

# Devon County Council Corporate Property Asset Management Plan 2010 - 2013

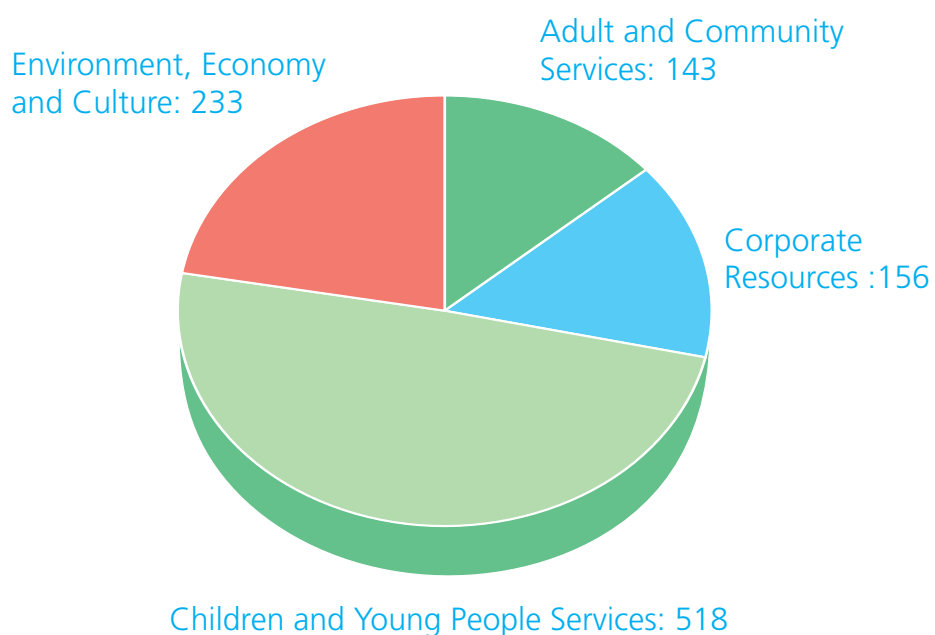


## Did you know we own, lease or occupy. . .

A total 1050 assets including:

- 364 schools
- 33 Children Centres
- 50 Libraries
- 56 Day Care Centres
- 20 Recycling Centres
- With an asset value of £984 million
- Totalling a floor area of 1,000,000 m<sup>2</sup>

### Number of properties by Directorate



# Foreword

by Councillor John Clatworthy  
Portfolio holder for Finance and Property

The Corporate Asset Management Plan sets out the ways in which the County Council will improve the quality of buildings in its non-school estate over the next three years. Our intention is to have buildings that offer the best possible environment for service users and staff, in a manner that is demonstrably cost effective and environmentally sensitive.

To achieve these aims, we are identifying poorly performing properties that are no longer suitable for service delivery and finding more suitable accommodation for these services.

The result will be a smaller estate of better performing buildings leading to a reduction in the running costs and a more 'fit for purpose' property portfolio.



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# What is the Corporate Asset Management Plan ?

The Corporate Asset Management Plan presents clear, forward-looking goals for the Council's land and buildings, which help to deliver corporate priorities and service delivery needs, now and in the future. It shows how the Authority's property assets will be maintained, modernised and rationalised to ensure they are fit for purpose.

## Why do we need Asset Management?

The corporate property estate represents a value of over £984 million and needs to be managed effectively to ensure best value for money from property assets in serving the strategic needs of the organisation. Property assets are expensive, in terms of both their capital value, annual maintenance and running costs and they need to be carefully managed over their lives to ensure best value through their use, maintenance and generation of income.

## Why do we need the Corporate Asset Management Plan?

- Recognition that property is a corporate resource
- A long term vision for the asset base
- A clear framework for managing the Council's property portfolio
- The context for decision making, now and in the future
- Evidence of progress so far
- Radical but realistic solutions

# How do our land and buildings support the priorities of the Corporate Strategic Plan

The Asset Management Plan supports the Council's priorities for the next 3 years and beyond, and links into the revenue and capital medium term financial strategies. The Asset Management Plan aims to improve the quality of life for all residents in Devon by focusing on the 5 key priorities.

## Support local business and tourism

### The Construction Framework South West (CFSW)

CFSW has been established to provide a highly efficient and effective building procurement vehicle capable of undertaking a large volume of public construction in the South West Region. It offers joint working benefits across the region with partnership and collaboration benefits and support for local South West businesses.

### Standing List of Approved Contractors

The List is based on nine geographical areas of Devon and provides details of a range of contractors who can deliver works up to £300,000. The list also benefits a significant number of small and medium sized enterprises who have a greater opportunity to work with their own local communities.

### Cullompton Library - 'Community hub'

Cullompton Library is a good example of the County Council's aspiration to deliver co-located front line services. The hub will provide

- A 21st century library
- A flexible working space for DCC and partner employees
- A workspace for businesses
- A centre for Adult and Community Learning
- A 'gateway' to other public sector and third sector agencies
- A community meeting space

## County Farms

The Devon County Council Strategic Farm Review March 2010 was approved by Cabinet in April 2010. The review explored the capital value of the Estate as well as the value the corporate strategic, economic, social and environmental benefits of the Farm Estate.

The following principles were detailed as part of the review:

- The Estate is an asset for the people of Devon which should be secured
- The Estate service must deliver the County Council's corporate aims
- The Estate should be retained to provide opportunities for new agricultural or land-based 'entrepreneurs.'
- An asset management plan to be put in place for the Estate to ensure long-term viability and to identify capital to be released in the immediate future for inward investment.
- The 'business critical' maintenance items on farms should be identified and a plan developed to reduce these items significantly.

## Improve knowledge, skills and productivity

### Skypark

Part of Exeter airport site was sold and is currently being developed as Skypark. The site will occupy 107 acres and provide resources and support in developing local businesses by providing an innovative 21st century business park.

### Construction Framework Southwest

The Framework Management are encouraging the 11 contractors on the Framework to develop additional apprenticeship schemes.

### DCC Sustainable Construction Policy

All construction projects of whatever size or nature will support the development of local employment and regeneration opportunities including the development of the necessary supply chains to support a low/zero carbon development industry through:

- A single standard audit process using the Devon County Council Sustainable Construction Tool
- Adopting the 'energy hierarchy' in its approach to improving the carbon performance of buildings when maintenance or refurbishment opportunities arise
- Using carbon reduction as a key tool in all asset review work

# Promote green travel, reduce road travel and reduce congestion

Adult and Community Learning are developing '**Virtual Learning Environments**' with the aim to widen access to people in remote locations and enhance traditional learning approaches. This will also help reduce the reliance on paper based resources.

A number of travel plan initiatives have been implemented at key council sites. This includes a **County Hall Green Travel Plan** which aims to reduce the number of single occupancy car trips by all those travelling to the campus and increase the use of more sustainable travel options.



## Outcome

### County Hall Travel Plan

Work began in September 2007 to develop a travel plan for the campus, intended to reduce the number of single occupancy car journeys to just 33%, increase car sharing to 37% and green travel (walking, cycling and public transport) to 40% and reduce the carbon footprint of staff travel to work by 15%.

Since the introduction of these measures the following results have been noted:

- More staff are making their travel to work by green alternatives. 350 members of staff qualified for a recent green travel breakfast – up from 180 the previous year
- Cycling has increased. Over 1000 members of staff have now joined the cycle to work scheme and the existing cycle storage facilities are frequently full.
- 650 members of staff have taken up the concessionary fare scheme
- Use of the park and ride bus has increased steadily and now averages 70 journeys per day
- The car park has not been full since the measures were introduced; prior to this staff frequently queued at the barriers waiting to find space
- Car sharing has increased – 120 car share groups registered to benefit from the more flexible car parking arrangements

# Provide responsive services that support people and families in need

## Special Educational and Joint Agency support services in North Devon

A new Joint Agency Support staff & Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Unit in North Devon has been approved. The co-location and shared use of resources of these services will improve the effectiveness of provision and efficiency of delivery and allow clients to access the service more easily.

## Changing Places

Devon County Council is supporting Mencap with resources from Devon County Council's 'Investing in Devon fund' to support the specialist equipment and building works required for 3 Changing Places toilets. The facilities provide fully accessible toilets and changing space for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and their carers, as well as many other disabled people. The first facilities opened in Newton Abbot in December 2009. In addition to this there are now facilities in Exeter and a further site has been identified in Barnstaple. Where new or refurbished building schemes are implemented, Devon County Council are including the facilities where possible.

# Reduce waste, improve recycling and reduce landfill

The office accommodation strategy and rationalisation of the corporate estate will reduce the working area available for each business unit. Working practices will need to change and encompass 'smarter' office procedures such as digitising and archiving documents, effective document management, remote printing and increased recycling.

The recycle@work project encourages all staff to 'reduce', 'reuse' and 'recycle'. It has put recycling facilities into nearly 40% of DCC offices and runs waste awareness campaigns and initiatives with the support of the cross county team of Environmental promoters.

# Our Vision

*To use property that is fit for purpose to support the delivery of services*

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Property is a resource and as such must **support service** delivery by being:

- **'fit for purpose'** - property that actively contributes to effective service delivery. This means in terms of location, condition, accessibility, design and layout. To ensure the right property in the right location.
- **'sustainable'** - both in environmental and financial terms. The estate is to continue to support the work of the authority and its partners whatever changes come our way.
- **'efficient'** - in the way that property performs and in the way that property is used. The aim is to have buildings which can be used flexibly and support new ways of working.

We will **achieve** this by:

- **Improving** any property that is not fit for purpose, sustainable and efficient

**Underpinned** by the following supporting strategies:

- **Targeting available resources** on 'core' properties; those that the council considers it needs to retain in the medium to long term (5+ years)
- **Working in partnership** with other organisations and local communities to maximise the use of property for the benefit of the people of Devon.
- **Addressing both the causes and the effects of climate change** through the management of the estate.
- **Ensuring value for money** in all property-related transactions.
- **Improving organisational arrangements**, by raising the profile of asset management to ensure effective decision making.

# Our Principles

Our 3 key principles are to **improve, replace, and release** of properties as part of the corporate estate. By following these principles we strive to rationalise the estate, reduce backlog maintenance and provide fit for purpose buildings to support service delivery.

## Improve - Investment to reduce backlog maintenance in core properties

### 1. Backlog Maintenance

#### Challenges

- To target the reduced maintenance budget effectively in agreement with the service directorates.
- To monitor the delivery of the maintenance programme to time and budget
- To ensure we have accurate, current condition reports for all our properties and to make sure these are accessible to premises managers.

#### Pledges

- To significantly reduce business critical maintenance by 2013 (based on existing levels of investment)
- To focus maintenance spend on the Councils 'core' properties
- To maintain and update the 'core' property list in consultation with service directorates to reflect growing service needs, priorities and changing user requirements.

#### Outcome

The Council identifies both backlog maintenance and **'business critical' maintenance** data to ensure the effective allocation of the corporate maintenance budget. 'Business critical' maintenance is work that is required within the next 5 years to prevent imminent deterioration in the fabric of the building that could lead to disruption of service .

## 2. Compliance

### Challenges

- To ensure the Council's property assets comply with Statutory and Regulatory Health and Safety Codes
- To improve the accessibility of properties across the corporate estate
- To ensure accessibility needs are reviewed as the use of buildings changes
- To focus resources on the work required identified in the accessibility audits

### Pledges

- To carry out the recommendations made in response to the CIPFA audit, complete actions and establish procedures as detailed on the Compliance Monitoring action plan
- To carry out a further programme of access surveys and implement a programme of remedial works and action plans in accordance with the survey findings
- To keep all premises managers responsible for DCC properties informed by providing current policies, strategies and management procedures covering health, safety and compliance issues including asbestos, radon and legionella

### Outcome

In September 2009, the Council **commissioned CIPFA** to carry out an **audit of the Health & Safety protocols**.

The review concluded that procedures to ensure compliance with legislation are very good.

The audit resulted in an action plan being produced which is being regularly monitored.

During 2008/9 the council provided **comprehensive property related Health & Safety training for all staff (including school staff) with premises management responsibilities**, senior staff in the authority, and school governors.

### 3. Property Management Information

#### Challenge

- To provide a comprehensive data set for all of Devon County Council's assets which contains accurate and complete property data to be used as part of the strategic decision making process for the corporate estate
- To ensure compliance data on the corporate estate is reliable, current and accessible to all premises managers
- To co-ordinate the project to migrate the property management information data from the current property management system, (Evolution) to Connect2

#### Outcome

The '**Core**' property list – this list was agreed in consultation with the service directorates and is used to focus and target maintenance spend on properties required for long term service delivery.

#### Pledges

- To complete the migration to Connect2 on budget and to the agreed project programme
- To annually record, maintain and update the property performance information in SPAR.net, the authority's performance management system
- To report property performance information to Cabinet on an annual basis

### 4. Construction Framework South West (CFSW)

Construction Framework South West (CFSW) has been set up to provide a collaborative construction framework for all public bodies in the South West to obtain collective buying power from the market and considerably better levels of service compared to one off contracts. The Framework is for major construction projects of between £1 million to £100 million and began in August 2009.

#### Outcome

##### Commercial Benefits of CFSW

- Savings in the cost of the tender process compared to individual construction project tendering
- Highly competitive overhead and profit percentages will be honoured throughout the life of the framework even when the construction market improves.
- Contractors will compete to secure each project. Successful contractors will be continually benchmarked to their original tenders and subsequent advice they provide.
- This large regional Framework will provide sufficient continuity of work to enable contractors to commit and retain dedicated project teams
- There are currently 32 projects using CFSW with an approximate value of £185 million

# Replace – New capital projects to release non-core poorly performing assets and improve facilities

## Challenges

- To identify priorities in the context of a reduced Capital Programme for 2010/11 and the need to reduce unsupported borrowing.
- To ensure capital projects and investments in assets are prudent, affordable, and sustainable and support the Council's Strategic Plan

## Pledges

- To deliver 3 integrated community hubs across Devon by 2013
- To minimise the impact on the environment through sustainable construction and on going maintenance
- To release poorly performing assets where facilities are replaced

## Outcome

### **Oaklands Court, Tiverton**

Oaklands Court, Tiverton was opened in October 2009 and is one of the 5 key strategic centres approved as part of CYPs office rationalisation programme. It provides 4 specialist consultation rooms, seminar rooms and desks for 70 staff and will result in the disposal of 4 smaller, poorly performing buildings.

# Release - to identify poorly performing assets to rationalise the corporate estate

## 1. Property Reviews

The authority need to streamline its estate in order to be able to provide fit for purpose buildings to support service delivery. This means releasing buildings which are not fit for purpose where investing in improvement is not viable and gaining capital receipts from sales to fund replacement or improvement of other properties and other capital assets.

### Challenges

- To review the service delivery model and identify poorly performing properties which are inadequate or surplus to service delivery needs
- To ensure that all properties currently identified as surplus are disposed of in the agreed timescales to achieve best value

### Pledges

- To hold an accurate and up to date record of surplus properties and expected capital receipts
- To dispose of properties no longer required as efficiently as possible
- To provide accurate service performance management information to feed into the property review process
- To report property performance information to cabinet on an annual basis

## Outcome

### The office accommodation review

The Corporate Office Strategy commits the authority to a reduction in office floor area by 25% as a minimum, seeking to further reduce the floor area by 10% by 2012. This strategy will release approximately £8.8 million in capital receipts and generate a potential saving of £1.7 million annually in revenue costs. Additionally the authority's liability for maintenance will reduce by approximately £1.6 million

# Working in Partnership

The authority aims to provide services across the county alongside and in collaboration with other organisations, enabling local people to access a range of services from one 'hub'. This is an important issue in the provision of services to both children and young people and in adult care services where the ability to access a range of support facilities in one location is beneficial (personalisation of services).

Devon County Council is a member of the **Devon Strategic Partnership** which comprises of public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations. The Partnership focus is on delivering real improvements to the issues that matter most to the people of Devon with a vision 'to achieve 'strong local communities that are prosperous and welcoming with an excellent quality of life and a sustainable future'

Devon County Council had embraced the 'Total Place' agenda which takes a whole area approach to delivering public services in a geographical location through developing local user-driven solutions. In addition Devon will continue to support local communities and encourage community action by supporting the new Government's Big Society agenda to 'empower communities to come together to address local issues'.

## Challenges

- To identify opportunities for greater efficiency in service delivery and building use in key towns across Devon.

## Outcome

### **Estuary House, Newton Abbot**

Estuary House is a shared partnership arrangement and forms part of a joint estates strategy between the NHS and Devon County Council which aims to rationalise office property and improve service delivery. Approximately 220 health and social care staff will share the 1,400m<sup>2</sup> leasehold property. The new building will offer improved accommodation, reduce maintenance cost and allow the disposal of 4 poorly performing buildings.

## Community Asset Transfers

The Authority has supported the principles of the Quirk report on community asset transfer and has been involved in 3 pilot asset transfer projects. These projects have provided the authority with a valuable learning tool and enabled the authority to take a pro-active and innovative lead in embracing the opportunities and addressing the challenges of community asset transfer.

### Challenges

- To balance the benefits of asset transfers and community empowerment with the need to generate resources to fund the Capital Programme.

### Pledges

- To complete the existing asset transfers (in Winkleigh, Moretonhampstead and Exeter Community Centre) by September 2010

## Outcome

### Winkleigh Community Centre Community Asset Transfer

Officers have worked closely with Winkleigh Community Centre Trust to progress the asset transfer of the former school in Winkleigh. Officers have provided support to the Group to develop a robust business case and secure agreement to innovative transfer terms for the Group. The authority's social value toolkit was used to assess social activities and evidence to elected members and chief officers the 'value' of transferring the asset to empower the community.

# Sustainability

*“Buildings are responsible for almost half of the country’s carbon emissions, half of our water consumption, about one third of landfill waste and one quarter of all raw materials used in the economy.*

*It is clear that we cannot meet our declared environmental targets without dramatically reducing the environmental impact of buildings and infrastructure construction; we have to change the way we design and build.”*

Her Majesty’s Government Strategy for Sustainable Construction: June 2008

## Challenges

- To provide accurate and current information on energy, running costs and carbon emissions for the corporate estate
- To provide flexible working environments to give staff the opportunity to adopt more flexible working patterns and reduce travel
- To maintain the core list of properties to inform key programmes of work for the corporate estate
- To achieve the Governments zero carbon buildings target (all new school buildings to be zero carbon by 2016 and all other new non domestic public sector buildings to be zero carbon by 2018)
- To develop a properly costed rolling programme of carbon reduction measures to enable the authority to meet its ongoing energy saving carbon reduction commitment

## Outcome

A number of sustainable, social and environmental projects have been completed across the corporate estate, including;

- Loft Cavity Insulation Programme – to improve insulation and heating efficiency in the Council’s core properties
- Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) Schedule- identification of cost effective meters to be automated with in the Councils ‘core’ properties. A roll out programme was agreed from this and an e-billing process has been established for all AMR’d.
- Energy Audit Programme – energy audits were carried out in all core properties and a detailed action plan with cost recommendations and the identification of detailed energy efficient and carbon reduction projects was produced

## **Pledges**

- To implement the principles of the Devon County Council sustainable construction policy
- To meet the national timetable for reduction of carbon emissions for non residential buildings
- To commit to all new schools and non residential buildings being designed to LZC (Low to Zero Carbon) standards aligned with on-going Government targets
- To establish a cross directorate forum to maintain and amend the Devon County Council Sustainable Construction policy and monitor outcomes
- To conduct energy audits where heating systems are identified for renewal

## **Summary**

The Asset Management Plan provides a summary of how the Council's assets support the Council's Corporate priorities and details the challenges ahead to ensure a strategic approach is taken to support corporate and services strategies. To achieve the pledges detailed throughout the plan, the principles of effective asset management will need to be applied corporately and will require cross service directorates and wider agency co-operation and support in a challenging and changing environment.