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**Swansea** Council

**Swansea Council**

**Housing Estate  
Management Strategy**

**2021-2025**

## **Foreword Cabinet Member for Homes and Energy**

As a council we are committed to maintaining and enhancing Swansea's natural resources and biodiversity so that we reduce our carbon footprint, improve our knowledge and understanding of our natural environment and benefit health and well-being. This has never been more important; the climate emergency we are experiencing threatens our health, economy, infrastructure and our natural environment.

The Local Housing Strategy recognises the importance of space, place, identity and community and its impact on physical and mental health, with one of the key priorities of the Housing service to “provide good quality homes and services which support communities and help to safeguard and protect both people and the environment of Swansea”.

The Housing Estate Management Strategy 2021-2025 seeks to deliver on this; its overall strategic aim being “to ensure that council housing estates are safe and clean, with spaces for children to play, where people feel they belong and where anti-social behaviour is not tolerated”

It has been developed alongside tenants, in particular members of the Estate Management and Caretaking Panel, to ensure it accurately captures the needs and aspirations of residents living on council housing estates.

This strategy is, in parts, ambitious, as it should be as we strive to fulfil the objectives set. It focuses not just on day to day estate management but also looks to the future and at significant projects we aim to deliver across the city over the next four years. As a Councillor and Cabinet Member I have supported opportunities to improve and enhance the natural environment, reduce carbon emissions as well as tackling fuel poverty. This includes a commitment to innovative, energy efficient housing and a decarbonisation retrofit programme with the intention of reducing carbon emissions in social housing in Wales by 95%.

At the time of publication of this strategy the country is experiencing a global pandemic and Swansea is locked down. Despite this, our strategy remains unchanged, our priorities remain unchanged and we are continuing to provide an estate management service on council housing estates. The delivery of this service might look different for now as we adapt to new ways of working to ensure both staff and residents stay safe at this time but I am proud to say that the staff continue to be visible on estates, the caretaking team continue to keep estates clean and free of litter and fly-tipping, the Neighbourhood Support Unit continue to respond to instances of anti-social behaviour and to patrol streets and blocks of flats on a 24/7 basis. Tenants can continue to contact us in the usual way to report any estate management concerns, we continue to work to deliver the Welsh Housing Quality Standard which includes improvements to tenants' gardens and the general environment and the More Homes project continues to go from strength to strength; 16 new homes have recently been completed at Parc Y Helig and the first tenants have already started to move in with more new properties expected by early Spring.

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## 1. Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy sets out the guiding principles for the development and delivery of estate management services on Swansea Council housing estates over the next 4 years.

It has been developed following consultation with the Estate Management and Caretakers Panel\*, with tenants at an open estate management consultation event and using feedback from the most recent Tenant Satisfaction survey, to ensure it accurately captures the needs and aspirations of residents living on council housing estates.

*\*The Estate Management and Caretakers Panel is made up of members of the wider Tenant Consultative Panel*

### Overall Strategic Aim

“The aim of Swansea’s Housing Estate Management Strategy is to ensure that council housing estates are safe and clean, with spaces for children to play, where people feel they belong and where anti-social behaviour is not tolerated”

## 2. Objectives

**Objective 1:** To ensure council housing estates are kept free of litter and fly tipping, with open spaces maintained.

**Objective 2:** To ensure council housing estates are safe environments with opportunities for children to play and in which tenants and residents have a vested interest and sense of belonging.

**Objective 3:** To ensure anti-social behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively, to minimise the impact on individuals and the wider community.

## 3. National / Legislative Context

### 3.1 Key legislation

There are a number of key pieces of legislation which help to shape this strategy, they include:

- Housing Act 1985
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992 (UNCRC)
- Housing Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010

- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Housing (Wales) Act 2014
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016

### 3.2 Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 introduced five ways of working to set out the steps for improving the well-being of people in Wales and to ensure sustainability, i.e.:

- Prevention – Preventing problems occurring or getting worse
- Long-term – Balancing short term needs with addressing long term needs
- Integration – Avoiding conflict with other public bodies
- Collaboration – Working in partnership with others
- Involvement – Involving local people

### 3.3 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 introduced seven well-being goals. They are:

- **A prosperous Wales** – An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment.
- **A resilient Wales** – A nation that keeps and enhances a biodiverse natural environment.
- **A healthier Wales** – A society where people’s physical and mental well-being is the best it can be.
- **A more equal Wales** – A society that helps people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances
- **A Wales of cohesive communities** – Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
- **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language** – A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language.
- **A globally responsible Wales** – A nation that thinks about whether our actions make a positive contribution to global well-being.

### 3.4 Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) and the Housing Health and Safety Rating

In 2001 the Welsh Government (WG) set out its long term vision for housing in Wales in its strategy “Better Homes for People in Wales” and in April 2002, it introduced the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). The WHQS sets out a common target for the physical condition of all housing in Wales including local authority owned

housing. It is underpinned by legal and regulatory requirements and provides a link with other Welsh Government strategies.

Environmental work required within the boundary of the property plus the wider environment are included within the WHQS, much of which is attributed to ensure compliance with the Housing Health and Safety Rating. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is the Government's approach to the evaluation of the potential risks to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. The underlying principle of the HHSRS is that any residential premises should provide a safe and healthy environment for any potential occupier or visitor.

The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) states that by 2020 (extended to 2021 due to Covid) all homes should be:

- In a good state of repair
- Safe and secure
- Adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated
- Contain up to date kitchens and bathrooms
- Located in attractive and safe environments
- Suit the specific requirements of the household

### **3.5 United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC)**

Swansea Council has a long-held commitment to working with children and young people. This can best be demonstrated by its embedding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) into its work, ensuring all policies and procedures give due regard to children's rights.

## **4. Local Strategic Context**

The Housing Estate Management Strategy is not a stand-alone document and is considered in the context of other strategies and plans.

### **4.1 Swansea Public Services Board and Local Well-Being Plan**

As part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, every council in Wales is legally required to have a Public Services Board, a partnership of public service agencies, whose purpose is to work collectively to improve local social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being. Each Public Service Board is required to carry out an Assessment of Well-being to understand current levels of well-being and what matters most to local communities and to produce a plan in order to improve wellbeing. This Act also puts in place a 'sustainable development principle' which tells organisations how to go about meeting their duty under the Act.

Following the Assessment of Well-being in Swansea, the Local Well-being Plan 'Working Together to make a better future' has been produced which contains the high-level priorities that the Swansea Public Service Board has identified as being the most important, these are:

- Children have the best start in life to be the best they can be

- People live and age well
- Working with nature
- Building stronger communities

#### **4.2 Council's Corporate Priorities**

The Council's corporate priorities were refreshed following the production of the Well-being Plan as developed by the Public Service Board. The priorities look to deliver on the council's contribution to Wales' seven national goals described within the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and describes how we will maximise this contribution to the national goals and to the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of Swansea by working in line with the sustainability principles set out within the Act.

The Council's six corporate priorities are:

- Safeguarding people from harm
- Improving education and skills
- Transforming our economy and infrastructure
- Tackling poverty
- Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's Natural Resources and Biodiversity
- Transformation and future council development

#### **4.3 Local Housing Strategy**

The key priorities of the Housing service support both the service's overall vision i.e.: 'We will provide good quality homes and services which support communities and help to safeguard and protect both people and the environment of Swansea' and delivery of the key Corporate priorities.

The Local Housing Strategy acknowledges that good quality housing plays a significant role in helping to achieve the vision for Swansea and in meeting the Council's corporate priorities. It also recognises the importance of space, place, identity and community and its impact on physical and mental health.

The Local Housing Strategy 2015-2020 acts as an umbrella for a number of 'issue specific' strategies, including this Estate Management Strategy.

#### **4.4 Estate Management Strategy**

The Estate Management Strategy aims to deliver in respect of both the national and local priorities.

In relation to WHQS this strategy specifically supports the requirement for homes to be located in attractive and safe environments. The scope of environmental improvements is wide and can include:

- Tree planting
- Street furniture
- Improvements to external lighting

- Soft and hard landscaping
- Adequate and safe play space for young children
- Adequate communal areas

This is not an exhaustive list and communities will be consulted so as to realise their priorities and aspirations and to ensure that all improvements will be ones that the community relates to, feels proud of, and helps to maintain and sustain.

This strategy helps to deliver in respect of the priorities of the Public Service Board by:

- Ensuring **children have the best start in life** to be the best they can be by allowing them the opportunity to play in a safe environment
- Ensuring **Swansea is a great place to live and age well** by maintaining our housing estates and dealing with anti-social behaviour
- Ensuring we **work with nature** to improve health and enhance biodiversity by enhancing our estates and green spaces
- Ensuring **strong communities** are supported and encouraged and enabled to take greater community ownership to ensure long-term stability

This strategy will be delivered with regard to the 5 ways of working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to ensure sustainability, i.e.: we will look to prevent problems occurring or getting worse by adopting proactive practices where practicable. Decisions in relation to estate management will balance short term with long term needs. Objectives will be delivered by working alongside and avoiding conflict with other public bodies. This strategy will be delivered by involving residents; this includes working with representatives on the Estate Management and Caretaking Panel in respect of city wide issues and with local residents on local issues.

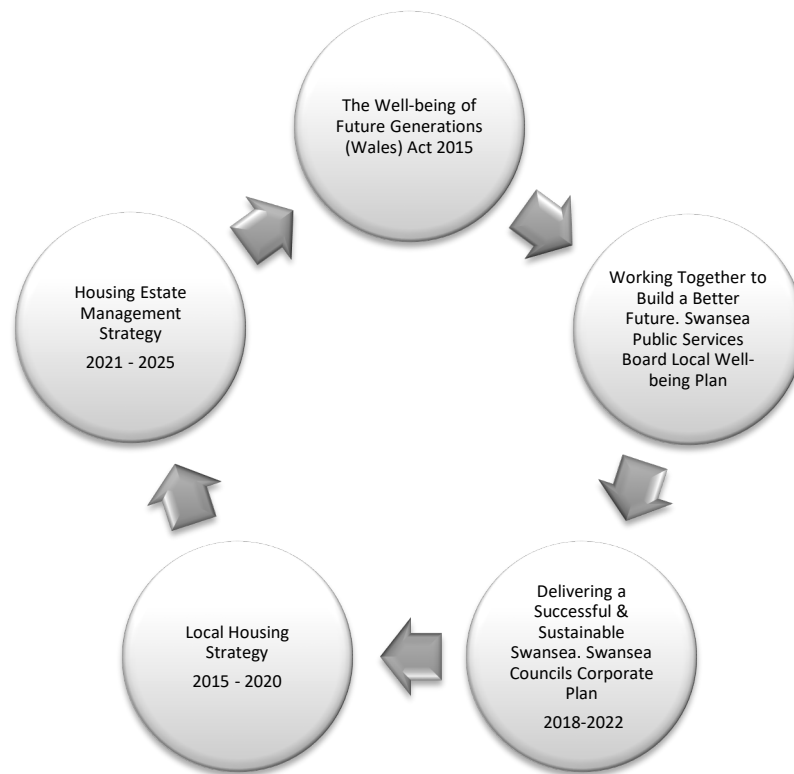
With regard to the Council's corporate priorities, whilst estate management impacts across all six of the Council's corporate priorities, its main priorities are in relation to the following:

- Safeguarding people from harm - so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation
- Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's Natural Resources and Biodiversity - so that we maintain and enhance biodiversity, reduce our carbon footprint, improve our knowledge and understanding of our natural environment and benefit health and well-being



## 4.5 Legislative and Strategic linkages

The following infographic shows how the legislative and strategic context are inter-related:



## 5. How services are delivered

Estate management services, from caretaking to managing anti-social behaviour, are delivered by numerous teams within Landlord Services.

### 5.1 District Housing Offices

Day to day operational housing management is delivered from one of Housing's District Housing Offices. Officers based in the District Housing Offices regularly inspect all areas of housing land and blocks of flats on their designated patch for any tenancy or estate management issues.

Estate management issues include but are not restricted to:

- Litter
- Fly-tipping on housing land
- Overgrown hedges
- Wilful damage
- Graffiti
- Safety concerns
- General untidiness

- Management and maintenance of garage sites
- Overgrown gardens and rubbish collecting in tenants' gardens (this cuts across both tenancy and estate management as an untidy garden will impact on neighbouring tenants)

Officers from the District Housing Office will inspect their patches, reporting any work required to the caretaking team or to other services as appropriate and will take any necessary tenancy management action (for instance in relation to overgrown gardens).

District Housing Office teams also deal with any instances of anti-social behaviour, including noise nuisance, responding to reports of anti-social behaviour, providing support to tenants, gathering evidence and taking any necessary action as appropriate. DHO's are supported internally by a dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour Team (details below).

## **5.2 Caretaking Team**

Housing directly employ a team of caretakers. The caretaking team undertake the following work:

- Regular visits to all housing areas undertaking some low level grounds maintenance and clearance
- Sweeping
- Litter picking
- Removal of fly tipping
- Removal of offensive graffiti and syringes
- Responding to emergencies
- Assisting sheltered housing schemes with low level grounds maintenance and bulk item clearances
- Targeted estate clearances in partnership with other services
- Responding to emergencies as they arise
- Garden cutting for qualifying tenants

*This list is not exhaustive*

## **5.3 Neighbourhood Support Team**

The Neighbourhood Support Unit (NSU) provides a 24 hour / 365 day landlord presence on Swansea's council housing estates. The duties of the Neighbourhood Support Unit are varied and include:

- Foot and mobile patrols
- Provision of a response service to reported incidents of anti-social behaviour
- Recording and reporting of any estate management and anti-social behaviour issues to the District Housing Office or other relevant services or external agencies as appropriate
- Offering reassurance to tenants and residents through its 24/7 presence
- Gathering evidence and witnessing anti-social behaviour at first hand

*This list is not exhaustive*

## **5.4 Anti-Social Behaviour Team**

The main objective in relation to anti-social behaviour (ASB) is to ensure that ASB is effectively dealt with and victims are supported, that new legislation is implemented and the quality of the service being delivered to tenants and residents is of a high standard and that restorative practice is embedded in our approach to dealing with ASB.

The role of the Anti-Social Behaviour team involves:

- Supporting the District Housing Offices with complex cases of ASB
- Providing advice and reassurance
- Working closely with victims and perpetrators
- Liaising with other agencies on behalf of victims and perpetrators
- Compiling statements and collating of evidence
- Assisting with possession and injunctive action
- Liaising with courts and legal services
- Installation and monitoring of specialist equipment
- Undertaking satisfaction surveys with victims of ASB

### **5.5 Leasehold Team**

In addition to its 13,500 tenanted properties, the Council is also responsible for the management of 637 leasehold flats that are spread across council housing estates. These are managed by a centrally based Leasehold Team. They work closely with the District Housing Offices in respect of any estate management concerns and anti-social behaviour where a leaseholder is involved or affected.

### **5.6 Tenants gardening competition**

The Housing service hosts an annual tenants gardening competition. The intention of the competition is to encourage tenants and leaseholders to take pride in their own gardens and estates and encourage others locally to do the same.

The awards issued each year are:

- **Best Garden**
- **Best Newcomer** (for residents who have not previously entered the competition)
- **Edible Garden** (judging is based on the quality and variety of edible produce)
- **Best Wildflower Garden** (judging is based on the variety and overall appearance of the flowers)
- **Best Communal Garden** (can include sheltered complexes or other communal areas maintained by a group of tenants/leaseholders)
- **Judges' Choice award** (given to an entrant who has not won any of the other categories, but has impressed the judges with their effort and dedication which deserves recognition)
- **Lifestyle Garden** (needs to make the best use of space to suit the lifestyle and needs of the family)
- **Best use of a small/restricted space** (eg: balcony or a small space outside a flat)

Whilst the gardening competition is well regarded by many tenants it is recognised that the number of entrants is limited. Going forward, in an effort to encourage increased participation in this competition, consideration is being given to increasing the number of categories and prizes.

## **6. Collaboration**

Housing services collaborate with others by joint working and working in partnership.

### **6.1 Joint Working**

Housing staff work with internal and external stakeholders on a daily basis in the best interest of tenants and housing estates. Some examples of this joint working include:

- The caretaking team work jointly with the Waste and Recycling team to deliver targeted community based recycling events across our estates and to issue fines and take enforcement action as appropriate e.g.: fly-tipping. These events are a pro-active measure aimed at raising awareness on the importance of recycling, for both the environment and the Council's duty to meet its recycling target. Officers from the Recycling and Waste teams work alongside Housing teams undertaking a door knocking exercise offering advice and guidance on recycling whilst the caretaking team clear unwanted items which have been placed on the kerbside
- The Neighbourhood Support Unit and Anti-Social Behaviour team work closely with the District Housing Offices and with the Police to ensure incidents of anti-social behaviour or nuisance are dealt with
- Housing staff will treat seriously and investigate fully any form of hate incidents, harassment, intimidation and discrimination by/or against tenants and will work with the Police and other agencies to use existing legal remedies against tenants (and household members and visitors) found to be perpetrating hate crime or harassment. Examples of this include racist or homophobic incidents, harassment or discrimination, and incidents relating to a person's disability, age, sexual orientation or religious beliefs. Hate crime, racial harassment, and harassment includes, not only physical attacks on persons and damage to property, but also verbal abuse and graffiti and any other form of behaviour which deprives a person of the peaceful enjoyment of their homes.
- Housing staff work with other services and agencies to protect young people and vulnerable adults. Services and agencies also work together to identify potential harmful settings outside of the family home and work to create safety within those environments (contextual safeguarding).

- Caretaking team work with the NEET team (Not in Education, Employment or Training) to clear pathways
- Caretaking team work with Enforcement officers in the Environment section to serve Fixed Penalty Notices as appropriate
- Housing is represented on the Swansea Play Network forum, the objectives of which include ensuring there are high quality, appropriate, accessible and resourced play opportunities for all children and young people within the Swansea area
- Housing staff work closely with the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MWWFRS) in respect of fire safety, in particular in relation to high rise, low rise and sheltered housing accommodation, to ensure all accommodation is safe for tenants and residents
- Housing staff will engage regularly with others (non-tenants) who live and work on council housing estates eg: residents, shop owners, other support agencies to name but a few, in the best interest of tenants and the wider environment
- Housing works closely with Highways in respect of street lighting, roads and pavements on council housing estates
- Housing staff work closely with Registered Social Landlords (eg: Pobl, Coastal and Family Housing Association) where they have accommodation in close proximity to council housing estates to ensure any development, area enhancement or environmental improvements are at best integrated and at least, not at odds with one another
- Housing staff work closely with colleagues in Parks and Cleansing to identify, inspect and manage dangerous or diseased trees, both in tenants' gardens and on Housing land. Inspections are taking place on a three year cycle with appropriate action taken where a tree is classified as unsafe. This includes checking Ash trees for signs of Ash die-back.

With regard to trees on Housing land, whilst we will take appropriate action to prune or fell a dangerous tree, we will not prune or fell a tree to:

- alleviate the nuisance of overhanging branches
- improve natural light or improve the view from in a private or Council owned property
- remove or reduce leaf fall, blossom, bird droppings, honeydew or other sticky residue from trees
- remove or reduce the incidence of bees, wasps and other insects or wild animals
- enable/ease installation or improve reception of satellite or television receivers
- because it is considered to be 'too big' or 'too tall'

## **6.2 Safer Swansea Partnership**

The Council is a key partner in the Safer Swansea Partnership which aims to curtail crime and anti-social behaviour, in order to help create safe and secure estates where residents are able to live without fear of crime or harassment.

Safer Swansea's priorities are:

- Alcohol and drugs
- Anti-social behaviour
- Children and young people
- City centre violent crime
- Community cohesion
- Safeguarding those at risk
- Working together

The Council is committed to dealing robustly with anti-social behaviour (ASB) and works closely with key partners in the Safer Swansea Partnership to tackle ASB and crime on estates. This is achieved by actively engaging with communities face to face to provide reassurance and to address community safety issues people raise through the Partnership and Communities Together (PACT) process, providing reassurance and crime prevention advice to the public through a variety of communication methods, developing crime reduction projects to reduce crime and vulnerability to crime.

Safer Swansea partnership agencies include:

- Swansea Council
- South Wales Police
- Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service
- Wales Probation Trust
- Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Other organisations and voluntary groups with a common interest in community safety issues

In addition to established partnerships and collaborations, the Housing service continuously seeks opportunities to work with partners, both internally and externally in the best interest of tenants and residents.

## **7. Funding**

The estate management functions of the Housing service are funded via the Housing Revenue Account. The Estate Caretaking Team, Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Neighbourhood Support Unit and each local District Housing Office holds their own budgets.

By December 2021, it is forecast that £498m would have been invested to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. This includes an investment to improve the external facilities within the curtilage of properties as well as investment to improve the wider environment.

These works are funded by a combination of rental income, borrowing and the Welsh Government's Major Repairs Allowance Grant (MRA). The MRA for 2019/20 was £9.2m. This grant helps improve the lives of those who live in council homes as well as providing community benefits.

## **8. Key Achievements**

### **8.1 Performance**

The following Performance Indicators were introduced in the 2015 Estate Management Strategy and have been collated and reported to the Estate Management and Caretaking Panel quarterly:

- Property Inspections – all properties to be inspected within a 4 year period
- Street inspections – all streets to be inspected on a 4/8 week cycle
- Offensive graffiti – to be removed within 24 hours of being reported
- Fly tipped material on Housing Service owned land– to be removed within 48 hours of being reported
- Communal blocks of flats – 100% to reach a very good or satisfactory standard
- Removal of syringes – within 4 hours of being reported
- Tenants who are very or fairly satisfied with the overall service provided – 75% target

Performance against these targets has been good to excellent.

The most recent Tenant Satisfaction survey (2017) asked tenants a number of questions in relation to their homes and neighbourhoods. A total of 2,807 responses were received. On the whole these responses show us that tenants are largely satisfied with their homes and neighbourhoods:

- 80% of respondents stated that they are satisfied, either fairly or very with the overall condition of their home.
- 82% of respondents stated that they were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (41% of these were very satisfied). 18% of respondents were either fairly or very dissatisfied.
- Of those who were satisfied, the most common reasons given were 'having nice neighbours', 'quiet area' and 'location/ proximity to amenities'.
- 59% said they had seen an improvement in their home or estate.

### **8.2 Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)**

The council budgeted over £380m for the Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme between 2002 and 2018. In addition to new kitchens and bathrooms, rewires, insulation and boiler replacement programmes, work has been undertaken to the external fabric of buildings such as new roofs, weatherboards and rainwater goods, windows and doors.

There is a plan to spend an additional £118m by December 2021 to include works to tenants' gardens.

In addition £8.5m has been set aside to improve the general environment plus £5m for maintaining paths, roads and lighting.

### **8.3 More Homes**

The Council's More Homes Programme, focussed on providing new build Council housing, continues to move forward at pace. Cabinet approved the first Housing Revenue Account Development Plan in February 2019, which set out a programme to develop over 140 new homes up to 2022. The Council is currently looking to increase this ambition to develop 1000 new Council homes between 2021-2031.

Following on from the first passivhaus pilot at Colliers way, the second phase of the More Homes project has just been completed at Parc Y Helyg, and Colliers Way Phase 2 is due for completion in March 2021. As part of this phase, 34 new homes will be built as 'Homes as Power Stations' using funds from a £1.5m Innovative Housing Programme grant from the Welsh Government. The homes will have innovative features such as solar panels and battery-powered energy, as well as the inclusion of swift bricks to support biodiversity.

Work has recently been undertaken to convert a former social services building in West Cross into 2 new family homes.

A number of former council properties have been 'bought back' and added to the council's stock with more to follow.

Work is underway on a further 25 homes on Hill View Crescent in Clase. This scheme has also been awarded £1.5m of Innovative Housing funding, which will fund the renewable technologies to continue the Homes as Power Stations theme. This will also be the site of a new build Welsh medium primary school, and will provide an opportunity to regenerate the area.

Planning permission has been granted to develop 6 bungalows in West Cross and these will be starting on site in March 2021. A further scheme in Clase is also being designed and a planning application for 11 units will be submitted shortly.

The Council is progressing the procurement of a development partner or partners. The aim will be to deliver mixed tenure housing on the larger Council owned sites, whilst maximising the delivery of affordable housing to meet local need.

The Council has also procured a multi-disciplinary team to deliver a masterplan for the regeneration of a large HRA site; this project is progressing. A key element in its delivery will be consultation with local residents.



## 8.4 Empty properties

The number of empty council properties is at a lower level than in recent years.

Given the level of investment in delivering the Welsh Housing Quality Standard this trend is hoped to continue.

Empty properties have a negative impact on the wider environment and as such a reduction in the number of empty properties is positive for estate management. As the numbers of tenants leaving council housing slows down this also helps to create a better sense of community, with families staying longer and thereby creating community connections.

## 9. Key Priorities

### 9.1 Estate management

Estate management priorities have been considered by front line Housing staff, discussed with internal stakeholders and with tenants at Estate Management and Caretaking Panel meetings, at an open 'estate management' tenants consultation event and at a Tenants Consultative Panel.

In addition, we have analysed feedback from the most recent Tenant Satisfaction survey. Respondents told us that the top 3 most important changes they would like to see made to their local estate were in relation to car parking, adequate and safe places for young children and road/footpaths. Of those who were dissatisfied, the most common reasons cited were lack of parking facilities, litter/rubbish/fly-tipping, dog mess and racing cars/motorbikes.

The following is a summary of the priorities for the next 4 years:

#### The priorities can be summarised as:

- 1. Environmental improvements** - cleaner streets, more planting, softer landscaping, grassed areas better maintained, landscaping projects, regeneration projects
- 2. Developing Communities** – Communal meeting areas, more opportunities for neighbours / communities to meet in open spaces. Formal and informal play opportunities. Communities to become engaged in relation to wider environmental improvements and take vested interest in their communities
- 3. Responding to and reducing anti-social behaviour** – deter / respond promptly to fly tipping, deal with youths congregating, work with partners to reduce impact of drug use on communities, reduce nuisance from ball games by offering play opportunities, introduce 'noise app' to support the gathering of important information in relation to noise nuisance in appropriate circumstances.

## **9.2 Priorities post WHQS**

The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) states that all homes should reach the standard by 2021. Beyond this date work will continue to improve both council housing and council housing estates. Some key priorities, post 2021 link to the Housing Estate Management Strategy. They are:

### **9.2.1 Townhill North regeneration pilot**

A regeneration programme for the council's oldest housing stock will be considered; this may include remodelling of gardens and land, thermal upgrades to building fabric and planned renewal of internal finishes not included in WHQS programme.

Townhill North has been highlighted for a pilot post 2020. Townhill North has a higher than average turnover rate compared to other areas of the city. The topography of the area contributes to low demand; many of the gardens are very large and steep and therefore difficult to maintain. In addition the streets are typically narrow and congested.

The plan is to deliver a small pilot project (approx. 20 properties) in the Townhill North area to see if regeneration measures would have an impact on turnover rates, thus creating a more stable community. This pilot would involve work to individual properties and the wider environment and includes initiatives such as garden shortening schemes, widening of the highway and creation of parking spaces and improved waste disposal /recycling facilities.

### **9.2.2 Town Centre - High rise blocks**

Post 2021 plans will be considered for the regeneration of high rise blocks in the Town Centre area.

Work to flats in Croft Street will aim to incorporate recommendations from the Police in respect of Secured by Design whilst also improving landscaping.

For Griffith John Street there has been recent demolition of a number of garages, cutting back overgrown undergrowth and enhanced lighting to address anti-social behaviour in the area. Long term options for Griffith John Street flats are also to be considered post 2021, including refurbishment, refurbishment and infill development, demolition and redevelopment.

### **9.2.3 Decarbonisation**

A decarbonisation retrofit programme is scheduled for 2021 -2030 with the intention of reducing carbon emissions in social housing in Wales by 95%, ensuring properties are better insulated, lessen heat loss, lower fuel bills for residents and reduction in fuel poverty.

The programme will see upgrades in the thermal performance of building fabric elements and make use of renewable technologies to reduce reliance on grid for energy usage.

## **10. The Way Forward**

Each of the strategic objectives has a range of areas for development that will be focused on for the next four years. Underpinning the objectives and actions there will be a focus on prevention, on balancing long term and short term needs, on integration and collaboration and on involving residents

The objectives form the basis of a four-year action plan, which gives clear outcomes, provides details on the key activities to be carried out and identifies the leads who will ensure that the action and outcomes identified are progressed. The full action plan is attached at appendix 1.

In summary, what we need to do can be categorised as follows:

### **Objective 1: To ensure Council housing estates are kept free of litter and fly tipping, with open spaces maintained**

To achieve this objective we will continue to carry out litter picking, regularly inspect streets and blocks, inspect existing and plant new trees and flower beds, maintain grassed areas, continue to encourage tenants to use waste collection services appropriately and recycle so that tenants see an improvement in the cleanliness of their wider environment. We will encourage tenants to maintain their own gardens, develop strategies for dealing with rubbish in gardens, ensure garden cutting scheme reaches those most in need. We will work with partners to ensure we can deliver on these objectives. Post 2020 we will deliver ambitious regeneration projects in some areas.

### **Objective 2: To ensure council housing estates are safe environments with opportunities for children to play and in which tenants and residents have a vested interest and sense of belonging**

To achieve this objective we will develop a consultation / engagement programme in respect of environmental improvements to ensure residents have had a say on what is important to them in their community. We will engage with tenants across the city and within local communities. We will engage with young people on what is important to them. We will consider any requests for community food growing opportunities and other community based initiatives. We will improve communal areas to encourage individuals to make positive connections and develop a sense of community. We will review 'no ball games' signage across our estates and look to provide informal and formal play opportunities so that children can play freely.

### **Objective 3: To ensure anti-social behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively, to minimise the impact on individuals and the wider community.**

To achieve this objective we will deal with fly tipping on housing land and provide feedback in relation to complaints. We will deal with youths congregating and drug related ASB by working closely with partners in the Safer Swansea Partnership. We will look to stop nuisance from ball games by considering appropriate play opportunities on estates.

## **11. Consultation**

Housing services are committed to consulting with tenants and residents in respect of any environmental improvements on housing land. Consultation will follow an agreed format ie: open consultation events for schemes with wide impact, targeted consultation where there is a direct impact on a specific number of residents and engagement with local schools as appropriate and where there is an interest.

## **12. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The objectives of the Housing Estate Management Strategy 2015-17 were:

- To promote awareness about safety within the home and on estates
- To take a more pro-active approach to tackling people's fear of crime and improve safety and security for tenants on Council estates
- To improve public perceptions of Council housing estates
- To ensure a consistent approach to the delivery of the estate management service
- To reduce costs and improve the performance and efficiency of the delivery of the estate management service
- To address tenants' concerns that the estate management service should be given greater priority
- To improve tenants satisfaction levels with the overall estate management and housing service
- To improve the standard of Council housing estates

Many of these objectives have been ongoing since 2004 and remain ongoing as we continue to work towards tackling fear of crime, improving public perceptions of council estates, reduce costs and improve performance and efficiency and improve satisfaction levels etc. The recent tenant satisfaction survey results (8.1) are however positive.

This updated Housing Estate Management Strategy outlines how the Council plans to deliver estate management services between 2021 and 2025.

Progress towards achieving the strategy's aims and objectives will be measured and monitored on a regular basis. In order to achieve this the following activities will be carried out:

- The action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and progress reported to the Estate Management and Caretakers Panel

- An annual update will be produced including action plan progress and an update of the key data

In addition to the annual review of progress, key performance measures will be used to monitor on-going success and progress.

Performance Indicators have been refreshed for 2021 – 2025 to reflect the new aims and objectives, as agreed by the Estate Management and Caretaking Panel and to ensure we are working in line with the 5 ways of working introduced in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to ensure sustainability.

The revised Performance Indicators, which will be reported to the Estate Management and Caretaking Panel quarterly are:

- Number of community recycling events held
- Number of blocks inspected
- Number of estate inspections undertaken
- Number of additional caretaker requests
- Levels of satisfaction in ASB cases
- No. of estate referral forms to DHO
- Number of mobile patrols undertaken by NSU
- Number of foot patrols undertaken by NSU

### **13. Equalities**

A key principle of this strategy is to ensure equality of access to services and promote social inclusion and community cohesion. Wider housing issues relating to these groups have been highlighted in the Local Housing Strategy 2015-20. <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/housing>

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the development of this strategy and is available on the Council's website.