



PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

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1. Introduction

This plan has been created in conjunction with the management team at Wells City Council, setting out the Council's key strategic objectives for property asset management, the approach the Council will take to managing its property assets and a series of high-level commitments to guide policy and decision, making for the next 2 years of the Council's transition after devolution, this will be reviewed in line with corporate priorities.

Wells City Council's portfolio is varied with open spaces, public conveniences, buildings of significant cultural value with Grade 2 listed buildings and Ancient Monument status, public houses, cafés and restaurants. Some of these assets are utilised to deliver key Council's functions such as the Town Hall, delivering 'Mayor Making' and staff offices. Some assets have been previously procured to deliver community or corporate value. The Council's position will change due to time and known factors such as devolution and therefore the newly acquired assets will require to be assessed and managed accordingly. Dynamic management of our assets is key to ensure the portfolio delivers our strategic needs and requirements, ensuring return on investments and asset sustainability for the future.

The key aim of this document is to ensure each Council asset is designated a specific purpose, whether this is for community value, commercial gain or to enable the ability to continue to maintain the current operations of the Council.

The initial section of this document outlines the strategic objectives of the property asset management and how this supports the Council's Vision and Corporate Priorities.

2. Exclusions

The scope of this document covers the assets managed and maintained by the Council but excludes assets such as litter bins, street furniture, telephone boxes, bike racks, planters' bollards etc. which will be managed through an open space's asset management plan.

3. The Council's Vision

The Council currently has yet to adopt a Vision, this will be supported by the Council's priorities when set in 2025.

4. The Council's Priorities

The Council currently has yet to adopt a set of Priorities although it can be assumed that the themes of these priorities will be as follows;

1. Revenue Growth

2. Community Engagement and Value
3. Operational Efficiency

These are due to be set in 2025.

4. Opportunities and Challenges

The Council is currently in a period of transformation with additional assets potentially available to be devolved from Somerset Council. The Council has the potential to inherit additional assets, with existing tenancies, occupants, operational nature and building types. Managing these new assets will result in additional workload for the existing Open Spaces, Facilities and Town Hall management teams. Managing this alongside the current projected budget will likely result in some restrictions in deliverables, which will require prioritisation.

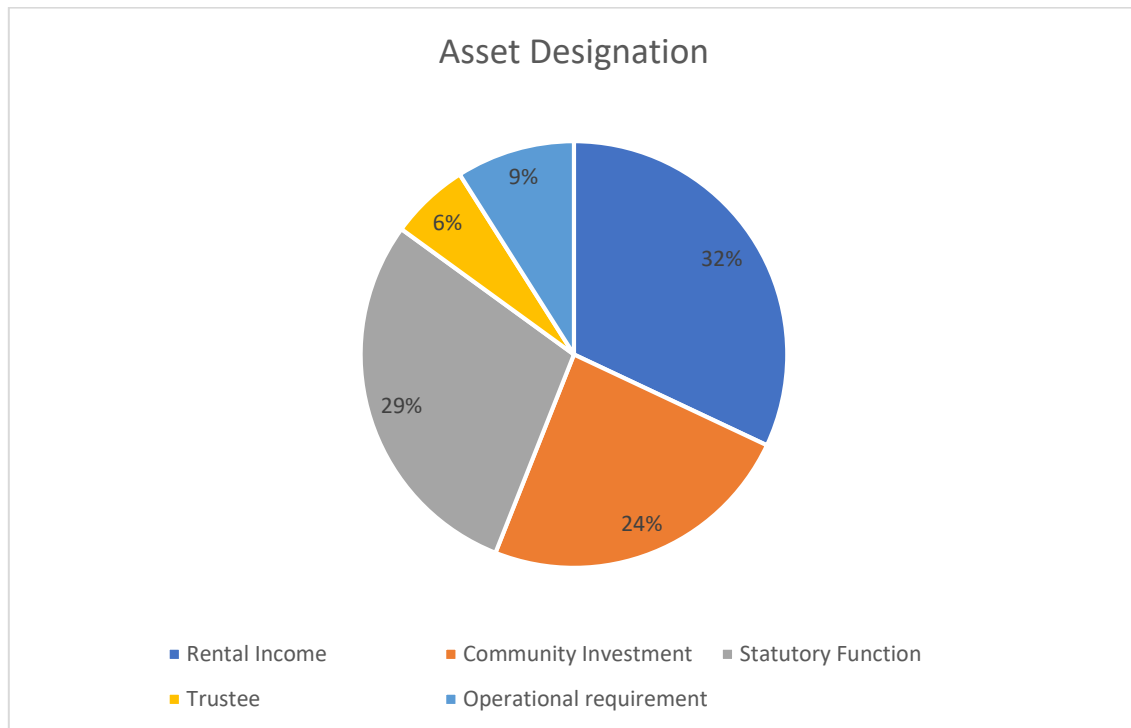
The opportunity to maximise our assets needs to be fully explored to allow for best revenue growth from each facility. Due to the current condition of our existing assets based on the review of the condition data actively available, it is estimated that the costs associated to necessary works will outweigh the existing allocated budgets. A review of the condition data, and creation of Planned Preventative Maintenance schedules for the next 5 years will assist in the management and delivery of repairs and maintenance. There is a high risk that any devolved properties will also require significant investment, some of which may be passed to the relevant tenant, subject to their lease arrangement, business plan and financial position. It is understood existing assets will also need action to ensure the tenant(s) are adhering to their lease agreement. As no annual lease inspections have taken place we must assume that these assets have dilapidated and therefore some may require significant investment.

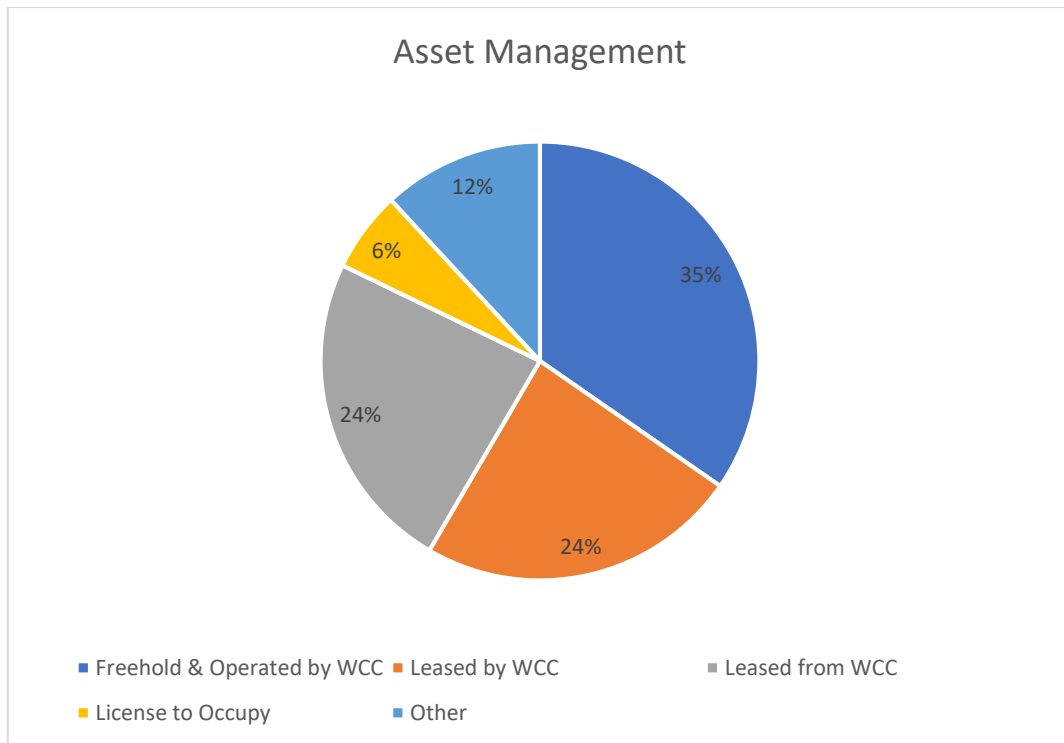
Although the challenge presented by the current asset maintenance backlog is likely significant, Wells City Council is confident that with proactive management, these assets will see improvement over the next 5-10 years, within constraints of the budget taken into consideration. There is also a risk to the authority that standing tenants will not have the budget or inclination to enact repairs/necessary works which may result in further repairs and maintenance responsibly if they wish to surrender the lease, working closely with the tenant to provide support, financial and knowledge sharing, are likely key to keep our current tenants in situ.

The addition of new assets will bring opportunity for increased income and community value. This also presents the ability to review potential de-carbonisation works, such as additional tree planting and improving energy efficiency through energy use reduction.

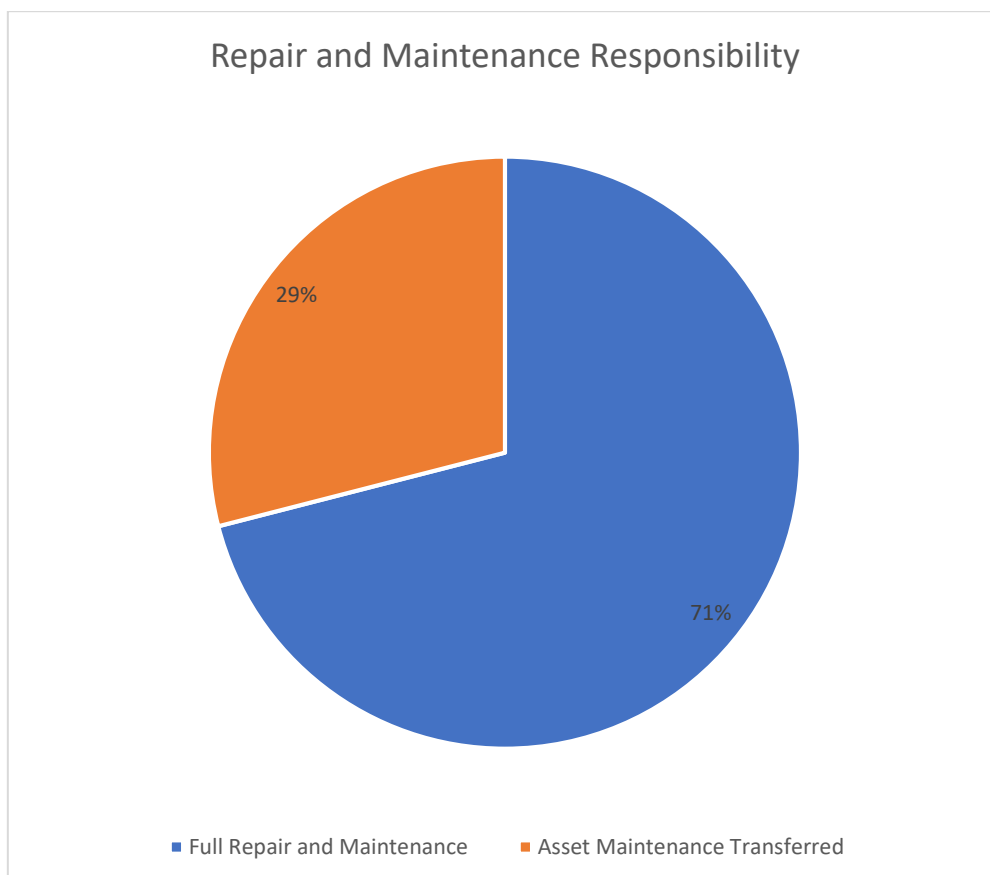
4.The Council's Assets

The Council has a fully comprehensive asset list, detailing the value, purpose of the asset (revenue generator or community value designation), listed status and lease data. These assets have been assigned a designation as below. The copies of the lease agreements are held by the Town Clerk and the Council's solicitor Chubb Bullied.





The below analysis depicts the percentage assets that the Council have direct repair and maintenance responsibility.



5.Strategic Objectives

The below objectives have been developed in line with the proposed priorities of the Council

- **Objective 1:** The Council's estate is financially sustainable and supports economic growth
- **Objective 2:** The Council's assets are compliant, safe and fit for purpose
- **Objective 3:** The Council's assets support community engagement and value
- **Objective 4:** The Council's assets support the delivering of climate efficiency targets

5.1 The Corporate Landlord Model

In line with the Royal Institutes of Chartered Surveyors recommendation it would be best practice to ensure we deliver all property maintenance by a centralised team via a Corporate Landlord model.

The Corporate Landlord Model is the practice of a centralised Corporate Landlord responsible for the management and maintenance of all the Council's assets. The individual lead officers become corporate tenants and report into the centralised Corporate Landlord any issues regarding maintenance and management.

5.2 Methodology of Delivery

Due to the nature of a Parish Council, individuals have been charged with managing and maintaining individual assets, this leads to differences in practices and management arrangements, making collating asset information more difficult. A centralised system should be utilised to managed asset information input to ensure continuity, compliance, financial management, maintenance, thus drives, improvement in utilisation, economy of scale and therefore overall asset value to the authority.

Wells City Council should adopt this approach to enable continuity between services, current lead officers should manage and report into the Property Management Group, these leads should hold the technical/professional expertise for asset management to ensure the Council's compliance is met, this should be followed by reporting into the Estate's Committee. The Lead Officers will engage with relevant Partners and Organisation's relating to those assets.

5.3 Property Management Group (PMG) and Record Management

This group is responsible for the maintenance of the records including maintenance and lease information. This group will not be a formal committee but one which meets to ensure the Council's compliance and management of the assets in line with current and new legislation and align existing practices with the view to adopt new and innovative ways of working. This group is responsible for liaising with the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) to ensure budgets align with expected and unforeseen costs associated to each of their respective sites. The group will report into the Town Clerk and present any concerns or issues relating to the Council's property.

The property management database is held electronically on Citrix and is available to all staff. This will be updated and managed by the Property Management Group, increasing the information held with time, updating with maintenance records and key documentation will be embedded into day to day activities ensuring they remain up to date and accurate.

5.4 Working with our Partners and with the Community

For the Corporate Landlord Model to be effective, it is paramount that engagement with our Partners is established and maintained. Effective communication allows for greater partnership working. As part of the role of the Property Management Group would be ensuring that clear open lines of communication and delivery of regular meetings as suited to the individual partner.

The Council will have Partner Agreements in place for all those with existing or prearranged agreements, this will be established within the first six months of 2025.

Due to the Council delivering Community functions at its heart, it is equally important to engage with the community and our customers. It is important to link in within the Local Community Networks established in our area to ascertain better community access whilst engaging directly with our local community through social media platforms, localised events and direct liaison. This engagement will help understand the needs of our residents and allow the Council to make informed decisions for the utilisation of our assets.

6. Governance

The Property Management Group will not have delegated powers to acquisitions, disposals or change the usage of the Council's Property, this will remain in line with the Council's Constitution, the Town Clerk and Executive Members (Full Council).

All proposals for the acquisition, disposal and change of use will be presented by the relevant Lead Officer to Full Council after consultation with the Property

Management Group, Officers, relevant interested parties (community and stakeholders) as appropriate.

The Council will develop and update policies and procedures to support the Council's objectives and these will be reviewed by the Property Management Group before submitting to the Town Clerk for adoption.

7. Implementation

Objective 1: The Council's estate is financially sustainable and supports economic growth

- Review current practices and procurements to align and allow for best value for money
- Review current assets to ascertain future viability, financial stability and reason for retention
- Feed into the Council's Income and Marketing strategy
- Adopt and implement The Corporate Landlord Model to manage property centrally with oversight
- Protect heritage assets where and when affordable, managing utilisation, devolving or disposing of them to deliver long term sustainable protection
- Develop and implement maintenance schedules alongside available budgetary constraints

Objective 2: The Council's assets are compliant, safe and fit for purpose

- Review current practices and procurements to ensure statutory requirements are met and legislative tasks undertaken.
- Implement regular lease inspections to ensure compliance within all Council's assets.
- Implement Partnership Agreements to ensure all Partners are aware and operate within safe, compliant parameters. Ensuring their Duty of Care to their staff, visitors and contractors' requirements are met.
- Review accessibility of the Council's assets and where reasonably practicable adjust ensure customer, staff and contractor access, whilst managing and maintaining the assets protected characteristics.

- Collate and manage documents utilising the Council's document retention system holding information on condition, safety, inspections, providing a comprehensive list of buildings and their compliance.

Objective 3: The Council's assets support community engagement and value

- Work in partnership with local community networks, where community values align to help deliver facilities and support to the local community.
- Engage with local community groups to better understand the local community requirements and wants.
- Work in partnership with local community groups to offer available, suitable facilities to host incentives for the wellbeing of the community.

Objective 4: The Council's assets support the delivering of climate efficiency targets

- Consider climate and environmental impact within the day to day decisions of the Council
- Consider local community groups offering climate deduction/mitigation measures
- Review current practices and ascertain options for change, considering sustainable green products and practices available.
- Review land and assets for potential additional tree planting, de-carbonisation opportunities.
- Review opportunities for renewable energy, recycling and reduction in emissions.
- Consider local companies and organisations locality when delivering contracts to reduce carbon emissions in the delivery of Council contracts.
- Create and manage utility monitors for all sites, ensuring statutory compliance can be met through the delivery of Display Energy, Energy Performance Certificates and Advisory reports for the Council's assets.