

Trivallis.

Homes strategy.



www.trivallis.co.uk

Introduction

Our Homes strategy outlines our plans for the coming years to improve our current homes and their surroundings, while also building additional housing to meet the growing demand.

This strategy shows how we'll turn our goals from the 2024–29 Strategic Framework (Building Brighter Futures) into real actions.

In the Strategic Framework we set out our main purpose which is:

To improve the wellbeing of communities and the people who live within them so that they can thrive.

We are more than just a landlord. Our relationships with tenants and the quality of our housing services play a big part in the wellbeing of communities.

Getting the basics right

This strategy focuses on big changes. But whilst we are making these changes, we mustn't lose sight of the basics, especially in how we manage and invest in our existing homes. Our strategy includes new projects but also aims to keep improving our basic services so that we provide safe, good quality homes.



Strategy development

This strategy and our other strategies are based on ideas and feedback from everyone within Team Trivallis. We've listened to involved tenants, staff, senior leaders, and the Board. We have looked for and used the most up-to-date and successful practices in the housing sector.

Our goals

We have three aims:

- Improve the quality of our homes and build or acquire more of them to meet the scale and range of housing needed in our communities.
- Improve tenants' wellbeing through our investments.
- Revitalise our communities in all that we do.



Our integrated approach

Our approach covers many different areas, but they will all need to be joined up to make a difference. Each area will have its own action plan, but these plans will be consistent from development through to regeneration.



Instead of a top-down approach, we will connect with people living in the community. We will involve tenants and communities to improve our services. This will help us understand their needs, build on their strengths, and support what communities want to achieve themselves.

This plan will involve every part of our business, following the idea of *team around the tenant* which is explained in our Tenant Services strategy. Our Finance, People, and Digital and Data plans will support the Homes strategy by making sure we have the money, staff, and IT systems needed to meet our goals.

How we work

It is important to understand the situation that we work in. Things are complicated and change very quickly, making it hard for us to know what will happen in the future. Instead of rigid actions, the Homes strategy provides guidelines allowing us to adapt as things change.



CUSTOMER NEEDS

- Population changes
- Health determinants
- Increased demand for affordable housing
- More exacting customer expectations



BUILDING STANDARDS

- Government standards
- Statutory and regulatory requirements
- Fitness for Human Habitation
- Renewed focus on damp and mould



CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

- Rising material and energy costs
- Supply chain issues
- Skills shortage
- Contractor capacity
- Contractor insolvency



ENVIRONMENT & TECHNOLOGY

- Climate change
- Extreme weather conditions
- National net zero targets
- Drive to increase energy efficiency standards of homes
- Renewable technology development



POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SITUATION

- Political instability
- Impact of rising inflation and interest rates
- Increase in price uncertainty and volatility
- Increasingly competitive housing market and relatively low local incomes
- Access to financial and funding

Investment which takes account of equity, diversity and inclusion

Different communities have their own needs, so our investment plans must change to match these differences.

We want all our communities to thrive. We will develop plans for each community, working with the people who live there and our partners. Some areas are growing quickly and there is a high demand for new social housing. In other areas people are leaving, and we need to work with communities and partners to tackle this problem and invest in things which will encourage them to stay. Some areas are struggling, and we need to be a strong support to make sure our investments help rebuild these communities and secure their future.



What we will do

Our new approach has five elements. These elements are meant to make sure we live up to our values of being kind, inclusive, progressive and trustworthy. We also want to fully embrace Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, so our services can better meet the needs of all our tenants.

1.

Provide more new homes to meet housing need

We plan to quickly grow our development programme so that we build or buy at least 130 new homes every year. These homes will include options for renting, shared ownership, and buying. While we will mainly focus on Rhondda Cynon Taff, we will also build in other parts of South Wales, making sure we can manage and support these new homes. We will buy existing properties and build new ones, if they meet our quality and financial standards. All new homes will be energy-efficient with an EPC A rating. Our home designs will consider different social and cultural needs, include new smart technology, and adapt to people's changing needs over time. We will work closely with Social Care and Health to provide for specific needs. To ensure value for money, we will use our group structure in all development and regeneration projects. We will make sure our contractors offer community benefits, promote local jobs, and support local suppliers and contractors.



2.

Bring empty homes and buildings back into use

We will work with RCT Council to create programmes that bring empty homes back into use, helping us to improve communities and provide more housing. These homes will be available in different ways, depending on the funding we get. Our goal is to offer affordable homes and attract young people to RCT to buy their first home. If we have enough funding, we will focus on turning empty buildings, especially in town and village centres, into homes. We will set quality standards and financial guidelines for buying existing homes and create plans that connect investments, housing management, and community development in each area.

3.

Improve our existing homes

We will make sure we have accurate and up-to-date information about our homes, including energy performance and the investment needed. We'll use smart technology where possible. We will invest in our homes to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023, ensuring all homes reach EPC C, and create plans for further energy improvements if needed. Our focus will be on energy efficiency, using any available grants to make homes warmer, reduce dampness, and lower fuel costs. We'll also invest in improving our estates and communal areas, involving residents in planning these improvements. We'll move to a more data-driven approach to managing our assets, possibly using sensors and alarms, and we'll constantly look for ways to improve. We'll review how we adapt homes to meet the needs of different households effectively and sustainably. We'll also regularly check if our homes, including sheltered and supported housing, are still suitable and sustainable, and look for ways to renew and regenerate them when possible. We'll invest in a new system to manage our asset data, which will work seamlessly with our financial, repairs, and housing systems. We'll use repairs data each year to plan our investments, so we can reduce the need for emergency repairs over time. Finally, we'll explore using our own workforce for future home improvements and work with the University of South Wales and local colleges to ensure our workers and contractors have the skills they need now and in the future.



4.

Regenerate Penrhys

If it's financially possible, we'll work with residents and the Council to create a new, lively, and energy-efficient village in Penrhys with different types of ownership and renting options.

5.

Improve our repairs service and speed up the time it takes to re-let empty homes

We will work to reduce the time it takes to fix empty homes until we have fewer than 100 empty homes at any time and our turnaround time is among the best in Wales. We'll also team up with tenants and staff to make our repair process faster and better and improve how we communicate with tenants. Our Repairs 2030 project aims to make our repair service top-notch in productivity, performance, and satisfaction. We'll start by getting better data on costs and productivity and plan for the future workforce by summer 2025. We will keep up with new technology, including artificial intelligence, to see how it can help our repair service and decide if we should use it. We'll also keep track of repair trends so we can adjust our service to meet changing needs.

What we expect to see

This is a big change, and it may take a while to make a difference, but we want to see some important outcomes.



How we'll keep track of progress

We will develop new measures for reporting to Board so they can check on our progress.

- Increased tenant satisfaction with the quality of their homes.
- Increase in the number of new homes delivered.
- Increase the range of available housing options.
- A significant reduction in the number of empty homes by bringing them back into use.
- Implementation of an annual investment programme that fully complies with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023.
- Clear evidence that our investments are lowering energy costs for tenants and enhancing the comfort and warmth of their homes.
- Decreased repair costs and greater tenant satisfaction with our repairs service.
- Fewer empty homes and cost savings due to quicker turnaround times.

How much will this cost?

We have put aside money in the 2024–25 budget to pay for:

- Investment needed to meet the initial requirements of WHQS 2023 (that every home meets EPC C by 2030).
- the current costs of the repairs service and level of voids from which we plan to improve.
- the proposed target for developing 130 new homes per year as soon as possible.

Further loan finance will be needed for which we have capacity. Before moving forward, we will add the costs of buying empty homes and the financial impact of the Penrhys project into our business plan.



Risks and challenges

- We haven't worked on developments this big or offered these types of housing before. We have a Director of Development and two new Board members with experience in this area to help us manage the risks properly.
- We haven't tested out our ideas for acquiring empty homes before. There are risks but they are similar to the risks from building new homes. All purchases must be financially viable in the long term.
- We need to ensure we have the skills in the organisation to help us build new joined-up computer systems and gather data and information about our services.
- We need to secure financial grants to make sure we can afford our Penrhys regeneration project.

Conclusion

This plan shows how we will make our goals from the 2024–29 Strategic Framework (Building Brighter Futures) happen. By following this plan, we want to improve the wellbeing of communities and the people who live there, helping them do well. We will do this by working together with our communities and our partners.

Investing in new and existing homes is a big part of how we can help people and communities thrive.

Our actions will be guided by fairness, diversity, inclusion, and our values: kindness, trust, progress, and inclusion. By following these principles, we will help communities shape their own futures, making a brighter and more connected future for everyone.

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