

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 31st July 2025

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release NA

Stock Condition Survey Summary Report

Report summary:

This report presents the findings of the comprehensive Stock Condition Survey undertaken by Currie & Brown on behalf of East Devon District Council (EDDC).

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That Housing Review Board recommend to Cabinet that;

1. The results of the stock condition survey are noted.

Reason for recommendation:

To note the outcome of the Stock Condition Survey

Officer: Liam Reading – Assistant Director of Programmes, Investment & Development

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Assets and Economy
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☐ Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- ☐ Environment - Nature and Climate
- ☐ Environment - Operational
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- ☒ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Medium Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; Challenges and risk are outlined in points 24 to 26 of this report.

Links to background information .

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ A supported and engaged community
 - ☒ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
 - ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
 - ☒ Financially secure and improving quality of services
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East Devon District Council – Stock Condition Survey Summary Report

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the comprehensive Stock Condition Survey undertaken by Currie & Brown on behalf of East Devon District Council (EDDC). The programme surveyed 3,554 residential properties and assessed an additional 588 properties on a desktop basis. In total, 4,522 assets were surveyed, including community centres and garages etc. The purpose of the survey was to support strategic asset management, guide future investment planning, ensure continued compliance with the Decent Homes Standard and identify any health and safety risks under the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The key outcomes were;

Decent Homes Compliance:

- A high 93.44% pass rate achieved across the individual properties surveyed compared to a national average of 89%
- A low 6.56% of individual properties failed, primarily due to issues of thermal comfort (e.g. inadequate heating or insulation).

Damp Issues:

- 370 instances of major or medium dampness were identified, equating to 10.43% of the stock
- The main causes of damp, including condensation, were due to poor ventilation, penetrating damp from aging windows and seals and damp in bathrooms.

Housing Health & Safety Rating System

- The survey identified 45 Cat 1 Hazards or 1.27% of the stock. This is considered to be a very low number when compared to the national average of 5.1% of properties having category 1 hazards.

Community Centres:

- 15 centres surveyed, many requiring moderate to priority maintenance.
- EPC ratings range from C to E, with multiple opportunities for low-cost energy efficiency improvements.

Sewage Treatment Plants:

- 10 sites were identified as requiring priority replacement or repair due to failure or environmental risk.

Catch-Up Repairs:

The survey identified £5.2 million in catch up repairs, with the highest costs associated with kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems, and windows. A number of these repairs, improvements and replacement have now been completed.

30-Year Investment Forecast:

A key outcome of the survey work was an estimation of the investment needs of the stock to inform the business plan and guide future investment decisions. The headline findings were;

- £267 million required across the surveyed stock.
- £311 million projected cost when accounting for the full asset base.
- Highest forecast costs relate to boilers, external walls, landscaping, and roof coverings.

Conclusion

The stock condition survey results demonstrate that East Devon District Council's housing stock is largely compliant and fundamentally sound, but requires long-term strategic investment. This investment, which will be set out in a 30 year Business Plan, will need to be targeted and sustained to avoid asset degradation and future compliance failures which impact tenant wellbeing, service delivery and long-term sustainability.

Stock Condition Survey - Summary Report

Introduction

1. The survey was commissioned to inform strategic asset planning, assess future investment needs and ensure compliance with regulatory standards across EDDC's housing portfolio.

Survey Scope

2. The following outlines the scope of the survey.

- 4522 Assets surveyed out of a total of 5202 assets (87% coverage)
 - 3554 Individual properties physically surveyed out of 4142 (86% Coverage)
 - 588 Remaining individual properties assessed on a desk top basis:
3. Surveys incorporated both physical inspections and energy audits, ensuring a robust data set for future planning.

N.B: – Figures calculated based on 4142 properties. Stock figures change over time reflecting Right to Buy Sales and Acquisitions and may be marginally different as at today's date.

Condition Summary

Decent Homes Standard Compliance

4. The Decent Homes Standard is a framework set by the UK government in 2000 to ensure that all social housing meets certain baseline living conditions.
5. The survey identified a very positive pass rate of 93.44%. This level of decency is significantly above the national average of c.89%.
6. The primary reason for failure was thermal comfort (excess cold). Other failure areas included inadequate kitchen and bathroom standards and substandard heating or insulation systems.
7. A number of blocks of flats with external and communal elements were originally recorded as having failed. However, where a decent homes failure in a block has occurred, this has been attributed to individual flats, to avoid double counting and showing a higher failure rate.

Damp and Condensation

8. Major or Medium levels of damp were reported in 10.43 % of properties or 370 individual homes. This compares to a national average of 7.0 % indicating a slightly higher incidence of damp.
9. The classification of Dampness into Major and Medium follows Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) guidance. The incidence of major damp was reported in 1.8% of properties, with Medium Damp being present in 8.63%. The key causes being;
 - Poor ventilation (leading to condensation)
 - Penetrating damp from aging windows
 - Damp in bathrooms
10. Addressing damp is critical for tenant wellbeing and long-term housing quality. Resolving damp issues is therefore a key priority, as outlined in the 2025/26 HRA Budget priorities,

and factored into current planned expenditure and maintenance programmes. As highlighted, any damp issues falling into HHSRS Cat 1 hazards were addressed immediately once the issues were identified.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

11. The Housing Health and Rating System (HHSRS) identifies hazards which are ranked based on the potential risk they pose to health and safety:

▪ **Category 1 Hazards:**

These are the most serious risks to health, such as severe damp, dangerous electrics, or fire hazards. By law, landlords must take immediate action to rectify these issues once identified.

▪ **Category 2 Hazards:**

These represent less severe risks but still require attention. Although a Category 2 hazard does not result in a failure under the Decent Homes Standard, it is best practice to resolve these hazards as soon as practicable to prevent them from escalating into more serious issues or impacting tenants' wellbeing

12. The survey identified 45 Cat 1 Hazards or 1.27% of the stock. This is considered to be a very low number when compared to the national average of 5.1% of properties having category 1 hazards. A total 1,997 of the lower level Cat 2 hazards were identified.

Community Centres and EPC Ratings

13. All 15 community centres were surveyed. Common issues included;

- Blocked gutters
- Poor insulation
- Structural cracking
- Non-compliant or degraded fire doors

14. EPC ratings for community centres range from C to E, with widespread recommendations for LED lighting, cavity wall insulation, modern heating systems and energy efficiency upgrades (e.g. air/ground source heat pumps, PV systems).

Sewage Treatment Plants

15. 10 plants were rated 'Red' and requiring immediate replacement or remediation (e.g. Failed trickle filters, undersized tanks, discharging to watercourses). Several others received Amber ratings, indicating risk of future failure and the need for proactive works. To date, 2 out of the 10 have received the necessary repairs, replacements or upgrades.

Garages

16. The condition survey for the garages was prepared on the basis of a visual non-disruptive inspection of the building fabric. The average cost per garage to refurbish amounts to £1,747. The total cost to refurbish all blocks is £1.23m. An internal interim Garage Asset Management Plan is in place to assess and respond to the issues identified in the survey.

Investment Needs – Summary

Urgent Catch-Up Repairs

17. The survey identified the need for catch up repairs with a total investment requirement of £5.2m. The highest cost areas were;

- Kitchens: £2.75m
- Sanitary appliances & extract fans: £1.09m
- Boilers: £339k
- Windows: £185k

30-Year Lifecycle Investment

18. A key outcome of the survey is 'lifecycle data' for key component replacement such as doors, roofs, windows, boilers etc over a 30 year period. This data provides a base position to develop a long term 30 year Business Plan and an effective Asset Management Plan

19. For the properties surveyed, the report estimates an investment requirement of £267 million. The total projected investment required (including un-surveyed properties) amounts to £311 million.

20. The high-cost areas over 30 years were:

- Boilers/Heating Systems: £34.3m
- External Walls: £32.6m
- Landscaping: £20.5m
- Kitchens: £17.1m
- Roof Coverings: £9.2m

Survey Conclusions and Recommendations

21. The survey report recommended significant investment across both short-term repairs and long-term improvement and upgrades. Priority areas are:
- Heating and thermal efficiency improvements
 - Kitchen and bathroom replacements
 - Damp and mould remediation
 - Ensuring compliance with the Decent Homes Standard
 - Incorporating energy-efficient upgrades to reduce carbon emissions, enhancing tenant comfort, and managing fuel poverty.

Strengths Identified

22. The majority of the housing stock is in generally good or satisfactory condition, with a strong baseline for long-term management and with a high Decent Homes pass rate and a low level of Cat 1 hazards compared to the national average.
23. Many identified improvement measures, particularly around energy efficiency, offer high return on investment and align with sustainability goals.

Challenges and Risks

24. Substantial short and long-term capital investment is required to maintain asset quality and tenant satisfaction.
25. High initial investment pressure have been identified within the first 15 years, particularly for heating, external fabric, and roofing systems.
26. Key risks include non-compliance with thermal comfort standards and damp-related health issues.

Responding to the Survey

27. As Members will be aware, the survey commenced in quarter 4 of 2022. Since this time a significant investment has been made into the stock with many of the repairs identified above having been completed. Where such repairs have been undertaken, these will be updated on our Housing System enabling an up-to-date record of stock condition.

Urgent Works – Short Term

28. On receipt of emerging data, officers were able to identify and respond to any high level priority risks such as Category 1 Hazards. All properties where Cat 1 hazards were identified during the survey have had remedial work commenced.
29. In addition to Cat 1 hazards, urgent upgrades to Sewage Treatment Plants were also identified. Again, these were prioritised for remedial works with 2 of the 10 Sewage Treatment Plants identified having undergone major improvement or replacement. Further

improvements and replacement will be undertaken as part of an ongoing planned programme.

Priority Works – Medium term

30. The survey work identified a number of HHSRS Category 2 hazards, which whilst not legally required, should be completed by a responsible landlord. Our investment plans over the medium term i.e. 1 – 5 years will respond to both the identified category 2 hazards and the 7% of homes that fail the decent homes standard.

Investment, Cyclical Maintenance & Component Replacement - Long Term

31. The level investment required in the housing stock presents a substantial financial challenge requiring effective long term business planning and proactive asset management. Our long term approach will be set out in a 30 year business plan later in 2025/26, alongside an Asset Management Plan to ensure the effective management of our assets, including tackling high cost, non performing, assets.

Conclusion

32. The stock condition survey results demonstrate that East Devon District Council's housing stock is largely compliant, fundamentally sound, but requiring strategic long-term investment. This investment will need to be targeted and sustained to avoid asset degradation and future compliance failures which impact tenant wellbeing, service delivery and long-term sustainability.
33. Having formally concluded the stock condition work, the Council has a clear view of where to act, a solid data foundation for decision-making and long term business planning and effective asset management moving forward.

Financial implications:

These details will now be assessed as part of the 30 year business plan for the HRA

Legal implications:

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report