



Asset Management Strategy 2025-29

We're focused on providing good quality, safe, sustainable and affordable homes within desirable communities where residents can flourish. This Strategy is one of the main drivers for the Housing Revenue Account business plan.

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1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This strategy outlines the Council's approach to managing the condition of its housing stock, delivering a cost-effective service whilst considering its customers' voice. It aligns closely with the Council's Plan and provides a comprehensive overview of the Council's housing assets and garages within the Housing Revenue Account. The strategy aims to inform key decisions regarding stock improvements, redevelopment, and disposals.
- 1.2 The Strategy incorporates recent legislative changes, particularly the reformed building safety regulations introduced in response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy and the recommendations of the Hackitt Report. The strategy is being implemented in a challenging environment, characterised by ongoing budgetary pressures in the public sector and significant changes to government housing policies and standards.
- 1.3 In recent years the Council has prioritised:
- redeveloping sheltered housing sites,
 - delivering decent homes (as defined by the Decent Homes Standard),
 - Making properties more energy efficient,

This Strategy will be delivered by making long-term investments guided by stock condition and lifecycle cost analyses. There will be a specific focus on fire safety improvements. Looking ahead, the Council recognises the need to explore redevelopment opportunities for other housing stock, where such efforts can support broader financial and social housing objectives.

2.0 Executive summary and actions

- 2.1 The Asset Management Strategy for the housing stock will provide a framework to ensure assets are effectively managed to support the Council, its communities, and residents. Strategic asset management is vital in ensuring that assets are managed in a structured way, whilst providing flexibility should the external environment change. This Asset Management Strategy covers the period 2025/26 to 2029/30 to ensure effective delivery of the Council's priorities. The Strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure its success.
- 2.2 There are 6 commitments for the next five years of this Strategy which are set out below.

Our asset management commitments are to:

- Provide and maintain good quality warm, safe and decent homes that are compliant with all health and safety requirements.
- Use resident engagement and customer insight to improve the delivery of the service, reduce costs and increase satisfaction.
- Deliver an effective and efficient modern repairs service that is responsive to customer needs.
- Achieve service efficiencies and consistency by embracing technology, and ensuring data is used intelligently.

- Respond to climate change by reducing carbon emissions from within our homes, working towards net-zero carbon by 2030.
- Have a sustainable long-term financial investment plan to deliver this asset management strategy ensuring our homes are fit for the future.

3.0 National context and drivers for change

3.1 Social Housing Regulation Act 2023.

This Act introduced new Consumer Standards for social housing. Alongside this the Regulator of Social Housing is more actively involved in holding providers of social housing to account for their performance in delivering core landlord services. This regulation includes an inspection process for social landlords every 4 years, who are also required to submit Tenant Satisfaction Measures on an annual basis. These measures provide performance information for example on repairs, decent homes, health and safety, complaints. It also includes a tenant perception survey which assesses how satisfied tenants are with services being provided by their landlord. Under this new regulatory process there is a clear emphasis on tenant engagement, health and safety, scrutiny of performance, data and knowing who your tenants are, and the condition of individual properties in the housing stock.

3.2 Housing Ombudsman

Under the above Act, the Housing Ombudsman's powers have been increased, and they have an active role in driving change within the social rented sector. Alongside their powers to make Complaint Handling Failure Orders, direct compensation, and issue fines, they also produce *lessons learnt* reports from complaints which are often topic specific. Landlords are expected to review these alongside their own policies and procedures.

3.3 Building safety

There are increased requirements in terms of building safety and in particular fire safety and the associated costs required to meet these are significant. This is also impacted by a national shortage of contractors and labour with the appropriate skillset to carry out some of this complex work.

3.4 Future Government Consultations

The Government is expected to consult on an updated Decent Homes Standard in 2025. This is likely to introduce additional requirements relating to the state of repair of homes, new requirements on damp and mould and on safety and security of the home. Changes to the standard will have budget implications for social landlords.

A consultation is also expected on Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards for rental properties. This will include a proposal for private and social rented homes to achieve Energy Performance 'C' or equivalent by 2030.

In addition to the above there are also external factors such as political and economic uncertainty which may also affect our ability to invest to meet future standards.

4.0 Local Context

4.1 St Albans district is an affluent and desirable place to live. This has an impact on the affordability of housing in the area with both house prices and rental vales exceeding national average. However, there are some areas of deprivation where some of our social housing stock is located. In addition, around a fifth of the Council's housing stock is made up of properties that were built of a non-traditional construction.

4.2 Council Plan 2024-2029

The Council's overarching vision is a happy, inclusive and sustainable community. To help deliver this there are 5 areas of high priority set out below.

- Combat Climate Emergency
- Deliver more social housing
- Support our Local Economy
- Enhance the District's Cultural Offer
- Promote Equality, Inclusion and Fairness

4.3 Sustainability and Climate Crisis Strategy 2024-2027

The Council's Sustainability and Climate Crisis Strategy sets out actions that will be taken to achieve net zero carbon emissions target by 2030.

We have 93% stock condition surveys completed, although these will be refreshed over the next 5 years from April 2025. This data has informed the 5-year asset management strategy and will be improved upon annually during the period of this strategy.

5.0 Links to other Strategies

5.1 This Strategy also aligns to other Council strategies and plans including the [Housing Strategy](#), [Garage Strategy](#), [Local Plan](#), [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#). It will also influence inter-related plans and policies. This will ensure that the management of our assets is part of a wider approach to delivering high quality services.

6.0 Overview of SADC's Housing Stock

6.1 The Council's housing stock as of 1st April 2024 stood at 4899 dwellings, comprising 4,819 general accommodation dwellings and 80 temporary accommodation dwellings. The tables below show the breakdown, by dwelling type and number of bedrooms:

General Needs Stock	Flat	Bungalow	House	Totals
One bedroom	1077	302	24	1,403
Two bedrooms	918	9	490	1,417
Three bedrooms	31	10	1866	1,907
Four bedrooms	0	0	83	83
Five bedrooms	0	0	6	6

Six or more bedrooms	0	0	3	3
Totals	2,026	321	2,472	4,819

Temporary Accommodation Stock	Flat	Bungalow	House	Totals
One bedroom	44	0	0	44
Two bedrooms	26	0	2	28
Three bedrooms	3	0	5	8
Totals	73	0	7	80

Total Stock as of 1st April 2024	4,899
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6.2 The age profile of the stock (4899 dwellings) is shown below:

Year of Construction	Number of Dwellings
Pre 1919	420
1920 - 1939	438
1940 - 1959	1962
1960 - 1979	1523
1980 - 1999	427
2000 - 2019	70
2020 Onwards	59
Total	4899

The table above shows that approximately 71% (3485 homes) of the Council's housing stock were built between 1940 and 1979. The average age of our stock is 68 years, with approximately 81% of stock being over 50 years old.

6.3 Most of the Council's housing stock is traditional brick built, typical of that generally associated with local authority social housing. However, within the total housing stock there are 1,057 properties classified as 'non-traditional' construction of varying types shown in the table below:

'Non-Trad' Type	Units
Airey	52
Belfry	108
Drury/Gregory	89
Drury/System '3'	134

Hawksley Aluminium BL8	9
High Rise flats (Hybrid)	60
Lovell	186
Swedish	3
Trusteel	6
Unity	140
Unknown	3
Wates	87
Wimpey 'No-Fines'	180
TOTAL	1,057

- 6.4 In addition to the 4899 Council owned freehold dwellings, there are a further 1027 (as of 1st April 2024) leasehold dwellings, for which the Council owns the freehold. The leasehold dwellings are categorised as follows: -

Leasehold Category	Units
Flats within Housing Blocks with internal communal areas	532
Flats/Maisonettes with independent access (No internal communal areas)	495
Total	1027

7.0 Health and safety – the legal framework

- 7.1 There are key pieces of legislation to adhere to. This helps ensure compliance and building safety. These include:

- The Building Safety Act 2022 (BSA) introduced a new regulatory regime for higher-risk buildings, specifically those over 18 metres high or have at least seven storeys and contain at least two residential units,
- The Fire Safety Act 2021 applies to any building containing two or more properties in terms of fire safety,
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 with a clear focus on building safety and the tenants' voice,
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, which ensures that all rented accommodation is fit for human habitation,
- Awaab's law was introduced in July 2023 as part of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 detailing expectations around managing hazards within homes.

7.2 Statutory obligation

We undertake various statutory obligations related activities within the Council's homes and its communal locations, these include: gas checks, electrical checks, smoke and carbon dioxide detection checks, water hygiene checks, asbestos checks and lift safety checks.

7.3 Disrepair

Many social landlords have seen an increase in housing disrepair claims following introduction of legislation, specifically the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) act 2018. The Council saw 17 active cases in 2022/23, 40 in 2023/24, and an estimated 80 in 2024/25. It is expected this will continue to increase during the life of this strategy.

Closer scrutiny of all legal cases will be in place at the start of 2025, and a review to ensure our lawyers are helping resolve issues quickly and delivering value for money for the Council.

8.0 Effective communication and customer voice

- 8.1 This strategy has been developed with the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum who were consulted on both the priorities within this strategy and this 'customer voice' section.

Tenant and Leaseholder views of the Council as a landlord, and in particular their views of the repairs service, have been collated from the 2023 and 2024 Tenant Satisfaction Measures. Improvements to the service are required given that satisfaction with the repairs service has been around 60% in both years, and satisfaction that the home is well maintained scoring on average 3% lower.

- 8.2 There have also been extensive discussions about repairs and maintenance at the Tenant & Leaseholder Forum in Q3 of 24/25, and a discussion at the Housing & Inclusion Committee meeting again held in Q3 of 24/25, where Councillors discussed current issues directly with senior members of Morgan Sindall Property Services.

- 8.3 The two main issues coming from the Forum were 'respect' and 'security'. Both issues were written into the current Resident Engagement Strategy and have been considered within this Asset Management Strategy. Respect must be a cross-cutting requirement for all Council staff and contractors to underpin communication and budgets need to allow for an element of security e.g. for things like fencing, lighting and CCTV. Clearer service standards around repairs are required to meet customer expectations, and lead to greater satisfaction, with particular focus on associated communication.

9.0 Sustainability and net zero carbon

- 9.1 In 2020, St Albans District Council declared a climate emergency, committing to achieving net-zero carbon emissions across its Housing Revenue Account social housing stock by 2030. This exceeds the UK Government's 2019 declaration of a climate and ecological emergency, which set legally binding targets for achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. The Climate Change Act 2008, supported by the Government's Net Zero Strategy (2021) and Net Zero Growth Plan (2023), provides the legislative framework and carbon budgets required to meet these ambitious goals.
- 9.2 The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) is a government initiative aimed at improving the energy efficiency of social housing properties. Its primary objectives include reducing carbon emissions, lowering heating costs for residents, and making homes warmer and more sustainable. Housing providers must co-fund a portion of the costs alongside government grants. Over the first three waves of the fund, SADC successfully upgraded 428 homes to December 2024, improving their Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings to C or better. These upgrades included insulation improvements, energy-efficient windows, solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, and enhanced ventilation systems.
- 9.3 The Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund Wave 3 will target further upgrades to a substantial portion of the remaining social housing stock, including blocks of flats. Selected properties will benefit from low-carbon heating systems and smart hot water tanks, piloted to provide performance data for evidence-based insights into energy consumption and carbon savings, to align with the government's mission to deliver a cheaper, zero-carbon electricity system by 2030.
- 9.4 The Council is committed to achieving net-zero emissions in its housing stock by 2030. To meet the interim target of EPC rating C by 2030 for the most fuel-poor households an estimated £41 million investment is required. Resources have been allocated to be aligned with Government grants. Works will include measures as previously discussed in 9.2. Costs for leasehold properties situated within the Council blocks of flats are included in the forecast.
- 9.5 Achieving net zero for all homes by 2030 is projected to require an additional £18 million. This will primarily include the provision and installation of alternative heating systems to fossil fuel (gas) heating. The strategy will focus on installing Electric Boilers to every property, Electric Boilers are not required to be serviced annually, this will save revenue costs in the future. This approach will not begin until the Government target to decarbonise the national grid is realised. Air Source Heat pumps will be considered if practically and financially feasible.

The Council's housing stock comprises a variety of property archetypes, including cavity wall properties and non-traditional constructions such as cross-wall and pre-cast concrete panel homes. These diverse structures will require tailored solutions to meet energy performance standards.

10.0 Sheltered housing

- 10.1 Following the redevelopment of 11 sheltered housing schemes to improve both the quality of housing for older people, and create more choice, only 2 remain. One of these was improved previously thereby providing self-contained one bed flats, and the other has had fire safety work carried out.

11.0 Garages

- 11.1 As of January 2025, the Council has 2,285 garages. 1,205 garages are currently let and 1,080 are empty. There is a waiting list of 374 applicants.

Of those empty, 420 have been taken out of management pending site redevelopment or other asset management considerations.

Another 462 require significant repair and have been 'packaged' for the contractor to schedule works and establish costs. The work will be prioritised in areas of greatest demand to help ensure the improvement costs are recouped in the additional rental income.

Therefore, the overall occupancy rate is 53%, but the occupancy rate for garages within current management control (1,403) is 85%.

The remaining 198 garages are either being advertised for let or are being repossessed for reletting.

- 11.2 Not all the empty garages are currently available for rent, with some in a state of disrepair and other sites being consolidated. There is an annual budget of £100k per annum in the Housing Investment Programme to carry out improvement works on garage sites where occupancy is high.
- 11.3 The Council adopted a Garage Management Strategy that outlines the 4 options the Council will consider for each garage site. These are to retain, redevelop, dispose of the site, or identify an alternative use for the site.
- 11.4 Several garage sites have already been redeveloped for social rented housing and since 2018/19 the Council has delivered 54 social rented properties across seven sites. There are a further two sites having feasibility work undertaken to deliver another 15 properties for social housing.

12.0 Digitalisation, innovation, IT and data management

- 12.1 We recognise that the challenges being presented over the period of this Strategy will require different thinking, new technology and new ways of working. Our approach to new technology is to be an early follower, rather than an adopter to reduce risk by investing in tried and tested solutions.

- 12.2 Where we are being innovative, we will explore a number of projects/pilots to test out their scalability, impact on customers and contribution to efficiency before they are fully rolled out.
- 12.3 We will also monitor pilots carried out by others in the sector to help us decide whether they are suitable for our needs and ensure that shared learning is done across our networks and in sector forums.
- 12.4 We will continue to prioritise a digital offer for communicating with customers in real time, recognising that how we do things is as important as what we do.
- 12.5 IT systems will be used to provide the data to improve our knowledge of our assets and assist in future management and investment decision making via a 5-year asset management plan.
- 12.6 Introducing predictive maintenance will be a driver for future plans and we will explore the use of sensor technology to enhance the customer experience of repairs by predicting breakdowns and scheduling repairs with the customer ahead of service breakdown.
- 12.7 We will help the main contractors improve their knowledge of service requirements and better understanding the tenants' voice. Our contractors will have access to real time performance information, dynamic scheduling and team member productivity. This will assist us better manage customer interactions in real time and improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- 12.8 We will trial new alternative heat and power technologies, piloting and prototyping to deliver a measured response to the need to move away from traditional forms of energy. We will extend our provision of photovoltaic arrays to contribute to our self-generated energy provision and helping tackle fuel poverty locally.

13.0 Investment decisions

- 13.1 Over the next 30 years we have committed to spending around £420 million in asset investment, with £70 million being committed during the life of this Strategy to 2030 (excluding any external or grant funding). These figures are reviewed annually and subject to change depending on the findings of the latest stock condition surveys undertaken.
- 13.2 The average age of our stock is 68 years, with 81% of stock older than 50 years.
- 13.3 The competing demands of ongoing investment in decent homes, ensuring compliance in key regulated services, our commitment to move towards net zero carbon and competing pressures on our finances are significant challenges.

- 13.4 The cost of materials and labour are likely to continually increase during the life of this strategy due to higher demand and competition. When combined with pressures to our income stream from the cost-of-living crisis, it is more important than ever that we have a clear plan which delivers value for money.

Our investment decisions will be prioritised as follows:

- the safety of our customers and achieving compliance with all legislation,
- policy commitments ensuring we provide high quality homes and services to customers and that our homes are fit for the future,
- developing new and innovative solutions to improve the customer experience and exploit new technologies.

- 13.5 We believe that by having a clear set of priorities we will be able to react dynamically to a fast-changing external environment whilst protecting our customers, meet our statutory requirements, and ensuring our stock is fit for the future.

This dynamic approach will also allow us to capitalise on grant and funding opportunities as they arise. This will be an essential part of achieving net zero carbon for the Council.

14.0 Stock Condition Survey

- 14.1 A further programme of stock condition surveys will be carried out commencing in 2025/26. The surveys will be carried out over 5 years with 20% of the stock completed each year. The surveys will also include communal areas to blocks of flats. The purpose of the stock condition surveys is set out below:

- The data from the surveys will be used to steer the investment requirements over the 30-year business plan,
- To identify any properties that fail the Decent Homes Standard, or have significant hazards for example damp and mould so that so that investment can be prioritised and targeted to those properties,
- To help identify properties that have high maintenance costs and therefore may not be performing as well as others. These properties can then be considered for disposal or redevelopment,
- To provide compliance information to the Regulator of Social Housing on non – decent homes and to ensure compliance with their Consumer Standards,
- To help inform future bidding programmes particularly around decarbonising the housing stock,
- To identify trends and understand where investment may require redirection.

During 2025 we will also be starting a programme of surveys which will be specific to the requirements of the non-traditional stock of properties.

A validation process will be built into workstreams to help ensure value for money.

15.0 Decent Homes

- 15.1 The Decent Homes Standard is the minimum standard, prescribed by government, and those dwellings that do not meet the criteria within the standards are known as 'non-decent' homes.
- 15.2 The Government's 'Decent Homes' guidance provides a breakdown of measures which are to be used to identify whether a dwelling should be categorised as 'decent' or 'non-decent'. This data is reported to the Regulator annually.
- 15.3 The criteria relates to:
- the current statutory minimum standard for housing.
 - a reasonable state of repair.
 - having reasonably modern facilities and services.
 - providing a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.
- 15.4 In its Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) return, completed in July 2024 for the previous year, the Council reported that 2.31% (113 dwellings) of its housing stock were categorised as 'non-decent'.
- 15.5 This Strategy is designed to help ensure all our homes sustainably meet the current criteria of decent homes, and any future iterations of it.

16.0 Efficiency and value for money

- 16.1 To get the most out of our investment it is essential that we deliver an efficient asset management service. There are increasing competing demands for spend on fire safety, carbon reduction and meeting new regulations and changing expectations of customers.
- 16.2 We have extended the contract with Morgan Sindall Property Services by 5 years within a partnering framework, which we believe will bring additional benefits to residents with the services provided (around larger repairs and empty homes in particular), and to the local community by the social value interventions they undertake.
- 16.3 Long-term partnerships mean we will benefit from economies of scale (from set up and infrastructure investment costs as well as volume). The Regulator of Social Housing's value for money standard requires that we clearly demonstrate our approach to value for money. This includes an excellent understanding of the performance of our assets to inform investment and plan for future placement and regeneration of our homes.
- 16.4 Our stock condition surveys are undertaken by Morgan Sindall and the data is uploaded into the contractor's IT system and is uploaded into Asset Pro software within the Council.
- 16.5 We continue to deliver a proactive asset management approach to ensure we target investment where it has greatest impact and that we identify early signs of property obsolescence, planning solutions to ensure our housing stock effectively meets the

needs of our residents. The SAM surveys provide the base evidence at a property level.

- 16.5 As members of HouseMark, a national benchmarking club, we will compare our cost base to help highlight any areas of comparative higher cost for further investigation.

17.0 Ensuring effective and efficient modern services

- 17.1 Asset Management involves delivering services with our partners to keep properties well maintained:

- Repairs - We will fix or replace existing fixtures and fittings that are not working correctly or have become unsafe.
- Planned Works - We will plan and deliver proactive maintenance activities / improvement programmes to ensure homes are well maintained and in good condition (e.g. roofs, doors, windows, heating systems, kitchen, bathrooms, external decoration, and wider estate related activities).
- Decarbonisation Works - We will deliver planned programmes of decarbonisation work supported by the government's Warm Homes: Social Housing Funds.
- Empty homes - We undertake works to bring our empty properties up to our agreed lettings standard to be re-let within target times.
- Asset Compliance - We carry out regular safety checks and risk assessment within homes and the common areas of blocks of flats, carrying out work to ensure that we continue to meet all current regulatory standards.

17.2 Adaptations

- Adaptations - We deliver adaptations based on referrals made by the County Council's Occupational Therapy team to support residents to live in their homes as their needs and mobility change. These works include things, wet rooms, stair lifts, ramps, kitchen adaptations, door widening and extensions.
- The Adaptation works are delivered by a small number of specialist contractors, and will be reviewed to ensure this delivers value for money.
- Demand for Adaptations to HRA Housing stock is expected to increase year on year, which coupled with rising costs requires close monitoring which is done through reporting to the Housing and Inclusion Committee (HIC).
- We will work closely with colleagues to future proof the stock where feasible to meet the needs of an aging population.

- 17.3 We continue to work with our existing partners, including our customers, to review all activities we provide and learn from potential mistakes to build a better and more dynamic service for the customer. Operational learning is reported annually to HIC.

18.0 Property disposals

- 18.1 The Council has a Disposal Policy. If a property meets any of the criteria in the policy, then it will be considered for disposal. The criteria include the following:

- The property needs major structural work to ensure the long-term stability of the structure e.g roof defect or instability

- The property needs major work to remove any health and safety rating system hazards or asbestos that require a high level of ongoing management to comply with Decent Homes Standard
- Properties with an Energy Performance Certificate below 'C' where the construction, location and design make it difficult meet the thermal performance requirements.
- Properties which due to their design, location or designation are no longer fit for purpose and have associated difficulty re-letting
- The property needs major works to remedy penetrating or rising damp
- Properties due to their age, design, location command a higher-than-average market value which due to their age /condition will incur higher than average costs to maintain over the 30-year Business Plan.

- 18.2 A financial assessment is carried out for any property considered for disposal. This includes the cost of works and market value of the property, and all disposals are authorised by in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

The Council has disposed of 11 properties since 2022. There were 7 disposals in 2022/23 and 4 disposals in 2023/24. The receipts from selling these properties have been used to fund new social housing developments within the Council's Housing investment Programme. There are currently 3 disposals in progress the financial year 2024/25.

19.0 New housing developments

- 19.1 The Council Plan has a priority of Delivering More Social Housing. The Housing department will contribute to this priority by increasing the amount of new housing made available for Social Rent or temporary accommodation. However, the Council has limited resources and will continue to work in partnership with Registered Providers to develop new sites for social housing.
- 19.2 Social housing is at a premium in the district. Most new housing is delivered by way of planning agreements by Registered Providers/Housing Associations on large scale developments. Typically, the Council has no control over the type and tenure of the properties. Consequently, the Council has a role to play in ensuring the delivery of additional new housing that meets the needs of applicants on the Housing Register.
- 19.3 The Council has an active new housing development programme having completed 98 properties for social rent since 2016/17. These have been built on former garage sites, sites where temporary accommodation was no longer fit for purpose, and redundant sheltered housing schemes. The Housing Department has developed a feasibility pipeline of future housing projects. These will predominantly be on Council-owned garage sites that have a high void rate and experience a high level of vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
- 19.4 In addition, the Housing Department will look at other opportunities to increase the number and quality of social housing properties by making best use of existing stock. This could include the reconfiguration or regeneration of housing no longer fit for purpose or experiencing long term maintenance issues. The Council decided that its only tower block and associated maisonettes and garages will be redeveloped to provide more modern social housing. This site is being decommissioned with residents being resettled into other accommodation.

- 19.5 The Council has received government funding to deliver additional social housing. Since 2023/24 the Council has purchased 4 properties to be provided for humanitarian purposes. In another round of funding the Council will be purchasing 6 properties for use as temporary accommodation in 2024/25 and 2025/26. Typically, these acquisitions are traditional ex-Council housing stock. The Council will continue to explore opportunities for future funding to increase its social housing stock.

20.0 Risk management

- 20.1 Given the size, scale and impact of our Asset Management Strategy we are aware of the importance of understanding and managing risk in its design and delivery. We have identified the key risks to ensure they are considered and mitigated; these are reviewed annually. These risks will be managed alongside the corporate risk register linked to the Housing Directorate.
- 20.2 Failure to meet regulation and legislation - we set our budgets each year prioritising items that deliver safety and meet legal and regulatory requirements. This ensures we achieve compliance with enough resources allocated to those programmes. Our prioritisation will also incorporate net zero targets as well as compliance with gas, electric, water, fire safety and asbestos.
- 20.3 Staff resource and skills shortages - we will ensure we have the right skills to meet the emerging demands of our Asset Management Strategy. We will upskill staff where necessary. There is a real shortage of trade skills in the wider construction industry. We will help ensure that our contractors remain competitive in the marketplace to attract and retain the right skill sets by being a supportive client. In addition, we are developing a career pathway and reviewing the training needs for all staff to ensure they have the right skills to meet the requirements of the Competency and Conduct Standard when this comes into effect from Regulator of Social Housing.
- 20.4 Health and safety - we will continue to promote a strong health and safety culture, encouraging identification and reporting of all concerns. We will have robust and transparent reporting, and a programme of health and safety training managed corporately for all staff.
- 20.5 Climate change - as global temperatures increase there are increased risks of adverse weather which may impact on our homes and on our ability to provide services. We will continue to monitor the impact of extreme weather conditions on our homes and further develop our business continuity plans to ensure we have a robust service offer in poor weather conditions.
- 20.6 Availability of supplies and materials – we have seen shortages in some key materials which have impacted our contractors (both on the cost of materials and availability). Some of these shortages are because of Covid lockdowns and others due to issues of Brexit, worldwide issues of distribution and challenges of the economic climate. We will work closely with our contracting partners to ensure they have robust supply chains and sufficient stocks to meet the needs of our services.

21.0 Monitoring of this Strategy

- 21.1 This Strategy will be reviewed annually at Housing and Inclusion Committee and scrutinised at the Tenants & Leaseholder Forum every 6 months.

22.0 Action plan

- 22.1 Provide and Maintain Good Quality Warm and Safe and Decent Homes that are compliant with all health and safety data.

- Deliver planned programmes of capital works to meet the needs of housing stock, and create a 5-year detailed plan utilising external validation from a sector expert,
- Carry out a 5-year rolling programme of stock condition surveys (to include communal areas associated with blocks of flats), which will refine the detailed plan above,
- This plan will address non-decency within the housing stock through a programme of capital works to maintain Decent Homes Standard,
- Respond to the Government's consultation on a new Decent Homes Standard in 2025,
- Develop a no access policy for difficult to access homes.

- 22.2 Use Resident Engagement and customer Insight to Improve the Delivery of The Service, Reduce Costs and Increase Satisfaction

- Involve residents in the ongoing oversight and scrutiny of our repairs and planned services via Tenant and Leaseholder Forum and bespoke focus groups,
- Seek feedback from residents via annual tenants' perception surveys, transactional surveys, online consultations, other bespoke surveys and focus groups,
- Work with resident forums to update the Repairs Handbook every 3-years,
- Introduce new Service Standards for the repairs and maintenance service,
- Expand the use of digital methods to inform residents of works, such as text messaging, bespoke project newsletters and other messages,
- Ensure tenants' voice is heard at all client/contractor meetings by inviting the resident engagement officer.

- 22.3 Deliver an effective and efficient modern repairs service that is responsive to customer needs

- Implement the small works team within Morgan Sindall Property Services to manage multi repair orders,
- Improve the way we manage/monitor damp and mould growth within the home, by considering household composition and circumstances, and severity of damp by way of risk assessments,
- Better understand trends from complaints, and learn from our mistakes to improve service delivery,
- Internal review of the Council's housing team structure and resources to ensure we deliver a modern housing service.

22.4 Achieve service efficiencies and consistency by embracing technology and ensuring data is used intelligently

- Develop a legal process to support legal matters such as access injunctions to improve performance and value for money,
- Review use of existing IT systems to ensure the correct IT systems support the delivery of this strategy,
- Ensure relevant data is used to drive service priorities and is updated as more data is available from the SAM surveys,
- Annual review of training needs of the department.

22.5 Responding to climate change by reducing carbon emissions from within our homes. Working towards net zero carbon by 2030

- Completion of works that form Wave 2.1 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund,
- Actively seek any further funding for any decarbonisation, renewable technology or retrofit programmes,
- Develop and cost a programme of works to assist in achieving EPC rating 'C' by 2030 for all homes and ensure its sustainable within the long term HRA business plan,
- Review internal working practices to identify areas to reduce our carbon footprint, and work with supply chain partners to reduce theirs.

22.6 To have a sustainable long term financial investment plan to deliver this Asset Management Strategy ensuring our homes are fit for the future

- Develop a robust and sufficiently resourced HRA funded 30-year investment and decarbonisation plan that focuses on homes that are sustainable and meet customer choice and expectation,
- Maximise the recharging of costs through the service charge mechanisms,
- Collaborate with stakeholders to attract further funding and investment to improve our homes and neighbourhoods,
- Carry out options appraisals on properties as per our acquisitions and disposal policy,
- Ensure all contracts deliver value for money through monitoring and working closely with the corporate procurement team.