

Housing and Property Services Department



Housing Asset Management Plan

September 2017

Aims and aspirations

●● *Property and land are long term assets owned by Wealden District Council for the benefit and use of its residents now and into the future.*

Our aim is to have a good understanding of our residents' needs and expectations and incorporate these into future workplans – in relation to our existing or new assets.

Our aspiration is to maintain a detailed knowledge of our assets and their condition so that we can make proper and sustainable provision to maintain appropriate assets for future stakeholders.

This Housing Asset Management Strategy will help us achieve these aims and aspirations.



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Related documents

The following documents are referred to in the main body of the Plan.

- Wealden District Council component life-cycles
- Decent Homes standards
- Housing standards, existing, new build and acquisitions
- Retirement Living Court standards
- Void standards, general needs and retirement living
- Housing Asset list as at September 2016
- Potential Development Opportunities as at September 2017

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out the Plan to be adopted by the Housing and Property Services Department to ensure that all Wealden District Council (WDC) housing and housing-related assets e.g. access roads, garages, parking and amenity areas are managed and maintained in accordance with:

- WDC Corporate Vision, Aims and Objectives
- WDC Housing Strategy
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan

In addition to inform policies and procedures including but not exclusively:

- Housing Services Development Standards
- Housing Services Asbestos Management Plan
- Housing Services Health & Safety Policy

To support the achievement of specific internal and external indicators and targets including:

External	Achievement of Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) targets Meeting Decent Homes (DH) Criteria
Internal	Supporting the Sheltered Housing Review (SHR) Informing the Development Strategy

To keep the report to a minimum, wherever possible operational details are contained within the appendices or cross referenced to other documents or websites.

The HRA Business Plan and Housing Asset Management Plan (HAMP) are long term commitments and processes which require periodic review to ensure they are current and effective.

This version of the HAMP shall be effective from 1 April 2018 for the period to 31 March 2024 and reviewed in 2021



Responsibilities and delivery

The delivery and review of the HAMP will be the responsibility of the Housing Asset Management Group (HAMG) which shall consist of:

- Head of Housing and Property Services (Chair)
- Housing Services Manager
- Property Services Manager
- Housing Options and Performance Manager
- Housing Development Team Leader

The daily responsibility for the monitoring, management and review of the Plan will be carried out by the Asset Team Leader (ATL).

The ATL shall update the HAMG, at least quarterly, on progress against any agreed targets and advising of other relevant issues. The HAMG shall meet annually to formerly review progress against targets, agree any additions, alterations or amendments to targets and the plan. The meeting shall be facilitated by the ATL.

Effective asset information

Housing and Property Services primarily manage properties owned by WDC and rented by them or occupied by leaseholders and shared owners. In addition there is a range of other assets which are included in this Plan ranging from garages and car parking areas through un-adopted roadways, pathways to grass amenity areas, play areas and verges.

A detailed list of our assets is not included in this plan as it changes regularly with RTB sales, acquisitions and new builds.

A current list of housing assets is available at any time from the IT Support Team Leader, our Estates Manager maintains the Council's Terrier which contains at any time a current asset list including all assets held by the HRA.

At the time of this report being prepared the following housing assets were held, the majority of general needs housing date from the post war period or through the 70's and 80's, all Retirement Living Courts were built in the 70's and early 80's.

1304	Houses
249	Bungalows
11	Retirement Living bungalows
976	General needs flats
434	flats in 11 Retirement Living Courts
2974	Total number of units

Further we had 113 new build homes in construction or about to commence, 25 RTB applications in process and 380 garages.

Managing these assets effectively is a long term commitment with the Capital Works Plan being prepared on a 30 year rolling cycle. In line with Decent Homes Guidance. In addition the life-cycle of many building components is well in excess of this; for example tiled roof coverings which are expected to last in excess of 50 years.

The components used in construction have not varied much over the years and there are clearly defined and published life-cycles for most elements.

However, in practice the life-cycle of components will often vary from this for a range of factors such as quality of workmanship, selection of components or materials, exposure to extreme weather during or subsequent to construction, etc.

In addition other factors such as social change, lifestyle, fashion, climate change, or government intervention may require components to be changed before reaching the end of their life.

Taking these issues into account, as well as our extensive knowledge of the properties, WDC has prepared and use the set of component life-cycles. See related documents for details.

Having accurate records of the properties, the components used, their age (including dates where replaced) and condition, are paramount to forward planning, budgeting and effective decision making. It is therefore imperative that all our housing asset records are not only comprehensive and accurate, but are also reviewed regularly with processes in place to capture current condition, renewals and replacements.

To ensure this is the case, the ATL arranges periodic property surveys. These may be targeted at particular attributes e.g. kitchens or bathrooms which may have been replaced by tenants or when void, problem areas e.g. pointing on a particular estate where there are damp issues, or to assess the need to carry out a specific work programme where condition is more relevant than age, e.g. re-roofing, re-pointing or replacing tile hanging

By working in this method rather than simply replacing components based on their age, we have been able to amend the Business Plan programme and identify funding to remodel and refurbish Joan Hughes Court.

The intention is to carry out a survey of at least 5% of our stock annually.

Asset Management Database and Information Systems

WDC use two main housing software systems which are linked in certain areas to maintain reliable and accessible information, thus enabling a wide range of functions within the Housing Services Department. Access to some data held in the systems is available in the Tenants Portal, we regularly review and update the information held and available.

These are:

Orchard, a Housing Management database in which basic property records are managed. It is used primarily for tenancy management as well as raising, managing and monitoring property repairs.

Keystone, an Asset Management database and tool. This uses the property details from Orchard and is used to record detailed property and component records, calculate and cost renewal programmes and also to maintain asbestos records. We have recently added their 'Auto Assessor' module which allows scenario modelling and more energy functionality.

The Estates Manager uses **ELF**, a Terrier database, to record land records, licences, leases, etc. for all WDC assets which are also linked to **Datamap** – a basic mapping systems using layers to record ownership and other data. This is a convenient and readily accessible tool. However its use is not intuitive and is issued to staff in an inconsistent way.

Keystone and ELF systems were updated in 2013 to latest versions with relevant staff trained in their use.

Datamap is in process of being replaced by a GIS system and Estates staff are involved in its implementation to ensure relevant data is retained and transferred, to ensure functionality with our Terrier. It is due to be implemented fully by 2018/19.

Our Estates Team will continue to be involved in the implementation of the new GIS Software.

Asbestos Management

The ATL is the nominated Asbestos Manager for the HRA. This role includes the preparation, review and management of the Housing Service's Asbestos Management Plan. Due to the high level of risk from asbestos, many functions are strictly controlled by legislation e.g. inspection and testing. To ensure the relevant expertise is available, we retain an Asbestos Consultant who carries out the following on our behalf:

- Management Surveys
- Refurbishment and Demolition surveys
- Contractor audits
- Provides asbestos advice
- Periodically reviews the Asbestos Management Plan in conjunction with the ATL
- Provides an online Portal with 'live' asbestos data for our premises
- Carries out staff and contractor training **



*** This has been reduced by the availability of an 'online' training module for relevant staff but would typically be carried out if or when asbestos legislation is amended.*

All our communal areas have had Management Surveys carried out. In addition (excepting 300 properties that have refused access) all our housing and communal areas have had Management Surveys carried out.

In 2017 we commenced a 10 year re-survey programme.

Fire Safety Management

All general needs properties, including flats, are equipped with mains-operated smoke and heat detector systems. More recently, where appropriate, CO detectors are also being installed.

The recent fire at Grenfell Tower in London has brought fire safety in flats to the fore and the following points summarise our stock and risk they present

- Most of our properties are individual houses and bungalows traditionally built of brick/block walls with tiled roofs
- A large percentage of our flats and all our maisonettes are 'one-up, one-down' properties at each end of a terrace of houses having no communal areas. These are also traditionally constructed
- Our remaining flats are purpose-built blocks, traditionally built with brick/block walls under tiled roofs, with concrete floors and effective fire compartmentalisation between floors, at each floor level and within properties **
- We also have 11 purpose-built Retirement Living Courts

*** The majority of the purpose built blocks of flats are simple 2 storey, 2 up 2 down flats.*

On Town Farm Estate in Hailsham we also have 11 three storey blocks of flats, in Heathfield we have 2 four storey blocks of flats.

Since the implementation of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 the Council have been in contract with DDS (International) Ltd.(DDS) to prepare and manage Fire Risk Assessments (FRA), these include annual Assessments of our Retirement Living courts and bi-annual Assessments of our purpose-built General Needs flats.

In addition Retirement Living Care Managers and Estate Wardens carry out monthly inspections of their premises with results recorded on DDS Portal.

We also carry out a FRA on any new sites, or existing sites which have been altered or adapted to an extent where the FRA would be invalid.

In recent years we have been carrying out necessary building works to resolve any areas of concern, particularly compartmentalisation, and pro-actively managing the premises to ensure occupiers do not create any risks.

Retirement Living Courts are all equipped with:

- Fire Alarm system**
- Emergency lighting
- Fire fighting equipment e.g. fire extinguishers and blankets

*** Of our 11 Courts 5 have been upgraded to L2/LD2 systems meeting British Standards (BS5839 Part1:2008), a further 4 sites will be upgraded in the next 5 years.*

In all cases the Courts operate a 'stay put' policy and residents receive talks from Fire Safety Officers.

General Needs flats are all equipped with:

- Emergency lighting

In all cases the FRA were reviewed following the Grenfell fire, and on receipt of guidance from East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS), it has been agreed that we shall follow the audit process for all major projects – this covers the pre, during and post construction phases.

Further information on our Policy is contained within the Housing Services Health and Safety Policy together with a copy of ESFRS Audit Tool.

We shall continue our programme to upgrade fire alarms in RLC's, together with regular Fire Risk Assessments by specialists and ongoing monitoring and management by local staff. We shall also consider the viability of installing sprinkler systems in RLC's.

Water services and treatment

A number of our properties have shared or stored water services and as a result need to comply with relevant legislation to control legionella.

Under current guidance residents of our Retirement Living Courts are considered 'vulnerable'. To comply with the legislation we will ensure these residents receive a higher level of care with all systems assessed, reviewed and monitored closely. Our Health and Safety Policy sets out the Water Safety Policy (strategic) and Water Safety Plan (operational) for these premises.

We also have a general needs duty to all Wealden properties which are considered domestic properties. To ensure compliance we provide information and advice, such as flushing toilets, running taps and showers after a holiday. In addition we complete a void checklist for all properties.

Our Mechanical and Electrical Services Term Contractor fulfils our duties required under legislation for our RLC's.

In addition a General Needs Risk Screening has been completed by a water hygiene consultant in regard to all of Wealden's general needs properties.

Wherever possible we have already, and will continue to, reduce the number of individual and group properties with stored water by a range of initiatives including:

- Installing mains pressure hot and cold water services to Retirement Living Courts when built and/or refurbished.
- Replacing bathrooms in RLC's with level access shower rooms using mains fed showers
- Replacing boilers in individual properties with combination boilers and pressurised systems, removing the need for any water storage tanks
- Wherever possible replacing shared water mains in older flats by individual mains with mains pressure hot and cold water services

We will work to reduce the potential for legionella at source wherever possible, where there is a risk to implement the Water Safety Policy and Plan to minimise risks.

Business Planning

Over the last 5 years we have invested substantial time in Keystone to update the system and improve the information it contains and can generate.

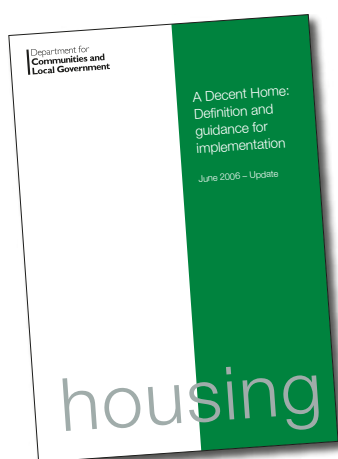
For this first time in 2016/17 the HRA Programme was generated by Keystone requiring few adjustments by the ATL to make it into a suitable format for Finance to use.

The adjustments primarily related to 'smoothing' peaks and troughs in the programme.

Keystone is now able to directly generate annual work programmes for surveyors and an active process is in place to capture and feed into Keystone survey data and completed works information quarterly.

The primary targets to be met nationally by all Social Housing Providers relate to **Decent Homes Standards** (last revision 2006)

The stated purpose being



'...to provide a minimum standard of housing conditions for all those who are housed in the public sector.'

HHSRS (introduced 2006 at time of Decent Home review)

This replaced the 'Decent Homes fitness standard'

'...it is a risk assessment procedure and does not set a standard, however to be decent, a dwelling should be free of category 1 hazards, and the existence of such hazards should be a trigger for remedial action...'

'...HHSRS must be incorporated in housing stock condition surveys...'

Decent Homes is not a target that can be achieved and set aside. As time passes more components reach 'the end of their life' and properties may no longer achieve the standard. Ongoing vigilance is required to ensure that components nearing the end of their published life-cycle are inspected and data amended, or that budgets and contracts are in place for replacements.

There are two components where there is a degree of conflict which needs to be managed, namely kitchens and bathrooms where we are not achieving value for money nor meeting our tenants expectations:

- Few private households would expect to retain a kitchen for 30 years. It is becoming more of a 'fashionable' fixture in a home and expected to have all modern technology built into it. We provide a simple kitchen with no white goods to meet the basic needs of the occupier. Recent experience demonstrates that many tenants replace the kitchen themselves, or that due to high tenant turnover, the quality of the units fitted, as well as wear & tear, many kitchens are replaced early
- To a lesser extent bathrooms are similar, with few tenants expecting to use a 40 year old bathroom suite. This is a very busy room in a house especially in a family home, and takes much use and abuse. Bathroom suites are also simple and relatively cheap to replace by tenants. Recent experience is that by the time we survey for replacement, most of the sanitary ware, taps and wastes has probably been replaced. In addition we spend void monies taking out inferior, unmaintainable or poorly installed items e.g. showers

- Retirement Living Courts are an exception to this where a simple kitchen is generally welcome, especially where there is a communal laundry. Kitchens will easily last 30 years. However bathrooms are unlikely to last 40 years as most will have a level access shower fitted for health reasons

We have a specific set of life-cycles agreed. These are set out in the related documents.

WDC is committed to ensure that all properties meet Decent Homes Standards, and any all Category 1 hazards (HHSRS) are identified and incorporated into current programmes of work.

Previous intentions to reduce kitchen life-cycles to 20 years and bathrooms to 30 years are not sustainable.

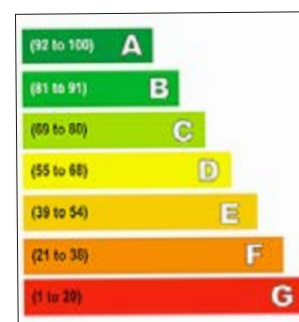
There is justification in looking into a ‘smarter’ way to deal with these particular components which better suits both the tenants and ourselves, and we will look into options to achieve this in the coming years.

Sustainability

The Housing Service’s Energy Efficiency Officer carried out an Energy Review in 2011 for the period to 2016 which was adopted and set a future direction to achieve improvements.

By the end of 2016 the following has been achieved:

- 167 properties ‘off gas mains’ have had Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) central heating systems
- 120 properties near to gas mains have had a gas supply fitted and a gas central heating system (gas switch) installed
- all blocks of general needs flats have LED lighting
- all properties have cavity wall insulation
- all Retirement Living Courts have cavity wall insulation, 270mm loft insulation, communal LED lighting and PV panels



Following these works, our average SAP rating for properties is 62, this is in band D which ranges from 55-68.

Desktop exercises show that we will be unable to move up to the next band with our current property portfolio, the only substantive works being underfloor insulation which would be massively disruptive and costly to achieve.

We can continue to target properties suitable for switching to gas, also to encourage the installation of ASHP systems away from gas networks.

The other initiatives which we need to explore further are:

- ‘V-charge’ storage heater controls. These are technically advanced controls linking the properties needs, external environment and forecast to the availability of cheap energy.
- Solar thermal systems for which the Government are offering Domestic Renewable Heat Incentives (RHI). This could potentially generate an income around £1,000 over 7 years (average council property at current tariffs)

The Government's priority at present is to private households off gas mains networks. The Council's Energy Efficiency Officer has been targeting this group and other private households recently achieving the following:

- Funding for 7 new gas heating systems and 15 replacement boilers, 7 new Night Storage Heater (NSH) systems, as well as numerous improvements such as energy saving bulbs
- Collective Energy Switch in 2016 saving £55,000 overall to those joining in
- Smart meter roadshow in 10 rural communities
- Collective Energy Switch in 2017 saving £217,000 overall to those joining in

We will continue to press tenants off gas networks to change to ASHP or where possible carry out a Gas Switch.

Further investigation is needed with regard to Solar Thermal to see if the Council could benefit from Domestic RHI for these installations.

A trial is underway to install 'V-charge' storage heating controls. If this proves successful we shall investigate the potential to 'upgrade' our remaining NSH installations.

Housing (existing general needs)

WDC has in the main traditionally constructed housing under tiled roofs with no properties over 3 storeys. There are a small number of system-built houses which have been refurbished in recent years.

With few exceptions, housing has been built by the Council to a good space standard and quality. There has been an active programme for replacements for many years, more recently to ensure that Decent Homes Standards are achieved.

In general the internal fixtures and services in our properties are in good or very good order with well-established contracts and programmes for their planned replacement.

In 2012 guidance changed relating to periodic electrical test and reports. The main change related to the frequency of testing with a reduction from 10 to 5 years. This at a stroke doubled the costs associated with this programme.

Over the last 5 years, we have been working towards a 5 year programme. To achieve better value from this we included electrical upgrading of the systems and installation of mains operated detectors.

We have now completed the first 5 year cycle and costs for the recent test and reports are substantially lower, with few properties requiring any work.

An advantage of the increased frequency of testing is that we are carrying out fewer electrical rewire and generally only where the cabling initially installed was defective (in particular where the copper/plastic in the wiring was contaminated and lead to a breakdown of the wire).

In 2010 we commenced using Worcester Greenstar 'A' rated boilers throughout our general need properties. This has enabled our contractors to carry good stocks of parts and gain a good understanding of the products boosting reliability and increasing their life beyond 15 years. We do not have a definitive programme for their replacement but look at their reliability and performance allowing for a percentage replacement each year.

In 2016 we achieved intention to have all windows in our properties double glazed and are most entrance doors are double glazed, secure composite, pvc or aluminium. The older PVC products are not as effective or long-lived as more modern units and are updated as and when necessary.

Internal flat entrance doors are one hour fire rated doors and typically solid timber rarely requiring renewal.

Over the last 5 years, we have commenced planned works programmes to replace ageing roof coverings, porches and canopies, as well as roofline products.

We are also working through a long term programme to renew or replace footpaths, fencing and boundary walls to both individual properties and estate areas.

With the increasing use of maintenance-free products externally to our properties eg windows, doors, fascias and gutters, there is a decreasing need for planned redecoration programmes.

Replacement porches and canopies shall be GRP or similar wherever possible.

We will continue to use such products and look at more recent innovations such as composite cladding boards in place of timber.

An internal redecoration programme has been developed and implemented for the internal communal areas of general needs and RLC's.

We will continue to investigate options to minimise our liability for the ongoing maintenance of components such as fences and footpaths, either by devolving these to tenants, or by providing lower cost and/or maintenance free replacements.

Housing (Retirement Living Courts)

In 2010 the Council agreed a Sheltered Housing Review. This was an ongoing project with the main aims being to review our present provision, and to convert bedsits into a more acceptable layout wherever possible (also meeting current space standards).

The majority of the Council's retirement living courts were built in the 70's and 80's to a common layout and style by the then 'in house' Architects Department.

To date the following has been agreed and/or implemented:

- Tower Mill Place – site demolished and 16 general needs homes built
- Evelyn Clark House – site demolished and 28 general needs homes built
- Buxted Court - refurbishment of site, including remodelling of flats (completed 2016)
- Grants Hill House – decision made to redevelop, providing 67 retirement living flats (site demolished and reconstruction in process 2017-18)
- Elizabeth Court - decision made to redevelop site as general needs accommodation (site demolished and reconstruction in process 2017-2018)
- Joan Hughes Court – decision made to remodel and refurbish (Tender documentation being prepared for site works 2018-20)

Streatfeild House was identified as a lower priority with works proposed to be carried out after Buxted Court, Grants Hill House and Joan Hughes Court (if remodelling/refurbishment selected works cannot commence until 2020 earliest due to funding). HMT are currently considering a separate report setting out options for the site.



Visual representation of Grants Hill House by PRP Architects

The Courts are unusual in having a large percentage of Shared Owners. This does create some tension as the premises are ageing and major replacements become due e.g. lifts, roofs, windows, etc.

A modest sinking fund has been established and arrangements put in place to recover larger payments.

We have recently completed an exercise to co-ordinate the replacement of soft

furnishings (furniture, curtains/blinds, etc.) with internal redecoration and other planned works. This will require bringing some works forward to resolve funding.

A good working relationship has been established across the respective Housing Teams ensuring the appropriate design, detailing and facilities are maintained in recent refurbishment and ongoing redevelopment projects.

We have an initial set of standards identified and accepted as a basis for Grants Hill House and for refurbishment of other schemes. See related documents for details.

Housing (new build and acquisitions)

WDC has an ongoing programme of building new housing for rent.

It is not the intention of this document to replace or duplicate the 'Design Quality Standards' (DQS) as prepared by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). It is imperative however that the components within all new properties are of a common quality, type and standard to ensure that they fit into our present life-cycle standards and that they can be serviced and maintained by our current contractors.

New technology in particular and non-standard forms of construction can be a particular issue, often necessitated by the requirement to achieve certain standards or meet expectations of funding partners.

The Development Team shall ensure that:

- The current specification takes into account currently used components



- That any deviation from standard forms of construction (traditional masonry cavity or timber framed walls under a pitched tiled roof) shall be discussed and agreed with the Property Services Manager
- That the Housing Service's Energy Efficiency Officer is involved in any decisions regarding the selection and use of alternative sustainable systems.
- A handover standard is agreed with the Property Services Team Leader and Housing Services Manager at each site and adhered to for remaining properties
- Changes in funding have led to the situation where private housing is bought into stock for rent. Over recent years, many RSL's have undertaken the purchase of properties off the open market in line with various Government initiatives. In many instances these have been unsatisfactory leading to increased management and maintenance costs and unhappy tenants in unsuitable properties

The Development Team shall ensure that:

- Repurchased properties are former WDC properties unless agreed otherwise with the Property Services manager
- Properties are brought up to Decent Homes as a minimum and compliant to HHSRS

Housing (void standards)

Housing staff have worked with tenants to develop appropriate and affordable standards for void properties. These are reviewed regularly with a review underway currently.

The benefits are many and include:

- Offering a consistent and acceptable level of accommodation to incoming tenants
- Reducing turnover times and hence rent losses as staff and contractors are aware of the expectations on both parties
- Minimising the likelihood of refusals
- Removing the potential for complaints about differing standards being offered or favouritism

In a small number of cases tenants may refuse major works such as heating, kitchen or bathroom renewals. In such cases the trigger for the property becoming non decent is when it becomes vacant.

It is therefore imperative that a system is in place to identify such properties promptly, and for officers and contractors to be in a position to carry out necessary catch up works during the void period without undue delay.

System settings

Alarms have been established on Orchard to ensure that void properties requiring catch up works are identified early, typically when notice is served

Void standards

The Voids Surveyor and Housing Officers review the void standards periodically to identify any areas where the standards have led to refusals or concerns – these shall be implemented where costs are minimal.

Capital works programme

A suitable budget is available to allow for void catch-up works in any financial year

Housing related assets and disposals

Given the age of our properties, it is inevitable that the condition of the related assets will be poor and potentially could lead to monies being diverted away from housing programmes. It is imperative therefore that the extent and condition of such assets, together with both our obligations and those of other parties, be established and quantified together with any opportunity to generate a single or longer term income from them.

Many of the assets were a requirement for a council to provide, or were acquired to facilitate the development of a scheme and are no longer relevant or required. These include substantial areas of hardstanding, garages in blocks and gardens, unadopted roadways and footpaths, play areas and amenity grass areas.

In addition there are some more obscure holdings e.g. Uckfield Bowling Club which was built in the grounds of a Retirement Living Court to encourage its residents to remain active.

As these are secondary to our core purpose many of these areas have been neglected or are simply not a priority for funding.

A programme is in place for the annual inspection of unadopted access roadways in accordance with relevant Codes of Practice which is expected by our Insurers. This has also proved beneficial to our Insurers by providing evidence to challenge speculative injury claims.

Costed planned works programmes have been prepared and incorporated within the business plan.

In addition we liaise with third parties to ensure they are aware of their liability towards repair costs where appropriate.

Since the last HAMP was adopted we have carried out a review of our garage stock and parking areas, demolishing those where there is no need and renovating those in demand that remain. In tandem with this, we have been more pro-active in letting void garages. This has maximised our income whilst minimising our liability.

On Town Farm Estate, Hailsham, we have liaised with the Residents Association and reduced the blocks of garages substantially to suit previous demand. Long term void or unlettable garages are being demolished to provide much needed off street parking around the estate and minimising our maintenance costs.



The remaining issue regarding garages is that a high proportion of them are in rear garden areas, mainly at Town Farm, Hailsham. We have approached Right To Buy (RTB) owners where these were excluded from their sale and sold a number. However many remain with tenanted properties. With few exceptions these are in poor condition or unlettable.

The Council has been pro-active in disposing of surplus assets and on housing estates the most obvious development opportunities have been sold and developed, typically by Housing Associations.

However there still remain a number of opportunities for development. The garage review has identified a number of potential sites which had not previously been considered.

In some cases the sites are made up of garages, parking and tenanted garden.

These have been discussed and agreed by the HAMG, where they are considered feasible:

- Details are prepared so they can be retained in the new GIS system
- Where sites require a tenanted garden area, flags are being set on Orchard to ensure that when the property is re-let the appropriate garden area is licenced to the new tenant
- The Development Manager is progressing the most likely sites either directly or through the recently established Housing company, Sussex Weald Homes Ltd.

See related documents for a current list of these sites with brief notes.

Conversely, where properties were sold under RTB legislation, policy has been inconsistent but generally sold only the area included in the tenancy. This has left a legacy of small unadopted garden areas, road crossovers and garages which could or should have been included in the sale.

In many cases these are sold to the owner occupiers or their successors in following years.

We are now looking more carefully at each RTB sale and balancing the desire to dispose of assets which are a liability, whilst retaining areas which could be of value e.g. as part of a development opportunity.

In the coming year we will review remaining garages in curtileges with view to disposing of or demolishing them. This may take some years to achieve for tenanted properties as we may need to wait until they are void.



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