



Creating great homes and communities for
the people of Barnsley

Asset Management Strategy 2021-26

This Strategy sets out how Berneslai Homes, the Council's managing agent, will seek to manage the Council's 18,645 homes and assets across Barnsley during the period 2021-26. Berneslai Homes will work in partnership with the Council (and other agencies) across the Borough to make the very best use of stock; maximising all opportunities to meet the strategic objectives of the Barnsley 2030 Vision.

Embracing our role as an anchor institution in Barnsley, we are working with the Council and partners to bring the vision of Barnsley 2030 to life – making Barnsley a Place of Possibilities. As this vision is developed, we will align our asset management services and ensure that we have a pivotal role in meeting the challenges and opportunities the new vision will bring. We will ensure that we align our service delivery to the four key outcomes of Barnsley 2030.



Berneslai Homes is committed to providing the best customer service to tenants and is proud of the management and repairs functions that we deliver.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of this Asset Management Strategy.

The profile of the assets that we manage is shown on Page 3 and our roadmap to deliver this Asset Management Strategy and our investment plan will be included as an appendix.

OUR AIMS

We have six strategic aims for asset management that will help us achieve our vision.

1. Homes will be safe, secure, warm and well maintained to enhance the lives of customers.
2. We will provide homes in the right areas to meet customer needs.
3. Communal and open spaces will be attractive and well managed.
4. Asset management and maintenance services will be efficient and effective achieving high levels of customer satisfaction.
5. We will be innovative and utilise sustainable solutions wherever possible, working hand in hand with the Council.
6. Forging strong partnerships with our suppliers, we will use social value and community investment to deliver training and employment across our neighbourhoods and for our communities.

Stock profile



Total Homes



18,600 homes in management

- Council Stock (18,264) 58% are houses (10,787)
70% are 3 x beds (7,451)
- Leaseholders (336) 29% are 2 x beds (3,023)



Bungalows



25% of homes are bungalows (4,664)
mainly 1 & 2 beds



Flats



16% of homes are flats (3,054)
mainly 1 & 2 beds



Designation



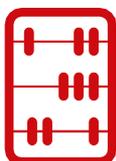
68% of homes are general needs (12,472)
32% with restrictions (5,796)
11 Independent Living Schemes with 360 flats for
over 60's



Age of stock



70% of homes were built before 1965



Attributes



743 blocks to maintain
46 community facilities
2595 garages or garage sites
32 shops in management

89% of our homes are mains gas

Strategic Aim 1: Homes will be safe, secure, and well maintained to enhance the lives of customers

WHY?

In line with our strategic priority to deliver EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICES, we understand that we have a key role to play in supporting customers to feel safe in their homes.

In addition, all homes will be warm, well maintained, and have modern facilities

ACTION TAKEN & WHEN?

The Barnsley Homes Standard investment programme is in progress and it is transforming homes. Through Construction Services (the Council's in-house contractor) and Wates (the Council's private contractor partner), it will deliver improvements to 1,300 homes this year and 6500 homes throughout the life of this strategy. We will work with customers to keep developing the Barnsley Homes Standard.

The current investment plan shows an average investment per property by Barnsley Council of £27.4k over the life of the 30-year business plan - this is in line with benchmark housing organisations.

We will develop a strategy with the Council to ensure all homes achieve an Energy Performance Certificate [EPC] rating of C as a minimum by 2030 and seek to invest in low carbon and renewable energies that benefit customers.

We will continue to deliver high performing building safety programmes across all assets and communal areas.

To continue our fire safety programme, we are installing additional sprinkler systems to four independent living schemes and three high-rise blocks of flats.

Our electrical inspection programme is in progress to bring 6,917 properties in line with our five-year programme. This is best practice.

A standalone IT system is being evaluated to ensure we are robust in managing and controlling building safety compliance.

HOW?

To achieve this, we will maintain all homes to the Barnsley Homes Standard – 100% Decent Homes Standard.

We will continue to invest in homes and build on the significant improvements made in our approach to health, safety, and compliance.

We will meet statutory and regulatory standards as well as meet the challenges set in the Building Safety Bill and Charter for Social Housing Residents to “raise the standard of social housing and meet the aspirations of residents...today and in the future”.

IMPACT

All homes will meet decency standards - over the next five years investment of c. £100m will be made delivering the Barnsley Homes Standard and elemental improvement programmes. This will comprise over 6500 homes.

This year, investment of almost £4m will go into Building Safety works.

In the next two years, investment of £1.2m will be made to deliver the five-year electrical inspection programme.

SUCCESS MEASURES

- 100% Decent Homes
- 100% compliance

Strategic Aim 2 – We will provide homes in the right areas to meet customer needs

WHY?

The Council has a strategic priority to create SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES aligned to the Barnsley 2030 vision.

To achieve this, we need to make the best use of the Council's social housing assets and this means having the right blend of homes in the right areas to meet housing need including assisting the Council to meet the needs of those affected by homelessness.

It is important we get the most from the 18,645 homes in management as the Council provides 80% of the affordable housing in Barnsley. Our offer is critical, and we set a high bar providing great quality affordable and healthy housing.

ACTION TAKEN & WHEN?

Area profile reports are prepared for our neighbourhoods, identifying performance and issues that drive investment planning. These will be further developed over the next 6 months; and will include ways in which we can work with partners to address wider issues of health and wellbeing.

We have strengthened our performance management of empty properties. Property option appraisals are being completed for our most 'difficult to let' homes and enhanced letting standards are in development.

Independent Living Schemes, Shops and other Facilities will be reviewed over the next 12 months to identify improvements/options.

For equipment and adaptations, we partner with South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust [SWYPFT] and we have appointed an Occupational Therapist to help match customers with disability needs with the right homes.

We will work with the Council to identify sites for redevelopment via the Council Build Programme to meet development targets and drive forward regeneration initiatives.

HOW?

We will use real time data and insight to monitor demand for homes. From this we will identify where there is a housing need and where potentially we have an over-supply of property.

Where there is specific demand for a property type, adaptation or an oversupply, we will identify if we can better utilise our existing stock through property option appraisal and neighbourhood planning.

We will proactively manage our empty properties and be flexible in deploying

enhanced standards to let our homes and sustain tenancies.

We will work with the Council to identify development opportunities across garage sites and land and ensure the supply of new homes are of the right type and in the right areas.

IMPACT

The Council will invest c. £38m during 2021/22 on repairing, maintaining and improving homes and neighbourhoods

We will support the Council in their goal of increasing the provision of affordable homes in the borough.

SUCCESS MEASURES

- Top quartile empty homes performance
- Equipment & Adaptations
 - 100% minor adaptations within timescale
 - 100% Completion of major adaptations within timescale

Strategic Aim 3: Communal and open spaces will be attractive and well managed.

WHY?

Under the Council's strategic priority of SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, we know that a home is more than just bricks and mortar. For individuals, families, and communities to thrive, it is vital that neighbourhoods are positive, uplifting and inclusive. This provides a strong foundation to enable customers to achieve their ambitions and aspirations.

From the STAR survey, 'customer satisfaction with their neighbourhoods as a place to live' scores highly. We will continue to make this a priority and work closely with the Council's Stronger Communities Team.

ACTION TAKEN & WHEN?

The assets team is working with the Council to review the garage sites to identify their potential as sites for new homes or areas for improvement.

We are collaborating with the council, in their Tiny Forests initiative to plant 10,000 trees. Wates, our construction partner, has also pledged to plant 500 trees.

Housing and asset teams are working together to undertake patch/estate inspections with a particular focus on our most challenging areas. Neighbourhood action plans will be co-produced with customers to improve these areas and meet aspirations.

Working in liaison with customers, develop a prioritised action plan to improve communal living areas.

We recognise that the decoration and fit-out of a number of our independent living schemes need to be appraised to ensure they continue to meet the needs of customers.

HOW?

We will continue to work with the Council, and customers, to ensure we maintain high standards in the management of our green spaces and grass cutting.

We will continue to develop and utilise Area Profile reports for neighbourhoods to identify issues and we will use this intelligence to drive our investment planning with the Council.

Partnering with the Council, we will identify suitable sites for tree planting.

Working with our customers, we will ensure our communal areas are well-kept and in good decoration.

IMPACT

The planting of trees, and maintenance of greenspaces, will contribute to a cleaner, lower carbon environment across our urban areas.

Well-kept neighbourhoods, with clean, safe and usable open spaces help individuals, families and communities to stay healthy and happy.

A neighbourhood approach to planning and investment, to improve communal and open spaces will help to deliver sustainable communities across Barnsley.

SUCCESS MEASURES

Top quartile performance for customer satisfaction in neighbourhoods (95%)

Trees planted – 1000 by 2025

Strategic Aim 4: Asset management and maintenance services will be efficient and effective, achieving high levels of customer satisfaction

WHY?

This aim meets the Council's priority and objectives to develop a baseline insight into the condition and efficiency of stock which will allow analysis which supports robust business and investment planning.

We want to deliver a great customer experience and put customers at the heart of all we do.

ACTION TAKEN & WHEN?

Work is in progress to update information in our asset management system which will enable us to analyse our stock baseline and support and enable Council colleagues to carry out strong business planning.

Asset surveys that support the Decent Homes investment programme have been developed and are being implemented through our teams.

EPC information for homes has been updated in our asset management system which will help to inform investment strategies to make homes more energy efficient and we will work with the Council to identify funding opportunities to meet the decarbonisation agenda. We will increase the number of EPC surveys that we undertake; doing them as part of all stock surveys and on the completion of BHS works.

Berneslai Homes went live with the Property Repairs and Improvement Partnership [PRIP] contract in April 2020 and strong contract management is in place to support the delivery of high performing asset investment services. This will continue to drive up customer satisfaction with the quality of their home.

HOW?

We will ensure our asset management system is up to date, reviewed annually and fully integrated into the delivery of our asset investment programmes. We commit to producing an annual Asset Management Condition Report for the Council which will show the baseline position of stock in terms of decency/energy efficiency, the impact of investments over the previous 12 months, proposals for future retrofit/replacement programmes and wider investment initiatives.

We will target 20% stock condition and EPC surveys per year to further enhance the intelligence that we hold on stock.

Our approach to achieving and maintaining decent homes will be flexible working in partnership with our customers.

We want to improve our 'right first time' approach and reduce reactive repairs in favour of planned repairs. This will deliver a better customer experience and improve our efficiency, budget management and VFM.

IMPACT

Our approach to asset management will support business planning to ensure our homes meet future demands and inform longer term investment decisions.

Delivering consistently high performing asset investment services will improve customer satisfaction with the quality of their home – this is a STAR survey priority.

Increasing planned investment and decreasing the proportion of revenue spend improves effectiveness and business planning.

SUCCESS MEASURES

Customer satisfaction – top quartile

- Repairs and maintenance (98 %)
- Investment (98%)
- 20% stock condition annually
- EPC 2400 annually

Strategic Aim 5: We will be innovative and utilise sustainable solutions wherever possible, working hand in hand with the council.

WHY?

We understand that climate change has become one of the most pressing issues. In September 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and set a target to be net zero carbon in its operations by 2040 and for the borough to be net zero carbon by 2045.

Under the priority of SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, we will work alongside the Council to ensure that Berneslai Homes is proactive in reducing fuel poverty, tackling health inequalities, improving the efficiency of homes and reducing carbon emission across the whole business.

ACTION TAKEN & WHEN?

We have improved the energy performance information in our asset system. This will help us prioritise poor performing [EPC] homes and improve the speed that we can react to funding opportunities.

We are increasing EPC surveys that we will complete annually – with 1000 EPC surveys to be completed in 2021/22.

We are working with Age UK (Barnsley) to retrofit 75 batteries to enhance solar PV systems for our customers.

We are partnering with the Council and Energise Barnsley to install 1000 solar PV systems.

HOW?

We will identify those who are considered 'fuel poor' from Berneslai Homes customers. These will be our priority.

We will positively engage with our fuel poor customers to identify and implement solutions to ensure that they are able to keep their homes warm – and that that this is both affordable and sustainable. Linking with the Council's delivery themes, we will implement the most appropriate measures:

- Energy Efficiency [retrofitting]
- Renewable Energy [biomass, solar]
- Resource Efficiency [minimise waste]
- Decentralised Heating [heat networks]

We will ensure we achieve the fuel poverty target whereby all households in fuel poverty have a home which achieves EPC Band C as a minimum by 2030.

Partnering with the Council, we will identify suitable sites for tree planting.

As an organisation, we commit to meeting the Council's zero 40 targets.

IMPACT

We are investing to improve EPC survey information.

We are positively contributing to the zero-carbon agenda.

We are investing to improve the lives of our customers so that they can affordably warm their homes and improve their health and wellbeing.

SUCCESS MEASURES

- Zero carbon strategy by 2022
- Energy efficient homes – EPC level C by 2030

- Pilot Renewable Technology – 1000 solar pv's
 - 75 batteries
 - 100 air sourced heat pumps by 2023

Strategic Aim 6: Forging strong partnerships with our suppliers, we will use social value and community investment to deliver training and employment across our neighbourhoods.

WHY?

Partnership working is a strategic priority. Our procurement activity will support the vision for Barnsley as a place of possibilities and will contribute to social value, keeping spend local to support the community will strengthen the Barnsley pound.

As an anchor institution for the Council in Barnsley, our long-term long-term sustainability will contribute to the well-being of customers and communities.

We will work in partnership with customer to develop and prioritise how we increase economic, social, and environmental well- being; in particular, training, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities.

ACTION TAKEN & WHEN?

Berneslai Homes is committed to working with the Council to deliver a performance and evidence-based approach to Social Value.

Through the PRIP contract, our main contracting partners, Construction Services and Wates have committed £150k per year to deliver training, employment, and local community initiatives.

Our contracts will deliver substantial social benefit outputs to deliver more jobs, better training and improved business and links to the Council's Employment and Skills Strategy: 'More and Better Jobs'

HOW?

In keeping with our equality, diversity and inclusion principles, we will require our partners and suppliers to make a strong commitment to delivering social value and community investment through all tendering activity; reducing health inequalities and improving environmental sustainability

We will monitor performance of our partners and suppliers to ensure that commitments are delivered, and we will report outputs monthly in our contract meetings.

Utilising well tested procurement frameworks that deliver strong social value, we will leverage our contracting to deliver training and positive employment outcomes.

IMPACT

The PRIP contract will annually deliver a minimum:

- 75 school visits / workshops
- 120 support activities for local Voluntary Organisations
- 66 work experience placements

- 21 apprenticeships
- 30 sponsor opportunities for local Social Enterprises
- 72% of contract spend [£30m per year] in Barnsley.
- 75% target for local spend

There is a direct contribution of £150K per year towards our social value aims.

SUCCESS FACTORS

- 75% local spend
- Employment, training – 21 apprenticeships
 - 75 school visits
 - 66 work experience placements
- Social Value - £100,000 per annum to support social value initiatives