

Draft Portsmouth Homes Housing Strategy 2026 – 2030

Purpose

The purpose of this Housing Strategy is to ensure every resident has access to a safe, secure and quality home, supported by services that respect individuals, strengthen communities and respond to local needs. It sets out our long-term commitment to providing homes that enable people to thrive and to delivering housing services that are fair, inclusive and accountable. Quality homes, supported by services that respect individuals, strengthen communities and respond to local needs.

Introduction

From Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness and Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services

Portsmouth has a proud and remarkable housing story — one built on ambition, resilience and an unwavering commitment to the people we serve. For over a century, the city has invested in safe, good quality homes and strong communities, from the early cottage estates at Whites Row to the postwar neighbourhoods of Paulsgrove, Leigh Park and Wymering. Today, Portsmouth Homes continues that legacy as we manage around 17,000 homes across Portsmouth, Havant, Gosport, Fareham and Winchester.

But our story is still being written. The expectations of residents, the demands of regulation and the financial pressures facing the housing sector are changing faster than ever before. We know we must continue to modernise our services, strengthen our compliance, listen more closely to residents, and equip our people with the skills and confidence to deliver the very best for the communities we serve.

This strategy sets out how Portsmouth Homes will move forward with clarity, purpose and ambition. It builds on the strengths we already hold — strong resident engagement, committed teams, improving building safety performance and increasing confidence in core services — and it openly acknowledges where improvement is needed. Our recent challenges, including the C3 regulatory judgement, have sharpened our focus and strengthened our resolve to deliver services that are safe, reliable, transparent and centred on residents.

However, this is only one of many challenges the service faces. Many assets are coming to the traditional end of their natural life. Local government reorganisation

has the potential to create both instability in the short-term and major organisation change in the longer-term.

Central to this strategy is our people. We can only achieve our goals if our workforce is supported, skilled and empowered. As the housing sector undergoes significant transformation, we must ensure that our teams have the tools, technology and training they need to provide excellent customer service, make sound decisions and take pride in the vital work they do every day. “Equipping our people for success” is not simply an objective — it is the foundation that enables all other improvements to happen.

Our vision, mission and values reflect a strong public service ethos and our Customer Promise ensures we stay rooted in what matters most to our tenants, leaseholders and shared owners.

Through this strategy, we will focus on delivering high-quality homes, great customer experiences, neighbourhoods people can be proud of, better support for residents who need to move, improved efficiency and a strengthened, confident workforce. These ambitions reflect our shared commitment — as a service, as a council, and as a city — to delivering housing services that are responsive, modern and firmly centred on residents, quality homes and great customer experiences.

We are grateful to all staff, partners and residents who contributed to shaping this strategy. Together, we will build on Portsmouth’s exceptional housing legacy and ensure that Portsmouth Homes is equipped for the future — resilient, professional, and always driven by the needs of the communities we serve.

Portsmouth Homes - Our Story

Portsmouth has a long and proud history of providing quality homes for its residents. The city’s first council houses were built on the former Whites Row site, offering modern amenities and improved living conditions for families displaced by slum clearance. In 1914 the council bought these houses from a Southsea estate agent who had let and managed them since they were built. These early cottage-style homes set new standards for space, sanitation and comfort. This marked the beginning of Portsmouth’s commitment to decent housing for all and 1148 houses and flats were built under the 1930 Housing Act in Landport, Portsea and Cosham.

As housing needs grew, the council expanded its role, appointing its first housing manager and developing new neighbourhoods across the city. After the Second World War, Portsmouth took bold steps to address overcrowding by purchasing large areas of land at Paulsgrove and Leigh Park. The first homes were completed in Paulsgrove by December 1948 while the first homes to be built in Leigh Park were completed in 1949. These estates—once farmland and private holdings—were transformed into thriving communities, with thousands of new homes built rapidly to

meet urgent demand. The post-war homes in areas such as Wymering, symbolised a new chapter of stability and opportunity for families rebuilding their lives. Today we own and manage around 17,000 homes in Portsmouth, Havant, Gosport, Fareham and Winchester.

This legacy of innovation, resilience and community investment forms the foundation of Portsmouth's housing story today. It guides our ambition to continue delivering safe, high quality homes that meet the needs of current and future generations, while creating strong, thriving neighbourhoods that residents are proud to call home.

[Portsmouth's History of Council Housing](#)

Vision, Mission, Values and Customer Promise

Our Vision

Safe homes in neighbourhoods where every resident feels valued, empowered and proud to live, supported by efficient services and well-trained, competent teams.

Our Mission

Our mission is to deliver excellent housing and neighbourhood services that combine efficiency, value for money and professional expertise. We invest in our people, work closely with residents and our strong partnerships within the local authority and externally allow us to achieve our vision.

Our Values

Working as part of Portsmouth City Council our core values are:

- **respect** – we treat everyone with respect, considering the feelings, wellbeing, safety, and rights of others
- **integrity** – we are accountable, can be trusted and take responsibility for our actions
- **collaboration** – we work together as a team and with our colleagues, residents, partners, and communities to achieve more
- **inclusive** – we recognise diversity, are open, fair and provide equal opportunity to all
- **people-focussed** – we put people first and make sure our customers are at the heart of everything we do

Everything we do is guided by our values. They set who we are as people, what we stand for and how we act.

Customer Promise

At Portsmouth Homes our tenants, leaseholders and shared owners are at the heart of everything we do. As part of Portsmouth City Council we are committed to delivering our customer promise.

Our customer promise is:

- we will listen to you
- we will try our best to resolve your enquiry quickly and if we can't, we'll pass it to the right place and tell you what is happening
- we will do what we say we are going to do
- we will be polite, helpful, and respectful
- we will explain things clearly in a way that is easy to understand
- we will take the needs of individual customers into account and adapt our approach to meet your needs

Current Picture

To inform the development of this strategy, a comprehensive analysis has been undertaken to assess Portsmouth Homes' current operating environment. This analysis evaluates the internal strengths and weaknesses within our services, structures and resources, alongside the external opportunities and threats influencing the wider housing landscape in Portsmouth. The findings provide a balanced view of our position and highlight the critical areas that must shape our strategy priorities moving forward.

What's working well

High satisfaction scores

Sustained resident confidence in core landlord services demonstrated in Tenant Satisfaction Measures, notably overall service satisfaction remains above 83%, and satisfaction with the repairs service (87.3%), repair times (86.3%), and home safety (83.5%)

Strong Commitment to improving building safety

Portsmouth Homes is delivering a comprehensive programme which includes £180m commitment investing in fire safety improvements across our stock by a target date of 2030 whilst maintaining **100%** completion rates for fire safety checks, asbestos checks, smoke detector installation and carbon monoxide detectors.

Strong resident engagement

Portsmouth Homes benefits from strong and meaningful resident involvement, with well-established engagement groups that actively influence policy, service design and continuous improvement across the organisation.

Strong Leadership

An experienced and professionally qualified senior management team provides strong, committed leadership, driving the organisation's improvement journey with a clear focus on achieving higher regulatory standards and delivering better outcomes for all Portsmouth Homes residents.

Room for Improvement

Regulatory Judgement

Portsmouth Homes undertook a self-assessment against the consumer standards, noting areas of improvement required to achieve the outcomes of the standards and made a self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing in September 2024. Regulatory engagement followed and the regulator issued a regulatory judgement for aspects of non-compliance for one part of the Consumer Standard, the Safety and Quality standard. The C3 judgement was issued in January 2025 and Portsmouth Homes meet with the regulator of social housing monthly to track improvement. Housing cabinet have been updated on the progress of the improvement work the table of documents at the end of this report includes references to those reports.

We have made substantial progress in strengthening our compliance framework, improving governance and developing a clear programme of remedial actions, demonstrating our commitment to sustained improvement.

The Strategy provides a clear basis for driving improvement to be the C1 social housing landlord that we should be and our residents have a right to expect, ensuring that the service maintains momentum in addressing compliance gaps, strengthening governance and rebuilding resident confidence.

HRA Under Significant Financial Pressure

The Housing Revenue Account continues to face financial pressures from rising costs, new regulatory requirements and the investment needed for compliance, building safety and asset improvement. However, these pressures are being carefully managed through proactive financial planning.

Fragmented IT Systems

Portsmouth Homes holds valuable data across several IT platforms. Bringing these systems into closer alignment would improve our ability to triangulate different data

sources and enhance our ability to draw insights and produce more cohesive reporting.

Anti-Social Behaviour Case Management

Residents value clear communication about the progress of ASB complaints. Providing more consistent updates would help strengthen confidence in how cases are managed and make the proactive work happening behind the scenes more visible.

Improvement Opportunities

Major Stock Condition Survey Programme

The council is commissioning 12,000 new condition surveys by September 2026 to improve data accuracy and support compliance with new regulatory expectations. This will enable better strategic asset management and prioritisation.

New Consumer Standards (2024) Driving Service Transformation

The 2024 regulatory reforms introduce clearer expectations for quality, safety, transparency, and resident voice. Portsmouth Homes is already responding through improved communication channels and enhanced housing officer visibility. This shift provides a structured framework for rebuilding trust and improving performance.

Enhancing Resident Voice

Growing emphasis on tenant engagement offers the chance for Portsmouth Homes to build deeper resident participation, shaping services collaboratively and improving satisfaction through co-designed solutions, service pilots and local area feedback loops.

Workforce Development

Portsmouth Homes improvement journey presents an opportunity to invest in workforce capability, qualifications and career pathways, building specialist expertise (e.g. in building safety, compliance, digital services) and strengthening operational resilience.

Improving our digital offer

Investing in new IT systems and developing services to make effective use of data to inform service delivery.

Things to watch out for

Ongoing Regulatory Pressure and Risk of Further Enforcement

The C3 judgement and outstanding safety issues pose ongoing reputational and compliance risks. Continued underperformance could lead to further regulatory interventions. We are progressing our improvement plan collaboratively with the Regulator.

Workforce Recruitment and Retention Challenges

Growing competition for skilled housing, compliance and building safety professionals could make it harder to attract and retain experienced staff, affecting service capacity.

Economic Pressures on Residents

Increases in the cost of living, energy costs, household debt and capped incomes may lead to rising arrears, increased tenancy sustainment pressures and greater demand for support services.

Anti-Social Behaviour Management

Perceived or actual weaknesses in ASB case handling (e.g. slow progress, limited updates, inconsistent outcomes) can erode resident trust, fuel complaints and media scrutiny and heighten regulatory attention under the consumer standards.

Local Government Reorganisation

Local Government Reorganisation could create uncertainty around governance, resources and workforce stability, posing a risk to service continuity, regulatory compliance and long-term planning.

Ageing Stock

Ageing stock poses an increasing challenge in meeting evolving safety, building and energy efficiency standards. Older homes require disproportionately high levels of repair and capital investment, creating a risk of noncompliance if funding cannot keep pace with need. In some cases, the scale of required works may necessitate decisions on the long-term viability of some homes.

Our Objectives

As Portsmouth Homes continues its transformation journey, understanding our strengths and the areas where improvement is needed allows us to set purposeful and deliverable strategic objectives. The strategic objectives that follow are shaped by insights from our Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey responses, complaints, resident engagement activity and the analysis above. The objectives below set out how we will strengthen compliance, improve customer experience and modernise our services whilst ensuring we have the people, systems and homes needed to meet future expectations. The objectives also link to Portsmouth City Council's Corporate Plan.

1. Safe, High-Quality and Sustainable Homes

What we're working towards: We will provide warm, safe and well-maintained homes where residents want to live.

It means maintaining a strong understanding of our stock, taking a proactive and data driven approach to investment and ensuring full compliance with all safety requirements. Resident safety is non-negotiable and we will embed a culture in which safety, quality and long-term sustainability guide every decision. Our homes will be supported by robust compliance arrangements, clear maintenance standards and a value for money approach to long-term asset planning - including an assessment of long-term viability of homes based on financial performance, condition, energy use and demand; focusing resources where they generate the most value driven approach to investment and ensuring full compliance with all safety requirements.

This objective supports Portsmouth City Council's corporate plan priority 3: Supporting Residents In Need

We will achieve this objective by:

- Delivering planned home improvement programmes
- Working with partners to deliver the full stock condition survey programme
- Publishing a new Asset Management Strategy
- Strengthening the use of technology and data to improve efficiency and track compliance
- Using a data driven approach to inform the HRA 30 year business plan and asset investment decisions

We will measure our success by:

- The number of stock condition surveys completed in the last 5 years
- The number of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard

- Number of repairs completed within — 24 hours for emergency repairs, 3 days for urgent repairs
- Compliance with the 'big six': Gas, Electric, Water Hygiene, Asbestos, Lifts, Fire
- Compliance with the standards set out in Awaab's law
- KPIs for the term service contracts
- The number of homes achieving a minimum EPC C rating
- Satisfaction measures from the TSM

2. Great Customer Experience

What we're working towards: To have great customer experience in all our service areas ensuring the customer voice influences decision making.

Good customer service is already a core priority for us and our strong Tenant Satisfaction Measures scores reflect the positive experiences many residents have when engaging with our services. We want to build on this foundation by ensuring that high-quality, responsive and respectful customer interactions are delivered consistently across all service areas and for all residents. By continuing to listen actively to customer feedback and embedding their voices in our decision-making, we aim to further strengthen trust, improve outcomes and ensure our services remain aligned with the needs of our communities.

This objective also supports Portsmouth City Council's corporate priority 7: Effective and Efficient Services

We will achieve this objective by:

- Emphasising a customer focused approach in all our service delivery ensuring that our service providers deliver to the same high standards we expect from our teams
- Promoting our reasonable adjustments policies and procedures to our customers and staff to support services being delivered tailored to our customer's needs
- Supporting our housing teams to be more visible out in the communities we serve to improve their understanding of the issues faced by our customers
- Providing an improved digital offer to our customers to facilitate those customers that wish to self-serve where appropriate and have access to their own rent account information
- Continuing to work with residents as set out in the Portsmouth Homes [2024-2027 Resident engagement plan](#) to shape our policies and services
- Providing dedicated customer service training to staff

- Introducing a housing specific code of conduct for staff
- Providing more opportunity for professional training for staff
- Delivering a new IT system for Portsmouth Homes teams and customers
- Having clear processes for how we learn from complaints
- Developing a consistent approach to quality assurance across our services

We will measure our success by:

- TSM score - Overall customer satisfaction
- TSM score - Being treated fairly and with respect
- Reduction in the number of stage 2 complaints - meaning complaints are resolved at stage 1
- Improved quality of case management

Linked documents: [Resident engagement plan](#)

3. Neighbourhoods to be proud of

What we're working towards: For all Portsmouth Homes residents to be able to enjoy their homes and be proud of the neighbourhood in which they live with opportunities for them to connect with their neighbours, influence the shaping of services in their areas and access support to improve their situation where appropriate.

We recognise that anti-social behaviour remains a concern for our residents and we know that ASB can have a negative impact on our resident's ability to enjoy their homes.

We will work with residents to review our case management processes and ensure that effective and timely communication is at the heart of all cases. We will continue to strengthen partnerships with other agencies serving our communities to provide a joined-up approach to resolving community tension and ASB. We will encourage our teams to think more innovatively when seeking solutions for ASB cases or community issues and to include residents in identifying appropriate solutions.

We will improve our service offer to those tenants needing money advice and tenancy support.

This objective also supports Portsmouth City Council's corporate plan priority 1: Safe Clean and Green City

We will achieve this objective by:

- Completing a review of our ASB process
- Increasing the amount of quality assurance case reviews we complete
- Providing staff with further ASB case management training

- Continuing to engage with our residents around cleaning and grounds maintenance
- Accessing all funding opportunities to provide environmental improvements
- Embedding the new Tenancy Support team
- Increasing the number of Money Advisors to support residents
- Introducing a Neighbourhood Management policy.

We will measure our success by:

- TSM score - Satisfaction with cleaning and grounds maintenance
- TSM score - Maintenance of communal spaces
- TSM score - ASB case closure surveys
- Improved TSM score - Satisfaction in the way we manage ASB
- Number of residents with improved outcomes following support with money advice or focused tenancy support
- Introduction of a Neighbourhood Management policy

4. Supporting residents to find the right home

What we're working towards: To have support in place to assist Portsmouth Homes tenants to find the right home for them when their needs change and their current home no longer meets their needs.

Making sure tenants are in a home that meets their needs is central to providing safe, secure, and affordable housing. It helps families thrive, reduces overcrowding, and ensures that homes are used in the best way for our community. When people live in the right home, they are more likely to feel settled, maintain their tenancy, and enjoy better health and wellbeing. As a social landlord we must have mechanisms in place to support our tenants to find the right home for them and ensure we are making the best use of our housing stock.

This objective also supports Portsmouth City Council's corporate plan priority 3: Supporting Residents In Need

We will achieve this objective by:

- Actively promoting mutual exchanges via mutual exchange events in partnership with other housing providers
- Introducing a new policy and process to provide support to those residents that want to downsize
- Improving our void turnaround performance to maximise the availability of our stock
- Providing advice to those residents that wish to become a homeowner
- Continuing to explore opportunities for new developments and acquisitions where possible

We will measure our success by:

- The number of Portsmouth Homes residents registered for a move with Local Authorities
- The number of mutual exchanges completed

5. Equipping our people for success

What we're working towards: Our staff will have the skills, tools and confidence they need to deliver excellent services, identify value for money opportunities and make decisions that put tenants first.

We are proud of the city we serve and we will work collaboratively across all Portsmouth Homes teams to deliver great customer service to our residents. We recognise that competition in the housing sector is high, making recruitment and retention difficult. At Portsmouth City Council, we have a great employment offer that supports resilience through our wellbeing offer and opportunities for colleagues to be able to balance their home and work life. The amount of change facing the housing sector is considerable and means that our teams continue to experience change in their roles. To support teams through this, Portsmouth Homes will ensure that our staff are provided with the right training and tools to equip them to deliver great services to our customers. We will invest in more opportunities for professional qualification training and make use of both internal and external training to ensure our teams have the skills they need to face the challenges ahead.

This objective supports Portsmouth City Council's corporate plan priority 7: Effective and Efficient Organisation

We will achieve this objective by:

- Providing all staff with a personal development review annually
- Providing training plans tailored to support staff competency for their roles
- Promoting the wellbeing offer to new recruits, existing staff and via team meetings
- Continuing to promote a no blame culture that empowers staff to make the right decisions
- Encouraging a culture of honest dialogue at all levels
- Continuing to develop a culture that encourages staff to share their ideas for improvement or concerns when things aren't working as they should be

We will measure our success by:

- Number of staff achieving professional qualifications or certifications
- Levels of staff retention
- Compliance with mandatory and role related training
- Number of complaints resolved at stage 1

- Colleague satisfaction survey scores

6. Improved Efficiency

What we're working towards: To provide improved efficiency and value for money across all our service delivery.

The Housing Revenue Account is the dedicated budget for Portsmouth Homes to manage council-owned homes. All our operating costs are increasing. Building safety improvements and making homes more energy-efficient all cost much more than they did a few years ago. Income is limited with Government rules on rent levels in place limiting the amount we can raise rents to cover these extra costs, so we have less money to spend. We also have some big priorities to fund. We must meet new safety standards, tackle damp and mould quickly and invest in greener homes to help reduce energy bills. This is why every pound matters. We need to make careful choices to keep homes safe and well-maintained while planning for the future. We also know that our residents continue to be challenged by the cost of living and recognise our role in ensuring that their housing costs provide excellent value for money. We are ambitious in wanting to provide safe, secure, and affordable homes and to keep improving our services wherever we can which is where our value for money approach comes in. We aim to deliver high-quality services in a way that is cost-effective, sustainable, and focused on what matters most to our residents.

This objective also supports Portsmouth City Council's Corporate Plan priority 7: Effective and Efficient Organisation

We will achieve this objective by:

- Making better use of data to support effective use of resources and decision making
- Using technology smarter by introducing online services and mobile tools to support tenants to self-serve and make it easier for tenants to contact us
- Training teams to spot opportunities for savings and service improvements during their day-to-day work
- Encouraging staff to suggest ideas for doing things better
- Making value for money part of every decision by asking: "Is this the best way to use our resources for tenants?"
- Keeping value for money at the heart of all procurement activity
- Providing more streamlined and less manual processes to support staff to be more efficient

We will measure our success by:

- Sustainable budgetary position
- Less complaints about service delivery
- Improved digital offer for staff and residents

Summary of our objectives

- 1. Safe, high quality and sustainable homes** - Ensuring compliance with consumer standards and better outcomes for tenants
- 2. Great customer experience** - To have great customer experience in all our service areas
- 3. Neighbourhoods be proud of** - For all Portsmouth Homes residents to be able to enjoy their homes and be proud of the neighbourhood in which they live
- 4. Supporting residents to find the right home** - To have support in place to assist Portsmouth Homes tenants to find the right home for them
- 5. Equipping our people for success** - Our staff will have the skills, tools and confidence they need to deliver excellent services
- 6. Improved efficiency** - To provide improved efficiency and value for money across all our service delivery

Additional sections to be added in the final form

- What we know about our residents
- Location of our housing stock
- Visuals and pictures
- Accessible options including languages
- How the Strategy will be reviewed
- How to contact the service
- Document version control

To be developed - 2026

The strategy requires further development to:

- Strengthen the resident, staff and stakeholder consultation
- Develop action plans to deliver the objectives
- Devise measures to track the performance of the strategy
- Make links to other work underway, including the Portsmouth Homes Asset Management Strategy, where appropriate