

**Let's
Go!**

Investing in modern homes

**Asset Management Strategy
2020 – 2025**



**watford
community
housing**

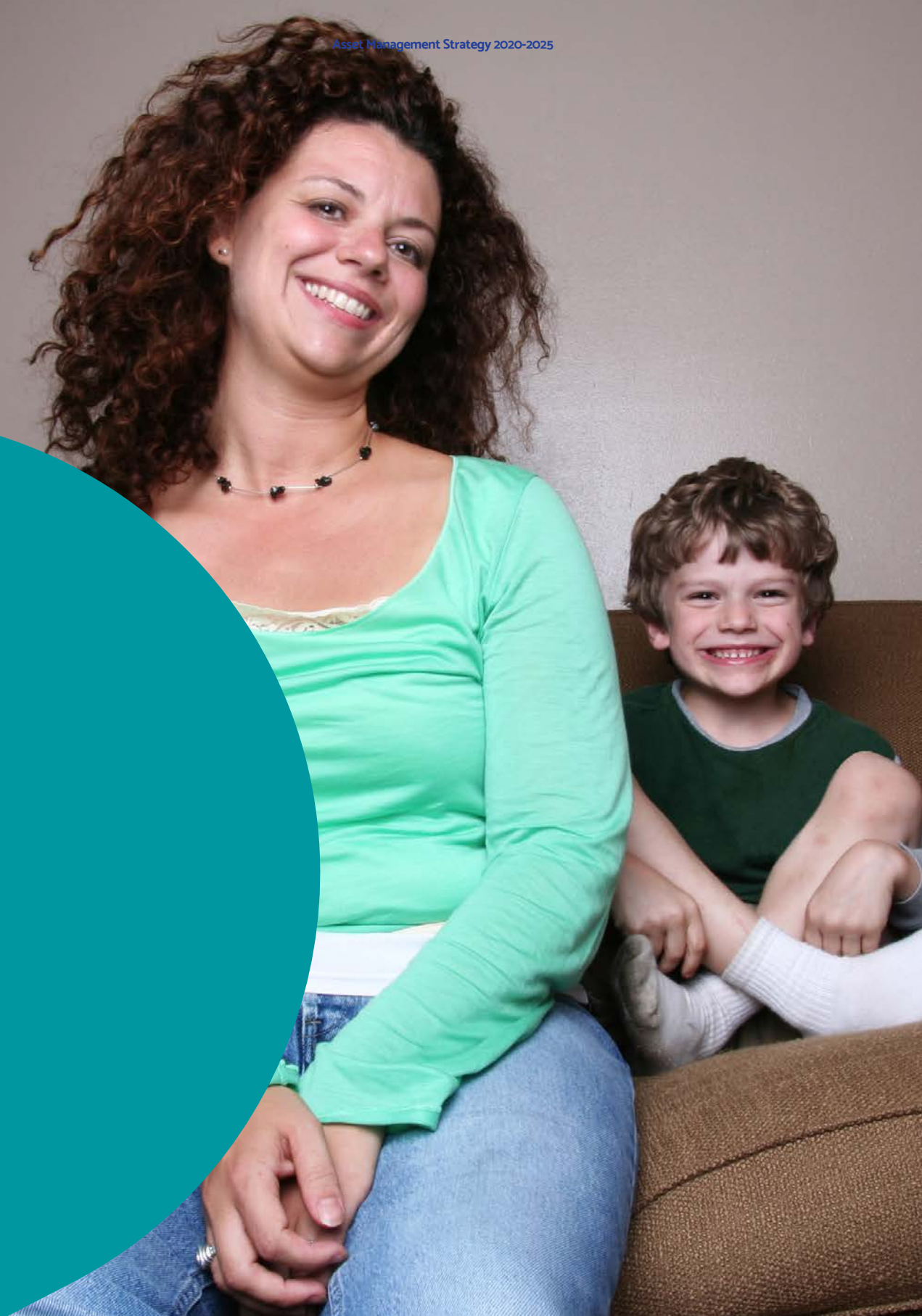
Investing in modern homes

The right home can set people up to lead more fulfilling lives. We're committed to ensuring that our customers' homes are well-maintained and fit for modern life, giving people a solid foundation and the chance to live well.

It is vital that we invest in the buildings we own so that we can continue to provide high-quality homes and services into the future.

£40m investment

We will invest £40m in maintaining and improving our homes between 2020 and 2025 – which equates to an average of £8,000 per home.





Asset management is about more than just buildings. In line with our ethos as a Community Gateway organisation, we are committed to strong resident engagement – so we will work with our customers to put them at the heart of our decision-making.

Working together

We will make sure we communicate effectively with residents across a range of channels, so that our customers know about everything that might affect them. Whenever we are looking to carry out works, we will make sure that people are well-informed and have the chance to have their say.

Engaging over key decisions

The safety of our customers has always been our top priority and we recognise that there is now an increased focus on how housing providers engage with residents over fire safety since the tragic events at Grenfell Tower in 2017.

We will be investing more than ever in the safety of our homes over the next five years, in line with the recommendations set out in the Hackitt Review, so we will ensure that we are transparent about our work and engage with customers over key decisions.

We believe in being open and honest, so we will make relevant information about people's homes available to them.

This will include the findings of any fire risk assessments carried out on their building, and customers will be able to access these through their online account.



Everyone should have a home that they can be proud of. All our properties now go beyond the Decent Homes Standard – the minimum standard set by the government – and we want to keep improving.

Improving homes and neighbourhoods



We will continue to invest in improvements such as new kitchens and bathrooms, ensuring that we maintain a high level of satisfaction for the works we carry out.

97% satisfaction

We will maintain a customer satisfaction rating of at least 97% for our improvement works.

Over the next five years, we will also increase the amount we spend on communal and outdoor spaces.

We want to enhance the look and feel of the shared areas in and around our homes, to make them welcoming and vibrant – as well as making them as safe as possible, in line with the commitment to community safety set out in our Customer Promise.

We will upgrade flooring and redecorate inside our blocks so they are modern and easy to keep clean, and we will make sure that green areas and other spaces such as car parking areas are well-maintained and attractive.

Making homes more energy-efficient is a win-win. As well as being good for the planet, it can put money back into our customers' pockets.

A greener future

Just like household appliances such as fridges and washing machines, homes can be graded from 'A' to 'G' according to their energy efficiency.

We have a long-term goal for all of our customers' homes to have an energy performance rating of 'C' or higher, making them easier to heat and cheaper to run.

This would put our homes amongst the top 30% in the country.

Helping people save money

Between now and 2025, we will invest £3.5 million to make improvements to the least efficient homes, so that they have at least a 'D' rating. We estimate that this will generate combined savings for our customers of £75,000 every year.

We will then continue our work beyond 2025, with the aim of every home having a 'C' rating by 2030.

If it is not cost-effective for us to bring a home up to a reasonable standard of energy efficiency, we will look at other options including disposing of the property. This would usually only happen when the property is already empty.



We believe that people should have homes that are comfortable and fit for modern living. By continuing to raise standards, we can help people to get more out of life.

Raising standards

We will work in partnership with customers to produce a Home Standard document, which sets out exactly what people can expect us to provide both inside their home and in communal and outdoor areas.

By working with residents and benchmarking these standards against other housing providers, we will make sure that our homes are high-quality and meet our customers' expectations.

As part of our new Welfare Fund, we will also look to provide additional fittings, such as carpets and curtains, for new customers who are in particular need of financial support.



It is important that our customers have a home that is right for them. Since people's requirements can change, we will make sure we provide the right services to give our customers the options they need.

The right home

Helping people to live comfortably

We will spend £350,000 every year to provide an excellent aids and adaptations service – reducing waiting times and making it easier for people to request changes to their homes that will help them to live comfortably.

Because we know that people with mobility problems can feel stigmatised, we will do all that we can to minimise the impact of these changes on the look and feel of residents' homes – by opting for solutions that do not look 'institutional' and are invisible wherever possible.

Working in partnership with other organisations, we will also provide attractive and desirable independent living accommodation for older people – ensuring that these homes are modern, vibrant and meet the needs of our local communities.



To make sure that we deliver excellent services and value for money for our customers, we will take a strategic approach to investment and asset management – making full use of data and technology so that we can be confident in the decisions we take.

Think smart

We will continue to use our Asset Investment Model, which helps us to understand how our homes and other buildings are performing. It will assist us in identifying properties that are not performing well, along with the cost of making improvements, so that we can make strategic investment decisions.

It is also crucial that we have accurate data to work with. We will continue to carry out stock condition surveys on 20% of our buildings every year, so that we maintain a full set of data that is no more than five years old.

This gives us up-to-date information that informs our five-year improvement programme, as well as our wider 30-year financial forecast.





We believe in embracing opportunities to innovate. In line with our Digital Transformation Strategy, we will use the latest technologies to deliver proactive services to our customers and reduce the need for responsive repairs.

Embracing innovation

By adopting technology such as Building Management Systems, which monitor the performance of communal services such as boilers and lifts, we will be able to respond more quickly to any problems – often before residents are affected.

As part of the drive to improve the information we hold about our homes, we will roll out Building Information Modelling (BIM) for some of our existing stock, where it will help us to deliver a better service. By retrospectively logging in-depth information about some of our buildings, we will be able to plan repairs and future programmes of works more efficiently.

To reduce the chances of things going wrong, we will also look to carry out basic checks and maintenance tasks in people's homes so that fewer responsive repairs are needed – avoiding hassle for customers and making our repairs service more efficient.

Behavioural change

As well as making physical improvements to properties, we want to work with people to help them understand how they can get the best out of their home. We will advise our customers on how to use the features in their homes to help them learn how to reduce energy consumption and save money.



Let's Go!

Our key goals for 2020-2025

- Put customers at the heart of our decision-making and make key information about their home available to them.
- Invest £40m in maintaining and improving our homes between 2020 and 2025.
- Achieve a customer satisfaction rating of at least 97% for our improvement works.
- Invest £3.5m to make homes more energy-efficient - saving customers around £75,000 every year.
- Provide high-quality homes that meet our customers' expectations - and we will publish a Home Standard document so that our promises are clear.
- Take a strategic approach to asset management and use the latest technologies to deliver proactive services.



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