

HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

19 JANUARY 2021

CONDITION AND FUTURE USE OF COUNCIL OWNED GARAGES

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor Bob Evans
Responsible Officers: Mr Michael Lowman, Building Services Operations Manager/ Simon Newcombe, Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing

Reason for Report and Recommendation: To provide an update to Members on the current garage stock situation, with plans for modernisations and opportunities for change of use/redevelopment, and the adoption of a 6-year rather than the existing 12-year planned maintenance programme.

Recommendation: Members note the report. Members are also asked to recommend to Cabinet the adoption of a 6 yearly planned garage maintenance programme by bringing forward budgeted funds from future years.

Financial Implications: The activity of the Housing Service spans both General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The HRA is ring fenced and subject to specific financial controls.

Budget and Policy Framework: Policies agreed by the Homes Policy Development Group govern the work of the Housing Service. The HRA is funded in large part by rental income and therefore maintaining the revenue stream must be a key priority for the Housing Service.

Legal Implications: Tenancy management including our housing and garages property maintenance and redevelopment is funded through the Housing Revenue Account. The tenancy agreement defines the Council's relationship with tenants and sets out the rights and responsibilities of both parties. This takes account of legal and regulatory requirements. The Housing Act 1985, the Localism Act 2011 and the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 contain many provisions which must be taken into account by the Housing Service.

Risk Assessment: The landlord service has approximately 1100 garages in management which represents a huge investment. Failure to provide an effective tenancy management service has the potential to result in failure to meet legal and statutory obligations including those relating to health and safety issues, tenancy fraud, and potential negative publicity in the event of, for example, a serious fire or anti-social behaviour leading to residents on an estate feeling stigmatised. Failure to collect rental income could impact the ability to fund necessary management and maintenance activities.

Equality Impact Assessment: There is a suite of housing related policies. The use of these helps to ensure that service delivery is consistent and fair. There is a regulatory requirement for registered providers of social housing to tailor their service to meet the needs of the tenants and the Housing Service requests diversity data from tenants to enable compliance to be monitored.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Homes and the environment are a priority for the Council and this includes increasing the supply of affordable homes in the District and also supporting and growing active tenant engagement.

Impact on Climate Change: We recognise that the provision of sustainable communities is important. As part of our commitment to meeting the provisions of the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard within the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing, the Council offers a menu of involvement which provides opportunities for tenants to get involved in service delivery. We use social media to promote sustainability and publish information relating to a variety of topics including fuel efficiency, recycling and healthy living.

With regard to the homes and property in our management, our repairs and improvements strategies are informed by the need to reduce carbon emissions; and the need to reduce fuel poverty is also a key consideration.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The rationale for this report is to identify the current condition of the stock, planned maintenance programmes and to highlight alternative opportunities within our garage estates.
- 1.2 It is apparent that there has been a lack of funding towards the garage stock as a whole in previous years, and this is highlighted by the current condition of the majority of the stock. Although for the last 4 years we have been carrying out a planned maintenance programme and have an annual budget going forward of £75k for these works.

2. Occupancy

- 2.1 The number of garages within the service is 1110 with 334 of these currently Void (Table 1), giving an occupancy of 70%. This creates a rental income of £464,048 per annum.
- 2.2 The occupancy % of the 199 garages that have already been modernised is 83%, although this would be higher if lettings hadn't been temporarily stopped until January 2021 due to the pandemic. If this higher occupancy % was achieved throughout the garage stock it would increase the yearly rental income by up to £90k.

3. Planned Maintenance Programme

- 3.1 The planned Maintenance programme is carried out by Building Services and includes the complete replacement of the roofs and doors, whilst also replacing any soffits, fascias and guttering with UPVC. The vast majority of the existing roofs are Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) sheets, which need to be removed and disposed of in-line with current legislation, and as such increases the cost of each modernisation, with the average cost working out at around £2k per unit. The roofs are replaced with Polyester painted steel box profile sheets which have a life expectancy of at least 20 years.

- 3.2 The modernisation programme is currently scheduled over the next 12 years within the current 30-year projection for the HRA, within which we aim to have completed the modernisation of the entire stock. There is however an opportunity to bring forward increased occupancy and income by doubling the rate of modernisation and reducing this to a 6 yearly planned maintenance programme. There is capacity within Building Services to meet this programme but not if it were to be shortened to fewer than 6 years.

4. Opportunities

- 4.1 A number of garage sites have been identified as having the potential for alternative uses. These include demolition and the provision of social housing or parking bays. These sites identified are in the majority, where the garages are in such poor structural condition that they are 'beyond repair', we will be looking at these opportunities during the coming months to identify which if any are the most feasible/achievable.
- 4.2 Annex 1 sets out an initial assessment of the opportunities for each garage site within the HRA estate.
- 4.3 In addition to the assessment set out in Annex 1, we have also specifically looked at a number of sites where we feel that the provision of modular 'pod' housing would be the most beneficial way forward. This has identified several preferred locations where preliminary no-cost feasibility studies have already been completed. These provide clear guide as to what is possible as well as an indicative cost.
- 4.4 Pods are pre-manufactured, modular high-quality homes of different occupancy sizes which are low-maintenance and have 75-year design life, comparable to more traditional buildings. The proposal is for the new properties to be SAP 'A' rated (new build predicted Energy Performance Certificate, EPC) and to have a carbon rating of net zero.
- 4.5 These modular sites could potentially be used flexibly including as temporary accommodation which would allow us to return other standard properties held for this purpose back into long-term tenancy. Further assessment and consultation will take place before any sites are finalised for formal consideration.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the report.
- 5.2. Members are also asked to recommend to Cabinet the adoption of a 6 yearly planned garage maintenance programme by bringing forward budgeted funds from future years.

Contact for more Information: Michael Lowman, Building Services Operations Manager, telephone: 01884 255255, email: mlowman@middevon.gov.uk or Simon Newcombe, Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing email: snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk

Circulation of the Report:

Members of the Housing PDG

Cllr Bob Evans, Cabinet Member for Homes

Leadership Team

Corporate Management Team and other Group/Interim Service Managers

Legal Services

Annex 1 – Garage sites context and opportunities

| Address | No | Voids | % Tenanted | Waiting List | Modernisation | Condition | Potential |
|-----------------------------|----|-------|------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|------------------|
| Amory Road, Tiverton | 31 | 5 | 84% | 18 | 2025/26 | poor | No |
| Appledore Close, Cullompton | 3 | 0 | 100% | 33 | 2027/28 | Good | No |
| Ashley Close, Uffculme | 25 | 9 | 64% | 14 | n/a | V Poor | Housing |
| Barnes Close, Willand | 1 | 0 | 100% | 14 | n/a | Good | No |
| Barnfield, Crediton | 10 | 1 | 90% | 18 | 2018/19 | V Good | No |
| Barnhay, Bampton | 12 | 1 | 92% | 14 | 2016/17 | V Good | No |
| Beech Road, Tiverton | 6 | 1 | 84% | 25 | n/a | poor | Housing |
| Bellingate, Coleford | 2 | 1 | 50% | 0 | n/a | Good | Disposal |
| Bells Close, Chawleigh | 3 | 1 | 67% | 4 | 2016/17 | V Good | No |
| Blackmore Road, Tiverton | 5 | 0 | 100% | 7 | 2018/19 | V Good | No |
| Boyes Close, Halberton | 9 | 2 | 78% | 7 | 2027/28 | Poor | No |
| Bowley Meadow, Bradninch | 3 | 0 | 100% | 26 | 2025/26 | poor | No |
| Branscombe Road, Tiverton | 26 | 25 | 4% | 1 | n/a | V Poor | Disposal |
| Bray Close, Burlescombe | 8 | 2 | 75% | 0 | n/a | Good | Housing/Disposal |
| Broadlands, Thorverton | 25 | 11 | 56% | 8 | 2019/20 | V Good | No |
| Bullens Close, Thovertown | 3 | 1 | 67% | 12 | 2023/24 | V Poor | No |
| Butts Close, Chawleigh | 5 | 3 | 40% | 3 | n/a | n/a | Disposal |
| Cameron Close, Tiverton | 18 | 9 | 50% | 5 | n/a | n/a | Parking Spaces |
| Chaves Close, Tiverton | 8 | 7 | 13% | 0 | n/a | n/a | Housing |

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|------------------------------|----|----|------|----|---------|-----------|---------------|
| Churchill Drive, Crediton | 17 | 3 | 82% | 28 | 2026/27 | n/a | No |
| Church Street, M Bishop | 3 | 1 | 67% | 2 | 2018/19 | V Good | No |
| Churchills, Hemyock | 4 | 1 | 75% | 13 | 2019/20 | V Good | No |
| Coach Road, Silverton | 7 | 0 | 100% | 12 | 2014/15 | V Good | No |
| Coldharbour Road, Uffculme | 4 | 1 | 75% | 1 | 2015/16 | V Good | No |
| Coles Mead, Tiverton | 4 | 2 | 50% | 1 | 2022/23 | V Poor | No |
| Cornerways, Westcott | 1 | 0 | 100% | 11 | 2027/28 | Good | No |
| Courtney Road, Tiverton | 3 | 1 | 67% | 1 | 2023/24 | Poor | No |
| Court Orchard, Newton St Cyr | 5 | 1 | 80% | 6 | 2023/24 | Poor | No |
| Crofts Estate, Sandford | 11 | 1 | 91% | 11 | 2028/29 | poor | No |
| Culm Haven, Uffculme | 6 | 1 | 84% | 14 | 2018/19 | V Good | No |
| Dunsford Way, Tiverton | 3 | 1 | 67% | 6 | 2023/24 | Poor | No |
| Elmore Way, Tiverton | 8 | 2 | 75% | 12 | 2024/25 | Poor | No |
| Fir Close, Willand | 10 | 3 | 70% | 18 | n/a | poor | Yes |
| Ford Road, Tiverton | 19 | 13 | 32% | 5 | n/a | Very Poor | Change of use |
| Glebelands, Cheriton Bishop | 8 | 2 | 75% | 0 | n/a | Poor | Disposal |
| Glebeland, Down St Mary | 4 | 1 | 75% | 1 | 2027/28 | Good | No |
| Godfrey Gardens, Bow | 12 | 3 | 75% | 10 | n/a | Good | No |
| Greenaway, Morchard Bishop | 14 | 1 | 93% | 5 | n/a | Good | Housing |
| Halsbury Road, Tiverton | 14 | 2 | 86% | 14 | 2026/27 | poor | No |
| Hammett Road, Cullompton | 4 | 0 | 100% | 30 | 2014/15 | V Good | No |

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|-----------------------------|----|----|------|----|------------|-----------|---------|
| Hermes Avenue, Tiverton | 6 | 0 | 100% | 4 | 2026/27 | Good | No |
| High Street, Silverton | 4 | 0 | 100% | 21 | 2020/21 | V Good | No |
| Highland Terrace, Uffculme | 6 | 0 | 100% | 6 | 2015/16 | V Good | No |
| Hillcrest, Tiverton | 2 | 0 | 100% | 22 | 2026/27 | Good | No |
| Holly Close, Tiverton | 38 | 11 | 71% | 8 | 2031/32 | V Poor | No |
| Hunters Way, Culmstock | 8 | 2 | 75% | 8 | 2016/17 | V Good | No |
| Knightswood, Cullompton | 61 | 14 | 78% | 43 | 2029/30 | Good | No |
| Landboat View, C Fitzpaine | 3 | 0 | 100% | 6 | 2027/28 | Good | No |
| Lazenby Road, Tiverton | 8 | 3 | 63% | 8 | 2019/20 | V Good | No |
| Lime Close, Tiverton | 1 | 0 | 100% | 10 | 2026/27 | Good | No |
| Lime Kiln Road, Tiverton | 29 | 15 | 48% | 4 | n/a | n/a | Housing |
| Lower Cotteylands, Tiverton | 43 | 22 | 48% | 4 | n/a | n/a | Housing |
| Mackenzie Way, Tiverton | 2 | 0 | 100% | 2 | 2020/21 | V Poor | No |
| Market Place, Burlescombe | 12 | 1 | 92% | 4 | 2018/19 | V Good | No |
| Marshall Close, Tiverton | 16 | 1 | 94% | 6 | 2021/22 | V Poor | No |
| Meadowside Road, Sandford | 2 | 0 | 100% | 13 | 2016/17 | V Good | No |
| Moorland View, Lapford | 17 | 2 | 88% | 19 | 2022/23 | Poor | No |
| New Estate, Newton St Cyres | 8 | 2 | 75% | 2 | 2020/21 | Poor | No |
| Orchard Way, Cullompton | 47 | 12 | 74% | 27 | 2028/29/30 | Good/Poor | No |
| Orchard Way, Tiverton | 10 | 1 | 90% | 14 | 2015/16 | V Good | No |
| Palmerston Park, Tiverton | 54 | 27 | 50% | 9 | 2030/31/32 | Good | No |

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|-----------------------------|----|----|------|----|------------|--------|------------------|
| Pethertons, Halberton | 10 | 2 | 80% | 8 | 2018/19 | V Good | No |
| Prospect Way, Lapford | 2 | 0 | 100% | 21 | 2027/28 | Good | No |
| Prowses, Hemyock | 11 | 1 | 91% | 11 | 2022/23 | Poor | No |
| Pugsley Road, Tiverton | 25 | 11 | 56% | 7 | 2020/21/22 | V Poor | No |
| Queensway, Tiverton | 34 | 14 | 59% | 11 | 2029/30/31 | Good | No |
| Richmond Close, S Peverell | 14 | 3 | 79% | 14 | 2018/19 | V Good | No |
| Roundhill, Tiverton | 16 | 5 | 69% | 3 | n/a | V Poor | Housing |
| Russett Close, Uffculme | 10 | 4 | 60% | 9 | n/a | V Poor | Parking/Disposal |
| Sage Grove, Tiverton | 16 | 3 | 82% | 4 | n/a | Good | Housing |
| School Close, Shobrooke | 5 | 1 | 80% | 2 | 2028/29 | Good | No |
| Shortridge Mead, Tiverton | 5 | 2 | 60% | 2 | 2014/15 | V Good | No |
| Shapland Place, Tiverton | 41 | 29 | 29% | 4 | n/a | V Poor | Housing |
| Shortlands Road, Cullompton | 12 | 1 | 92% | 36 | 2024/25 | Poor | No |
| Siddalls Gardens, Tiverton | 13 | 1 | 92% | 16 | 2023/24 | Poor | No |
| Snows Estate, Sandford | 5 | 0 | 100% | 11 | 2020/21 | Poor | No |
| Somerlea, Willand | 6 | 1 | 84% | 12 | 2024/25 | Poor | No |
| Spruce Park, Crediton | 5 | 0 | 100% | 20 | 2026/27 | Good | No |
| Stanbury Court, Crediton | 1 | 0 | 100% | 39 | 2025/26 | Good | No |
| Sunningbrook Road, Tiverton | 18 | 1 | 94% | 13 | 2028/29 | Good | No |
| Sycamore Road, Tiverton | 34 | 10 | 71% | 6 | n/a | poor | Housing |
| The Walronds, Tiverton | 8 | 1 | 88% | 25 | 2018/19 | V Good | No |

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|-------------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|----------|--------|------------------|
| Townlands, Bradninch | 10 | 2 | 80% | 14 | n/a | Good | Housing |
| Tumbling Fields, Tiverton | 7 | 2 | 71% | 9 | 2018/19 | V Good | No |
| Valley View, Morebath | 8 | 3 | 63% | 1 | n/a | Good | Housing/Disposal |
| Westgate, Lapford | 6 | 2 | 67% | 20 | 2020/21 | V Good | No |
| Wethered Close, Tiverton | 8 | 1 | 88% | 11 | 2024/25 | Poor | No |
| Winswood, Crediton | 7 | 0 | 100% | 19 | 2026/27 | Good | No |
| Wordland Cross, Cheriton Fitz | 5 | 1 | 80% | 4 | 2023/24 | Poor | No |
| Wyndham Road, Silverton | 24 | 1 | 96% | 15 | 2017/18 | V Good | No |
| Yeo View, Yeoford | 3 | 0 | 100% | 4 | 2031/32 | Good | No |
| TOTAL | 1110 | 334 | 70% | 1021 | . | | |