

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

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| TO: | HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS & LEISURE COMMITTEE | | |
| DATE: | 10 MARCH 2021 | AGENDA ITEM: | |
| TITLE: | HOUSING UPDATE AND PROGRAMME OF WORKS TO COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK 2021/2022 | | |
| LEAD COUNCILLOR: | CLLR JOHN ENNIS | PORTFOLIO: | HOUSING |
| SERVICE: | HOUSING | WARDS: | ALL |
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

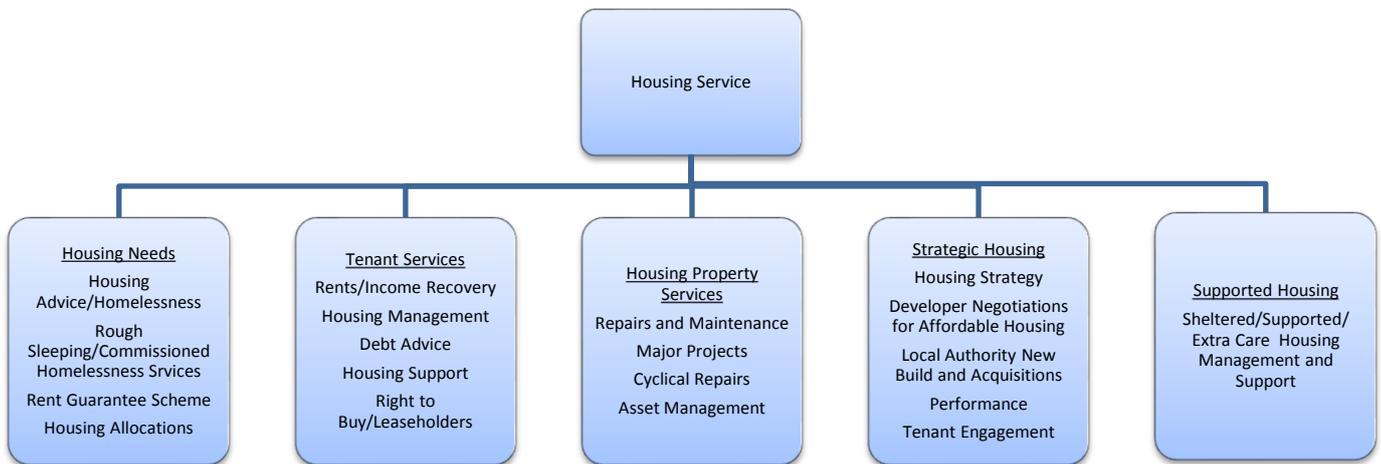
- 1.1 The Council' Housing Strategy was adopted by Policy Committee in September this year. The vision for the strategy is "For all our residents to have the opportunity to live in a good quality sustainable home they can afford within a thriving neighbourhood." Key to this is the supply of accommodation, the quality of accommodation and neighbourhoods and support to residents.
- 1.2 This report highlights key achievements of the Housing Service over the over the past financial year in line with this vision and sets out the work programme for the Council's housing stock for the next financial year.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee note the key achievements of the Housing Service in the past financial year and the planned programme of works to Council stock for 2021/22.
- 2.2 That Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Housing & Communities in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Housing to: (a) tender; and (b) enter into all necessary contracts for individual schemes within the 21/22 work programme as set out in Tables 1 and 2 of this report subject to sufficient funding being available in the approved Budget to meet the cost of the schemes.

3. HOUSING SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Housing Service comprises of Housing Needs, Tenant Services, Housing Property Services, Strategic Housing and Supported Housing. The service works closely with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team to deal with issues arising within Council estate neighbourhoods and with the Property Development Team to deliver the Council's local authority new build programme.



3.2 The last year has been challenging for the Housing Service as it has for services across the Council. Despite this, the teams have adapted their working processes and continued to maintain services for residents to ensure that the most vulnerable are taken care of.

4. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2020/21

4.1 Throughout the course of the pandemic staff across the service took on different roles to assist our residents, from delivery drivers to provide meals for those who had been sleeping on the streets, manning phones to contact 3000 of our most vulnerable tenants to check on their welfare, working in the One Reading Hub or working alongside the police and providing support to residents in the wake of the tragic Forbury Gardens attack .

4.2 In addition there have been key achievements across the service despite the challenges of the pandemic and the difficulties arising with lockdowns, shielding, furloughing of contractor's operatives and restricted access to occupied dwellings.

4.3 Key Achievements 2020/21 include:

- Everyone In - the provision of accommodation and food for 264 people who were found rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping during the first lockdown. The service acted at speed to find properties to provide safe and appropriate shelter for some of the most vulnerable people in our town.
- The provision of a new 10 bed women's project and the progression of the development of 40 modular homes (due to complete April/May) for people who had previously been sleeping rough. Coupled with this was the successful bid to MHCLG for 2.279 million for

the provision of 24-hour support to assist with rebuilding the lives of these vulnerable individuals.

- No homeless children had to spend Christmas in shared Bed and Breakfast as we maintained the position where no homeless families were placed in shared Bed and Breakfast accommodation for the 3rd year running.
- Continued support and debt advice to our tenants ensured that we maintained rent collection levels of over 97.5 % despite the increasing financial pressure on our residents as a result of the pandemic.
- Development and adoption of the Council’s Housing and Homelessness Strategies which set out our vision and priorities for the next 5 years. These include our commitment and plan of action in tackling the housing crisis, responding to climate change and building on our strong partnership approach to dealing with the continued issues of rough sleeping.
- Start on site for phase 2 and 3 of the local authority new build programme that will deliver 124 homes over the next 2 years. These include:

| Scheme Name | Ward | Number of Homes | Completion Year |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| George Street | Battle | 4 | 2021 |
| Norcot Community Centre | Kentwood | 18 | 2021 |
| Arthur Hill | Park | 15 | 2022 |
| North Street | Abbey | 41 | 2022 |
| Wensley Road | Minster | 46 | 2022 |

- Start on site for the long-awaited community centre as part of the Dee Park Regeneration. The community centre will provide a Childrens Centre, midwifery services, a pre-school facility and community activities.
- Conversion of 6 unused spaces within blocks of council flats to create 6 new homes.
- Refurbishment of the fifth and final block of flats as part of the Hexham Road project providing improved fire safety measures, new exteriors, and new kitchens and bathrooms.
- More than 300 gas central heating systems have been updated with energy efficient condensing boilers and controls, helping to tackle fuel poverty and improving the thermal comfort of homes. Moving forward we will be investing in more carbon neutral heating systems in line with our climate change ambitions.
- Replacement of the water distribution system and the installation of a new fire alarm system and sprinkler system at the flats on the Wensley Road estate. This will significantly reduce the incidents of leaks within the flats and further enhance fire safety provisions.
- Replacement of windows to Wates flats in Southcote, Tilehurst and Caversham, improving the thermal comfort of 223 homes.
- The installation of a sprinkler system to Wates flats (despite delays due to Covid) anticipated to complete this financial year, 2020/21.

5. TENANT SATISFACTION

- 5.1 A tenant satisfaction survey was carried out in April and May this year which showed mixed results. The survey was carried out independently and the full results are shown below. Overall satisfaction remained about the same slightly increased from 80% to 81%, staff being pleasant and polite rose from 90% to 95% and 80% of tenants are passive or promoters of the service (i.e. not detractors).
- 5.2 This aside however there are falls in satisfaction in relation to repairs and maintenance, quality of homes, satisfaction with neighbourhoods and in making views known. The survey took place during the first lockdown when services were scaled back, and this may have influenced the results. Further analysis of the results shows that the fall in satisfaction is more noticeable in households under the age of 35. Further work is being done to understand this including the commissioning of a number of independent digital focus groups with tenants. In addition, the service is exploring opportunities to adapt in terms of modernising its communication methods and improving the housing stock and the built environments of the estates. New improved specifications for voids, kitchens and bathrooms are being introduced for the 21/22 programme of works.
- 5.3 Satisfaction with the way anti-social behaviour is dealt with has traditionally been low and has fallen again this year. The picture in this area is complex, previous focus groups and tenant scrutiny reviews have surfaced the fact that there is a disconnect between how tenants think the service should respond to anti-social behaviour and what is required legally to evict perpetrators. This is further complicated by criminal issues that are the responsibility of the police as opposed to the service.
- 5.4 Anti-social behaviour is a blight on our communities and has a significant effect on the lives of those that are affected, it is a priority for the service working in partnership with the police to improve outcomes for those who are impacted. Further resources will be invested in this area in the coming year to tackle the issues. In addition, there are two linked reports on the agenda; the Allocations Scheme Consultation and the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy which seek to address some of the issues.

5.5 Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2020

| Key Findings (NOTE- not all changes shown below are statistically significant but are shown for completeness) | 2018 | 2020 | Change ('18 to '20) |
|---|------|------|---------------------|
| Overall satisfaction has increased slightly 2016 | 80% | 81% | → |
| Satisfaction with the quality of homes has reduced | 83% | 77% | ↓ |
| RBC Housing Service provides a home that is safe and secure | NA | 86% | |
| Satisfaction with their neighbourhood as a place to live has decreased | 85% | 73% | ↓ |
| Satisfaction with rent as value for money has decreased slightly | 84% | 82% | → |

| | | | |
|--|-----|------------|---|
| Satisfaction with service charges as value for money has decreased | 70% | 65% | ↓ |
| Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance has decreased | 81% | 74% | ↓ |
| Satisfaction listening and acting on views is about the same | 71% | 69% | → |
| Satisfaction with the opportunity to make views known has decreased | 81% | 64% | ↓ |
| Keeping informed - satisfaction has decreased slightly | 86% | 82% | ↓ |
| A slight decrease in satisfaction that RBC Housing Services treats tenants fairly | 84% | 81% | ↓ |
| RBC Housing Service is easy to deal with | NA | 75% | |
| An increase in satisfaction with staff being pleasant and polite | 90% | 95% | ↑ |
| The majority of respondents would be promoters or passive - slightly higher than in 2018 | 78% | 80% | ↑ |
| A reduction in those that were satisfied with the way ASB is dealt with (those aware of ASB only) | 31% | 23% | ↓ |
| Majority were satisfied with the way in which enquiries are dealt with generally | 84% | 83% | → |
| Satisfaction with transfers and exchanges has increased (those who have transferred or exchanged only) | 66% | 68% | ↑ |
| View that RBC Housing Services has stayed the same or improved has increased slightly | 86% | 87% | → |

6.0 PROGRAMME OF WORKS 2021/22

- 6.1 Reading Borough Council's Housing Property Services manages the day to day repairs, planned maintenance, cyclical repairs and void works to approximately 5,785 Council homes.
- 6.2 Housing Property Services has a responsibility to ensure that the housing stock is well maintained in accordance with the Decent Homes Standard and that Council homes are safe and healthy places to live.
- 6.3 In addition the service continues to pursue a programme to improve the thermal efficiency of its stock in line with the Council's Climate Change ambitions ensuring homes can be heated efficiently and cost effectively, thus reducing their carbon footprint and reducing fuel poverty.

- 6.4 Beyond bricks and mortar the service also works to improve the wider environment on housing estates to meet the needs and aspirations of both the Council and the tenants.
- 6.5 Repairs and maintenance of the stock are delivered predominantly by an in-house workforce. Some works are sub-contracted using measured term contracts to allow for fluctuations in volumes, specialist work or where it is more cost effective to do so. Appendix 1 provides details of the wards where programmes of work were done in 20/21. Appendix 2 shows the wards that are included in the programme for 21/22.
- 6.6 Table 1 below summarises the budgets associated with the different elements of the programme along with details of the various schemes identified.
- 6.7 Table 2 below summarises the General Fund proposed work to Temporary Accommodation and garages for 21/22.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 7.1 The breadth of work of the Housing Service contributes to the following service priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan:
- Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable; and
 - Providing homes for those in most need.
- 7.2 New heating systems, insulation, new windows and doors contribute to the sustainability of the housing stock, helping to develop Reading as a Green City with a sustainable environment and economy at the heart of the Thames Valley and promoting equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 On the 26th of February 2019 the Council declared a Climate Emergency and resolved to act to accelerate a carbon neutral Reading to 2030. Reading Climate Change Partnership's Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-25 and the new RBC corporate Carbon Plan 2020-25 were adopted in November 2020.
- 8.2 The programme of works to Council homes looks to improve the energy efficiency and the insulation of properties wherever possible:
- Improving window replacements from double to triple glazing.
 - Investigating and trialling of low carbon and alternative heating systems, the results of which will help to shape the approach to retrofitting homes to reduce carbon emissions
- 8.3 The average SAP rating, measure of energy efficiency, of the Council's housing stock is currently 74.14 placing Reading in the top quartile when compared to our peer group.
- 8.4 With a successful application to the Green Homes Grant Fund the service will be installing air source heat pumps to a number of properties in Granville Road and installing external wall insulation and new windows to properties in Norcot.
- 8.5 The service is working on a net zero carbon plan with the intention of retrofitting homes to meet our climate change ambitions. Retro-fitting Reading's housing stock to align with the 'net zero by 2030' ambition will be a huge challenge requiring resources beyond what is available to us locally. We therefore continue to lobby Government to make a sustained financial commitment of sufficient scale to support us in addressing this challenge.

- 8.6 Our local authority new build programmes play a key role in achieving net zero carbon. In addition, the scheme at Wensley Road will be built to Passivhaus principles. The application of the fabric first approach of Passivhaus reduces greenhouse gas emissions and will deliver significant long-term energy savings to the tenants. The low running costs and higher quality building mean that costs are significantly reduced over the life of the building for the occupiers.
- 8.7 Studies undertaken by the Passivhaus House Trust indicate that buildings can achieve up to a 75% reduction in space heating requirements and costs, compared to standard UK new build.
- 8.8 The use of sustainable material will play an important role in the design. This, combined with the high quality of building physics achieved through insulation, thermal bridge-free design and airtightness ensures that the sustainable benefits of Passivhaus principles will last.

9. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 9.1 The Housing Service has an engagement approach that enables consultation with tenants on a range of issues and through a range of means including, surveys, focus groups, a tenant scrutiny panel and formal consultation, the results of which drive service improvement. Tenant involvement and feedback has driven changes to specifications on kitchens, bathrooms and flooring for next year.
- 9.2 Consultation events were run in relation to the design and layout of new homes on the Wensley Road estate. Phase 2 works have also been consulted on.
- 9.3 With all repairs and maintenance, we look to provide an efficient value for money service and recognise this can only be achieved by engaging with tenants, this is crucial when it comes to getting it right first time. Wherever possible tenants are given choices in the use of materials and colours.
- 9.4 When upgrading kitchens there is a design process, the customer is involved to ensure the layout and space allows for white goods. Within the range of kitchen units, worktops and tiles the tenant is offered choice of colour.
- 9.5 When upgrading our Crosswall properties we will consult with residents regarding the elevational treatment of the structure.
- 9.6 On our larger refurbishment schemes tenants are invited to evaluate the tender submissions.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 There is no requirement for an Equality Impact Assessment for the purposes of this report

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The 2006 Decent Homes Standard is a government-set standard for council housing. The standard describes a Decent Home as one that is fit to live in, in a reasonable state of repair, having reasonably modern facilities and services, and being insulated to a reasonable standard and weatherproof. The standard was updated in 2006 to include the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

- 11.2 In addition, work outlined in this report is covered by the following legislation:
- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985
 - Housing Act 2004
 - Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994
 - Defective Premises Act 1972
 - Commonhold & Leasehold Reform Act 2002
 - Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Building Regulations Act 1984
 - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Sections 2, 3 and 4
 - Equality Act 2010
 - HCA - The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012
- 11.3 Within this legal framework, programmes are aimed at ensuring the quality of accommodation, maintaining the 2006 Decent Homes Standard (or standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built if higher than the Decent Homes Standard) and providing a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service that meets applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.
- 11.4 Works contracts worth £4,733,252 (Works Threshold) or more must be advertised in the UK's e-notification service Find a Tender and then tendered or be procured via a framework agreement which itself has already been advertised in OJEU or Find a Tender (as applicable) and undergone a tender process. The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) does not require a Find a Tender advertised tendering process in the case of below Works Threshold contracts. Such contracts must be awarded in line with the Council's Standing Orders.

12. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The budget for the works programme 2021-22 is £16,978,000 and is funded through the Housing Revenue Account. The budget is set as part of the Council's annual budget setting programme and was agreed by full Council in February 2021. In revenue there are budgets of £2,413,000 for responsive repairs and £3,049,000 for planned maintenance. In capital there is £9,212,000 for major repairs, £500,000 for facilities for the disabled, £1,033,000 for Phase 2 of Wensley Road Improvements, and £771,000 (net of a £60,000 grant) for green homes.
- 12.2 The £258,000 of general fund commitments proposed in this paper will be met from the 2021/22 revenue budget which provides for a spend of £90,000 on garages, and £168,000 on responsive repairs and minor voids works in the temporary accommodation budget.
- 12.3 A number of other projects are already committed/in progress that may need to use the underspend from 2020-21 to be carried forward to cover the cost. We will seek delegated authority from the Lead Councillor for Housing in association with the Assistant Director for Housing & Communities should the need arise.
- 12.4 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) deals with council housing finance. The main income is housing rent, and all expenditure related to council housing is charged to this account. The Housing Revenue Account is 'ring-fenced' (separate) from other Council activity (this is accounted for through the 'General Fund' account).
- 12.5 The Council regularly updates and revises assumptions in a 30-year business plan for the HRA. This includes a comprehensive 30-year programme for replacing major components of homes (roofs, windows/doors, kitchens, bathrooms etc.) and maintaining them to Decent Homes standards.

12.6 These financial implications were reviewed by Mark Jones, Strategic Business Partner, on 4/2/21.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None applicable.

Table 1

WORKS TO COUNCIL STOCK 2021-2022
(Programmes of work funded from the HRA)

£'000

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|---------------|
| 1 | Responsive Repairs | 2,337 |
| 2 | Estate Maintenance | 100 |
| 3 | Voids (Minor Works) | 890 |
| Planned Programmes | | |
| 4 | Gas Servicing and domestic legionella checks | 300 |
| 5 | Essential Cyclical | 325 |
| 6 | Pensioner Decorations | 180 |
| 7 | Common Areas | 160 |
| 8 | Electrical Checks | 70 |
| 9 | External Repairs and Decorations | 1,100 |
| Major Capital Works | | |
| 10 | Voids (Major Works) | 823 |
| 11 | Special adaptations | 500 |
| 12 | Structural work | 450 |
| 13 | Rewiring | 150 |
| 14 | Windows and Doors | 900 |
| 15 | Central Heating and Boilers | 1,000 |
| 16 | Kitchens & Bathrooms | 2,000 |
| 17 | Door Entry Systems | 160 |
| 18 | Asbestos/Legionella | 400 |
| 19 | Decent Neighbourhoods Works | 200 |
| 20 | Norcot Improvements | 771 |
| 21 | Crosswall Blocks | 880 |
| 22 | Wensley Road Improvements, External Fabric/Windows and Roof | 1033 |
| 23 | Lifts | 517 |
| 24 | Major Repairs | 460 |
| 25 | Communal Flooring | 100 |
| 26 | Feasibility | 1,172 |
| TOTAL | | 16,978 |

RESPONSIVE REPAIRS

1. Responsive Repairs £2,337,000

The Repairs service is responsive and a customer driven service. Spend in recent years has been consistently £2.3M. In our 30-year plan we are investing heavily in planned programmes and replacement components.

In 2017/18 new and integrated computer information gave us strong analytical tools to better understand repair costs.

Repairs are delivered predominantly by an in-house workforce. Factors that influence service costs include:

- Standardisation of parts. We benefit from the legacy of earlier generations who standardised components from the 1940's onwards and have continued this process
- Control of high cost jobs and the development of new programmes of work to redirect investment to planned work
- A range of competitively priced and recently tendered planned programmes
- Batched gutter cleaning works to reduce use of scaffolding costs
- New types of scaffold and harnessing
- Improved Health and safety provision fuelled by legislation change and by an enhanced risk awareness following the Grenfell fire.
- Repairs analysis and understanding costs broken down by trade job type, material and property type
- Improved specification and more building items to maintain (such as more showers or more alarms and heat recovery ventilation)
- Feedback from surveys driving improvements
- Extended guarantees on boilers.

Benchmarking our costs against other social providers (with similar size and stock), repair costs have kept comparatively low, allowing us to focus on planned works and improvements. Investing sensibly in planned and replacement programmes over many years enables us to continue to keep costs low.

2. Estate Maintenance £100,000

A housing management-controlled budget to attend to day-to-day estate management issues and repair needs on our estates. This is typically used to improve parking, manage trees, provide dog bins, manage landscaping and paths that do not form part of the Highway.

3. Voids (Minor and Major Works) £1,713,000

The cost between tenancies to repair homes to an approved standard and then re-let these homes is met from this budget. This budget has remained steady at £1.25m for a number of years. In November 2019 we undertook a pilot, increasing the scope of works on all voids in the month. Where required we included decoration and the provision of floor coverings, the additional works varied between dwellings, some required no extra works. Although difficult to calculate the additional cost for a full year, we anticipate the additional funding required to achieve this improvement in our Voids Standard would be in the region of £463,000, the budget therefore has been increased to £1,713,000. Our aim is to keep a good balance between expenditure, re-let times and the re-let standards.

PLANNED PROGRAMMES

4. Gas Servicing £300,000

A landlord is legally required to make every reasonable effort to carry out gas checks every 12 months and at change of tenancy to all landlords owned gas appliances/ properties with gas meters. The number of gas services required each year increases with new builds added to the stock and more properties switching from electric to gas heating. We are normally 100% compliant with the gas safety regulations in our efforts to carry out this annual service.

5. Essential Cyclical Inspections £325,000

This budget has increased by £30,000 and covers work in the following areas:

- Basic Lift maintenance and safety certification
- Warden Call system maintenance
- Fire alarms, Dry risers
- Fire extinguisher maintenance
- Checks and modest repairs to door entry systems
- Burglar alarms
- Communal lights maintenance
- Communal TV Aerials maintenance
- CCTV

6. Pensioner Decorations £180,000

This is a three-year cyclical programme. The town is divided into three geographic areas, and the budget is usually around £110,000 each year. Given the works are for those tenants that are most vulnerable understandably the take up has been poor this year. So as not to disadvantage those vulnerable tenants that have been shielding the proposal for 2021/22 is to pick any outstanding addresses from the current financial year as well as the newly arising need.

This year, 2021/22, the areas of the town covered by this programme of works includes Caversham, Newtown, Woodley and part of the PFI managed stock. Work is carried out by outside contractors.

To be eligible, customers must be of pensionable age or receive a disability benefit and have no resource to an able-bodied person who can do the work for them. The service is only provided where the condition of the existing decoration is poor.

Tenants receive a pre-work visit to ensure eligibility and discuss choices in colour and finishes.

7. Common Areas £160,000

A seven-year cyclical programme is set, whilst maintaining additional budget for highly trafficked or vandalised areas in exceptional cases. This year looks at Minster, Norcot, Katesgrove and Caversham wards in the main

8. Periodic Electrical Checks £70,000

Historically, an electrical check was carried out every ten years or at a change of tenancy. Good practice, reviewed at national level, recommends checks should be made every 5 years. We have increased our expenditure to reflect this and we will achieve the transition from a 10-year cycle to every 5 years by 2022/23. All addresses have been identified. We use the data collected from the electrical checks to determine the rewiring programme and use the data to set programmes to upgrade and renew smoke detectors. The budget has been reduced from £110K to £70K to reflect costs in the new term contract.

9. External Repairs and Decoration £1,100,000

Typically this includes a repair package, looking at the outside fabric of the homes and carrying out suitable improvements or repairs to:

- Roofs, Down pipes and gutters and vent pipes
- Brickwork
- Windows and doors
- Porches, Sheds
- Repairs to kitchens

An external Painting programme follows the repair works. Painting is subject to weather conditions and stops during the winter period.

Work is carried out on a rolling 7-year cycle.

MAJOR / CAPITAL REPAIRS

10. Major Voids

See Item 3 above

11. Special Adaptations £500,000

The purpose of this budget is to provide adaptations to properties in order to improve living conditions for customers with disability needs. The majority of the budget is spent on adapting bathrooms.

Policies and specification changes we have adopted in relation to general council stock, offering showers above baths and standard showers, mean standard bathroom costs will increase, but such is demand, special adaptation costs are unlikely to reduce. We currently have 5,785 homes of which 693 have adapted level access showers, a surprisingly large number (521 of these are not in sheltered homes - approximately 10% of the housing stock) which shows how increasingly well adapted our stock has become. Whilst this points to high future maintenance costs it also suggests that there is a better match of adapted stock to meet customer need.

12. Structural Works £450,000

The purpose of this budget is to address the one-off structural issues arising through the year where works are required over and above that of responsive repairs; generally, these are isolated cases of failed DPC, underpinning of the structure and fire damaged properties. This year's budget has been increased to take into account the additional work necessary to completely refurbish a particular property and create an extra bedroom.

13. Rewires

£150,000

Condition rather than age is setting the rewiring budget. The need for full rewires has decreased. The focus has switched to upgrading systems. Rewires tend to be partial, focusing on circuit board replacement and socket upgrades. Selection for these upgrades is on the recommendation of the electric's team (following electrical checks) rather than from general building surveys.

Electric checks are done either as planned checks or checks at change of tenancy. We are increasing our annual number of inspections, moving from every 10 years to every 5 years in line with good practice. Although the numbers of inspections will increase the resulting repairs should decrease as the period between inspections is reduced, going forward the budget should therefore remain at a similar level.

14. Window and Doors Replacements

(windows £800,000)

(doors £100,000)

Doors -half of all carpentry repair costs relate to doors. 2021 continues an extensive door replacement programme, looking at 150 doors. Each door is individually surveyed. Investment has already shown a fall in carpentry repairs.

Windows - most windows were replaced from 1986 onwards, replacing comparatively few before 1991 but then the numbers increased. In 1992 we started replacing windows in houses rather than flats. Windows are a key element in the Decent Homes Standard with a lifecycle of 30 years; going forward this budget will increase to reflect the growing need for window renewal. Generally, our dwellings have double glazed units, this year and moving forward we are proposing to renew existing windows with triple glazed units to increase the energy efficiency of the properties thereby reducing carbon. Every effort will be made to ensure this work is undertaken on a just in time basis. Initially our programme will concentrate on the Stacked Windows Blocks, this also forms a part of our fire protection works.

15. Boilers and heating

£1,000,000

High investment in past years has made a considerable saving in repair costs and improvement in energy efficiency. We have negotiated an extended parts and labour guarantees of 10 years on new boilers.

The replacement of boilers is fixed on a 15-year plan and full systems every 30 to 40 years.

The Council is committed to zero carbon with a target of 2030, in order to achieve this there is a need to look at alternative heating for our dwellings, we need to phase out our gas boilers over time and look to provide alternatives such as air/ground source heating. In some instances we will need to replace systems with an electrical heating system, Quantum heaters, although more expensive to provide initially there are no annual servicing costs.

16. Kitchens and Bathrooms

£2,000,000

Kitchens and bathrooms will be replaced across all areas of the borough based strictly on the condition of existing facilities (and their age).

New kitchens take account of the size and range of tenant's 'white goods' and are individually designed to accommodate these (space permitting). The kitchen specification uses thicker carcasses, hinges that open doors 180 degrees, metal draw runners and are designed to last using a modern look that we hope will stay in vogue whilst offering good tenant choice. All taps for kitchens and bathrooms are lever taps, these permit easier use for tenants who suffer with hand mobility. Some improvements in the specification result in increased responsive repair cost. We aim to strike a responsible balance between modernisation and cost.

A revised specification this year includes the full decoration of all Kitchen and Bathroom upgrades.

Going forward the budget has been smoothed to reflect the required spend over a 30-year period and will remain at this level, this will ensure we meet the Decent Homes Standard.

17. Door Entry Systems £160,000

This budget is generally split between upgrades or replacement of older door entry systems and new installations where a door entry system would be advantageous. Addresses are not pre decided. The programme responds to systems that become inoperable and a repair to the system isn't an option.

18. Asbestos and Legionella £400,000

Asbestos surveys occur before many programmes of work can take place. We survey the whole property not just the area of the work and the intention is to have data for every property and not be reliant on cloned information.

This year's budget has been increased to allow the removal of asbestos insulation boards identified in our Laing Easiform properties in the Whitley area.

19. Decent Neighbourhood Funding £200,000

We are developing our knowledge for all blocks and communal areas through surveys. We will pick up on the stock needs of drying areas and paths, lighting and landscape and boundaries. Within communal area, we look at entry doors, door closers, matt wells, stairs and balustrades, finishes, stores security and refuse disposal.

Tenants choice funding has been amalgamated with this fund into one programme of work with the aim of improving the built environment of Council estates.

20. Norcot improvement works £771,000

Repairs resulting from ground movement have been identified at a number of properties, this has led to the identification of issues relating to floors dropping and the deflection of timber floor joists leading to first floor walls deforming. Externally the rendering is in need of replacement as are the windows. This year's work will be a package of measures to address the known issues and is a pilot for all properties in this location. This year's work will include the replacement of windows with triple glazed units and an improvement to the insulation of the building fabric.

21. Crosswall Blocks £880,000

The Crosswall construction consists of load bearing party walls and a lightweight infill construction to the front and rear elevations. Constructed in the late 1960's these properties are amongst the poorest of all our stock in terms of energy efficiency, in many cases the external walls are tile hung with no additional insulation. This year we propose to continue the modernisation of the external walls to our low rise Crosswall properties. Initially selecting two blocks, the works will consist of a reconstruction of the infill front and rear elevations that will incorporate replacement triple glazed windows. These properties will not only be insulated to a high standard the opportunity exists to refresh the tired appearance of the properties with new look low maintenance materials. In total we have in the region of 70 two and three storey Crosswall blocks. In the main the three-story blocks were insulated about 12 years ago, the windows of these blocks need replacement going forward, however, the two-story blocks are predominantly as built and will need significantly more work.

22. Wensley Road Estate Flats, External Fabric/Windows and Roofing **£1,033,000**

The proposals for the three blocks of flats at Wensley Road estate include a number of measures in line with the Councils zero carbon strategy, the major elements included within the scheme are the replacement of the external fabric and windows and a new waste management system. More efficient insulation and triple glazed windows will significantly improve the thermal efficiency of the dwellings. The works to the three blocks will be phased over two years with an estimated overall cost of £5,500,000 and are tied in with the wider improvements and development of new build homes on the estate.

23. Lifts **£517,000**

An extensive survey of lifts was made in 2017 to provide better long-term investment planning. A four-year programme of just over £1m has been identified. This year we focus on lift refurbishments of both Christchurch blocks, St Stephens Court and Weirside Court.

24. Major Repairs **£460,000**

Major repairs are batched together for increased efficiencies. Work includes a variety of projects such as replacing fencing, flooring, damp treatments etc.

25. Communal Flooring **£100,000**

£70,000 of the budget is earmarked to provide new flooring, replacing badly damaged flooring or concrete finished. This investment is a response to customer feedback from a tenant survey which highlighted the appearance of communal areas as an area of concern for customers.

26. Feasibility **£1,172,000**

£25,000 earmarked to design for remodelling/ development projects. £1,147,000 will be used to replace heating systems at Granville 8 story blocks as part of our trial of low carbon and alternative heating systems to gas, the results of this will help to shape Housing Zero Carbon strategy.

£258,000 WORKS TO General Fund STOCK 2021-2022
(Programmes of work funded from the General Fund)

£'000

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|-----|
| 1 | Garage Repairs | 50 |
| 2 | Garage Planned maintenance | 40 |
| 3 | Temporary Accommodation | 168 |

Appendix 2

1. Responsive Garage Repairs **£50,000**

This budget is for the provision of day-to-day repairs to the 1060 garages.

2. Planned Maintenance to Garages **£40,000**

Garage maintenance is done on a seven-year cycle of planned maintenance to reasonably maintained sites to ensure garages are kept up to standard

The business case for this budget is simple, to keep garage sites in a lettable condition to maintain the revenue stream whilst maintaining our asset and the appearance of estates. Over the last decade investment in garages has much improved the appearance of estates and removed areas of neglect

Numbers of garages have fallen in recent years as sites are redeveloped or land included in regeneration projects (such as at Dee Park). Where a site is designated for redevelopment in the next five years we do not carry out planned maintenance.

3. Temporary Accommodation **£158,000**

A budget is used for the repair and maintenance of temporary accommodation properties. In recent years we have decreased the budget as repair costs have fallen following the refurbishment of Jimmy Green Court and 2 Wensley Road flats in recent years.