

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> All
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b> Housing Investment Strategy Update	
<b>REPORT OF:</b> Director of Property Management	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO:</b> Housing Scrutiny Committee	<b>DATE:</b> 1 July 2026
<p><b>STRATEGIC CONTEXT</b></p> <p>We Make Camden is our joint vision for the borough, developed in partnership with our community. Its ambition is that everyone in Camden should have a place they call home Camden should be a green, clean, vibrant, accessible, and sustainable place with everyone empowered to contribute to tackling the climate emergency.</p> <p>This strategy sets out how the Council will meet this ambition for the homes it owns and manages. It will also contribute greatly to the delivery of the Estates Mission as it will consider the investment needed and the options available to either reduce investment need or generate resources for investment.</p> <p>The Way We Work is the Council’s response to We Make Camden and the development and delivery of the Housing Investment Strategy is closely aligned to the housing and repairs transformation programme which looks at how services and outcomes can be improved for residents.</p>	
<p><b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b></p> <p>This report provides an update on the implementation of the Housing Investment Strategy; this strategy outlined the Council’s ambitions on the delivery and acquisition of homes with ambitions and on stock improvement. This is because these ambitions combine to meet our We Make Camden ambition that the borough has enough ‘decent, safe, warm and family-friendly housing to support our communities’.</p> <p>The report presents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an update on the capital investment programme, including new projects commissioned for the 26/27 financial year</li> <li>- an update on Decent Homes compliance and stock condition surveys</li> <li>- an update on the Quality Homes, Family Friendly and acquisition programmes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</b> No documents that require listing were used in the preparation of this report.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Sinéad Burke, Chief Asset Management Officer <a href="mailto:Sinead.Burke@camden.gov.uk">Sinead.Burke@camden.gov.uk</a></p>	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	

That the Committee notes and comments on the progress of implementing the Council's Housing Investment Strategy.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Haynes', with a flourish at the end.

Gavin Haynes, Director of Property Management

Date 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2026

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 In January 2025, the Council approved a new Housing Investment Strategy setting out its approach to investing and growing its housing stock in the period 2025-2030 with the broad aim of ensuring that the borough has enough 'decent, safe, warm and family-friendly housing to support our communities'.
- 1.2 The Housing Investment Strategy set a common framework and ambitions for all the council's housing programmes including the Community Investment Programme, Camden Living, and the core social stock within the Housing Revenue Account. As part of that, the council also outlined a Housing Asset Management Strategy with a specific focus on the investment and management of this existing stock.
- 1.3 These documents are available on the Council's website: [Housing policies and strategies - Camden Council](#)
- 1.4 Within that, the document noted the urgent need to ensure the Council satisfies the requirements of the new consumer standards under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, despite the Council facing a significant gap in its financial resources following several years of high investment in fire safety and below-inflation rent increases. The strategy established a Quality Homes programme to address this gap: the Quality Homes programme will also focus on options for poorly performing properties; the Council has a small number of homes which have investment needs which are unsustainable, and which do not produce good outcomes for residents.
- 1.5 The key aims of the Housing Asset Management Strategy therefore are to:
- Make sure the Council can meet regulatory requirements
  - Generate resources for investment in Council homes
  - Identify the best option for homes that provide poor accommodation or have very high investment costs
  - Increase the number of better-quality homes for residents and meeting priority needs on the waiting list
- 1.6 The Housing Asset Management Strategy sets out the Council's investment priorities over the next 5-years and sets a plan to invest £670m in its homes.
- 1.7 The strategy sets out the Council's investment priorities and sets a plan to invest £670m in its homes over the next 5 years. These funds will be used to ensure Camden can continue to make essential investments in its existing stock with the following outcomes expected by 2030:
- Complete all fire risk actions and make provision for further works which we anticipate will arise from the completion of Building Safety Case Files to high rise buildings.
  - Ensure all tenanted homes fully meet the provisions of the Decent Homes standard.
  - Make suitable investments in M&E systems, especially communal heating
  - Attend to capital repair works which put homes at risk of disrepair
- 1.8 This report provides an update on the implementation of this strategy since January 2025.

## 2. CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

- 2.1 The investment of £670m is dated from April 2024; this being the most recent year end accounts available at the time of drafting of the strategy. £116m of capital investment was delivered in 24/25 which was within scope of the strategy and by Year End 25/26 this figure had increased to £204m.

### *New projects commissioned*

- 2.2 The approval of the strategy enabled the Council to commission new capital projects. In 2025/26 and through the annual budget setting for 2026/27, the Council has commissioned new projects with an estimated value of just over £100m.
- 2.3 The provisional capital programme set out in an appendix to the Asset Management Strategy ([Appendix B.1 Capital Programme](#)) is the baseline for external programmes, but as noted in the document all properties would be subject to additional surveys to ensure that the Council is best focussing its funds on the properties in greatest need. This has led to some blocks being deferred to later years. By contrast, based on various sources, officers have investigated the need for some blocks to have works done earlier; all these are recorded in a schedule to ensure there is consistency and accountability in decision making.
- 2.4 25/26 External Works Programme: For homes which the capital programme anticipated would need external work commissioned in 25/26, the net impact of these changes is for 22 additional blocks comprising 122 homes to be added to the 2025/26 programme, with further additions will follow for future years as analysis continues.
- 2.5 26/27 External Works Programme: In April 26 external work was commissioned to a further 27 Blocks which include 490 homes. The base programme in the AMS also contained 173 street property blocks containing 368 homes; we have appointed consultants to carry out early project scoping to all of these homes. We expect these works in total will take a few years to fully scope, consult on, tender and complete. Works to high rise buildings which require new stricter building control processes will take longest to deliver.
- 2.6 Residents can access the latest capital programme at this link: [https://opendata.camden.gov.uk/Housing/Building-Safety-Works/k7e5-9fuc/about\\_data](https://opendata.camden.gov.uk/Housing/Building-Safety-Works/k7e5-9fuc/about_data). It will be updated to reflect the commissioning of the 26/27 external works programme in early summer.
- 2.7 This is in addition to ongoing work programmes commissioned previously; capital projects need to go an increasing set of pre-site processes which means they often take over a year between initiation and works on site. The key stages involved are scoping and resident consultation, planning, building control (including Gateway for HRBs), procurement and Section 20 leasehold consultation.
- 2.8 Officers have established regular meetings to review properties and ensure that where necessary due consideration is given to making amendments to the original programme. This is to ensure the programme remains a live document and can respond to changes in our understanding of building condition.
- 2.9 The other major projects to be added are several district heating systems. The Council has commissioned detailed feasibility studies and options appraisals to the following systems. These will inform the scope of works and allow projects to be prioritised. Note that these are in

addition to several major district heating systems which are in procurement; these include Rowley Way, Mayford Estate and Maiden Lane Estate.

<b>District Heating System</b>	<b>No. Homes</b>	<b>No. Blocks</b>
Curnock St - Heating upgrade	283	12
Templar House - Heating upgrade	112	2
Silverbirch Walk - Heating upgrade	32	2
Seymour House - Heating upgrade	69	1
Newton St - Heating upgrade	50	1
Bacton - Heating upgrade	120	1
Brunswick – Foundling and O'Donnell Court - Heating upgrade	395	2
Casterbridge / Snowman - Heating upgrade	204	2
Tonbridge House 1-23 - Heating upgrade	53	1
Kennistoun Heating Upgrade	62	1
Woodhall / Netley – Heating Upgrade	80	4
Hunter House – Heating Upgrade	35	1
West End Sidings – Heating Upgrade	202	21
Webheath – Heating Upgrade	226	9
New Calthorpe St / Sageway – Heating Upgrade	71	9
Kiln Place – Heating Upgrade	181	8
Babington and Chancellors - Heating Upgrade	112	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,287</b>	<b>79</b>

2.10 Internal works programmes and other programmes of fire safety, mechanical and electrical works will be commissioned throughout the year based on ongoing internal stock condition surveys, fire risk assessments, the development of Building Safety Case Files and M&E testing programmes. Budgets have been provisionally set aside for this work.

#### *Delivery of programmes*

2.11 The current delivery of works on site at present is still fire safety works, primarily installation of new fire safe front entrance doors. While over 10,000 front entrance doors have been installed to date, approximately 2,300 remain to be installed.

2.12 Outside of fire safety the building works projects are showing lower delivery than recent years, due to the end of the main capital works framework in late 2024. Tender of a replacement contract is underway; as of May 2026, the evaluation is complete, and leasehold consultation is expected to start in June 2026. This consultation will be with all leaseholders. Note that this consultation is about the terms of the contract and the contractors to be appointed; at this stage the consultation will not be about specific works or costs at any block.

2.13 The framework contract has 15 lots covering a wider range of work types, including lifts, fire safety, building works and district heating. The arrangement means that the Council has contractual relationships with a set list of contractors, and contracts can be “called-off” this through “mini-tendering” processes. The advantage to the Council, and residents, is that these offer much quicker procurement routes, and with more predictable outcomes. At the time of “call off” leaseholders will be consulted on specific works and the related costs. These are

statutory consultations as required by the Leasehold and Tenant Act; the Council also runs consultation and engagement with tenants on the development of works proposals though.

2.14 Significant projects completed or substantially delivered this year include:

Project	No. Homes	Summary of Main Works
Derby Lodge	70	Window repair and renewal, facade works including structural repairs, replacement fire safe front doors, waterproofing to walkways
Clevedon & Parliament Hill Mansions	140	Window repairs, facade repairs, communal area redecorations, roof repairs and renewals
Bourne Estate (Phase 3)	534	New fire safe front doors, communal decorations, repairs to the facades, window renewals.
St. Silas Estate	131	Roof renewals including improved insulation
Maitland Park Estate		Works vary by block and included some window renewals, some roof replacements, renewal of communal and emergency lighting
Henderson Court	73	Works to the courtyard structure including waterproofing, access arrangements and repairs, communal area decorations, new sun screen awning
Argenta House	29	Communal area decorations, refurbish office space, drainage provisions across estate to remove ponding
Birkenhead Estate	99	Replacement of the insulation and cladding system to improved fire safety standards

### 3 DECENT HOMES and STOCK CONDITION

3.1 This section sets out some key performance information in relation to the Council's stock, against the key investment priorities of the strategy which are noted in 1.7.

#### *Decent Homes*

3.2 The Decent Homes Standard was introduced in 2004 and amended in 2006 as a minimum quality standard for social housing in the UK. The aim was to ensure homes were safe, warm and in good repair. The 2006 version of the standard is still in effect today, though the Government has recently announced plans to update it. The standard includes a wide range of information about the home and is organised in four sections:

- Free of serious hazards – There are 29 in total including damp & mould, falls, electrical hazards
- In a reasonable state of repair - considering 15 elements such as windows, roofs, walls, kitchens and bathrooms
- Reasonably modern services and facilities – considers the age of kitchens and bathrooms, noise insulation, appropriate bathroom location
- Thermal comfort - This requires a SAP rating of more than 35, adequate heating controls, and loft insulation where relevant.

3.3 The table below shows the % homes not meeting the Decent Homes standard over the past few years. All homes failing the standard have a relevant capital project, works order or investigative

survey underway. The figure at year end 25/26 is slightly higher than the previous year, which is reflective of a reduced level of capital investment as noted in section 2.

Metric	Year End 23/24	Year End 24/25	Year End 25/26
RP01: Homes not meeting Decent Homes Standard	9.1%	6.0%	6.78%

- 3.4 The Council primarily calculates the Decent Homes figure from regular stock condition surveys. Until 2023 only 10% of homes were surveyed internally, however, in 2024 the Council commissioned a firm, MLCS3, to survey all homes to ensure that there was much better confidence in figures and that investment plans were targeted properly to every home. By the year end this programme is almost complete and almost 70% of homes have a survey. Leasehold flats are not included in the survey as the Council is not responsible for the internal areas of these homes. While we aim to achieve 100%, we are reaching a limit on the homes where residents have been able to arrange appointments and expect we will have to look to alternative survey methods to maximise information while minimising disruption to residents.

Metric	Year End 23/24	Year End 24/25	Year End 25/26
% Properties with Internal SCS in past 5 years	10%	23%	69.8%

### *Fire Safety*

- 3.5 In March 2025 the Council had 4,447 outstanding fire risk actions, of which 3,286 were overdue. As of 9 April 2026, this has reduced to 3,133 of which 1,994 are overdue.
- 3.6 In mid-December the Council migrated to a new IT system to manage FRA actions; this caused some disruption to progress, but it is now fully operational. It provides managers with a live picture of all actions being managed and provides better record keeping with all data in one place. It does however take slightly longer to administer, and teams have been adapting to this.
- 3.6 All actions are assigned to teams and this process now happens automatically using the new IT system. Most remaining actions are with the capital teams and are larger projects which take longer to deliver. A significant number (approximately 350) are affected by new Building Control Gateway processes; nationally this process is operating at considerable delay.
- 3.7 There are significant new requirements for the management of high-rise buildings, and any major works to these. All such buildings will require a Building Safety Case File (BSCF) to be submitted to the Building Safety Regulator over a 5-year period. The Council has so far been asked to submit 12 BSCFs and all have been approved. Where works are carried out there is a new building control process (known as Gateway Approval) where proposals must be submitted to and approved by the Building Safety Regulator. In the year the Council received its first approvals through this process for recladding work at the Birkenhead Estate.

### *Communal Heating*

3.8 The Council is developing metrics to help track the communal heating (M&E) projects set out in paragraph 2.9, this being a priority area for investment.

3.9 Following the communal heating outage at the Brunswick Estate in winter 2025, the Council undertook a comprehensive lesson learned review and identified an action plan. This work is published here: [link](#). A specific winter plan for 26/27 is in the latter stages of development at present and will be available for issue in August.

#### **4. QUALITY HOMES, FAMILY FRIENDLY and ACQUISITION PROGRAMMES**

4.1 Family Friendly: The Family Friendly programme was approved in December 2022 and launched in 2023. It aims to tackle overcrowding in the borough by increasing the supply of social rent Council homes with two or more bedrooms so that overcrowded families with children on the housing register can move to a more spacious home.

4.2 By April 2026, the programme has increased the number of bedspaces by 46 through 32 acquired properties and 25 disposals. Numbers of transactions are still relatively low as the team works through sales of some complex properties. The programme has meant the Council has avoided an estimated £3m of investment need.

4.3 Quality Homes: This programme was introduced in the Housing Asset Management Strategy and includes the sale of some poorly performing homes, which will be used to fund capital investment. There was considerable work in the year mobilising the programme and setting up various new procedures and implementation arrangements. At present, 2 homes have completed sales, generating £2m in capital receipts.

4.4 Freehold Sales: The Council has initiated the sale of freeholds to blocks where there are only leasehold homes. This is as per a decision in the Cabinet Report which also established the Family Friendly programme. This work was initiated this year, but no transactions have yet completed.

4.5 The value of the freeholds is not significant, but it reduces the risk of the Council encountering costs which are not recoverable from the leaseholders and ensures the Council can focus its resource on management of social homes.

#### **5.0 COMMENTS OF THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR**

5.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and has no comments to add.

#### **6.0 COMMENTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

6.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the implementation of the Housing Investment Strategy – the capital investment programme, Family Friendly, Quality Homes and Freehold Sales programmes.

6.2 The Housing Asset Management Strategy sets out the Council's investment priorities over the next 5-years and sets a plan to invest £670m in existing Housing Revenue Account (HRA) residential stock. By the end of 25/26 financial year, there has been £204m invested.

6.3 The £670m of investment need as described above will be funded through £320m of existing available HRA capital budgets, and the remaining £350m of capital budgets will be funded through significant disposals programmes – Family Friendly, Quality Homes and Freehold

Sales. The financial implications of these programmes were considered at the time of the decision and are kept under review as part of the Council's budget setting and monitoring processes. So far, the disposal programmes have generated £15m worth of capital receipts. There is risk that due to the length of time complex sales take to generate capital receipts, the capital investment will need to be phased.

- 6.4 Finance will continue to work with the service to monitor and ensure as much as possible that associated costs are funded from existing resources.

## **7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The recommended programme will improve the energy efficiency of Council homes. It will see windows and roofs replaced and significant investment in communal heating systems. The Council will also continue delivery of its grant supported retrofit works which tackle some of the Council's least efficient homes. Construction works undertaken consequent to the investment programmes proposed, will be subject to strict environmental controls as set out in legislation and specific contract terms.
- 7.2 It is anticipated that homes that require significant investment and are released through the asset review process, will be refurbished and become more energy efficient in doing so. This will help reduce emissions within the borough.
- 7.3 While the strategy does propose to defer some investment in decarbonisation, the Council is also developing its Retrofit at Scale pilot which is looking at how institutional investment can help meet the cost of decarbonisation. The initial pilot will look at installing solar panels and battery storage in up to 3,000 Council homes, saving 943 tonnes of carbon per annum.
- 7.4 As the delivery of the strategy progresses, it will be possible to report on the impacts and outcomes of these in more detail.

**ENDS**