



Babergh District Council

Housing Revenue Account Summary

2022-2023



Contents

3 *Introduction*
PAGE

Executive Summary

4
PAGE

5
PAGE

What is HRA?

Main Objectives

PAGE

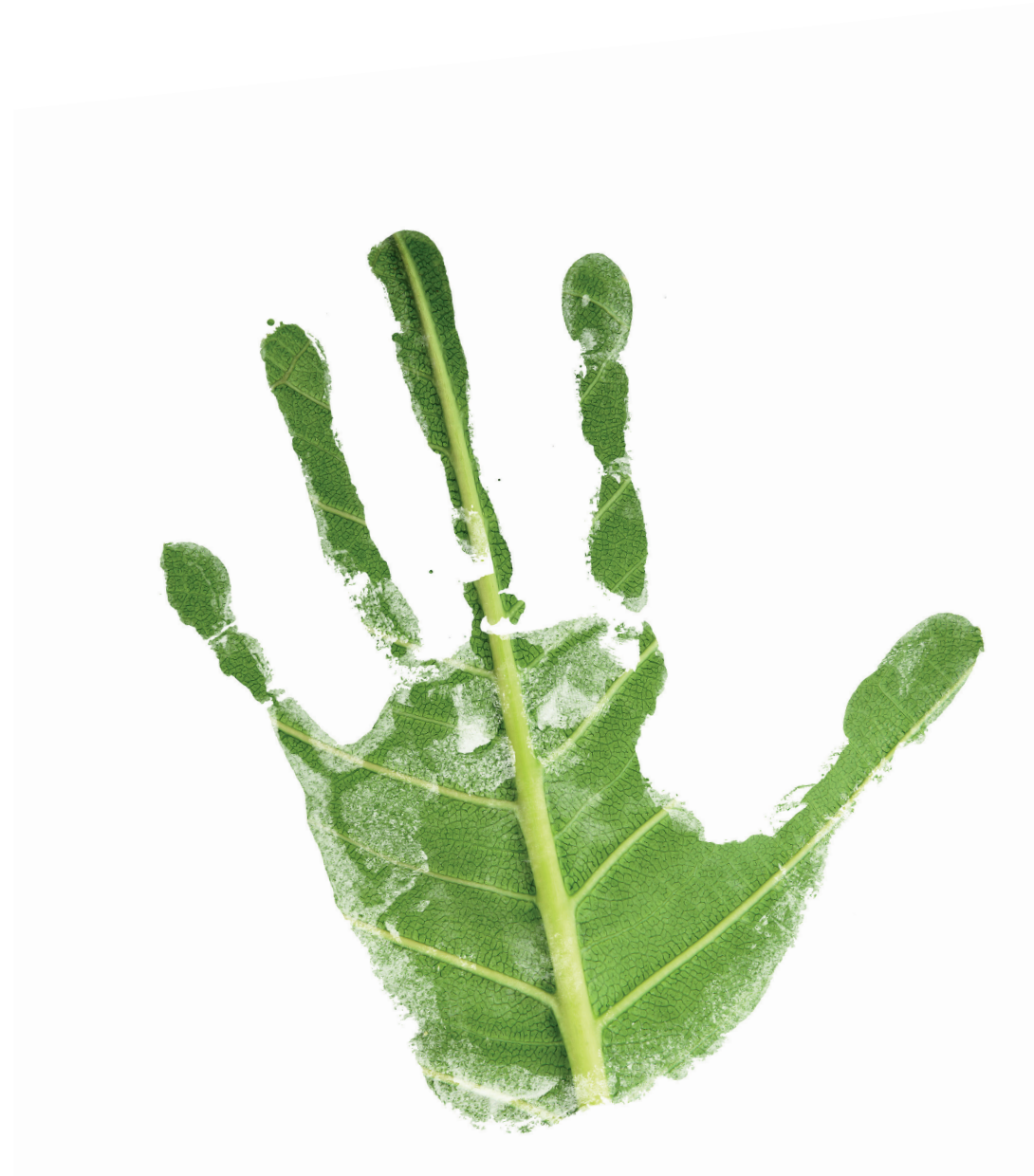
7

Introduction

Babergh District Council approved its new Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30-year business plan -2022 - 2052, a blueprint for the future of social housing on 5th July 2022. The plan set out the long-term priorities, plans and actions for council housing ensuring that its tenants have good quality and sustainable homes, in safe neighbourhoods.

The business plan outlines how the council will invest more than £30m in improving existing homes, to ensure they are energy efficient. This supports the councils' commitment to tackle climate change, as well as deliver new homes that provide good quality, affordable social housing for residents across the districts.

Babergh District Council maintains more than 4,000 council properties for tenants within its housing stock. However, demand continues to outstrip social housing availability, with 798 households on the waiting list in the district.



Executive Summary

This document sets out the framework that is the HRA business plan. It is essentially a document that sets a broad context for both future financial planning and investment decisions, as well as a medium-term strategy for the HRA and outcomes on behalf of tenants and leaseholders.

The plan must ensure that the Council's housing stock related priorities and programmes are supported and delivered whilst demonstrating sound financial management within existing budgets and through the use of additional debt headroom.

The main priorities and programmes aim to;

- Increase the stock of social housing owned by the HRA through an ambitious development programme.
- Develop new homes that are built to the highest standard, contributing to the Council's effort to ensure carbon neutrality.
- Improve the quality of existing homes and communal areas and reduce the carbon footprint of existing council homes through investment in assets, community led regeneration and working with communities and individuals.
- Ensure that our homes, and the management of them, maintain and improve wellbeing outcomes for individuals, families and communities alongside other Council services and partners.
- Making sure the HRA Business Plans continuously remain financially viable and sustainable.

What is the HRA?

The HRA is a ringfenced pot of money that is used solely for council-owned housing. All rent and service charge income goes into it, and all expenditure (management, maintenance etc) comes out of it.

The purpose of the business plan is to record expenditure and income of maintaining our housing stock and closely related services or facilities, which are provided primarily for the benefit of our tenants.

The business plan must have due regard to the longer-term income expectations as well as any opportunities provided by the additional debt headroom, which allows additional prudential borrowing to meet the Councils ambitions.

Aspirations for the future

In considering an aspiration for the future of the housing service, and the delivery of HRA Business Plans, that everyone can commit to for the next few years.

The following seven aims will drive the service forward in the medium term. These will in themselves be partly driven by national and local considerations as well as best practice elsewhere and linked to the Council's corporate objectives.

- **Investing in our current homes**
- **Tackling and adapting to climate change**
- **Building and buying new Council housing**
- **Improving the services that we provide our tenants**
- **Improving the neighbourhoods that we manage**
- **Involving tenants in the running of the service**
- **Implementing digital transformation**

A detailed 'smart action plan will be developed in response to this plan being adopted by both Councils and will run alongside the existing Homes and Housing Action Plan and the organisations Outcomes framework.

It is recognised that whilst it is five years since the last Housing Revenue Account Business Plan was adopted moving forward an annual review of progress will be undertaken that considers both financial performance of the accounts alongside the qualitative outcomes being delivered and the satisfaction of tenants and leaseholders.

An Annual Report published in May each year will publicly demonstrate the progress being made by looking back at the previous 12 months. This approach will also enable us to look forward at least a year ahead ensuring that we continuously adjust the Business Plan to reflect the environment around us including identifying what's working and what's not. What has changed and what we need to do differently.

The seven key aims will set the destination and future of the service. our main objectives have been developed to ensure that they are flexible and adaptable - ensuring that all stakeholders' expectations are met and also able to be amended to ensure they are compliant with changes in housing regulations, delivery and provision.

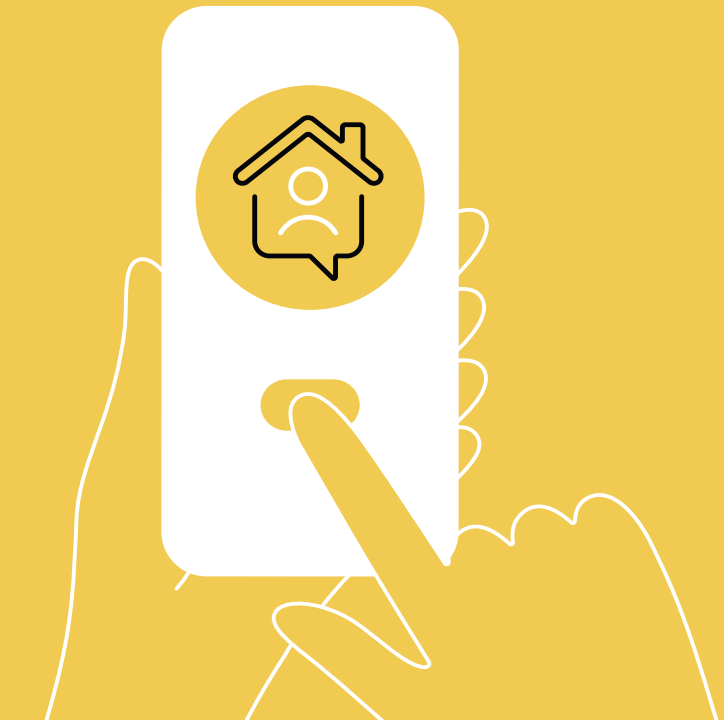


Main objectives

- To provide new homes that are energy efficient and improve the efficiency of existing homes to tackle the climate emergency.
- To engage with residents to reduce fuel poverty and raise awareness of climate friendly actions.
- To manage our external communal areas and green spaces well so that residents can enjoy these areas and be proud of where they live.
- To develop and provide affordable housing in a range of tenures and types to the highest standard of construction that can be afforded.
- To maintain and manage our homes to deliver the best outcomes for those living in them.
- To provide homes that are safe and healthy to live in by ensuring that all building safety standards are met, and residents can easily raise concerns.
- To deliver services that are influenced by and reflect the needs of local communities.
- To work in partnership with many agencies to promote social inclusion and support residents to be involved and thrive in their local communities.
- To deal effectively with complaints of anti-social behaviour and ensure there is appropriate support for victims.
- To work in partnership to support the needs of vulnerable residents to enable them to lead safe and independent lives.



- To work in partnership to reduce poverty wherever possible and to promote financial inclusion.
- To provide support for residents so they can manage and maintain their tenancy.
- To make the best use of technology and deliver new ways of working that benefit our residents.
- To ensure staff receive appropriate training and development to enable them to provide a high standard of service.
- To ensure that our services are responsive to diverse needs and that residents can access these in ways that are most convenient to them.
- To continually benchmark service delivery and ensure cost and performance outcomes are upper quartile.
- To promote resident involvement in service development and review by providing support, information, and resources to individual tenants and community organisations.
- To robustly measure resident satisfaction and provide services that are shaped by the views of our residents.
- To provide transparent information to residents about how well we are performing including how we deal with complaints.



The full housing revenue business plan 2022 – 2052, is available on the council website .

The plan includes details of our social housing blueprint providing an oversight of the consultation with key stakeholders and how this feedback and insight has shaped and developed the plan.