management processes are present and retained throughout delivery.

Targets:

- To undertake this by the end of the 2026/27 financial year (March 2027)

Sub-objective 2 - review our current management and reporting processes and understand the potential need for improved systems to better support compliance

Due to the critical and increasing nature of this area of work, we have identified we require better systems and processes to monitor our activities.

Having a robust reporting system will allow us to ensure that our servicing and remedial works programmes are continually monitored and can provide evidence and assurance to tenants, leaseholders and stakeholders of our overall compliance.

Goals:

- Have a system that can be used across the council, being able to monitor remedial works and management actions. This will be supported by an overarching compliance framework which will address the points required for the delivery and monitoring of these areas of compliance.
- Working alongside our development team in Property and Regeneration we will embed this framework into the design, development and handover processes for any new build properties.

Targets:

- An approach for doing this will be established by March 2027

Sub-objective 3 - create a suite of communication templates to be provided to tenants and leaseholders detailing all relevant compliance documentation and assurance

To comply with the Fire Safety Act, it is important we have good and clear communication with our residents for compliance and building safety.

This was highlighted in the Grenfell inquiry as an area of concern.

Goals:

- Where required, we will provide building specific safety files which will detail all relevant information about the building and its tenants. This will be mandatory for our sheltered schemes detailing all relevant compliance documentation (ie FSRAs), servicing plans and compliance assurance.
- To complete building safety cases for all three high rise buildings. This must include a mandatory reporting system, a building safety management system and

a resident engagement strategy for each building.

Targets:

- By March 2027

Sub-objective 4 - develop five-year servicing programmes with estimated remedial works creating a long-term financial projection for building compliance and safety

In a response to the Fire Safety Act and Building Safety Bill, we acknowledge we need to develop more detailed servicing and remedial works plans we can share with our tenants and leaseholders.

This is especially important where leaseholders may be responsible for a proportion of these costs.

These servicing programmes, along with the building safety files, will allow us to gain more foresight into the upcoming risk, liability and investment that will be required to ensure continued compliance and safety.

They will also allow us to have a more coordinated approach to work delivery, from both a responsive and planned investment perspective.

Goals:

- We will develop five-year servicing programmes with estimated remedial works creating a long-term financial projection for building compliance and safety; considering the impact on Service Charges and Leaseholder Recovery.

Targets:

- By March 2027

Key Theme 5

Regeneration and new homes

Key theme lead

Head of Property and Regeneration

Key objective

Providing homes that are high quality, meet housing needs, modern standards and are affordable for our tenants to live in

Sub objectives

1. Establish a cross-service approach towards identifying and determining opportunities for regeneration, redevelopment, new-build, acquisitions and disposals
2. Create a long-term garage and small sites development strategy, with the scope to deliver against cross-council objectives and priorities, whilst also identifying opportunities for regeneration, redevelopment and the construction of new homes

A critical part of our strategy is to ensure we have the 'right homes, in the right location, for the right people'.

Providing quality homes does not only relate to the condition of the property but also ensuring that it is the correct home for our residents.

This includes identifying opportunities and sites that are in suitable and in appropriate locations for the development of new homes.

This is outside of any larger-scale future housing needs and wider large scale development plans.

This aspect will be dealt with under an emerging new homes development strategy for which there will need to be

a collaboration of these strategies, both aligned to the HRA business plan.

Sub-objective 1 - establish a cross-service approach towards identifying and determining opportunities for regeneration, redevelopment, new-build, acquisitions and disposals

To ensure we are meeting the needs of our tenants and delivering the right homes, in the right locations, for the right people, a cross-service approach needs to be developed between the relevant council services and teams.

The key services that have been identified as needing to be involved in the delivery of this objective are:

- Housing and Community Services – leads on the assessment of housing needs in the district, which is reflected in the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy. Housing need is assessed on a district-wide basis, and the source of this data is the Canterbury Housing Needs Assessment, a key study that is undertaken in accordance with government guidance and is shared with the Local Plan. The housing needs of applicants for council accommodation, as reflected in the council's housing needs register, is included as part of the Canterbury Housing Needs Assessment. Detailed analysis of the housing needs register directly informs the HRA Business Plan 2019, in which the council commits to maintaining its housing stock at 2019 levels by building or acquiring an average of 27 dwellings per year to replace those lost each year through Right to Buy sales. This is not sufficient to meet the

demand for council homes but represents an important commitment to council housing.

- Property and Regeneration – leads on the identification, design, development and delivery of district-wide physical regeneration and redevelopment projects, new-build project management and managing the council's programme of land and property acquisitions and disposals;
- Contracts and Facilities Management – leads on the delivery of the contracts and hard FM aspects and is responsible for the ongoing life cycle management of our residential stock.
- Senior management level engagement and decision making is required in respect of the interaction of these services.

This includes direction on who takes the internal lead client role in respect of housing and other HRA assets, to ensure there is clear direction in place to allow services to work together harmoniously to develop and implement a methodology that assesses and evaluates the overall value of an asset, so that strategic management decisions can then be taken to ensure any actions taken deliver (whether directly or indirectly), feasible, financially viable and sustainable accommodation solutions that meet the housing needs of the district, as well as the expectations of residents.

Goals:

- We will identify those individual properties, geographically linked groups of properties or blocks which require further review, then assess and evaluate options that will inform the development of longer-term strategic asset management solutions. This may be to remodel, refurbish, redevelop or dispose of properties.
- We will also identify areas of land held within the Housing Revenue Account

that present development opportunities to deliver further new homes. As well as helping us identify investment return, these alternative opportunities will ensure our housing stock is continually meeting housing needs and those of our residents.

- We will develop a programme of new housing acquisition and delivery that helps contribute to ensuring the council is able to report a net positive number of new council stock homes annually, when also taking RTB sales into consideration.

Targets:

- An approach for doing this will be established by April 2026.

Sub-objective 2 - create a long-term garage and small sites strategy, with the scope to deliver against cross-council priorities and objectives, whilst also identifying opportunities for regeneration, redevelopment and the construction of new homes.

Our garages and small sites are under constant review.

The strategic and operational management is shared between Property and Regeneration, Housing and our FM services.

We must bring together the existing work that has been carried out to create a more robust garage and small sites strategy.

This will focus on those areas where we can identify development potential to build new homes on HRA land, as well as creating improvement programmes to bring up the standard of our garages and maximise rental income.

It will also consider the potential for disposals.

The strategy will include the requirement for site appraisals that identify options

and opportunities for regeneration and redevelopment.

It will need to combine the income generated by rents and any capital receipts linked to disposals.

It will need to consider the whole life cost of maintaining the garages and small sites identified for retention via condition survey information, reactive repairs information and operational costs such as administrative processing.

HRA Garage Management Strategy [Housing revenue account garage management strategy.pdf](#)

Goals:

- Create a long-term garage and small sites strategy, which has the potential

to deliver outputs that meet wider corporate objectives and priorities, while simultaneously identifying opportunities for delivering new council homes. Ultimately to produce a strategy that looks to either retain, redevelop or dispose of the garages and small sites with a plan identified for each site, or geographically linked group of sites, that enables clarity and the best overall use of the asset(s) over an agreed period of time.

- We will ensure cross-service engagement in all projects and monitor progress and delivery against key outputs through corporate governance and monitoring arrangements.

Targets:

- By April 2026.



Governance, communication, monitoring and review

The governance and responsibility of strategic delivery will be held by the Lead Strategic Assets Manager, and we will create an asset management steering group aligned to our corporate landlord approach.

Through the asset management steering group, the Lead Strategic Assets Manager will ensure we are aligned to our corporate landlord approach, that the strategic objectives are being maintained and actions are progressed and completed.

Operationally, the strategy will be monitored quarterly, focusing on delivering the projects and initiatives identified within the action plan which will be cascaded into service plans, team targets and individual objectives.

The steering group will provide a quarterly update which can be shared with the Management Team and councillors.

The strategy and action plan outcomes will be reported to the Management Team every six months, providing a review of activity and plans of the upcoming areas of focus.

The strategy will be reviewed every five years, with the supporting action plan being revised and updated.

At these review points, new strategic objectives and commitments may be developed to replace those completed or reacting to changes in the external environment.

The strategy will be communicated across the council, with tenants, leaseholders and external stakeholders.

We will provide a summary of the strategy to new tenants when they move into their home.

We will also update our tenants and leaseholders on progress through regular communications, newsletters and consultation meetings.

Throughout the strategy we will invite feedback from tenants as to our progress and work to include formal feedback through our communications.



Policies, procedures and strategies

This strategy should be read in conjunction with other business documents including, but not limited to, the following:

- Corporate Plan 2021 - 2024
 - The Local Plan
- Canterbury City Council Climate Change Action Plan
 - Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy
 - UK Government Collection: Local government, climate change and the environment
- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- Housing, Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy
 - Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy
 - Allocations Policy
 - Tenancy Strategy
 - Rent Setting Policy
 - Tenancy Policy
- Compliance and Building Safety Policies (Gas, Fire, Water, Asbestos, Electrical, Lifts)
 - Asbestos Management Plan
 - Damp and Mould Policy - Residential Buildings
- Stock Condition Survey Strategy
- HRA Garage Management Strategy
- HRA Acquisition and Disposal Policy
- The emerging new homes development strategy

Corporate Plan (explains the council's future vision and ambitions for the district.)

Local Plan (sets out local planning policies and identifies how land is used, determining what will be built where, it provides the framework for development across the district.)

Canterbury City Council Climate Change Action Plan (explains the importance of climate action as part of the council's work.)

Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (supports the aims of the Local Plan and Corporate Plan, it presents a comprehensive picture of local housing needs and sets out how the council, along with partners, will respond to the housing challenges faced by the district.)

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan (sets out our income and expenditure plans for delivering council housing services.)

Housing Asset Management Strategy (Canterbury City Council's strategic plan for managing its housing assets.)

Allocations Policy (sets out the council's approach to the letting of social and affordable rented homes in the district. It applies to both council owned housing and nominations to housing owned by participating Registered Providers. It includes the eligibility criteria for acceptance on to the Housing Needs Register (HNR) and explains how housing needs are prioritised.)

Tenancy Strategy (allows Registered Providers and the Private Rented Sector to work with the council to provide a more flexible housing)

Tenancy Policy (sets out how the council will operationally deliver the tenancy strategy.)
Rent Setting Policy (sets out how the council will calculate and charge rent.)

Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy (sets out Canterbury City Council's approach to the placement of households in temporary accommodation both inside and outside the district.)

HRA Acquisition and Disposal Policy (provides a framework that enables acquisitions and disposals to be used effectively.)

HRA Garage Management Strategy (sets out how we are managing our garage assets.)

Tenant Improvement Requests procedure (How to deal with requests from tenants asking to carry out alterations or make improvements to their homes.)

Damp & Mould Policy (sets out the council's approach, processes and responsibilities for the control of damp and mould.)

Stock Condition Survey Strategy (sets out how the council will calculate and charge rent.)

Contract management frameworks (contracts to deliver our responsive repairs, planned works investment and energy efficiency measures.)

Compliance & Building Safety Policies (Gas, Fire, Water, Asbestos, Electrical, Lifts)