



GROWTH STRATEGY - 2018-2022

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Title of Document	Growth Strategy
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Directorate(s)	Growth
Document Status	Final
Supersedes (Version & Date)	N/A
Approved By	RBH Board
Date of Approval	27th June 2021
Publication / Issue Date	September 2021
Date of Annual Review	July 2022
Changes Made at Last Review	N/A
Full Review Date	July 2022
Distribution	Website and Intranet

Rochdale Boroughwide Housing Limited is a charitable community benefit society.
FCA register number 31452R.

Registered Office: Unique Enterprise Centre, Belfield Road, Rochdale OL11 2UP.

Registered as a provider of social housing. RSH register number: 4607



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1. Introduction

RBH's Corporate Strategy - Together outlines how we will be delivering and developing our services over the next 10 years and explains how we will progress our mutual way of working.

We have three principal priorities to meet our overall aims and objectives – Growing Together, Thriving Together and Improving Together – these are mutually dependent and reinforcing.



How we invest in our existing and new homes is a key part of delivering Together and this Growth Strategy outlines our firm ambitions to deliver the right mix and quality of homes to make RBH communities strong and successful.

2. Our Vision and Our Values

This Growth Strategy has been developed inline with our vision- People succeeding together to offer great services and places to live and work. Our mutual values set out our ways of working and collectively they set the mutual framework and behaviours through which we will deliver our services and the activities within this Growth Strategy. Detail of how we will meet our values in the delivery of this Growth Strategy can be found in appendix 1.

3. Context

National Housing Market and Policy Context

The Bilfinger GVA UK Housing Market Outlook (2017) reported growing sales in 2017 with the highest in a decade.

The rate of house building is struggling to keep up with the pace of household growth, which would require 230,000 completions per annum for the next 5 years in England, 60% above the current rate, as well as extra to make up the back log. This required supply is of all tenures, with a particular need at the affordable and intermediate levels of the market.

Much of the government's housing policy is focused on supporting home ownership for first time buyers. The proportion of people owning homes (either outright or with a mortgage) has

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declined for each age group with the exception of the over 65's. There is a generational divide in homeownership which may have significant implications for shaping future tenure patterns.

Home ownership levels are likely to continue to decline, largely due to affordability constraints and the imbalance in supply. Meanwhile, projections for the number of people living in rented accommodation maintain an upward trajectory.

Greater Manchester Housing Market and policy context

The Greater Manchester Housing Providers Group has commissioned research which will report this year on the form and function on social housing in Greater Manchester. Early findings indicate two fundamental issues; an overall 'tightening up' of the housing market and in particular demand for affordable homes across Greater Manchester (40% of households cannot meet their needs in the market) and alongside this increasing polarisation between the city centre and south of the conurbation and areas to the north. As market homes in the city centre and southern areas become increasingly unaffordable there are early indications of displacement to areas where the overall housing market is characterised by lower values, particularly in the private rented sector. Greater Manchester overall saw significant depopulation and abandonment between 1951 and 2001. Recovery from this has been characterised by rapid growth in the residential market in the regional core.

The type and quality of homes built across Greater Manchester over the last century has a strong influence on the current market function of neighbourhoods with the city centre completely dominated by post 1990 development and the strongest demand neighbourhoods in the south having an urban form that has witnessed relatively little change since 1939 and providing a mix of different types and tenure of homes. For Rochdale key development periods were pre-1920 and 1940 to 1975.

Further consultation is due this year on the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework with a need currently identified for development of 11,360 new homes per year. This is significantly higher than current delivery rates across the conurbation.

The Greater Manchester strategy sets clear objectives around growth and in particular achieving inclusive growth with the benefits spread across the city region. The strategy also sets out the ambition to revitalise town centres. Linked to this Rochdale Town Centre has been selected by the council as the focus for the GM Mayor's Town Centre strategy in the borough.

Rochdale Housing Market

The economic and housing market backdrop to our work is a challenging one. The borough has yet to experience the return to growth seen in other parts of the region and consequently has remained in the 50 most deprived districts in England.

Although overall the Rochdale borough does have a reasonably diverse housing supply there remain too many neighbourhoods characterised by a lack of choice and poor quality homes. There has been a significant growth in the private rental market to the point where this is now greater than the social housing sector. There are particular concerns about the growth in the bottom end of this market where the impact on poor quality is felt in the wider neighbourhood.

House prices in the borough have persistently remained below regional averages. Average values do mask neighbourhoods where low values have impacted on the viability of potential development sites, meaning some kind of subsidy is needed to bring about the development of much needed new homes to improve quality and widen choice.

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Rochdale Borough Profile

Data from the Office of National Statistics and the Rochdale Borough Profile 2011, highlighted the following characteristics of the Rochdale Borough.

Rochdale has a total population of 218,500- 107,700 male and 110,700 female. The population of Rochdale is expected to grow by 212,300 by 2033. This projection is based on birth, death and migration trend over the previous 5 years.

Rochdale's population is younger than that of Greater Manchester and England. Rochdale has a larger proportion of 0-15 year olds, comprising 21% of the population, compared with 19% in both Greater Manchester and England. Population projection research for Rochdale suggests that in the future there will be a greater proportion of older people compared to those of working age.

There are a greater proportion of males aged 29 and under compared to females. There are also a greater proportion of females aged 65+ compared to males.

Most people in the Rochdale Borough are from a White British ethnic background, equivalent to 83.5% of the total population. People of a Pakistani background make up the largest minority ethnic group, with 8.3% of the population.

There has been an increase in the proportion of each minority group, except White Irish and Pakistani. The groups with the smallest numbers in the Borough have exhibited the larger proportional growth, representing increasing diversity.

The most deprived areas have a larger proportion of people from a minority ethnic background.

In terms of household composition Rochdale has a larger proportion of couples with children than England (29% compared with 27%), a higher proportion of lone parent families (12% compared with 10%) and fewer couples without children (23% compared to 27%). There is a large disparity of one person households across the borough, with some urban centres having 40-70% one person households compared to 0-20% in parts of Wardle and West Littleborough.

Rochdale is one of the most deprived boroughs in England and is ranked 25th most deprived (out of 354 Local Authorities in England) in terms of average scores of its Lower Super Output Areas. The homes we invest in need to recognise the need to drive up the quality of the housing offer in some of the most deprived areas and provide a mix to meet long term future need, including family housing and specialist homes for older people.

Delivery to Date

Since our mutual transfer in 2012 supported by grant funding from Homes England we have developed 150 new homes including family houses, flats, bungalows and the Borough's first extra care scheme. We have a further 35 homes under construction due for completion 18/19.

We have secured £3.382m under Homes England's Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme to deliver 99 new homes from 2018-2021, of which 25 have started on site. These homes are Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy, both new tenures for RBH and a reflection of our commitment to diversify and to meet changing needs and aspirations and to widen the housing choices open to residents.

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Since late 2016, we have been developing the options for investment in Rochdale Town Centre to provide a better quality and choice of homes for existing and future residents. We have completed our Strategic Masterplan for the Town Centre and have a preferred option for investment in place. We are working collaboratively with partners to develop and deliver our ambitious proposals.

We have ensured 100% of our existing homes continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard and we continue to work to improve the energy efficiency of our homes measured by SAP ratings.

4. Methodology

This strategy has been developed in the context of RBH's new Corporate Strategy, Together, which sets out our Strategic Priorities in relation to Growth.

One to one meetings have been held with Heads of Service to explore the linkages across service areas. A discussion has taken place with the Homes Panel, focusing on investment in our existing homes and analysing the Star Survey results and their experiences. A key concern from this discussion is damp, and associated plastering, pointing and ventilation and a new approach to plastering programmes is set out in the action plan.

The context in which we operate outlined in section two has also been key to establishing the appropriateness of the areas of activity which have been identified.

5. Strategic Themes

Activity in this Growth Strategy will facilitate the following strategic themes:

Direct Development of New Homes

These will be a mix and quality like those we have delivered to date. Across the period of this strategy 2018-2021, our delivery of will focus on our existing Homes England commitments to deliver 99 new homes by 2021. We will also seek opportunities to deliver additional homes where Business Plan resources are available and as is additional grant funding from Homes England. It is expected that these will predominantly support the delivery of replacement rented homes as part of the Town Centre Regeneration.

Facilitating New Homes

The Local Plan for Rochdale shows a need for 460 new homes a year and RBH cannot deliver all of these directly. However, we can support others to help grow the number of homes across the Borough. For example RBH could manage homes that others have developed or look at how our land could be used to deliver new homes.

Town Centre Regeneration

Investment in Rochdale Town Centre is a priority for both RBH and the Council. Our ambitious proposals to provide a better quality and choice of homes in the Town Centre will unlock more homes overall. It will also support improvements to the roads and environment to support a thriving Town Centre with a good mix of homes and better routes to the new shopping and leisure facilities in Rochdale Town Centre.

Diversifying Tenure

A mix of homes to rent and to own in different neighbourhoods helps to offer choices for local people to stay in the area they live and a mix of different types and tenures of homes helps to support a vibrant community.

Our 2018-2021 development programme includes 39 homes for Shared Ownership across two sites and 60 homes for Rent to Buy across two sites.

We will explore the feasibility of developing a market rent offer within the borough reviewing options as an alternative to disposal of assets for market sale and potential for acquisition and new development.

Any additional income that RBH generates from providing homes for market rent or sale would be used to support the development of additional affordable homes, investment in existing homes, the delivery of services and investment in RBH communities.

Smart Investment in our Homes

We will look at how we plan and make decisions about the right investment in our homes. Decisions will be made based on an assessment and balance of the best economic outcome as well as raising the quality of homes and achieving positive outcomes for tenants and residents. Sometimes this means taking difficult decisions about the disposal of empty homes or redevelopment of homes that do not meet the quality our customers deserve.

Safety and decency will remain an absolute baseline while planning investment in our homes. We will look to maximise impact and minimise disruption to customers by coordinating planned and cyclical investment where possible and we will consider the need for plastering as part of our planned programme. This will include a flexible approach across our investment programme, for example where the timing of replacements needs to be co-ordinated to maximise the impact on a neighbourhood.

We will ensure compliance with all statutory legislation for example fire, lift servicing, water, asbestos management and electrical safety. We will have robust processes in place to ensure compliance and test these through internal audit and reviews.

We will develop a comprehensive set of sustainability indicators to sit together with the financial indicators as part of our Asset Performance Evaluation (APE) tool. The data will be analysed to identify options for improving the overall value of our assets and supporting investment in our core priorities. Options may include disposal or redevelopment or co-ordinated programmed investment in our homes and neighbourhoods. We will also consider whether it may be appropriate to change the use of the asset, for example from residential to commercial. Linked closely with our strategic priority to diversify tenure, we will also assess whether it may be appropriate to change the tenure of an asset, if it would generate additional income and provide a greater range of housing options.

We will look at how we can improve the energy use and sustainability of our existing homes, with a focus on reducing the whole house costs for our customers and in reducing fuel poverty.

We will look at how we can make our existing homes and neighbourhoods more age friendly, particularly where there are growing concentrations of older people and where investment is needed in our independent living schemes to meet identified future needs and purpose.

6. Delivering our Strategic Themes

We have a commitment to build more homes and invest in our existing ones, to make sure that each of our neighbourhoods has a strong and attractive supply of homes. Our strategic themes represent a shift in our delivery to date and we recognise that to meet them we need a strategic approach and sound investment framework, to support a substantial and sustainable Development and Regeneration programme and Investment Programme.

To deliver on our strategic themes we will prioritise the following areas of activity:

Partnerships

We will actively seek partnership opportunities, by building on existing relationships and by dedicating resources to explore new venture opportunities and support long term strategic partnerships. Where we have the right support and are able to work collaboratively with key partners such as Homes England, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Rochdale Council, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the private sector we believe we can meet our ambitions, both in the short, medium and longer term. Creating a strong and effective partnership with a developer partner will be key to delivering our vision for Rochdale Town Centre.

Delivering our Development Programme and Building a Pipeline

The development programme over the next 3 years will focus on delivering our existing Homes England commitments- 99 Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy homes. We will also look to deliver additional homes where Business Plan resources and Homes England grant funding are available to support delivery.

To support the Corporate Strategy Growth Theme resources have been built in to our Business Plan post 2021 to support a substantial increase in the size of the development programme. Indicatively this is based on assumptions of 100 homes per annum supported by grant funding – 50 affordable rented, 25 Shared Ownership and 25 Rent to Buy and 20 non grant funded homes (Right to Buy Replacement programme). In addition 150 extra care homes have been included, indicated across three schemes from 2021-2031.

During 2018-2021, a focus will need to be on creating a pipeline of schemes to support delivery of this increased development programme post 2021. This will involve progressing schemes on RBH owned sites to receipt of planning consent and pursuing land and build packages with contractor and developer partners. There will also be a need to assess land acquisitions to support future delivery. These will be appraised from a strategic and financial perspective on a site by site basis.

Developing our Expertise

A key element of delivering this Growth Strategy will be retaining, attracting and developing a Development and Regeneration Team and Assets and Investment Team to deliver the outcomes required.

We recognise that we have been successful in delivery to date, principally around our Offer Document promises and our Homes England grant funding commitments. However, the delivery of a more diverse and larger development programme and a greater emphasis on asset investment and performance will require a broader range of skills.

Governance Framework to Support Delivery

We need to have in place a robust governance structure to support delivery. This need has already been identified by RBH's Board and a Growth Committee is being established, which is expected to be in operation by September 2018. Having the right skills mix, terms of reference and scheme of delegation in place will be key to the effectiveness of the Growth Committee and will result in a governance framework which supports delivery of the strategic themes within this Growth Strategy, both from a strategic and financial perspective.

Evidence Based Investment Decisions

To achieve our strategic themes in an efficient and commercial way we need to ensure we are making informed decisions based on evidence and market intelligence and this may involve commissioning expert external advice. This is particularly important now that we are delivering mixed tenure homes, we need to ensure that we have the right mix of homes suitable for local market conditions, which meet the needs and aspirations of our customers and contribute to effective place making. It also builds and protects the financial viability of RBH.

We will continue to refine the assumptions and scenarios to drive best use from our Asset Performance Evaluation model and ensure robust options appraisals are carried out to support decisions to dispose of or invest in our homes and other assets.

Our stock condition information will continue to be updated and feed in to our Asset Performance assessments and investment programme and cyclical planning.

Quality and Innovation

We will continue to implement high standards of design and specification, with an emphasis on developing homes which meet the expectations of our customers, place making and in reducing the whole life costs of our new homes. We will do this by keeping our development briefs and standards under review and learn from feedback from RBH colleagues across the Society and our customers.

There is a need to ensure that we are actively considering how modern methods of construction (MMC) such as modular, volumetric, pannelised systems can support our development ambitions. We will do this by continuing to work with other members of Homes for the North, to establish a pan Northern approach and explore how collectively as Registered Providers we can work together to reach a point where modern methods of construction, particularly offsite modular systems are viable from a cost perspective (i.e. equal or lower cost than traditional construction), deliverable on site and more quickly and raise quality. Through this work we will also scope the capacity and quality in the MMC supply chain in order to identify a small framework of suppliers with the required expertise, capacity and product with the required accreditation- principally NHBC building guarantee warranty, Council of Mortgage Lenders sign off and BOPAS (Build off site Property Assurance Scheme).

We know the energy performance of our new homes is very high, but there is more we can do to explore how we can improve this further and more we can learn from the partners we work with to deliver new homes, such as other developing Registered Providers, contractors and

developers and specialist consultants. We will develop our performance metrics on energy efficiency beyond EPC ratings and use these wider metrics to benchmark against our peers and set targets for improvement. Our future approach to energy performance will be linked closely with our approach to modern methods of construction, as energy efficiency is a key feature of many of these solutions.

We will continue to drive up the quality and performance, particularly in terms of environmental sustainability, for our existing homes. This will include considering options around technology which can meet the increasing requirements of building regulations, reduce the carbon impact of our homes and reduce the whole house costs for our customers. Where new technology or approaches to heating or energy are used, we will ensure that we carry out monitoring and evaluation of the impact in terms of energy usage and cost to our customers, to inform future specification decisions both for existing and new homes.

We will consider design of homes and surroundings when planning investment in our existing homes to ensure they contribute to the quality of the neighbourhoods and provide attractive homes. We will specifically review age friendly design in our purpose built homes for older people and in neighbourhoods where there are growing concentrations of older people. This will include adopting the principles of lifetime homes standard where possible, assessing accessibility of homes against full wheelchair design standards and including dementia friendly design. All of our proposed extra care schemes will be independently assessed against the 10 HAPPI (Housing Aging Population Panel for Innovation) principles, which outline 10 key design criteria for Older Persons Housing and how it can be integrated with the wider community,

Procurement, Value for Money and Social Value

In addition to the priorities set out in RBH's Procurement Strategy and Financial Regulations we know that we need to have in place appropriate procurement options in order to deliver our investment objectives. Where practical and possible, we will utilise membership of existing procurement frameworks using a combination of competitive tendering and negotiation. However, we will also recognise when we need to explore alternative options for delivery and seek appropriate procurement, financial and legal advice to ensure robust delivery strategies.

With increasing costs affecting the whole of the construction sector and a need to continue to drive quality, we need to improve Value for Money in the delivery of our investment projects. A balance needs to be reached between best price and quality and integral to that is an assessment of the whole life cost of design and components and specification. This should be captured in our financial assessment of projected management and maintenance costs of new and existing homes and their overall financial performance as an asset.

RBH's Social Value Strategy outlines our strategic approach to maximising Social Value in our communities, the Rochdale Borough and Greater Manchester. Our spend on the development of new homes and investment in our existing ones, accounts for a significant proportion of RBH's overall spend and we need to ensure we achieve and measure the Social Value of these investments. We will do this by being clearer on our expectations, efficient contract management and monitoring and evaluation. For the Town Centre regeneration we have the opportunity to set a new benchmark for Social Value, targeted at specific themes which we know will have the biggest impact on our communities. For Rochdale Town Centre the proposed areas of social value focus are employment- 'good work' and health and wellbeing.

Working with our Communities, Customers and Members

RBH is committed to developing proposals with our communities, customers and members. This is integral for the Town Centre regeneration and our People and Place approach to regeneration. We will ensure that within our Development and Regeneration and Investment Programme that we have genuine opportunities for proposals to be shaped with our communities, so that we can work together to unlock the potential to support growth in our neighbourhoods.

7. Equality and Diversity

This activity outlined within this Growth Strategy will impact on specific RBH neighbourhoods and communities and individuals within them. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and can be found in appendix 2.

8. Monitoring

Delivery of the outcomes of this strategy and its action plan will be reported to RBH's Executive Management Team on a quarterly basis. Some areas of work also fall within the Implementation Plan of our Corporate Strategy and will therefore also be monitored by RBH Board and the Representative Body.

9. Review

This strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains appropriate to the strategic objectives of the Growth Directorate and any changes to the internal and external operating environment. It will be reviewed in full in 2021.

10. Thematic Links with other SPSS Documents

This Strategy has thematic links with RBH's:

Together Corporate Strategy

Value for Money and Procurement Strategy

Social Value Strategy (strong links with the themes of this strategy)

Business Intelligence Strategy

Shared Ownership Sales Policy (currently in development)

Marketing Strategy (currently in development)

11. Action Plan

This action plan has been developed to deliver the objectives set out in this Growth Strategy. As part of the monitoring of this strategy it will be reviewed by the Executive Management Team and new and specific actions added as part of that process.

Objective	Action	Outcome	Responsible Lead	Milestone
Direct Development of New Homes	Deliver Homes England Grant Funded Development Programme	<u>18/19</u> 52 starts on site 35 completions	Head of Development & Regeneration	Programme delivered by March 2021
	Maintain Investment Partner Status with Homes England	<u>19/20</u> 53 starts on site 39 completions		Investment Partner status-annual
	Ensure resources identified within RBH's Business Plan to support delivery	<u>20/21</u> 91 completions		Business Plan-annual
	Recruitment of Development & Regeneration Team	Team in place to support delivery	Head of Development & Regeneration	Development Delivery Manager by September 2018 Rest of team by end of March 2019
	Establish framework for evaluating new business opportunities	Pipeline of development schemes for delivery post 2021	Head of Development & Regeneration	December 2018
	Review of RBH's design and specification guidance in relation to new homes	Updated documents in place	Head of Development & Regeneration	December 2018
	Research Paper on Modern Methods of Construction- linked with Homes for the North workstream and externally commissioned work	Presentation to Board on findings	Head of Development & Regeneration	March 2019

	to scope the MMC market, make recommendations as to preferred methods (with particular focus on offsite modular) and opportunities for a strategic partnership amongst members			
	Growth Committee established	Growth Committee in place with Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation agreed by Board	Legal and Governance Manager/ Company Secretary	September 2018
	Social Value embedded in procurement of Investment projects and outcomes monitored and measured	Achieving social value outcomes identified as priorities	Head of Development & Regeneration and Procurement Manager and Social Value Co-ordinator	December 2018
	Procurement of development appraisal software to replace in-house models	Software purchased and being used by Development Team	Head of Development & Regeneration/ Finance	September 2018
Facilitating New Homes	Develop a strategic approach to partnership working	Identify strategic partnership opportunities	Head of Development & Regeneration	December 2018
	Asset (land and non-housing assets) review to identify partnership and disposal opportunities	Strategic approach to opportunities and disposals	Head of Development & Regeneration/ Head of Asset Performance & Investment	March 2019
	Work with Rochdale Council to identify priorities and opportunities	Joined up approach to facilitating new homes	Head of Development & Regeneration	December 2018
Town Centre	Public investment secured for phases of work up	<u>18/19</u>	Head of	March 2021

Regeneration	to 2021 in the Town Centre. Affordable replacement homes in the Town Centre	19 completions <u>20/21</u> 53 completions	Development & Regeneration	
	Central Rochdale households supported to move home	<u>18/19</u> 80 households <u>19/20</u> 44 households <u>20/21</u> 74 households	Head of Development & Regeneration	March 2021
	Identify site for Town Centre extra care	Site identified to support Town Centre Masterplan, replacement affordable homes and business plan delivery	Head of Development & Regeneration	March 2019
	Progress Town Centre extra care ready for start on site 2021	Planning consent in place Grant funding secured Viable scheme for delivery	Head of Development & Regeneration	March 2021
	Procurement of a developer partner	Private sector partner in place with a commitment to invest	Head of Development & Regeneration	March 2019
	Develop a baseline survey and metrics framework to measure impact of regeneration	Baseline established for measuring wellbeing and quality of life in town centre	Head of Development & Regeneration	March 2019

	Seek co-funding to deliver New Pioneers Programme (NPP)	Agreement for social investment in place	Head of Development & Regeneration	March 2019
	Setting up of the NPP and recruitment of first 40 members	NPP delivery and cohort in place		March 2021
	Support Rochdale Council to develop a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Town Centre	SPD in place	Head of Development & Regeneration	December 2018
	Land Assembly and Leaseholder Buyouts to support delivery of Masterplan	Land Assembly Strategy in place Leaseholder buyouts completed Spend as per Business Plan assumptions on site acquisitions	Head of Development & Regeneration/ Rochdale Council	Land Assembly Strategy by end of June 2018 Site acquisitions/ leaseholder buyouts- by end of March 2021
Diversifying Tenure	Work with the Marketing and Communications team to develop a Marketing Strategy to inform the Marketing of our new and existing homes	Marketing Strategy in place	Marketing and Communications Manager	Sept 2018
	Develop Shared Ownership Sales Policy and associated procedures to support Shared Ownership Sales	Policy and procedures in place	Head of Development & Regeneration	December 2018
	Options appraisal study of Market Rented product	Board decision on Market Rent product and next steps	Head of Asset Performance & Investment	March 2020
Smart Investment in Our Homes	Develop measures to assess Net Present Value (NPV) and Neighbourhood Sustainability (NSI) of our assets	Meaningful measures place which are monitored and inform decision making	Head of Asset Performance & Investment	March 2019

	Implement a costed programme of plastering as part of our package of investment in homes, following pilot by the Repairs Team	Costed programme in place and implemented	Head of Asset Performance & Investment	March 2018
	Provide recommendations for age friendly options in neighbourhoods including costs and geographic priorities	Programme of options agreed by Board	Head of Asset Performance & Investment	June 2019
	Carry out a design review of options for investment in existing homes and environmental improvements	Review carried out and recommendations made	Head of Asset Performance & Investment	January 2019
	Consider options and performance measures to improve the whole house costs and reduce the carbon of existing homes as part of our planned investment programmes	Options set out with recommendations	Head of Asset Performance & Investment	June 2019

Appendix 1- Our Vision and Values

Our vision - People succeeding together to offer great services and places to live and work

Our Values

Responsibility - We take responsibility for, and answer for, our actions.

Take responsibility for the decisions made about the right investment in our assets and sometimes having to make difficult decisions in relation to disposal and redevelopment in order to raise the overall quality. We will ensure that evidence, including views from the community and wider partners have been considered and form part of our investment decisions, which are made for the long term.

Equity – We will run our mutual in a way that is fair and unbiased.

Where we are carrying out work in a neighbourhood, whether investing in existing homes, developing new homes or carrying out redevelopment we will have clear policies and procedures in place which are applied fairly to all those affected and will review these to ensure that we are not disadvantaging particular groups within our communities. We will be able to clearly evidence that the decisions we take are based on long term business planning from a strategic and financial perspective, neighbourhood impact and improving the quality of home and quality of life of our residents.

Democracy – Members have a say in how RBH is run.

This Strategy will be monitored by our tenant representatives. We will seek to involve members in local decisions around priorities and work hard to shape proposals for investment in neighbourhoods together. We will work together across RBH to ensure that we are making the right investment decisions and focusing whenever possible on identified priorities linked to Neighbourhood action planning.

Pioneering – Together we will seek to be leaders in the way we meet challenges and solutions.

We know that our communities face some big challenges for the future in terms of their investment needs. We will review new approaches to investment that can offer enhanced quality and value for money as part of investment in our existing assets and building new homes. We will commit to maximising social value from our investment and target these to have the biggest impact for our communities. We commit to exploring and implementing innovative construction, component specification and investment solutions, actively seeking out best practice and innovation in the sector.

Open & Honest – We will share information, do what we say we will do and when we make a mistake we will own up to it.

We will provide clear information to all homes directly affected by any decisions within the scope of this strategy. We will seek to balance providing information to communities which enables a meaningful contribution to proposals without creating prolonged uncertainty. Whenever possible we will work with communities when shaping proposals and making investment decisions. We will be clear on why decisions have been made and the evidence base supporting them. Where difficulties or problems are flagged to us we will seek to respond quickly and if we have made a mistake acknowledge this, put it right and learn for the future.

Caring – We will listen and respond to the needs of our members, tenants and employees.

We recognise that work within our tenants' homes, or in the neighbourhood near to where they live can cause some disruption and be difficult and stressful. Similarly where regeneration proposals impact on a tenant or residents home this has a significant impact on them. We recognise that some of our tenants have additional vulnerability and support needs which we will need to take into account and we are committed to providing support directly and by working with partner agencies. We will tailor our support to individuals needs and ensure that we keep people updated.

Championing – We will seek to reduce economic inequality within our communities.

Ensuring viable, sustainable and thriving communities for the future are the focus of our Growth ambitions. We recognise this is best delivered and supported where tenants and residents, employees and partners come together to champion our communities – setting out priorities for change and looking at ways to support and sustain our investment. We recognise that our community resources, volunteering, tenant and employee views and community groups are a vital element of championing our communities and need to be linked closely into supporting and protecting our investment. We will focus our social value requirements to support local labour and maximise the creation of jobs and training opportunities for people within RBH communities.