

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 23 March 2020
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Homes and Safe Communities
Report Title:	Review of the Vale of Glamorgan Council Housing's – Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard
Purpose of Report:	To approve the Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standards as required by Welsh Government.
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Building Services
Responsible Officer:	Director of Environment and Housing Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	<p>The 'Vale of Glamorgan Council Housing's – Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard' is applicable to all Council owned housing throughout the Vale of Glamorgan; therefore, no individual ward member consultation has been undertaken.</p> <p>Officers consulted are:</p> <p>Accountant - Housing Operational Manager - Housing Services Operational Manager - Legal Services - Committee Reports</p>
Policy Framework:	This report is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In April 2016, Cabinet was asked to consider the first version of the Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (C3161). The Policy was subsequently referred to the Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee for observations. • This Policy should be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current and relevant to the service delivery. • Whilst there have been no regulatory changes to impact on the content of the Policy, the Council has now achieved the Welsh Housing Quality Standard and this has required some changes to the commentary throughout this Policy. • Overall the Policy appears to be working and following a workshop with Welsh Government, the Vale of Glamorgan Council can be confident it has a good interpretation of WHQS and what it should deliver. 	

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet endorses the revisions to the; 'Vale of Glamorgan Council Housing – Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard', attached at Appendix 1, subject to any notable comments provided by the Scrutiny Committee (Homes and Safe Communities).
2. That the report be referred to the Scrutiny Committee (Homes and Safe Communities) for consideration.
3. That subject to no changes to the Policy being recommended by the Scrutiny Committee the Policy be agreed and any reference from the Committee being brought back to Cabinet for consideration.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To approve in principle the revised 'Vale of Glamorgan Council Housing – Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard' as required by the Welsh Government, to enable the matter to be considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.
2. To permit the matter to be considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.
3. To ensure prompt agreement of the Policy.

1. Background

- 1.1 The 'Welsh Housing Quality Standards' (WHQS), were produced by Welsh Government in 2002 with a requirement for all Welsh Authorities to reach the prescribed standard by 2012. Further guidance relating to the application of the standards was issued in 2008.
- 1.2 The revised guidance produced in 2008 has seen social landlords interpret the guidance in different ways. As a consequence of these different interpretations, Welsh Government has asked all landlords to provide a Policy on the application and interpretation of the standards as applied by each organisation.
- 1.3 The Vale of Glamorgan Council approved version 1.3 of the Policy in April 2016 (C3161). This Policy has then provided the standard for measuring WHQS and the associated acceptable fails which have been reported to Welsh Government and this Council.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 As a consequence of no change within the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, which this Policy specifically seeks to address, there has been no need to update any of the Council's views on application of the standard and subsequently the document requires no change to address this part.

- 2.2 However, since approval of the Vale of Glamorgan Council Housing's – Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard V1.3, the Council has been successful in achieving WHQS and the Policy has now been updated to reflect this.
- 2.3 The previous version, V 1.3 of this Policy, was submitted to Welsh Government to ensure the Policy was fit for purpose, achieved all the WHQS requirements and that the Council's application of WHQS was in line with Welsh Government thinking.
- 2.4 The policies of all the retained stock Authorities were subject to the same validation process by Welsh Government and a workshop was arranged recently by Welsh Government to clarify some of the issues which had arisen from other Councils. It was recognised at this meeting that the Vale of Glamorgan Council had a good understanding of the principles WHQS is trying to achieve and that our Policy interpreted the legislation well.
- 2.5 Over the first four years since introduction of this Policy, there have been no issues which the Policy has not been able to cover. In updating the Policy to Version 2 this should guide the Council through until the next review in 2023

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1 Looking to the long term, this Policy assists the Council in maintaining good quality housing which meets the current social needs and promotes strong well managed neighbourhoods. The Policy provides the assurance to the Welsh Government that the Council is providing homes and neighbourhoods which meet modern day standards and social expectations.
- 3.2 The provision of good quality homes is integral to the efficient use of other services and resources. Efficient modern homes help promote health amongst our residents which has a positive impact on the health service, whilst secure homes and well-maintained neighbourhoods assist the police.
- 3.3 The first version of this Policy was drafted with the cooperation of the tenant's working group, their views helped develop the standards set out within the Policy whilst improving the homes to a good standard. Over the past four years tenant feedback in relation to this Policy has been considered and has demonstrated there are no required changes. Additionally, through conversations with Welsh Government, officers have been able to establish the Vale of Glamorgan Council's WHQS Policy is comprehensive and meets all the necessary requirements.
- 3.4 Officers of the Council have worked with Welsh Government and other retained stock Council's to develop a robust understanding of the principles and standards which WHQS aspires to deliver.

- 3.5** The Council provides regular reports to Welsh Government on the number of acceptable fails and a breakdown of the individual aspects where each property does not/cannot reach the standard; this is then used by Welsh Government to benchmark all social housing providers. The definitions used for each class of acceptable fail helps decisions to be made on future investment programmes.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** The financial resources for the delivery of WHQS have been set out annually in the Council's HRA Business Plan. This Policy does not change the levels of investment required but provides a degree of clarification on the standards the Council will achieve through WHQS.
- 4.2** The potential to extend the life of certain attributes through this Policy, could assist the Housing Investment Programme by smoothing out expenditure over a number of years and avoiding significant peaks in investment.

Employment

- 4.3** There are no employment implications arising from this Policy.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.4** The achievement of WHQS assists the Council in managing its duties under the Housing Act 1985 and subsequent amendments.
- 4.5** Achievement of WHQS also addresses category 1 HHSRS (Home Health and Safety Rating System) issues.
- 4.6** The WHQS provides for appropriate adaptations to be made to each property to meet the specific needs of individual tenants.

5. Background Papers

Appendix A - The Vale of Glamorgan Council Housing's – Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard

**VALE OF GLAMORGAN
COUNCIL**



Vale of Glamorgan Council Housing – Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard

Housing and Building Services

March 2020, Version 2.0
Review date: March 2023

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Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 Aim

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance on the application of the 'Welsh Housing Quality Standards' as applied to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's owned and managed housing stock. Whilst the Welsh Housing Quality Standards are comprehensive, there is room for local interpretation which enables housing providers to tailor the standard to meet local needs and investment demands. This policy seeks to maintain the primary purpose of WHQS by providing homes for Council tenants which are modern, safe, fuel efficient and situated in a well maintained neighbourhoods.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this document are to:

- Provide an interpretation of the WHQS as applied to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's housing stock
- Provide a methodology in interpretation and recording of acceptable fails
- Provide a methodology for data collection
- Provide a methodology for data storage
- Outline WHQS progress and reporting procedures
- Outline the process for independent validation
- Summarise the annual financial investment and reporting processes to the Welsh Government in line with the Council's Housing Business Plan
- Summarise the delivery of community benefits received through the associated investment programmes.

1.3 Responsibilities

The responsibility for delivery and application of this policy is allocated to the key individuals and teams below:

Operational Manager – Building Services: to manage and monitor the application of the policy to all investment programmes, void works and responsive repairs and annually review this policy.

Asset and Development Manager: to ensure the delivery of this policy through all repair and investment programmes where they are capable of supporting achievement of the WHQS. To ensure all completed work is accurately recorded on the Asset Management Database (Keystone), regularly review and monitor the data held to ensure ongoing achievement of WHQS. To analyse the data held and complete Welsh Government Statistical returns as required annually. To develop the asset improvement plans and associated Asset Management strategy

Capital Projects Team: to collate all documentation (e.g. floor plans, M&E certificates, etc.) following the improvement of any property and ensure these are correctly entered onto Keystone.

Compliance Team: to ensure data is accurately recorded and to monitor the data relating to WHQS, providing reports on WHQS compliance as required.

Void Maintenance Team: to ensure all empty properties meet the Council's adopted Void Standard ready for letting to the new tenant. To identify areas of 'Acceptable Fail' (e.g. restrictions in the ability to provide a suitable garden area because of steep topography within the available curtilage) and record these on the 'Certificate of Compliance', which is then presented to the new tenant. The Void Maintenance Team are also responsible for ensuring the record details held within Keystone are updated to reflect the status of the property.

Section 2 – Background

2.0 WHQS

- 2.1 The 'Welsh Housing Quality Standard' (WHQS), was produced by Welsh Government in 2002 with a requirement for all Welsh Authorities to reach the prescribed standard by 2012. In 2004 the Welsh Government undertook a revision of the 2002 standards following requests from a number of Council's seeking additional guidance and clarification.
- 2.2 Subsequently a revised Welsh Housing Quality Standard was issued and adopted in 2008, requiring all social housing to have been improved where necessary to reach the standard by 2020. The standard covered a range of key elements of the home associated with modern living standards and was split into the following key elements:
- in a good state of repair – walls and roofs are structurally sound and the home is free from damp.
 - safe and secure – must meet requirements for safe food preparation, heating provision, security to windows and doors and be safe to move around the home.
 - adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated – provision of fuel-efficient heating and the building must be capable of retaining the heat.
 - contain up to date kitchens and bathrooms – kitchens and bathrooms should be modern and designed to ensure their safe use.
 - well managed (for rented housing) – tenants should receive a good service which meets their needs and the surrounding community.
 - located in attractive and safe environments – where practicable the local footpaths, roads and recreation areas should be well maintained.
 - as far as possible suit the specific requirements of the household (e.g. specific disabilities)" – homes should be adapted to support independent living.
- 2.3 The Vale of Glamorgan Council was pleased to announce the completion of the WHQS standard at 31st March 2018 and has since entered the Maintenance phase of the standard. Based on the previous version of this document (V1.3), the Vale of Glamorgan Council were confident the principles of the WHQS had been achieved in all Council homes. This achievement had been made with the assistance of the Council's tenants as the 'end user', who ensured they received homes they could be proud to call home. Consequently, tenants were actively engaged and involved throughout the programme, 'Tenant Champions' were appointed to assist officers in the development of specifications, material choices and monthly monitoring of the contractor's performance

Section 3 – Interpretation of the standard

- 3.1 The Revised Guidance for Social Landlords on Interpretation and Achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard published in July 2008 is a comprehensive document setting out the standards Local Authorities and Housing Associations should achieve in the delivery of the WHQS. This policy document provides the details of Council's application of WHQS to its Housing Stock and seeks to clarify areas of the standard as they are applied to meet local circumstances.
- 3.2 The Vale of Glamorgan Council's application of the WHQS is set out below. This policy supports the 'Revised Guidance for Social Landlords on Interpretation and Achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard', which should be used as the main reference document. The WHQS guidance makes reference to primary and secondary requirements which are categorised as follows:
- Primary elements are those which impact on the safety of the residents
 - Secondary elements are those more focussed around the comfort of the residents
- 3.3a **In a good state of repair:**
- 1(a) structurally stable and free from disrepair (Primary)
 - external walls
 - roof structure(s) and covering(s)
 - external windows and doors
 - chimneys
 - 1(b) free from damp (Primary)
- 3.3b The Vale of Glamorgan Council endeavours to ensure key building components remain in good condition by being free from fault, deficiency and not promote a HHSRS Category 1 Hazard. These key building attributes are maintained through a combination of major work programmes and localised responsive repair as necessary.
- 3.4a **Safe and Secure:**
- Stairs and landings
 - 2(a) Stairs must have at least one handrail and not be considered hazardous (Primary).
 - Kitchens and bathrooms
 - 2(b) The kitchen should have adequate space for appliances (Secondary).
 - The kitchen should be a well organised working area with adequate work surfaces for resting pans and food preparation (Secondary).
 - 2(d) The kitchen should have sufficient storage to meet the needs of the residents (Secondary).
 - 2(e) The kitchen should have sufficient and conveniently located power sockets (Secondary).

- 2(f) The dwelling should have flooring suitably designed for kitchens and bathrooms, and, where necessary, flooring suitable for use in wet areas (Secondary).
- Fire escape
 - 2(g) The dwelling should have an external fire escape (Secondary).
 - 2(h) The dwelling must have adequate fire alarms and equipment (Primary).
 - 2(i) The dwelling should have an escape route from the rooms used for sleeping to an external door which does not pass through another room (Secondary).
 - 2(j) The dwelling must have a suitably located, mains powered, smoke alarm (with a backup secondary power source such as a sealed lithium battery) on each floor (Primary).
 - 2(k) The dwelling should not have windows fitted with locks with an automatic locking action in rooms used for sleeping. (Secondary).
- Electrical installations, heating installations and appliances
 - 2(l) The gas, solid fuel or oil service and safety inspection certificate must be current. All heating installations and appliances must be checked and certified safe by an appropriately qualified person at least annually and as required by law (Primary).
 - 2(m) Electrical lighting and power installations must be checked and certified safe by an appropriately qualified person at least every 10 years as a minimum (Primary).
- Security
 - 2(n) The dwelling must have a reasonable level of physical security (Primary).
- Outside the dwelling
 - 2(o) All opportunities must be taken to make gardens safe and suitable for young children to play in, easy to maintain and reasonably private (Primary).

3.4b The Vale of Glamorgan Council complies with the 2008 WHQS guidance for elements 2a to 2l. However, the Council has implemented a Periodic Inspection process for electrical installations (2m) in accordance with NICEIC guidance, this means periodic electrical inspections are completed on a five-year cycle rather than the ten-year cycle provided in the 2008 WHQS guidance.

3.4c With regard to the requirements for security (2n) detailed in the 2008 WHQS guidance, all windows and doors comply with the requirements. Exterior lighting is installed to the front and rear entrance doors to ensure adequate illumination for those entering or leaving the building. The Council does not install intruder alarms.

3.4d The safety of rear garden areas (2o) within the 2008 WHQS guidance, is being delivered in accordance with the standard. The Council will ensure a minimum specification to rear gardens of; chain-link fencing to at least 1,200mm high, fixed to concrete post and strand wire. This standard is delivered through responsive repairs and void works. Where security presents a greater risk, e.g. where the rear garden boundary neighbours a

highway, open space or footpath, fencing solutions are tailored to meet the specific need. The Council also has a programme of replacement fencing to support neighbourhood improvement programmes where a high specification timber fence is being installed.

3.5a Adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated

- 3(a) Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the dwelling to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (Primary).
- 3(b) External doors and windows must be sufficiently well fitting so that they do not cause severe draughts (Primary).
- The main entrance door should not open directly into the living room (Secondary).
- 3(d) The hot water tank must be effectively insulated (Primary).
- 3(e) Kitchens and bathrooms should have an adequate amount of mechanical ventilation (Secondary).

3.5b The Vale of Glamorgan Council complies with the 2008 WHQS guidance for all elements set out within this part of the standard. All boilers are 'A' rated efficient condensing boilers with programmable operating times and thermostatic switching. External doors and windows are PVCu with integral draught proofing, and all kitchens and bathrooms have extract ventilation installed in accordance with building regulations.

3.5c Each individual property receives an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) on completion of all WHQS work to assess its energy performance and ensure it has reached the requisite 65/100. The Council's overall performance on this indicator is reported annually through the Welsh Government's statistical reporting process. To ensure this standard is achieved some properties require pre-evaluation to inform the level of work required to achieve this standard. The Council has experienced problems with cavity wall insulation and in certain cases this insulation has had to be removed and replaced with external wall insulation where the SAP score fails to achieve the desired level. A programme for installation of external wall insulation is being delivered to improve the building fabric to reduce carbon emissions.

3.5d The Vale of Glamorgan Council has a small number of housing properties, which have greater potential not to achieve the required SAP rating and, in such instances, an 'option appraisal' is undertaken to evaluate the potential choices for the property. Should the individual property be found to be a viable asset to the stock (based on local demand or revenue contribution), work to achieve an acceptable energy rating will be undertaken within budgetary constraints. Where it is not practical to achieve the required energy rating but achieve a balance of warmth against associated heating costs, these properties will be classed as an 'Acceptable Fail'.

3.6a Contain up to date kitchens and bathrooms

- Kitchens
 - 4(a) The dwelling must have a kitchen 15 years old or less unless it is in good condition (Primary).
- Washing and drying clothes
 - 4(b) The dwelling should have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes (Secondary).

- Bathroom and WC facilities
 - 4(c) The bathroom and WC facilities must be 25 years old or less, unless it is in good condition (Primary).
 - 4(d) The dwelling must have a bathroom with a bath and shower which may be an over bath shower (Primary)

- 3.6b The Vale of Glamorgan Council has replaced all kitchens and bathrooms over the prescribed ages where necessary. Tenants have been able to refuse an upgrade of either of these facilities, which has then counted as an 'Acceptable Fail'. Where such works have been refused by the tenant, these attributes are subsequently upgraded when the property becomes empty.

- 3.6c The replacement of kitchens and bathrooms reaching the prescribed age set out within the 2008 WHQS guidance will not be seen as a trigger for automatic replacement after 2017. During the 2012-2017 investment programme, all kitchens and bathrooms have been replaced where they have reached the age part of the definition. After this initial replacement programme, kitchens and bathrooms reaching the prescribed age will be inspected to assess their condition before considering each attribute for replacement. On validation of the attribute at the prescribed time, kitchens or bathrooms in poor condition will be included in a programme of replacement. Where they are found to be in good condition, the remaining lifespan will be assessed and entered onto the stock condition database (keystone). This approach will help the Council to smooth the investment programme over future years.

- 3.7a **Well managed (for rented housing)**

- 3.7b A revised STAR survey undertaken in 2019 and provided positive results which support a well-managed housing service.

- 3.8a **Located in attractive and safe environments**
 - 6(a) All roads and footpaths should be accessible and provide safety (Secondary).
 - 6(b) There should be soft and hard landscaping (Secondary).
 - 6(c) Street lighting should be adequate (Secondary).
 - 6(d) There should be safe play areas for young children (Secondary).
 - 6(e) Communal areas should be practical and maintainable (Secondary).
 - 6(f) The dwelling should have a clearly defined boundary (Secondary).
 - 6(g) Utilities should be clearly identified (Secondary).
 - 6(h) Car parking should also be practically located and should be clearly visible to residents (Secondary).

- 3.8b The Council's Asset Management Team has close working links with the Highways Team to provide a more strategic approach to providing attractive and safe neighbourhoods. This approach will seek to resolve local environmental issues which are not the responsibility of the social landlord and ensure the needs of local residents are considered in all schemes.

- 3.8c The Council recognises each neighbourhood, estate or street will have different challenges and issues. To ensure these improvement programmes meet these specific needs, the Council will hold resident consultation

meetings and workshops with the community to establish individual needs and priorities before fully developing and delivering estate improvements. The resident consultation process will follow the TPAS/Groundwork guidance on 'Interpretation of the WHQS Environmental Standard'. This approach will result in bespoke solutions for each identified area.

- 3.8d The Housing and Building Services division is producing an 'Environmental and Neighbourhood Improvement Strategy' and associated operational plan, which will support the delivery of environmental improvements to neighbourhoods.
- 3.9a **As far as possible, suit the specific requirements of the household (e.g. specific disabilities)**
- 7(a) The dwelling should provide sufficient space for everyday living (Secondary).
 - 7(b) The dwelling should have enough storage both internally and externally (Secondary).
 - 7(c) The dwelling layout should meet the specific cultural needs of the tenants (Secondary).
 - 7(d) All necessary physical aids required by the residents should be provided (Secondary).
 - 7(e) Dwellings with a garden should have a directly accessible, reasonably sized level area (Secondary).
 - 7(f) The dwelling should have paved access to any garden gate and drying line (Secondary).
- 3.9b As far as reasonably practicable, the Council will make every effort to meet the specific needs of the household. Prior to provision of accommodation a suitability assessment is made on the location, size and space of the accommodation being offered. A budget is available to enable provision of specific property adaptations, which meet the needs of tenants with disability.
- 3.9c With regard storage, adequate space is provided within the building for the safe storage of vacuum cleaners, ironing board and other cleaning materials. This may be provided by specific cupboard space, former cylinder cupboards, former pantries, where this is not provided within the building layout, the option to integrate a tall standing cupboard in the kitchen has been given to tenants.
- 3.9d Outside storage is provided through former coal stores, former outside w/c's or integrated outbuildings. Where this is not provided a timber shed (1800 x 1200) will be provided, where this is practicable. This provision applies to homes with a designated garden area only and does not apply to sheltered accommodation complexes.
- 3.10 The Vale of Glamorgan Council has not introduced a WHQS+ with effort and financial resources being focused on the delivery of the core elements of the standard.

Section 4 - Meeting the standard

- 4.1 In June 2011, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Cabinet agreed to pursue a retention strategy following a ballot of tenants. As a result the Council set aside £82m over 5 years for the delivery of WHQS. The business plan produced in December 2011, set out the Council's financial plan to deliver the standard.
- 4.2 At the time of developing the financial strategy for delivery of WHQS the Housing Business Plan (December 2011) identified the following works required to achieve WHQS by 2017:
- Kitchens = 3,600
 - Bathrooms = 3,200
 - Heating & Boilers = 1,186
 - Rewiring = 3,029
 - Roofs = 998
 - Environmental Improvements (£2M allocated)
- 4.3 Following consultation with tenants, a preference was expressed to complete internal improvements first followed by a programme of external work. At the time of writing this policy the internal improvements have been completed with the exception of tenant refusals. On completion of the internal programme, all contractors revisited properties where tenants refused work to check if circumstances have changed and whether tenants previously refusing, would now like the work completed. Where a second refusal is expressed by tenants, the work to achieve WHQS at individual properties will be delivered when time the property next becomes void. These properties are treated as an 'acceptable fail' under the terms of the standard.
- 4.4 Regular monitoring meetings are held with the contractors and the Vale of Glamorgan Council achieved the Welsh Housing Quality Standard on 31st March 2018. This coincided with an inspection conducted by the Welsh Audit Office who were able to review and validate the data and concluded the Vale of Glamorgan had achieved the Standard.
- 4.5 in meeting the standard the Council has completed the following work and continues to address acceptable fails through various programmes of work.

Attribute	Identified work	Completed	Refused	Outstanding
• Kitchens	3,600	3,283	317	0
• Bathrooms	3,200	3,025	175	0
• Heating and Boilers	1,186	542	0	644
• Rewiring	3,029	3,028	0	1
• Roofs	998	232	0	766
• Windows and doors	766	18	0	748
• Walls/ structure	565	248	0	317

- 4.6 Now all Council Homes have met the standard (or recorded as having an acceptable fail); the Council recognises there is an ongoing annual investment programme required to ensure the housing stock remains compliant. The Housing Investment Programme informs the Housing Business Plan using asset data held on The Asset Management Database (Keystone). Component lifespans are the key driver for projecting future replacement quantities, although individual component failure will be validated at the time of the projected failure to assess its actual condition. Additionally, responsive repair requests are evaluated to identify any attribute which may be failing prematurely against the expected component life-span. Where building components are found to be failing prematurely or exceeding the projected lifespan, the asset database is adjusted to reflect the revised life expectancy.
- 4.7 It is important the investment programme enables the Council to maintain WHQS compliance. This will be achieved through an ability to validate attribute replacement dates providing the potential to extended attribute lifecycles combined with an annual review of the investment programme with a view to smoothing the investment programme thereby providing potential to accelerate some of the replacement cycles.

Section 5 – Managing Data

- 5.1 The Council has invested significant resources in establishing an asset management database, which has been populated through housing stock condition surveys, which have now been completed in the majority of the housing stock. As a consequence of regular validation surveys, and stock data updates, the Council's stock condition data provides a high degree of confidence for investment planning and programme development purposes. Subsequently, the stock data, knowledge of the environmental issues and emerging national themes are used to shape the Annual Housing Improvement Programme.
- 5.2 The Keystone system was implemented in June 2011 to capture knowledge of the housing stock and more provide effective housing asset management. The system can provide:-
- Investment planning.
 - Data for WHQS returns.
 - "What if" scenario planning.
 - Asbestos register.
 - Contractor & planned programme management.
 - Energy management.
 - Accessible Home Register.
 - Servicing information.
- 5.3 The Keystone system provides an essential tool in the effective management of the Council's housing stock. The Council understand the importance of capturing data and has suitably resourced the maintenance of this data entry to ensure maintenance and investment work is effectively captured, enabling effective business planning from the database. The Keystone system has successfully assisted in the financial planning, production of attribute replacement programmes and the identification of target areas for achieving WHQS.
- 5.4 To ensure the data held on the asset database remains valid, it is planned to complete a stock condition survey of all property on a five-year rolling programme with 20% of the stock being surveyed each year by an in house team supported by external providers as necessary.
- 5.5 To ensure the data remains valid between surveys, any work completed through the investment, voids and adaptations programmes is updated in the 'Keystone AMS'. Additionally, major work completed by the responsive repairs team, which has an effect on the planned lifespan of an attribute, is manually updated in the data base.
- 5.6 In addition to updating the installation date of each major component, on completion of specific work to each property, key documents are loaded and held on the database such as; gas and electrical safety certificates, asbestos surveys, Energy Performance Certificates, guarantees and warranties.

- 5.7 Gas and electrical safety certificates are checked and validated by the Council's compliance team and the qualifying officer will also conduct random site checks to ensure the certificate has been completed correctly.
- 5.8 On completion of the WHQS validation surveys to each property, any attribute found to not require replacement is given an estimate of its remaining life, to ensure the information held on the system is as reliable as practically possible.

5.9 Data Process Map

Activity		Responsibility	Frequency
1.0	Stock Condition report produced	Development and Investment Manager	Annually/December
2.0	Provisional programme of work developed	Development and Investment Manager	Annually/December
2.1	Work programme allocated to areas and work type	Capital Projects Manager	Annually/December
3.0	Validation surveys completed to scheduled property	HIS officers	3-4 Months prior to commencement of work
3.1	Acceptable fails and refusals identified	Client TLO	3-4 Months prior to commencement of work
3.2	Acceptable fails and proposed improvements recorded on programme spreadsheet	Client TLO	3-4 Months prior to commencement of work
3.3	Schedule of works to achieve WHQS produced	HIS officers	3-4 Months prior to commencement of work
4.0	Schedule of Work valued	QS/Contractor	2-3 Months prior to commencement of work
5.0	Work undertaken at property	Contractor	In accordance with contractors programme
5.1	Any variations to scheduled work agreed and recorded on programme spreadsheet	HIS officers	As identified
6.0	Completed work inspected and certified by Client team	HIS Officers	On completion of work
6.1	Satisfaction survey conducted	Client TLO	On completion of work
7.0	Contractor provides contract documentation through electronic portal (EPC, CP12, Electrical work sheet, kitchen designs, etc.)	Contractor	Within 1 month of completion of work

Activity		Responsibility	Frequency
7.1	All CP12's validated (random sample pulled for site checks)	Housing Compliance Officer - Gas	On receipt
7.2	All Electrical Work Sheets validated (random sample pulled for site checks)	Compliance Officer – Electrical	On receipt
7.3	Sample EPC pulled for sense check	Development and Investment Manager	On receipt
8.0	Collate information from programme spreadsheet, contractor's certification, and load onto Keystone.	Business Support Assistant - Assets	Within 1 month of receipt
8.1	Upload all contract documentation onto keystone using correct file directories	Business Support Assistant - Assets	Within 1 month of receipt
8.2	Amend life expectancy/rest installation dates for all attributes surveyed through Validation survey and variation to work	Business Support Assistant - Assets	Within 1 month of receipt
8.3	Record Acceptable fails in Keystone	Business Support Assistant - Assets	Within 1 month of receipt
9.0	Data held on system sample validated for correct input	Business Coordinator	Quarterly
10.0	Data tested – independent sample review of the data held against each property through on-site inspection.	Development and Investment Manager	On completion of programme
11.0	Stock condition surveys to 20% of housing stock to update Keystone data	Development and Investment Manager	Annually

Section 6 – Acceptable Fails

- 6.1 Recording acceptable fails - The Council recognises the need to monitor compliance with WHQS and has introduced an approach to minimise “acceptable fails” during the delivery of the investment programme. Whilst tenants have been able to refuse certain improvements within their home, works which protect the safety of tenants or the building have been compulsory. Therefore, works such as electrical rewiring, gas safety, rising/penetrating damp and external work have not been optional and where necessary, the housing landlord has assisted to ensure these works are completed.
- 6.2 All “acceptable fails”, for whatever reason, are recorded onto the Council’s Keystone system.
- 6.3 A ‘Certificate of Compliance’ has been produced in consultation with tenants to ensure properties comply with WHQS. These certificates are produced and issued following the completion of works to ‘Void’ properties and are issued to the new tenant at the time of signing for their new tenancy.
- 6.4 The certificate of Compliance is provided at appendix A.

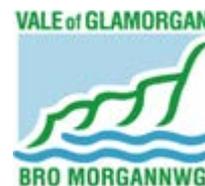
Section 7 – Monitoring Arrangements

- 7.1 Performance Monitoring – Monthly contract meetings are held with each of the main contractors engaged on investment project.
- 7.2 Upon completion of each property, details of the work are updated onto the Asset Management Database ‘Keystone’. This enables the data held to remain accurate and enable progress towards achievement of WHQS to be measured against each property. This data is then analysed and monitored by the Management Team to ensure appropriate progress is being made to achieve the standards.
- 7.3 Monthly meetings are held with the senior managers responsible for delivery of the programme to resolve any delivery issues, monitor progress, monitor budgetary spend and ensure appropriate financial resource is available to meet the standards.
- 7.4 The Council comply with all WHQS monitoring arrangements requested by Welsh Government through annual statistical returns measuring; ‘The Welsh Housing Quality Standard’ and ‘SAP’. These returns monitor any movement on compliance with the standard and are reported annually from the data held on Keystone.

Section 8 – Financial Investment

- 8.1 Annual investment programme is developed from the stock condition data held by the Council. The Council's Asset Management System (Keystone) is able to produce a summary report, which identifies the proposed replacement date of individual components based on projected life expectancy of individual attributes. Costs for replacement attributes are also held on the system and updated to reflect the most recent replacement costs for each individual attribute.
- 8.2 The lifespan and costs held in Keystone AMS are set out in the table provided at appendix B
- 8.3 Community benefits are a key feature of all major contracts procured by the Council. All contractors are aware of the need to deliver community benefits as part of the project and these community benefits are recorded through the 'Community Benefits Tool' available through the Welsh Government's; Policy and Resources toolkit.
- 8.4 The range of community benefits delivered through the WHQS major investment programme have been varied and are reported in more detail through the toolkit. However, examples of the benefits received are provided below:
- 6 week Construction skills course for homeless people to prepare them for their new home
 - Construction Skills Course for local tenants
 - School visits to promote health and safety in and around construction sites
 - Mock interviews with school pupils to prepare them for the workplace
 - Upgraded community buildings toilets
 - Decorated local children's centre
 - Charity Golf event raising £15,000 for the local children's hospice.

Welsh Housing Quality Standard Certificate of Compliance



Address			
Date of inspection		Name of Inspector	

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has duty as landlord, to ensure your home achieves the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). This certificate is confirmation of your home achieving the required standard and a records any areas where it is not technically or physically possible to achieve the full standard (acceptable fail).

Each category of the WHQS is assessed against the attached criteria and shows any areas where the property cannot meet the standard through acceptable fail. Where acceptable fail has been recorded, the Council have no plans or programmes of work to remedy this failure unless otherwise stated.

Tick

<input type="checkbox"/>	This property fully meets the WHQS standard
<input type="checkbox"/>	This property is recorded to have the following WHQS acceptable fails:

I hereby certify the above property meets WHQS as set out by Welsh Government.

Signed (Inspector) **Date**.....

I have explained to the new tenant how the property meets WHQS

Signed (Housing officer) **Date**.....

I understand how my new home meets WHQS

Signed (Tenant) **Date**.....

- **Part 1 - In a good state of repair**
 - *All external walls are in a good state of repair, structurally sound and free from damp*
 - *The roof structure and coverings are in a good state of repair and structurally sound*
 - *Chimneys are in a good state of repair and structurally sound*
 - *External windows and doors are secure and in a good state of repair*
- **Part 2 - Safe and secure**
 - *Stairs and landings - Stairs must have at least one handrail and not be considered hazardous.*
 - *Kitchen*
 - *The kitchen is well organised with adequate food preparation area and space for resting pans (based on the property type and size) and has adequate space for essential appliances.*
 - *The kitchen is deemed to have sufficient food and crockery storage and conveniently located power sockets (based on the property type and size)*
 - *The kitchen has been provided with suitable flooring for the property.*
 - *Bathroom*
 - *The Bathroom has been provided with suitable flooring for the property.*
 - *Fire*
 - *The property provides suitable escape in the event of a fire*
 - *The property is installed with working mains powered smoke and heat detection to provide early detection of fire (based on the property type and size)*
 - *Bedrooms and sleeping quarters have an appropriate direct escape in the event of a fire*
 - *The bedrooms and sleeping quarters do not have locks which prevent opening in the event of a fire*
 - *The heating system was last inspected on/...../..... and will receive annual safety inspections. A copy of the inspection certificate is enclosed.*
 - *The electrical wiring to the property was last inspected on/...../..... and will receive safety inspections every five years.*
 - *Security*
 - *The property has standard locks and fastenings to all entry points and is deemed secure*
 - *Gardens*
 - *The garden is easily accessible and well defined with a safe area for family activity (where appropriate).*
- **Part 3 - Adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated**
 - *The property is provided with efficient Electric/gas/oil/other..... heating capable of heating the whole property to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions*
 - *External doors and windows are sufficiently well fitting so they do not cause severe draughts*
 - *The main entrance door does not open directly into the living room*
 - *The hot water tank is effectively insulated (where installed)*
 - *Kitchens and bathrooms are mechanically ventilated*
 - *A copy of the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is enclosed with this document*

- **Part 4 - Contain up to date kitchens and bathrooms**
- *Kitchens*
 - *The kitchen was installed in and is scheduled for replacement in at the earliest*
 - *The property has appropriate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes*
- *Bathroom and WC facilities*
 - *The bathroom was installed in and is scheduled for replacement in at the earliest*
 - *The bathroom is installed with and over-bath shower/shower cubical/level access shower area.*

- **Part 5 – Not assessed here.**

- **Part 6 - Located in attractive and safe environments**
 - *All roads and footpaths are accessible and safe*
 - *There is hard and soft landscaping in the neighbouring area*
 - *There is adequate street lighting on the neighbouring roads and public footpaths*
 - *There are local safe play areas for young children*
 - *Communal areas are practical and maintainable*
 - *The property has a clearly defined boundary*
 - *Utilities and services to the property are clearly identified and accessible to new tenants.*
 - *Car parking is practically located and clearly visible to residents where parking is provided*

- **Part 7 - As far as possible suit the specific requirements of the household**
 - *The dwelling is deemed to provide sufficient space for everyday living for this type of property.*
 - *The property has adequate internal and external storage for the size and nature of the home*
 - *The property layout is deemed to meet the specific cultural needs of the new tenant*
 - *Physical aids required by the new tenants have been provided*
 - *Dwellings with a garden have a directly accessible, reasonably sized level area*
 - *The property has paved access to any garden gate and drying line.*

This form is available in large print or
alternative languages upon request.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council
Housing and Building Services
The Alps
Wenvoe
The Vale of Glamorgan
CF5 6AA

Jan - 2020

Appendix B

Lifecycle replacement assumptions and cost summary

Location	Description	Lifespan (years)	Cost	Measurement
External	Replace Boundary Walls in Brick	40	£75.00	Lm
External	Renew Fence and Gates with Chain-link	30	£25.00	Lm
External	Renew concrete Paths	30	£50.00	M ²
Adaptations	Renew Level Access Shower Tray	99	£4,000.00	Each
Adaptations	Renew Wet Room	25	£3,500.00	Each
Bathroom	Renew Bathroom	25	£2,750.00	Each
Bathroom	Renew Bathroom Extract Fan	15	£250.00	Each
Bathroom	Remedy Bathroom Location	200	£1,000.00	Each
Bathroom	Renew Shower Over Bath	15	£500.00	Each
Bathroom	Renew separate WC	25	£250.00	Each
Communal	Renew Door Entry Intercom	15	£300.00	Each
Communal	Renew Fire Alarm Systems	15	£5,000.00	Each
Communal	Renew Communal Fire Equipment	15	£1,000.00	Each
Doors	Renew External Store Doors	20	£150.00	Each
Doors	Renew Composite Door	30	£650.00	Each
External	Renew Steps	30	£50.00	Each
Heating	Renew Primary Heating Gas Condensing	15	£1,750.00	Each
Kitchen	Renew Kitchen	15	£4,000.00	Each
Kitchen	Renew Kitchen Extract Fan	15	£250.00	Each
Wiring	Renew CO Detectors	10	£250.00	Each
Wiring	Renew Consumer Unit	25	£400.00	Each
Wiring	Smoke Detectors Mains Wired	10	£250.00	Each
Heating	Renew Heating Electric Radiators	30	£3,500.00	Per Dwelling
Heating	Renew Heating Distribution Radiators	30	£1,750.00	Per Dwelling
Kitchen	Remedy Kitchen Layout	99	£1,000.00	Per Dwelling
Roofing	Rebuild Chimney	60	£1,000.00	Per Dwelling
Roofing	Renew Flat Felt Roof Covering	15	£ 40.00	M ²
Roofing	Renew Fascia/Soffits/Bargeboards	30	£1,000.00	Per Dwelling
Roofing	Install Loft Insulation	99	£250.00	Per Dwelling
Roofing	Renew Pitched Roof Cement Profile Sheet	35	£6,500.00	Per Dwelling
Roofing	Renew Pitched Roof Coverings Clay	35	£6,500.00	Per Dwelling

Roofing	Renew Pitched Roof Coverings Concrete Tile	55	£6,500.00	Per Dwelling
Roofing	Renew Pitched Roof Coverings Natural Slate	80	£6,500.00	Per Dwelling
Roofing	Renew Rain Water Goods PVC	30	£500.00	Per Dwelling
Walls	Repair Wall Finish with Render	50	£50.00	M ²
Walls	Repoint Face Brickwork Wall Finish	55	£40.00	M ²
Walls	Renew Canopy	35	£500.00	Each
Water Main	Renew Water Main	50	£1,500.00	Per Dwelling
Windows	Renew Windows Double Glazed PVC	30	£2,500.00	Per Dwelling
Wiring	Rewire Property	25	£2,100.00	Per Dwelling