ccha

Delivering on our promises

ICT Strategy 2021 - 2025

1. PURPOSE

This strategy outlines the approach that ccha will take to develop and introduce technologies that support its delivery of key services and objectives.

2. BACKGROUND

The challenges facing the housing sector today are for the most part the same as they always were, providing safe, affordable homes to meet housing need and doing this all on a limited budget.

What has changed is the advances in technology that offer opportunities to create efficiencies and improve the services provided to customers. The tools available today are far more sophisticated encouraging organisations to challenge their business models and respond to the rapid pace of technological disruption.

In addition to this, we are faced with a number of other challenges, including: a 'Digital skills gap' in our workforce and the need to adhere to strict data security standards – particularly with the introduction in 2018 of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Ccha recognises that ICT is no longer just a support service; it has become a critical service. If unavailable the organisation could not operate. It has become a key facilitator in improving efficiency and reducing costs across the organisation.

3. CCHA VALUES

Ccha's values are key to all activities undertaken across the organisation. This strategy ensures that we are embracing these values. We 'Care' as our objectives have our customers and staff at the heart of what we do and how ICT can improve their experience of ccha. The aims of this strategy can only be achieved by us 'ADAPTING' to change and being 'Resilient' to challenging times. We will only be successful by 'Everyone' playing their part.'

4. STRATEGY AIMS

This strategy aims to set the direction for the ICT service driven by the needs of the organisation whilst highlighting the important role that technology can play in shaping the future of the organisation. Whilst the strategy continues to drive digital innovation it doesn't lose sight of the fundamental need to keep core systems safe and resilient.

5. SCOPE

The scope of this strategy will cover the following key areas:

- Applications.
- Technical infrastructure
- Data
- IT staff, processes and organisation

6.   WHERE ARE WE NOW

In 2017, ccha initiated its IT Framework programme which aimed to:

- Replace the housing management system and interfaces.
- Move IT services to the public cloud.
- Put foundations in place for mobile working and improved information sharing.
- Develop and launch a customer portal enabling online transactions.

Completed in 2020 the programme delivered several key improvements in addition to the new infrastructure and in-house ICT resource. Some of which are included below:

- A new managed service contract was awarded to Conosco
- Infrastructure was migrated to Microsoft Azure with server numbers being reduced from 33 to 8.
- Thin client devices across all offices were replaced with docking stations .
- All staff have been issued with either an internet connected tablet or laptop.
- Wifi throughout the office has been upgraded increasing coverage and allowing a more flexible use of technology during meetings or in quiet spaces.
- The Wide Area Network (WAN) was upgraded and migrated to Virgin whilst also delivering savings of £8000 per year.
- Networking equipment was upgraded with client Virtual Private Network capabilities which proved crucial during the covid-19 pandemic.
- Enterprise software was upgraded to Microsoft's Office 365 cloud based subscription service
- A new housing management system was implemented bringing closer integration of key systems.

7.   WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE

With the previous framework delivering investment in core infrastructure as well as strengthening our relationship with our IT suppliers we now have the foundations to build upon and deliver good ICT services.

A renewed focus will now concentrate on transformational change. When delivering against this strategy we will follow a number of guiding principles:

Cloud First	Where possible, practical and financially viable, cloud solutions will be implemented. This will allow us to take advantage of greater scalability and resilience options.
Mobile Working	Solutions for front line services will directly deliver or support agile and mobile working.
Single Version of Truth	We will avoid disparate data silos across various systems. Datasets will be streamlined, standardised and cleansed.

Information Security	We will take a comprehensive and systematic approach to protecting the three tenets of information security: confidentiality, integrity and availability.
Intelligent Automation	Intelligent automation will help the organisation reduce costs and dependence on labour-based processes and optimise their service efficiencies.
Tribal Knowledge	Information can be key to quality services. Tribal knowledge will be converted into organisational property and systems will have more availability to record this information.

8. STRATEGY THEMES

This strategy will focus on the following priority themes:

Customer Experience	Responding in a flexible and agile way to internal and external customer needs with emphasis on providing low-cost online and self-service channels through automation.
Enabling Efficiency	Reengineering processes and digitalising where possible to enable more efficient and timely responses.
Innovation and Learning	Cultivating a mindset for innovation by developing our internal ICT capability and working with partner organisations.
Reducing Costs	Identifying and exploiting further opportunities for savings through greater innovation and closer integration of systems.
Security & Compliance	Defending information from unauthorised access, use, modification or disruption.

Customer Experience

The 2020 Social Housing White Paper draws attention to the customer experience. It enables customers to have a voice and Landlords as a result are under greater scrutiny to ensure high levels of customer service and manage complaints effectively.

We will support the design of a new customer service delivery model ensuring that customer journeys are simple, easy to navigate and customer centric. Interactions will be designed around the needs of the customer and we will ensure that automation is properly implemented that gives customers access to information they want when they need   it.

Over the next five years we will:

- Increase the number of services we offer online so that we can spend more time with customers who will benefit from a conversation.
- Introduce an online resident engagement platform that encourages residents to provide regular feedback on services and plans for the future.

- Develop a centralised and transparent performance reporting system which gives residents and staff real time information on how the organisation is performing.
- Take full advantage of our new telephony system's call management features to get callers to the right person quicker.
- Install communal wifi to all our older person schemes supporting our digital inclusion strategy.

Enabling Efficiency

Efficiency and speed are closely related. The quicker services such as maintenance repairs, are delivered to customers, the greater the efficiency required in the supporting processes and savings in resource time.

We will look to reengineer processes with high levels of automation where human judgment isn't required and incorporate seamless hand-offs between humans and machines whilst guiding the user through the most efficient way to complete a transaction.

We will seek to deliver mobile enabled and customer facing applications across the organisation with mobile process redesigns focusing on two angles of attack:

- Digital-physical intensity
  - By bringing the process to where the work actually gets done reduces time consuming steps such as travelling back to the office to enter the data.
- Mobile technology intensity
  - Increasing the use of technology such as tablets and smartphones will create possibilities that were previously technically infeasible.

Over the next five years we will:

- Fully Integrate systems using API's (Application Programming Interface) to maximise cross team collaboration, reduce manual intervention and increase accuracy of data.
- Implement a digital sign up process replacing paper-based forms and engaging with residents earlier in more supportive ways.
- Expand the ways in which residents can make payments taking advantage of more convenient methods such as recurring card payments.
- Interface with maintenance contractors and external agencies such as the DWP to receive and process information without the need for human intervention.
- Transfer our business-critical spreadsheets such as the asset register and add them to our core systems.

Innovation and Learning

Following an IT led survey of staff in November 2020 key themes in feedback received requested increased support in optimising processes and guidance on how technology solutions can better meet the business requirements.

We will look to take the strategic role of facilitators and run event-based ideation workshops with select groups of subject matter experts. Through the newly appointed Business Analyst role we will bring business staff together to collaboratively solve problems. A strong business analysis capability provides ICT with a clearly articulated requirement for improvement and a robust rationale for change.

Investing in our staff will remain a high priority. We will continue to improve the ICT skills of our workforce, equipping them with the skills they need to deliver a digital based service.

Over the next five years we will:

- Engage with the business to understand how data-driven changes to processes, services, software and hardware can improve efficiencies and add value.
- Strengthen our digital and data capabilities by providing stewardship of information and controls to ensure data quality.
- Gain full control over the data in all of our back office systems, and extract and analyse that data to improve services.
- Create engaging instructional training videos for all systems.
- Adopt the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Framework for IT Governance.
- Develop and encourage use of our productivity and collaboration tools.

Reducing Costs

The governments' 2012 Digital Efficiencies report found that the average cost of a digital transaction is almost 20 times lower than the cost of a telephone transaction, about 30 times lower than the cost of postal transaction and about 50 times lower than a face-to-face transaction. Making digital services the channel of choice for most residents offers the opportunity to achieve significant savings while at the same time offering a better service.

By utilising technology we can start working 'smarter' not harder and refocus resources on those interactions that deliver value.

Over the next five years we will:

- Record resident communication preferences encouraging electronic methods by default saving on postage and printing costs.
- Review every business process reengineering to follow a 'Digital First' policy, as well as simplifying, standardising, reducing duplication and misalignment.
- Expand the use of digital forms and workflows allowing staff to complete actions 'in the field' without the need to return to the office.
- Develop low-code applications that allow ccha to implement new processes quickly and at a lower cost than third party providers.
- Work with Internet Service Providers that offer high quality internet services to our properties at affordable prices increasing digital inclusion.
- Use data driven processes and decision making to automate landlord services such as rent collection and repairs reporting.

- Transfer all paper documents onto electronic document management systems reducing the office space required for storage.

Security and Compliance

According to a 2019 survey for the UK government 32% of all businesses in the UK reported an attempted breach of their data in 2019. We must focus on data and its value to the organisation and the customer ensuring we take a risk-based approach to its protection.

Over the next five years we will:

- Identify all information assets and apply classification based on sensitivity to the business, individuals or legal requirements.
- We will continue to promote a culture of security and educate employees on security best practices.
- Ensure accreditation to PCI-DSS (Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard)

9.   RISKS

Some of the key risks associated with the delivery of this strategy will be:

- changes in scope which may impact on cost, quality, timescales and resourcing
- resource constraints associated with running significant concurrent programmes of work
- important and urgent organisational business priorities emerging which require significant ICT resourcing, necessitating the redeployment of ICT resources as priorities dictate
- the technical complexity and interdependencies inherent in the concurrent deployment of large technical projects/
- cultural challenges associated with new ways of working, the use of technology and the desire for customised solutions
- ensuring appropriate skills, support and training is in place to empower employees to deal with organisational changes

10. ROADMAP

Infrastructure			
Area	**Short-term (2021)**	**Medium (2022)**	**Long (2023-24)**
Office Relocation		Plan and Install IT infrastructure to new office location	
Shared Services			Consider options for alternate method of service delivery
Tablets/Laptops			Renew Staff Laptops/Tablets
Windows Server	Move user profile folder redirection to Onedrive.	Upgrade remaining Windows Server 2012	

Networks			
Area	**Short-term (2021)**	**Medium (2022)**	**Long (2023-24)**
WAN/Internet	Monitor network capacity, upgrade as necessary to support h/w hosted offsite	Upgrade WAN connection to Speakers Court Fibre Broadband upgrade to all ccha resident blocks.	
Wireless networks		Investigate Communal Wifi facilities to Older Persons schemes.	

Services			
Area	**Short-term (2021)**	**Medium (2022)**	**Long (2023-24)**
EDM	Scan and index paper files to Sharepoint Automate indexing of all electronic documents	Relocate legacy shared files to Sharepoint	
KPIs	Develop automated KPI measurements Implement Business Intelligence Software	Incorporate resident access to KPIs through ccha Website	
Customer Portal	Fully automate initial registration	Expand functionality and integrate processes with Cx	Full omnichannel customer services
Printing	Deprecate printing, reduce need for hard copy		
Electronic Forms	Replace internal paper-based forms with digital forms		

Security & Compliance

Area	Short-term (2021)	Medium (2022)	Long (2023-24)
GDPR	Implement Microsoft Information Protection	Automate data retention policies	
Device Encryption	Implement Microsoft Intune (Mobile Device Management) Enable BitLocker device encryption		
ISMS		Implement an Information Security Management System (ISO27001)	
PCI Compliance	Achieve PCI DSS compliance		

Applications

Area	Short-term (2021)	Medium (2022)	Long (2023-24)
CRM	Develop digital by design business processes	Integrate CRM with other systems	Automate CRM business processes to reduce human element
Databases		Upgrade to SQL Server 2019	
Cx		Implement Information Management Module	Upgrade to the latest version.
POP		Implement Purchase Order system	
Digital Resident Sign up	Develop initial digital application form	Develop digital end to end sign up platform	
SUN Accounts		Upgrade to version 6.2	
Estate Management	Complete upgrade to Asprey Maintenance and Compliance Products		

Communications

Area	Short-term (2021)	Medium (2022)	Long (2023-24)
Avaya PBX	Upgrade telephone system and recording system		
IOT (Internet of Things)			Investigate benefits of investing in IOT sensor technology
PSTN Switch off			Upgrade Older Person Tunstall technology to digital