



**Asset Management Strategy** 2016-2046

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## Foreword

We are delighted to introduce the new Asset Management Strategy 2016 - 2046, which sets out in detail South Derbyshire District Council's ambitions for the future of their housing stock and the key priorities for the next five years and beyond.

This Asset Management Strategy demonstrates that for the next 30 years the Council can continue to invest in its housing stock and meet the needs of present and future tenants, and ensure that we remain a landlord of choice.

A key aspiration of both the Council and its tenants is to continue to build much needed new Council homes in the district and to maintain and improve our existing homes to a decent standard. By investing in our homes we will continue to improve the quality of life of our tenants and help to support the Council's vision in 'Making South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit'.



We would like to thank everyone who has contributed towards our new Asset Management Strategy and look forward to working with our tenants and partners in continuing to maintain and provide high quality, sustainable and affordable homes in South Derbyshire.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. N. Hewlett".

Councillor Jim Hewlett  
Chair of Housing and Community Services Committee

## Executive summary

Effective asset management is fundamental to the successful delivery of an excellent service that meets the organisations' ambitions and aspirations as defined within the context and allowances of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.

The HRA Asset Management Strategy is a separate and complementary document to the HRA Business Plan, and focuses on how South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC) intends to manage its HRA asset base over the next 30 years. It is designed to inform the HRA Business Plan and the strategy sets out how we intend to meet the necessary investment requirements to maintain our properties, and continue to meet the priorities of our tenants and leaseholders.

The Asset Management Strategy (AMS) also sets out the Council's wider ambitions and demonstrates how it aligns with the strategic housing priorities contained within the Council's Corporate Plan, and how it helps to support the successful delivery of achieving the Council's vision in 'Making South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit'.

The Council's key objective is to increase and maximise the asset value of the housing stock year on year by improving the quality and condition of the stock, and maintaining, or improving the stock to at least the Decent Homes Standard.

Investing in our homes will improve the quality of life for our tenants and future tenants, and also have a measurable positive impact on the local economy.

Alongside investment in new housing, a range of actions are planned to deliver service improvements with the key priorities for investment being:

- Sustaining and improving Council stock
- Improving the productivity of staff through the use of mobile technology
- Continuing to listen and learn from customer feedback

The Council consults regularly with tenants, residents and stakeholders and consultation has taken place in the development of this strategy. This included identifying what was most important in terms of investment in homes and estates to our tenants, and ensuring that their priorities for investment are reflected in our objectives.



# Introduction

## Purpose of the Housing Asset Management Strategy

This is South Derbyshire District Council's 30 year Housing Asset Management Strategy (AMS). It covers the period 2016 - 2046, and has been developed to inform the short, medium and long term strategic framework necessary to maintain and improve the Council's housing assets. The strategy also considers the opportunities and aspirations of the Council to continue building much needed new council homes in the district.

The AMS is complementary to the Council's HRA Business Plan which sets out how the Council intends to meet the investment requirements necessary to deliver the housing service and maintain its HRA properties over the next 30 years.

The Council's housing portfolio is its highest value asset, and their maintenance and capital investment costs also form its largest liability.

## What is Asset Management and why do we need a Housing Asset Management Strategy?

Within the context of the Council's housing stock, asset management covers the range of activities required to ensure that the Council fully utilises the use of their housing, land and property assets to maximise the contribution to the HRA Business Plan, whilst continuing to meet current and future needs and expectations of tenants. The Council's HRA assets consist of houses, small retail units, garages, gardens and land.

Having a robust and pro-active Asset Management Strategy ensures that any decisions about the future maintenance, refurbishment or replacement of any of the Council's housing assets are made as part of the the over-arching strategic business planning framework which includes an established and effective scenario planning process.

Scenario planning is an integral part of the Strategic Planning Process and enables the Asset Management Team to make flexible long term plans for the future.

The Housing Asset Management Strategy cuts across all of the Housing and Environmental Services Directorate, and is a key document in ensuring that we continue to evolve to meet existing and future housing need and demand.



## Our vision for South Derbyshire

“making South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit”

The vision for the District is set out within South Derbyshire District Council’s Corporate Plan and includes three strategic outcomes:

1. Keeping residents happy, healthy and safe.
2. Creating vibrant communities to meet residents’ needs, and
3. Encouraging inward investment and tourism opportunities.

There is also a cross cutting outcome of:

Embedding a process of continual improvement throughout the workforce and operations to ensure delivery of high quality services at reasonable cost.

The Asset Management Strategy aligns with and outlines how we will support the Council in achieving their vision and outcomes. In particular we will focus on the four strategic objectives related to housing:

1. Facilitate and deliver a range of integrated and sustainable housing and community infrastructure.
2. Enable people to live independently.
3. Protect and help the most vulnerable, including those affected by financial challenges.
4. Connect with our communities, helping them feel safe and secure.

The Council recognises that strategic use of its housing stock can play an important role in helping to achieve the Council’s outcomes, and this is further supported and aligns with the three strategic housing objectives as set out in the Housing Strategy 2016 - 2021:

1. Improving access to and supply of housing.
2. Well maintained, safer, greener homes.
3. Helping people to live independently.



The Council's Housing Strategy and the HRA Business Plan outline in more detail the important role that housing plays in ensuring that the wider Council's corporate objectives and priorities are achieved.

The Asset Management Strategy informs and complements the Council's key plans and strategies, particularly the:

- Corporate Plan 2016-2021
- HRA Business Plan 2016-2046
- Housing Strategy 2016-2021
- Corporate Asset Management Strategy
- Treasury Management Strategy
- Value for Money Strategy
- Procurement Strategy.

Maintaining value for money and delivering relevant, effective and efficient services is essential. Decisions made by the Housing Asset Management Team reflect the need to ensure the long term sustainability of the Council's assets whilst meeting high levels of performance.

The key priorities for investment over the next five years can be summarised as:

- Investment in sustaining and improving the existing Council Housing stock
- A quality repairs and maintenance service
- Developing new housing - flexible by design to reflect the changing market
- Delivering value for money across all aspects of the housing service.

In addition to the investment priorities there are three over-arching Housing & Environmental Services customer focussed objectives:

- Excellent customer service
- Active tenant scrutiny and engagement
- Effective neighbourhood management and community engagement.

The Council consults regularly on developing its strategic approach with tenants, residents and partner organisations. Tenants were consulted over their priorities in developing the Asset Management Strategy, and also as part of the budget setting process, and this included identifying what was most important in terms of investment in homes and estates. Priorities identified through consultation were:

- Maintaining the Decent Homes Standard
- Sustainable lettings - matching the right people to the property
- Getting it 'Right first time'
- Disabled adaptations

The AMS will be monitored and reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that the key priorities and objectives are successfully delivered, and that it remains relevant and reflects as accurately as possible the current condition of the housing stock, tenants' aspirations and is responsive to funding availability and opportunities.

# Our Housing Vision

“Through high quality services, delivered in partnership, the provision of well-maintained affordable homes that meet the requirements and aspirations of the people of South Derbyshire”.

Over recent years the Council’s priority for housing has been to bring the stock up to, and maintain, the Decent Homes Standard (DHS).

The minimum standard set down by the Government states that properties must meet the following four criteria:

- Meet the HHSRS minimum safety standards for housing
- Be in a reasonable state of repair
- Have reasonably modern facilities such as kitchens & bathrooms
- Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

The original stock condition survey carried out in 2002 concluded that 79% of the Council’s housing stock met the DHS.

In 2009, a further validation stock condition survey was undertaken and showed that the number of non-decent properties had reduced to 2.2% (67 properties out of a stock total of 3063), and a further 5.5% (171 properties) had the potential to become non-decent before the Decent Homes target of December 2010.

All of these properties were made decent by the target date of December 2010, and all properties in the future are scheduled to maintain the standard.

All the stock condition data is held on ‘Life-span Housing’ which is an asset management software system, and which has been populated

and updated with data from the stock condition surveys, and also from the Asset Management Team ‘focus’ day in December 2015.

The purpose of the ‘focus’ day was for the team to review the entire housing stock by individual property and then update Life-span accordingly. This exercise means that the team now have an exceptionally accurate picture of the condition of the stock, and a sound base to plan for any future works to maintain decency or when undertaking any scenario planning exercise.

As part of the new regime of HRA self-financing, the Council has since 2012, been able to keep its rental income in full and use it to fund housing stock and estate improvements, as well as providing opportunities to build new homes and regenerate outdated and unsustainable stock.

A five-year Capital Improvements and Planned Maintenance Plan for the period April 2012 to March 2017, with a total budget of over £27.3m, was approved by the Council in February 2012, and will complete on time, and within budget in 2017. This improvement programme is the largest investment that the Council has undertaken on its stock, and has enabled the replacement and upgrade of key components to improve properties and prevent them failing the Decent Homes Standard, whilst still meeting the aspirations and expectations of our tenants.

This Asset Management Strategy looks to focus particular attention on the next five year investment programme for 2017-2022.

A 30-year financial projection was considered and approved by the Council in 2014/15. The HRA Business Plan had been modelled with the assumption that there would be increases in social rents for 10 years. However, in October 2015, the financial position of the HRA was reviewed following the announcement that Central Government were proposing to reduce social rents by 1% per year from 2016/17, for four years.

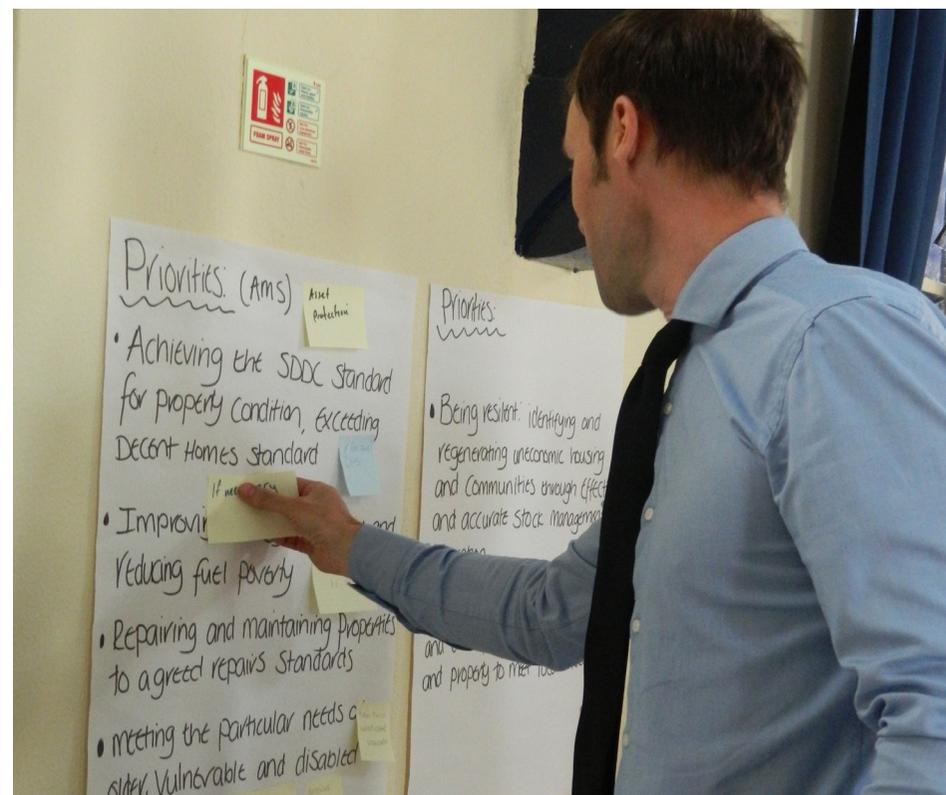
The review that was undertaken highlighted a significant loss of income in the HRA Business Plan of £6m to 2020, rising to £19m by 2024. As part of the review the capital improvements programme and maintenance budgets were re-modelled and reduced from £80m to £58m (excluding planned maintenance). Even with this level of planned savings all properties will continue to achieve the Decent Homes Standard.

A fundamental aim of the AMS is to ensure that the housing stock is maintained in good condition to maintain its value, avoid deterioration of assets, prevent avoidable future repair costs and meet legislative and regulatory requirements. The stock will also continue to provide good quality homes for our tenants.

There will be a continued focus on the management, maintenance and refurbishment of the existing stock over the next five years. However, the Council will also be looking more broadly at wider asset management issues and opportunities, to ensure we remain the landlord of choice.

This will include exploring the:

- Use of vacant sites for the building of new homes
- Refurbishment or re-modelling of existing properties and estates
- Potential redevelopment of existing properties
- Disposal of assets as a way of helping to fund the development or acquisition of new properties
- Remodelling and modernisation of the Direct Labour Organisation (DLO), and Housing Services Teams to ensure the service continues to be efficient, fit for purpose and delivers Value for Money (VfM).



# Our Property Portfolio

South Derbyshire District Council owns and manages a total of 3015 rented properties as at April 2016. The average age of the stock is 55 years and 16% were built prior to 1945. Nearly 92% of the total stock is made up of traditionally constructed dwellings whilst the remaining 8% comprise of a variety of non-traditional construction types.

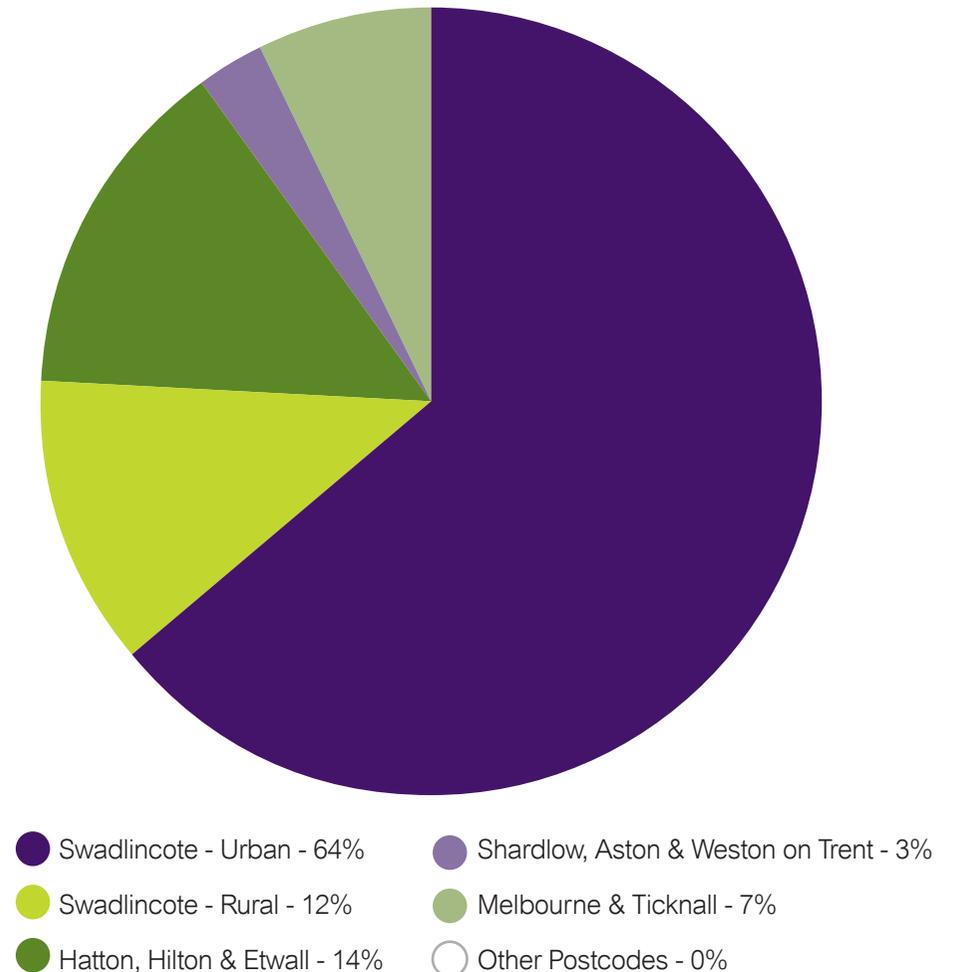
Houses account for just over half of the stock (53%), bungalows a fifth (21%) and flats a quarter (25%). Bedsits/studios make up the remaining 1%.

## Property type breakdown

| Accommodation Type         | Bedrooms   | Number of units | Percentage of total units |               |
|----------------------------|------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Houses<br>1593             | 1 bedroom  | 9               | 0.30                      |               |
|                            | 2 bedroom  | 501             | 16.62                     |               |
|                            | 3 bedroom  | 1046            | 34.69                     | 52.84         |
|                            | 4 bedroom  | 36              | 1.19                      |               |
|                            | 5 bedroom  | 1               | 0.03                      |               |
| Bungalows<br>638           | 1 bedroom  | 309             | 10.25                     |               |
|                            | 2 bedroom  | 328             | 10.88                     | 21.16         |
|                            | 3 bedroom  | 1               | 0.03                      |               |
| Flats<br>776               | 1 bedroom  | 371             | 12.31                     |               |
|                            | 2 bedroom  | 399             | 13.23                     | 25.74         |
|                            | 3 bedroom  | 6               | 0.20                      |               |
| Bedsits/studios<br>8       | 0 bedrooms | 8               | 0.27                      | 0.27          |
| <b>All property totals</b> |            | <b>301</b>      | <b>100</b>                | <b>100.00</b> |

The stock is spread throughout much of the District but the major concentration is in the Swadlincote area (76%), followed by Hatton & Hilton (14%), Melbourne (7%) and Shardlow (3%).

## Property stock location



Housing Services own 278 garages and 133 garage plots around the district, which vary in size, popularity and usage. Recent reviews have resulted in the sale of a number of sites and the receipts have been used to increase the Capital Programme. The remaining sites are in the process of being reviewed and a trial improvement to one site has recently been completed which has helped determine and shape the garage regeneration programme for the next five years.

Additional finances have been secured and committed to improve garage sites in the district. It is anticipated that this investment will help to make them more desirable and maximise income, as the annual void loss from garages and garage plots for 2015/16 was approximately £38k (28%).

It has also been recognised that potentially significant financial resources are required to address matters relating to communal land and parking issues around the district. However, focus remains on maintaining the stock, and further investigative works are required to fully appreciate all review options relating to the communal land and parking issues.

The number of Council owned homes has declined steadily over the last 10 years, and there have been 167 Right to Buy's (RTB) since 2006. The average number of RTB's since 2012/13 is 18 properties per year. By far the most popular property type, and the biggest decrease to the stock (137) has been in the number of family sized houses with two or more bedrooms.

This reduction in the total stock numbers and in the number of family sized housing, particularly in the more popular areas, has changed the overall profile of the housing stock. There has been an increase in the number of small units, flats and bungalows as a proportion of the overall total. Both the overall reduction in stock numbers and the reduction in the number of family sized homes available for rent by the Council has had a significant impact on our ability to house families on the housing

register. As at April 2016 there were 984 people waiting to be housed in South Derbyshire Council stock.

The Council's Housing Allocations team has a statutory responsibility to manage and regularly review the housing register, and as at April 2016 there were 984 applicants actively seeking rehousing, of which 69% (682) were single with the remaining 31% (302) classed as families or couples.

Over the last five years there has been an average of 215 void council properties per year, this represents approximately 7% of our total stock. All properties are brought up to the 'Fit to Let' standard before being offered to prospective new tenants and the average spend on a void property is £1,831.78

The average time to re-let properties (excluding major voids) during 2015/16 was 18.6 days, and including major voids was 25 days. This performance puts the Council in the upper quartile when compared to our peers in the national Housemark benchmarking service.

Benchmarking plays a fundamental role in reporting the business's performance, and is an important contributor in driving performance and value for money improvements.



In 2013, the Council approved the first phase of a long term commitment to increase its stock by building new homes, which the Council had not been able to do since 1991. The first phase commenced with buying back one leased flat in a block of 26 flats to increase the Council's strategic options for the possible redevelopment of the site.

The Council's first new build development completed in July 2016, and delivered 45 new Council owned homes for rent in Coton Park, Linton, Overseal and Swadlincote.



Under the direction of the Director of Housing and Environmental Services a Development and Regeneration Project Board has been set up to explore options to increase stock levels and maximise the Council's assets and housing related income. The Project Board includes staff from various departments within the Council, Members and tenants.

A large proportion of demand on the housing register is for smaller properties. 69% of households on the housing register are singles, but one bedroom properties only comprise 23% of the Council's housing stock. Certain properties, such as bedsits, in some areas of the district have proved difficult to let in the past. However, due to changes in Housing Benefit and Local Housing Allowances for the under 35's, demand for smaller type properties and shared accommodation such as Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) is expected to increase substantially.

In 2006 the number of bedsits in the Council's stock was 33, with 23 being located in Swadlincote. However, as part of the Oakland Village Extra Care Retirement Village development in Swadlincote all 23 bedsits were decommissioned and demolished in 2008/09.

Due to the recent changes in national policy the Council are reviewing their Acquisition and Development Policies to assess demand for bedsit and shared accommodation in the district.

Current funding arrangements available to Local Authorities do not support the development of smaller or multi-occupancy properties, and as such the Council will be utilising and supporting other options including the private sector in maximising the required supply of good quality suitable accommodation for the under 35's in the district.

# Strategic Priorities for Asset Management

The Housing AMS has been built around two key themes under which there are three strategic housing objectives and six priorities. This strategic performance framework has been developed specifically in response to the range of distinct issues for the Council, the stock and current and future tenant's needs.

An Action Plan as detailed in Appendix 1 on page 17 has been prepared for delivering the strategic priorities and this clearly sets out what the Council wants to achieve, and by when. The actions will be monitored, reviewed and revised during the period of the Strategy, and also as works are completed and new actions or priorities are established.

The two key themes are:

- Property and Service Standards – Ensure that we provide properties and services to agreed standards that meet current and future customers' needs.
- Property Asset Management – Pro-actively review, assess and evaluate our property portfolio to inform investment, development and regeneration decisions.

Under the two key themes the Council has determined six priorities which are a key function of the Asset Management Strategy to deliver and which are:

1. Achieving the South Derbyshire District Council standard for property condition, exceeding Decent Homes Standards
2. Improving energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty
3. Repairing and maintaining properties to agreed standards
4. Meeting the particular needs of older, vulnerable and disabled households

5. Being resilient: identifying and regenerating uneconomic housing and communities through effective and accurate stock management information
6. Managing investment opportunities and development potential of land and property to meet local needs.

## Priority One

Achieving the South Derbyshire District Council standard for property condition, exceeding Decent Homes Standards

The Council is committed to ensuring that the housing stock not only meets the national Decent Homes Standard (DHS), but that it exceeds the standard where resources and finances allow.

To meet this priority a higher local offer will be developed in consultation with our tenants through the Homes Standards Service Review Group. The Council's ambition is that their housing stock not only continues to meet statutory and/or regulatory standards but offers a quality of accommodation that exceeds the Decent Homes Standard and meets the developing needs of current and future tenants. This will ensure South Derbyshire remains the landlord of choice.

## Priority Two

Improving energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty

Achieving high levels of energy efficiency in existing homes is increasingly important to our tenants to help protect them against rising fuel prices and the risk of falling into fuel poverty.

The AMS aligns with Housing's Energy Efficiency Strategy and supports the main aim of providing homes that are affordable by being thermally and energy efficient.

Improvements over recent years have included the installation of double glazed windows, cavity wall insulation, 'A' rated boilers and thermostatic radiator valves. Air source heat pumps have been offered or installed into all properties where there is no mains gas.

One of the Council's Corporate Plan outcomes is 'Enhance environmental standards', and during 2016 successfully maintained their ISO 14001 quality standard.

### Priority Three

Repairing and maintaining properties to agreed standards

An effective and efficient repair and maintenance service is an essential element of the AMS as there will always be demand for routine, planned and cyclical maintenance to be carried out to the stock.

Having in place a well-designed repairs and maintenance framework which enhances and delivers the most efficient and cost effective service, whilst achieving high levels of customer satisfaction is the main aim of the service.

A review of the Direct Labour Organisation (DLO), who currently deliver the Emergency, Urgent and Routine responsive repairs service is planned during 2016/17, as part of a wider plan to modernise the operations and delivery of the DLO.

The DLO's annual turnover is in the region of £1.2m and they are supported in their delivery of the services by their partnered contractors.

### Priority Four

Meeting the needs of older, vulnerable and disabled households

Ensuring the availability of housing stock that meets the particular housing needs of older, vulnerable and disabled households will continue to be a priority due to the increase in the ageing population, and the specialist needs of people who are vulnerable, and/or have support needs in the district.

One of the Council's Corporate Plan objectives is to 'Enable people to live independently' and the AMS supports the delivery of this by:

- continuing to provide suitable older persons' accommodation
- allocating, and where necessary converting or adapting general needs stock to meet specific needs
- developing or facilitating suitable new build properties.

A County wide review of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) process is currently being undertaken, and will be completed by March 2017. This review may alter the process of how DFG's are delivered, and budgets are under review as demand is expected to increase.

### Priority Five

Being resilient: Identifying and regenerating uneconomic housing and communities through effective and accurate stock management information

It is essential that the stock condition information held on 'Life-span Housing' the asset management software system is accurate and up to date at all times. This information is essential to appraise the stock and understand its performance and contribution to the HRA

Business Plan and should also identify obsolete or uneconomic stock and potentially replace with new properties.

The viability of the stock is continuously reviewed through stock condition surveys and assessments made on the property are based on how 'fit for purpose', and sustainable it is for the future.

The properties are defined by the following categories and criteria:

### Category 1

Stock that is sustainable for the long term based on its sound financial and non-financial performance. Stock in this category will have some or all of the following characteristics:

- Lower than average repair costs
- Above average investment vs yield performance
- High demand, and/or low turnover

### Category 2

Stock that exhibits some issues in terms of its financial and non-financial performance, but that may, through targeted interventions, potentially be sustainable. Stock in this category may exhibit some or all of the following characteristics:

- Higher than average repair costs
- Below average investment vs yield performance
- Some demand, and/or turnover issues

### Category 3

Stock that gives cause for concern due to its poor financial and non-financial performance. There is also likely to be high investment needs including remodelling, demolition or disposal.

Stock in this category is likely to exhibit the following characteristics:

- Very high repair costs
- Poor/low investment vs yield performance
- Low demand, and/or turnover issues.

Decisions regarding which stock to retain or demolish will be made following robust option appraisal work, assessment of the future housing needs in the area, and analysis of local demand. The work will be presented to the Development and Regeneration Project Board.

#### Priority Six

Managing investment opportunities and development potential of land and property to meet local needs

Identifying land to build additional homes to increase the number of Council properties available in areas where people want to live, and opportunities to increase the housing stock including acquiring properties will continue to be the main aspiration of the Council.

# Delivering the Asset Management Strategy

Our aim is to review all relevant information and evidence to make objective, informed decisions about repair, maintenance and investment programmes.

The Council has developed a 30 year HRA Business Plan which gives budget figures for capital and revenue repairs, maintenance and investment works.

The HRA Business Plan provides a more detailed annual programme for the early years and then outlines the five yearly budget figures thereafter.

In order to maintain our housing stock to at least the Decent Homes Standard the table below shows the investment required over the next five years.

## Asset Management 5 year forecast 2016 - 2021

| Category of Expenditure          | 2016/17   | 2017/18   | 2018/19   | 2019/20   | 2010/21   | 5 Year Total |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| Planned Repairs & Maintenance    | 2,052,646 | 2,105,986 | 2,150,186 | 2,195,508 | 2,241,902 | 10,746,228   |
| Responsive Repairs & Maintenance | 1,262,036 | 1,282,609 | 1,303,595 | 1,325,004 | 1,346,847 | 6,520,091    |
| Capital Improvements             | 2,800,143 | 1,842,835 | 1,888,045 | 1,935,136 | 1,982,722 | 10,448,881   |

## Performance Framework

The range of actions required to deliver the AMS are set out in the Action Plan (Appendix 1) and they will be regularly monitored and reported on. Against each action are a set of tasks that are required to be undertaken to achieve a successful outcome.



## Responsibility for the Strategy

Responsibility for the delivery of the actions within the AMS stretches across a number of teams working within Housing and Environmental Services.

Performance and delivery of targets and actions within the AMS strategy will be monitored and scrutinised through the existing performance management framework which includes:

- Monthly performance monitoring
- Monthly performance monitoring of the capital programme by the corporate Capital Programme Asset Monitoring Group
- Quarterly performance monitoring by the Housing Management Executive Team
- Quarterly performance monitoring by Housing and Community Services Committee

Annual performance review by: Capital Programme Asset Monitoring Group, Housing Management Executive Team, Housing and Community Services Committee, and Housing Standards Service Review Group.

## Review of the Strategy

The strategy will be monitored on an annual basis to identify emerging risks and developing issues which may impact on the delivery of the planned actions or long term viability of the plan.

If required, the plan will be formally reviewed before 2022; to ensure that resources available remain capable of delivering the planned actions and/or that the actions can be amended accordingly.



# Appendix 1 Action Plan





# Obtaining alternative versions of this document

If you would like this document in another language, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please contact us.

This information is also available in large print, Braille or audio format upon request.

Phone: 01283 595795 or  
Email: [customer.services@south-derbys.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@south-derbys.gov.uk)

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اگر آپ یہ ڈاکیومنٹ کسی اور زبان میں چاہتے ہیں، یا اگر آپ کو کسی ترجمان کی خدمات درکار ہوں، تو براہ کرم ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔ درخواست کرنے پر یہ معلومات بڑے پرنٹ، بریل یا آڈیو فارمیٹ میں بھی دستیاب ہیں۔



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