

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS & LEISURE COMMITTEE		
DATE:	10th MARCH 2022	AGENDA ITEM:	
TITLE:	HOUSING UPDATE AND PROGRAMME OF WORKS TO COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK 2022/2023		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR ELLIE EMBERSON	PORTFOLIO:	HOUSING
SERVICE:	HOUSING	WARDS:	ALL
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

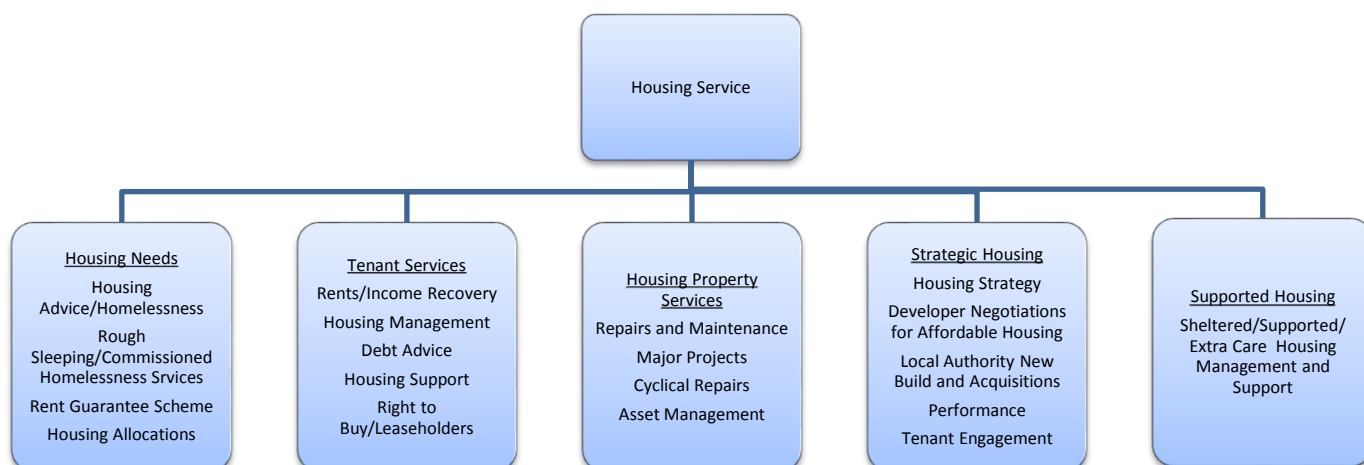
- 1.1 The Council' Housing Strategy was adopted by Policy Committee in September 2020. The vision for the strategy is "For all our residents to have the opportunity to live in a good quality sustainable home they can afford within a thriving neighbourhood." Key to this is the supply of accommodation, the quality of accommodation and neighbourhoods and support to residents.
- 1.2 This report highlights key achievements of the Housing Service over the 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. The Council's work programme continues to have a key focus on low carbon initiatives and £34 million has been invested over the next 5 years to drive sustainability improvements in the stock thereby increasing energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty for our tenants.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 - Works to Housing Stock 22/23 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
Appendix 2 - Works to Housing Stock 22/23 General Fund
Appendix 3 - Works to Housing Stock By Ward 22/23

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 Housing stock for 2022/23.
- 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 22/23 work programme as set out in Appendix 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 Due to the continuation of the pandemic, the last year has presented challenges for the service as it has for services across the Council and for residents. Business as usual is a huge task in itself. Despite this, the teams have adapted their working processes and continued to maintain services for residents and to ensure that the most vulnerable are taken care of.

4. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2021/22

- 4.1 The challenges this year have manifested themselves in different ways; the impact of covid related illness amongst staff and contractors, lack of building supplies and materials and spiralling costs to name a few. The Housing Service were at the heart of the response to the tragic event at Rowe Court just before Christmas. The Housing Service supported the response

on the day and continues to do so in the aftermath, providing accommodation, support and reassurance to many of the affected residents.

4.2 The service has achieved a great deal this year under difficult circumstances and a few of the key achievements are listed below;

- 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 4th year running.
- A new campaign to prevent homelessness was launched ‘Click Before You Evict’¹ to encourage landlords to engage with the service rather than evicting their tenants. This consisted of web resources which were developed to provide information and advice to both landlords and tenants to prevent homelessness. The service has not seen the increase in homeless households that was expected since the ban on evictions was lifted and it is a testament to the campaign and the work of the homelessness teams in continuing to prevent homelessness. This year so far 418 households have been provided with assistance to prevent them from becoming homeless
- The Housing Service won the Council’s Team Award in the Team Reading People’s Choice Awards in National Customer Services Week for the wholesale response to rough sleeping during the pandemic which included:
 - *Arranging emergency accommodation, and regular support for over 260 individual people)*
 - *Delivering hot meals on a daily basis*
 - *Provision of move on accommodation*
 - *Ambition and innovation in the delivery of a refurbished property to create a unique women’s accommodation project and beginning the development of 40 modular homes)*
 - *Successfully bidding for over to £2 million from MHCLG to provide long term support to customers who have been found rough sleeping*
 - *A great example of individual teams across the service working together efficiently and going above and beyond to provide this marginalised group of customers with significant help and support at a time of crisis and for the longer term.*

The teams were described as **‘outstanding, demonstrating all of our TEAM Reading values and met the criteria in all four categories of working together across services; driving efficiency; demonstrating ambition, and making a huge difference to our customers’**.

- Delivery of 40 modular homes for people with a history of rough sleeping incorporating 24/7 intensive support on site provided by our commissioned service St Mungos. The homes have been welcomed by new residents who moved in during November with one stating: **‘Every Borough should have a project like this I am like a kid at Christmas, this is the start of my life’**
- A new Housing Allocations Scheme was adopted to help build more sustainable communities by providing more priority to Council tenants, increasing opportunities for key workers, and creating a housing register specifically for people with a disability to better match them with appropriate housing. The scheme will be implemented later this year.

¹ <https://www.reading.gov.uk/housing/private-renting/landlord-advice/click-before-you-evict/>

- Continued support and debt advice to our tenants ensured that we maintained top quartile rent collection levels of over 97.7 % despite the increasing financial pressure on our residents as a result of the pandemic. Additional support was put in place for residents with the launch of the ‘Money Matters’² campaign and newly developed webpages providing advice, information and assistance to people struggling financially
- Installation of the Council’s first domestic air source heat pumps, 40 were installed in properties in Granville Road Southcote
- The refurbishment of 12 properties in Kentwood to reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency. The properties benefitted from the installation of new external wall insulation and render, triple glazed windows and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery systems.
- The Local Authority New Build Programme delivered 4 new homes in George Street and 18 new homes and a Community Centre in Lyndhurst Road, all built to the Council’s standards for low carbon homes
- The service won Homebuilder of the Year (16,000 or under) in the National UK Housing Awards. The Council was recognised by the judges for its ambition, commitment to sustainability and strong team working. The judges stated: ‘**Reading were clear winners for this award, with the council’s development plans ticking all boxes for the judges. Not only does it have ambitious development goals for the next five years, it is clear about how they will do this sustainably, and while engaging with and including the communities where the homes are being built.**
- The Council’s Local Authority New Build programme goes from strength to strength with the following properties currently in the pipeline to complete over the next 4 years

Scheme Name	Ward	Number of Homes
Arthur Hill Pool Site	Park	15
North Street	Abbey	41
Wensley Road	Minster	46
Battle Street	Abbey	64
Hexham Road	Redlands	30
Amethyst lane	Southcote	38 (outline)
Dwyer Road	Southcote	30 (outline)
5 small sites (ex- garage sites and scrubland)	Various	8

5.0 PROGRAMME OF WORKS 2022/223

- 5.1 Housing Property Services manages the planned maintenance, cyclical repairs and void works to approximately 5,662 Council homes.
- 5.2 The service 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.

² <https://www.reading.gov.uk/housing/money-matters/>

- 5.3 In addition the service continues to have a strong focus on improving the thermal efficiency of homes 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. £34 million has been invested in low carbon initiatives over the next 5 years with an Action Plan for both Council and private sector homes.
- 5.4 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 our tenants.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 Appendix 1 provides details of the programmes of work and associated budgets for the Councils HRA Housing Stock 2022/2023. Appendix 2 provides details of the works to the General Fund Housing Stock 2022/2023. Appendix 3 gives a breakdown of the programmes of work by ward

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 6.1 The programme of works to Council Homes contributes to:
- **A Healthy Environment** by retrofitting existing homes with low carbon initiatives to improve thermal efficiency and ultimately contribute to Reading becoming a carbon neutral town by 2030
 - **Thriving Communities** by introducing thermal efficiency measures to reduce fuel poverty and enable those living in Council homes to have an equal chance to thrive
 - **Inclusive Economy** by seeking to let contracts for major projects to contractors who provide a level of social value to the town including opportunities for education, skills and training
- 6.2 Full details of the Council's [Corporate Plan](#) are available on the website and include information on the projects which will deliver these priorities.
- 6.3 In line with TEAM Reading values the programme of works to Council homes makes a difference to our residents by:
- Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable; and
 - Providing homes for those in most need.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 The programme of works to Council homes looks to improve the energy efficiency and the insulation of properties wherever possible including:
- 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
 - Replacing external fabric of buildings including external wall insulation

➤ Installing mechanical ventilation with heat recovery systems

- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 Our local authority new build programmes play a key role in achieving net zero carbon. 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.
- 7.5 The use of sustainable material plays 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.

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 8.1 The Housing Service has an engagement approach that enables consultation with tenants on a range of issues and through different 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.
- 8.2 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.
- 8.3 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.
- 8.4 When upgrading our Crosswall properties we will consult with residents regarding the elevational treatment of the structure.
- 8.5 On our larger refurbishment schemes tenants are invited to evaluate the tender submissions.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 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).
- 10.2 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

10.3 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.

10.4 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.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The budget for the works programme 2022-23 is £22,633,000 (plus £258,000 General fund) and is funded through the Housing Revenue Account. The budget is set as part of the Council's annual budget setting programme and agreed by full Council in February 2022. An investment of £34 million of the Housing Revenue Account budget over the next 5 years will be focused on upgrading existing homes and delivering low carbon improvements, £7 million of which will be spent this year.

11.2 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).

11.3 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. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None applicable.

WORKS TO HOUSING STOCK 2022-2023 (HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT)

£'000

1	Responsive Repairs	2,550
2	Voids (Minor Works)	890
Planned Programmes		
3	Estate Maintenance	100
4	Gas Servicing and domestic legionella checks	308
5	Heating Non-Gas Servicing	45
6	Essential Cyclical	325
7	Pensioner Decorations	110
8	Common Areas	160
9	Electrical Checks	70
10	Sprinkler System Servicing	85
11	Fire Safety	100
12	External Repairs and Decorations	1,100
Major Capital Works		
13	Voids (Major Works)	823
14	Special adaptations	600
15	Communal Flooring	100
16	Structural work	400
17	Roofs - Traditional Pitched	100
18	Rewiring	307
19	Windows and Doors	850
20	Central Heating and Boilers	1,000
21	Granville Rd Heat Pumps	1,100
22	Kitchens & Bathrooms	2,100
23	Door Entry Systems	160
24	Asbestos	400
25	Decent Neighbourhoods Works	325
26	Kentwood Improvements	1,450
27	Crosswall Blocks	1,040
28	Coley High Rise, External Fabric/Windows and Roof	5,100
29	Ian Mikardo Way	150
30	Lifts	400
31	Major Repairs	360
32	Feasibility	25
TOTAL		22,633

RESPONSIVE REPAIRS

1. Responsive Repairs £2,550,000

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 been kept comparatively low, allowing us to focus on planned works and improvements. Investing sensibly in planned and replacement programmes over many years has enabled us to continue to keep costs low however the cost of labour and materials has started to rise in the last year.

Responsive repairs are undertaken in all Wards across the Borough as required.

2. 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. The additional works introduced as a pilot in 2019 have now been incorporated into our Voids Standard.

Our aim is to keep a good balance between expenditure, re-let times and the re-let standards.

Works to Void dwellings are undertaken in all Wards across the Borough as and when they become void.

PLANNED PROGRAMMES

3. 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.

Estate Management covers all Wards across the Borough as required.

4. Gas Servicing £308,000

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 landlord owned gas appliances/ properties with gas meters. The number of gas services required each year increases with new builds added to the stock. We are normally 100% compliant with the gas safety regulations in our efforts to carry out this annual service.

Gas servicing is undertaken in all dwellings that have a gas supply, there are in the region of 5,000 dwellings across the Borough, works will be undertaken in all wards.

5. Heating Non-Gas Servicing £45,000

We have as part of our carbon reduction works replaced some heating systems with Air Source Heat pumps. The first Block at Granville Road has been completed and the second Block is well underway. The servicing costs of Heat pumps is considerably more than that of a gas central heating system, we anticipate this will decrease in time as they become the norm rather than the exception. This is a budget that will increase in the future with more heat pumps being installed as part of our carbon reduction works, however, it will be offset in part as we reduce the number of gas systems within dwellings.

In the main this relates to the servicing of the Air Source Heat Pumps, part of our Carbon reduction plan and is in the Southcote Ward.

6. 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

Essential Cyclical Inspections are undertaken in all Wards across the Borough as required.

7. Pensioner Decorations **£110,000**

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 in recent years has been poor.

This year, 2022/23, the areas of the town covered by this programme of works includes Woodley, Norcot, Katesgrove, Minster, Redlands, Whitley and Kentwood Wards. 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.

8. 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's work is at Tilehurst, Norcot, Katesgrove and Whitley wards in the main.

9. Periodic Electrical Checks **£70,000**

Historically, an electrical check was carried out every ten years or at a change of tenancy. Best practice, reviewed at national level, recommends checks should be made every 5 years, Over the last couple of years, we have tried to increase our inspections to comply with best practice, unfortunately, Covid and Isolation have affected the contractors resourcing and access to our dwellings. Progress has been slower than anticipated, however, we will this year continue in our effort to achieve best practice by year end. We are currently procuring additional contractors to ensure we meet this target

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.

Periodic Electrical Checks are undertaken in all Wards across the Borough as required.

10. Sprinkler System Servicing **£85,000**

The design of our new build flats at Conwy and Bevan Close incorporate Sprinkler Systems as part of the fire safety measures. We have also fitted Sprinkler Systems within our Wates Flats and the High-Rise Flats at Coley to improve fire safety. To ensure the systems remain operational these systems require an annual service.

Works are at Coley High Rise, Minster Ward and the new build at Conwy and Bevan Close in the Tilehurst Ward. The Sprinkler systems in our Wates dwelling are in a number of Wards across the Borough.

11. Fire Safety **£100,000**

Depending on the risk associated with the Building type Fire Risk Assessments are required to ensure the buildings meet the current standards. High risk buildings are inspected annually, these are the High-Rise Blocks at Coley and Granville Road. Buildings identified as having a lower risk require an assessment every 3-4 years.

Work will be undertaken in all Wards across the Borough.

12. 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.

This year's work will be primarily in Abbey, Caversham, Katesgrove, Minster, Norcot and Tilehurst Wards.

MAJOR / CAPITAL REPAIRS

13. Major Voids

See Item 2 above

14. Special Adaptations £600,000

The purpose of this budget is to provide adaptations to properties in order to improve living conditions for customers with disability or mobility needs. The budget is spent on a range of measures from installation of stair lifts, hand rails or ramps to through the floor lifts. The greatest need for spend in this area is for the installation of level access showers.

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 6,926 homes, this includes 1264 PFI properties managed on our behalf, of which approximately 693 have adapted level access showers, a surprisingly large number 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.

This area of work is very reactive and will therefore be across all Wards within the Borough.

15. Communal Flooring **£100,000**

£70,000 of the budget is earmarked to provide new flooring, replacing badly damaged flooring or concrete finished floors. 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.

16. Structural Works **£400,000**

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 area of work is very reactive and will therefore be across all Wards within the Borough.

17. Roofs - Traditional Pitched **£100,000**

This budget is primarily for the roof renewal at Block 33-41b Caversham Road, an inspection in August 2021 identified the roof as in need of replacement. This is a 4-storey block containing 15 dwellings. Reactive repairs have been undertaken recently, addressing a number of leaks.

The roof renewal at Block 33-41b Caversham Road is in the Abbey Ward of the Borough.

18. Rewires **£307,000**

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 best 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.

This area of work is very reactive and will therefore be across all Wards within the Borough.

19. Window and Doors Replacements **(windows £750,000) (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.

This year's window renewal is in Peppard, Minster, Redlands, Whitley and Southcote Wards.

20. Central Heating and Boilers £1,000,000

High investment in past years has made a considerable saving in repair costs and improvement in energy efficiency. We have negotiated 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.

This is based on a 15-year lifecycle and will be across all Wards within the Borough

21. Granville Road Heat Pumps £1,000,100

The installation of Air Source Heat Pumps at the first of the High-Rise Blocks at Granville Road has been completed and the second block is now underway. This coming year we will be starting works on the 3rd Block, the heating for this block will be a Ground Source Heat Pump. This will give us a useful comparison, air source to ground source regarding the heating efficiency, servicing cost and future maintenance costs, this will better inform our carbon reduction strategy.

The heat pump installations will be in Southcote Ward.

22. Kitchens and Bathrooms £2,100,000

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 costs. We aim to strike a responsible balance between modernisation and cost.

A revised specification introduced last 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 continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

This is based on a 20-year lifecycle for kitchens and 30 years for bathrooms, on a worst first basis and will be across all Wards within the Borough

23. 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. The programme will cover all Wards across the Borough.

24. Asbestos **£400,000**

Asbestos surveys are required 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.

As a landlord we are required to manage the Asbestos within our Stock. We manage asbestos by periodic inspection based on risk, the risk is determined by the type of asbestos, it's condition and the likely disturbance. Periodic inspections are ongoing and apply to all dwelling constructed prior to the year 2000, properties constructed after this date will not have included any asbestos containing materials within the specification.

Our programme of asbestos surveys account for £200,000 of this budget

The remainder of the budget is for the removal of asbestos where required to facilitate improvement works or where the asbestos survey recommends removal of the asbestos rather than its management.

This work is reactive and dependant on other programmes of work it will cover all Wards across the Borough.

25. Decent Neighbourhood Works **£325,000**

We are developing our knowledge for all blocks and communal areas through surveys. We continue to pick up on the stock needs of drying areas and paths, lighting and landscape and boundaries. Within communal areas, 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.

Works will cover all Wards across the Borough.

26. Kentwood Improvements **£1,450,000**

The improvement works at homes in Kentwood are continuing this year following the successful completion of our pilot. The works include structural repairs, improved external insulation and render together with triple glazing. Where required the heating will be replaced with Air Source Heat Pumps and Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) systems.

All the measures in this scheme contribute to our carbon reduction strategy and are based on a fabric first approach.

27. Crosswall Blocks **£1,040,000**

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.

The works proposed are 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.

The scheme will include alternative heating, the proposal for the initial blocks at Bamburgh Close includes Ground Source Heat Pumps.

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.

This year's Crosswall blocks to benefit from these major improvements are in the Redlands Ward.

28. Wensley Road Estate Flats, External Fabric/Windows and Roofing **£5,100,000**

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 insulation together with triple glazed windows and a new waste management system.

A 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 three years with an estimated overall cost of £11,200,000 and are tied in with the wider improvements and development of new build homes on the estate.

The Coley High Rise blocks are in the Minster Ward of the Borough.

29. Ian Mikardo Way **£150,000**

A number of dwellings have been identified as having Tentest ceiling boards. Although there have been no issues with this type of ceiling it doesn't give the same level of fire protection as plasterboard. This budget is for the replacement of the identified ceilings with plasterboard.

This work is primarily in the Caversham Ward of the Borough.

30. Lifts **£400,000**

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 28 Granville Road (Cedar Tree House) lift B, 34 Granville Road (Chestnut Tree House) lift B and 38 Granville Road (Oak Tree House) lift B.

31. Major Repairs **£360,000**

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

Works tend to be reactive in nature and will cover all Wards across the Borough.

32. Feasibility **£25,000**

£25,000 earmarked to design remodelling/ development projects.

Appendix 2

£258,000 WORKS TO HOUSING STOCK 2022-2023 (GENERAL FUND) (Programmes of work funded from the General Fund)

£'000

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

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 within the next five years, we do not carry out planned maintenance.

3. Temporary Accommodation **£168,000**

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.

Appendix 3

**WORKS TO HOUSING STOCK BY WARD
2022-2023**

	Work Items	Planned/ Demand led	Ward(s)
1	Responsive Repairs	Demand led	All Wards
2	Voids (includes £400k Capital work)	Demand led	Various
Planned Programmes			
3	Estate Maintenance	Demand led	Various
4	Gas Servicing and domestic legionella checks	Planned	All Wards
5	Heating Non-Gas Servicing	Planned	Southcote Ward
6	Essential Cyclical	Planned	Various
7	Pensioner Decorations	Planned	Whitley, Redlands, Kentwood, Katesgrove, Minster, Norcot and Woodley
8	Common Areas	Planned	Tilehurst, Norcot, Katesgrove and Whitley
9	Electrical Checks	Planned	Various
10	Sprinkler System Servicing	Planned	Minster, Tilehurst, and the Wates Flats in various wards across the Borough
11	Fire Safety	Planned	Various
12	External Repairs and Decorations	Planned	Abbey, Caversham, Katesgrove, Minster, Norcot and Tilehurst
Major Capital Works			
13	Voids (Major Works)	Demand led	Various
14	Special adaptations	Demand led	Various
15	Communal Flooring	Demand led	Various
16	Structural work	Demand led	Various
17	Roofs - Traditional Pitched	Planned/Demand led	Abbey Ward
18	Rewiring	Demand led	Various
19	Windows and Doors	Planned	Peppard, Minster, Redlands, Southcote and Whitley Wards (Windows)
20	Central Heating and Boilers	Planned	Various
21	Granville Road Heat Pumps	Planned	Southcote Ward
22	Kitchens & Bathrooms	Demand led	Various
23	Door Entry Systems	Demand led	Various
24	Asbestos	Demand led	Various

25	Decent Neighbourhoods Works	Planned	Various
26	Kentwood Improvements	Planned	Kentwood
27	Crosswall Blocks	Planned	Redlands
28	Coley High Rise, External Fabric/Windows and Roof	Planned	Minster
29	Ian Mikardo Way Ceilings	Planned	Caversham
30	Lifts	Demand led	Various
31	Major Repairs	Demand led	Various
32	Feasibility/Contingencies	N/A	N/A