Delivering on our promises

IT Strategy 2025-2026

Purpose

This one-year bridging strategy sets out how ccha will develop and use technology to support its operations, enhance services, and respond to new challenges.

IT is increasingly recognised as a central strategic department — essential for day-to-day operations, service delivery, and long-term organisational success, rather than a siloed support team. This reflects the wider shift across multiple business sectors and aligns with recognised good practice.

This bridging strategy defines the direction for how ccha will continue to embrace technology to improve service delivery, increase resilience, continuously improve, and empower both staff and residents with modern digital tools.

A key part of this strategy would be to work closely with other departments to understand their operational and strategic needs, and how IT fits within that.

Background

In many ways, the challenges of the housing sector have remained constant, particularly the challenge of delivering safe, affordable homes within tight budgets and strict regulations. What has changed significantly in the past 10 years, is the pace of technological advancement and the opportunities it creates for service transformation.

ccha also faces internal challenges, including a digital skills gap, rising security concerns, and the need for uninterrupted service in the face of disruption or change.

Between 2020 and 2025, ccha made significant IT investments—adopting cloud-first principles, enabling mobile working, improving access to data, and embedding automation and security.

This bridging strategy aims to build on those foundations by focusing on **maturity**, **resilience**, and **service integration**. Going forward, we aim to enhance our internal capacity and capability, ensuring our systems are future-ready, cost-effective, and designed with our staff and residents in mind.

ccha Values

ccha's core values guide how we design and deliver IT service delivery:

- We **c**are – designing systems around the needs of staff and residents.
- We **a**dapt – service transformation and building robust future-proof systems.
- We are **r**esilient – focusing on business continuity, security, and innovation, no shortcuts.
- **E**veryone plays their part – empowering teams with the tools and training to do their job well.

Where are we now

ccha has made significant progress in modernising its IT environment. Core services—such as Office 365, CRM (Civica Cx), telephony, and remote access—are stable and well adopted across the organisation.

The transition to cloud infrastructure, combined with the successful shift to in-house level 1 and level 2 support (first- and second-line technical support to staff), has improved responsiveness and provided greater operational control.

IT is now more visible and better integrated with the wider organisation, creating a solid foundation for future development.

We have worked closely with our managed service providers, Conosco to review our security position and ensure level 3 (advanced technical support) is available on demand.

Where do we want to be

Over the past year, the IT function has evolved from a reactive support role to a more structured and proactive service. This transition has delivered measurable improvements to service delivery and enhanced support for core business operations. This strategy acknowledges that further work is required to stabilise and professionalise our technology environment.

Several business systems continue to operate in isolation, leading to data duplication and process inefficiencies. A key objective is to automate workflows and streamline reporting by implementing modern IT solutions that enhance operational performance and service delivery. We will also strengthen the customer experience by developing online portals and mobile platforms that support and enrich tenant interactions.

Our security posture has been strengthened through the implementation of baseline protections, including antivirus software, device encryption, and secure remote access. We now aim to move towards a more proactive, policy-driven approach to threat detection, incident response, and disaster recovery planning.

Our goal is to establish a digitally mature and agile organisation, underpinned by resilient systems, a collaborative IT function, and technology that is aligned with the needs of both staff and residents.

Scope

Specifically, this strategy applies to the following areas:

- **Applications and core business systems**: ensuring that our software is fit for purpose, integrated, and capable of supporting efficient, joined-up service delivery.
- **Technical infrastructure:** focusing on resilient, scalable platforms—minimising downtime, supporting flexible working, and enabling future growth.
- **Service delivery and support:** Strengthening internal capacity to provide responsive, proactive support that meets the evolving needs of the business.
- **Data governance and information management:** Improving how we store, manage, and use data—enhancing decision-making, reporting, and compliance (including automated KPI reporting).
- **Security, continuity, and risk management:** Embedding security, disaster recovery, and resilience into everything we do, protecting the organisation from disruption.
- **IT team capability:** Building internal expertise, documenting processes, and fostering collaboration across teams to increase agility and reduce reliance on external support for business-critical operations/processes.

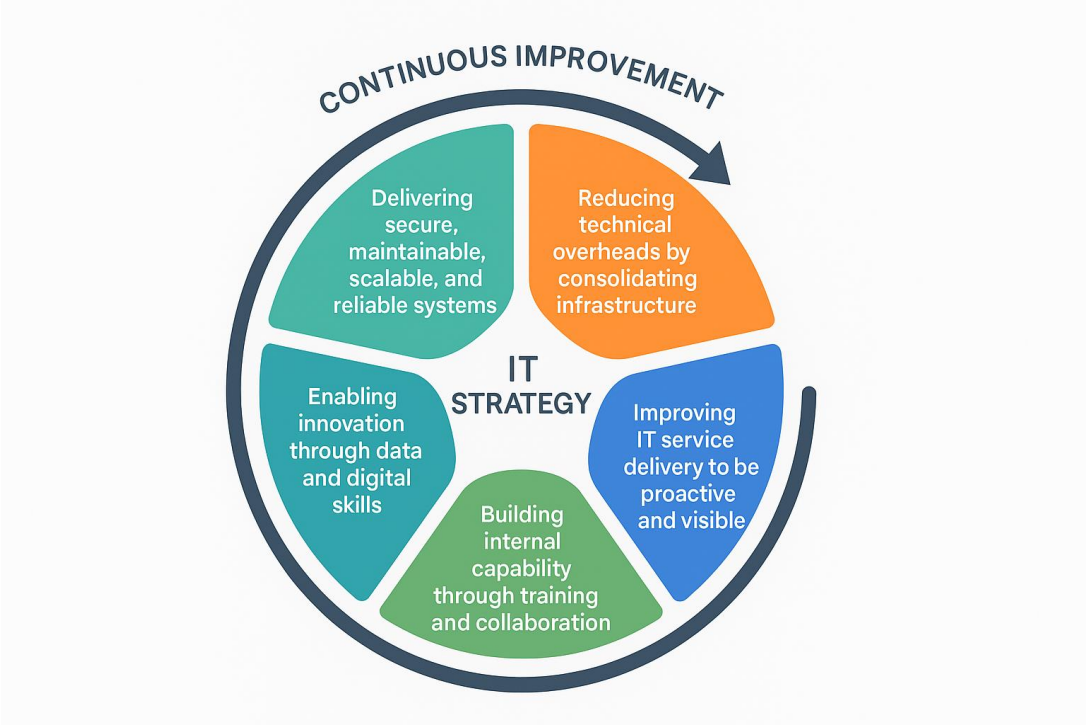
This scope aligns directly with our strategic aims and will guide how we prioritise investment, develop internal processes, and measure success over the course of this strategy.

Strategic aims

This strategy focuses on service **maturity, resilience**, and **service integration/delivery**.

Our aims are to:

1. Deliver **secure, maintainable, scalable, and reliable systems** that underpin daily operations.
2. **Reducing technical overheads** by consolidating infrastructure and investing in future-proof solutions/systems/processes.
3. **Improving IT service delivery** to be proactive, visible, and supportive to all departments.
4. **Building internal capability** through structured training, knowledge sharing, and collaboration.
5. **Enabling collaboration and continuous improvement** through better use of data, modern systems, and working closely with our staff and residents to understand their needs and creating robust solutions for them.



Strategic priorities

To deliver real value for the business, IT at CCHA must focus on what matters most: supporting people, improving services, reducing unnecessary complexity, and creating the right conditions for innovation and resilience. These five strategic priorities guide how we will do that:

Reliable and Resilient Systems (relates to strategic aim 1)

We need dependable systems that support daily operations without disruption. Our focus is on stability, security, and future readiness.

This means:

- Using cloud-based and modular infrastructure to scale with the organisation and reduce downtime.
- Automating routine tasks to minimise errors and improve consistency.
- Making systems easier to maintain by applying configuration standards and documenting environments.
- Ensuring data is accurate and accessible by improving integration and ownership.

Simplifying and Modernising Technology (relates to strategic aim 2)

Too many systems or outdated tools can slow us down. By streamlining our technology landscape, we can focus more on value and less on firefighting.

This means:

- Retiring legacy systems that no longer deliver value.
- Choosing platforms that are flexible, well-supported, and built for the future.
- Reducing duplication in systems and data, so teams work from a single source of truth.
- Prioritising tools that are simple to support and easy to adapt as needs evolve.

Responsive, Visible and Supportive IT Services (relates to strategic aim 3)

We want to be a trusted partner across the organisation—not just a service desk, but a team that enables everyone to do their best work.

This means:

- Defining clear support standards and response times that teams can rely on.
- Improving communication through regular updates and performance dashboards.
- Having IT team members visible and engaged across departments.
- Getting involved early in projects to help shape smarter digital solutions.

Building internal capability and confidence (relates to strategic aim 4)

Strong internal skills are essential. We want a confident, capable team that works closely with others, shares knowledge, and solves problems together.

This means:

- Investing in training, mentoring and onboarding for both IT and business teams.
- Documenting systems, tools, and processes so knowledge doesn't sit with just one person.
- Supporting collaborative working groups to solve shared problems and design better systems.
- Reducing reliance on external providers where we can grow our own capability.

Fostering innovation and better use of data (relates to strategic aim 5)

We want to create space for improvement. By making data more accessible and supporting teams to experiment with digital tools, we can unlock smarter ways of working.

This means:

- Giving teams real-time data and reporting to support better decision making.
- Encouraging departments to test and refine digital tools before wider rollout.
- Scaling low-code and self-service platforms where they meet business needs.
- Promoting digital confidence through training, support, and peer learning.

Team

To deliver on this strategy, CCHA will adopt a lean, focused IT structure designed to be flexible, responsive, and aligned with organisational priorities. The proposed structure balances cost-efficiency with capability, ensuring that core services are maintained while also enabling innovation and strategic change.

As part of a wider people strategy, ccha is investigating a Business Analyst role, and a project coordinator/delivery officer, who would have a broad view of projects, and facilitate the delivery of projects, processes, improvements. Working closely with the IT team.

IT Manager (full-time):

Provides strategic leadership, oversees delivery of the IT strategy, and ensures alignment between technology, risk, and business objectives. Acts as the primary liaison between IT and the wider organisation.

Operations and Support Technician (full-time):

Focused on maintaining day-to-day operational stability. This role delivers responsive 1st and 2nd line support, assists with system maintenance, and contributes to infrastructure improvement initiatives.

IT Support (training) (part-time IT):

Supports the service desk and provides business analysis support, supporting in translating user requirements into practical solutions, identifying process inefficiencies, and supporting implementation of digital tools.

Contractor (ad-Hoc, project-based):

Flexible resource to deliver specific technical projects or provide capacity during periods of peak demand. This ensures agility without permanent cost commitments.

As part of a wider people strategy, ccha is exploring the introduction of two key roles: a Business Analyst and a Project Coordinator/Delivery Officer. These roles will help improve cross-organisational visibility of projects and ensure structured delivery of initiatives and improvements.

Risks

To successfully deliver this strategy, we must actively identify and manage several risks that could impact progress, stability, or adoption.

Capacity and workload pressures within a small team	
Risk: The IT team is lean and continues to operate at or near full capacity. This limits the ability to absorb additional project work, cover absence, or proactively improve systems and documentation.	Mitigation: Ensure effective workload management through clear prioritisation of activities, in collaboration with the leadership team. Where needed, bring in external resources or temporary project-based support to maintain delivery and resilience.

Resistance to adopting new systems or ways of working	
Risk: Introducing new tools, platforms, or processes often involves changes in behaviour, responsibilities, or workflows. Some staff may be reluctant to adopt these changes without clear benefits, communication, or support—potentially resulting in low uptake or inefficient use of technology investments	Mitigation: Adopt strong change management/culture practices by engaging staff early, ensuring clear communication of benefits, and involving end users in the design and implementation of new systems/processes. Creating a sense of ownership through collaboration, training, and feedback.

Limited documentation and standardisation of processes	
Risk: Where support processes, system configurations, or integrations are not clearly documented, knowledge becomes siloed and fragile. This limits the ability of new staff to contribute effectively, introduces inconsistency in support, and increases the risk of service interruption if key individuals are unavailable	Mitigation: Embedding documentation and knowledge sharing as a core part of daily operations. Prioritise documenting and standardising key processes for helpdesk support, projects, and tasks. Recognising that documentation and knowledge transfer reduces risk, improves onboarding, and strengthens operational resilience—even if it temporarily impacts capacity.

Ongoing cyber security threats and recovery readiness	
Risk: As cyber threats evolve, the risks of data loss, service disruption, or reputational damage grow. While security controls are in place, there is a continuous need to assess, update, and test our defences—including our disaster recovery and business continuity plans—to ensure we remain prepared for emerging threats.	Mitigation: Treat all security incidents as high priority, ensuring prompt investigation, resolution, and follow-up. Proactively address vulnerabilities as they are identified and maintain strong collaboration with our Managed Service Provider (MSP) to test and refine our cyber response, disaster recovery, and business continuity plans

Legacy systems that may no longer align with business needs	
Risk: Some systems in use today were designed for previous ways of working or limited functionality. These legacy platforms can be difficult to support and poorly integrated. Continuing to rely on outdated tools increases technical debt, reduces efficiency, and creates friction when trying to scale or innovate	Mitigation: Legacy systems will continue to be supported where necessary, but a risk-based approach will be taken as they become increasingly difficult to maintain—especially where source code is unavailable or security vulnerabilities arise. The impact on business operations will be carefully managed and phased retirement plans will be aligned with available resources and replacement timelines.

Dependence on IT	
Risk: Due of historic processes and organisational gaps, IT has taken on responsibility for routine and departmental tasks that would typically fall under other teams. This creates operational dependencies that increase risk when IT capacity is limited or when key staff leave. It also leads to knowledge and ownership being concentrated within IT, reducing resilience and accountability across the wider organisation.	Mitigation: Responsibilities that fall outside IT’s core remit will be gradually transitioned back to relevant business teams. This will involve clearly defining and documenting processes, training staff, and providing temporary support during the handover. The goal is to rebalance ownership and ensure long-term sustainability and accountability across departments.

Roadmap

Phase	Project	Aims	RAG
Q2 - Q3	**Service Charges** Work with Finance to define, map, and document how service charges are managed within our core systems. This project ensures we follow Finance's strategic approach while supporting a clear, consistent, and sustainable process for managing service charges going forward. By year-end, service charge processes are fully mapped, automated where feasible, and embedded into the core system with Finance leading ownership. Staff in Finance and Income teams are trained and confident in using the system without IT intervention.	1,2,4 & 5	Red
Q1 - Q3	**Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery (BCDR)** This project will define how we prepare for, respond to, and recover from major IT disruptions. It will ensure we have the right plans, systems, and processes in place to maintain critical services during unexpected events—minimising downtime, protecting data, and supporting the organisation's ability to operate without significant interruption. By year-end, documented BCDR plans are in place, tested, and reviewed. Key systems have clear recovery time objectives (RTOs) and recovery point objectives (RPOs), and response scenarios are rehearsed through tabletop or live simulations	1,2,3 & 4	Red
Q2-Q4	**Business Intelligence & Reporting (KPIs)** This project will review and standardise all reports and dashboards across the organisation. It will align key performance indicators (KPIs) with business goals and establish a consistent framework for accessing reliable data—supporting better decision-making and operational visibility. By year-end, KPI dashboards are standardised and in active use by key teams. Reports are generated automatically using a consistent framework, with reduced reliance on spreadsheets and increased confidence in data accuracy.	1, 4, & 5	Amber

Phase	Project	Aims	Priority (RAG)
Q1-Q4	**Cx Integration and embedding** Ensure all key business procedures are fully integrated into Cx, with documentation and staff training. This includes working closely with the business to understand, map and embedding all business process, such as bulk communications, tenancy changes and rent statements – ensuring consistent use of the system. By year-end, core business processes are documented, mapped, and embedded into Cx. Usage across departments is consistent, training materials are available, and manual workarounds are eliminated.	1,2,3,4 & 5	Red
Q2-Q3	**Systems & operations review** This project will assess current systems and processes across key operational areas to identify gaps, inefficiencies, and future needs. Working with teams across the organisation, it will inform planning for future solutions—such as finance integrations, EDI, customer portals, digital noticeboards, and enhanced reporting—to ensure systems continue to meet evolving business requirements. By year-end, gap analysis is completed and endorsed, with future system and integration needs clearly defined. Outputs feed directly into 2026 planning, enabling prioritised investment in operational	1,2,3,4 & 5	Red
Q3	**Asset & Liability Register Integration** This project will create a centralised and reliable register of assets and liabilities, ensuring the data is structured, maintained, and aligned with the broader data strategy—supporting better financial oversight and strategic planning. By year-end, a centralised, reliable register is implemented, maintained, and linked to relevant systems. The register supports strategic decision-making and aligns with the organisation's data governance framework.	1,2,3 & 5	Red

Phase	Project	Aims	Priority (RAG)
Q3	**Telephony system review** This project will evaluate the current telephony system to assess its performance, capabilities, and suitability for future needs. It will result in a project plan that outlines improvement options or potential replacements to better support internal communication and customer service. By year-end, performance review completed, and options presented to senior leadership. Clear recommendations (improvement or replacement) are approved, and procurement or implementation planning is underway.	1,2,3 & 5	Amber
Q1-Q4	**Business Operations & Continuous Improvement** This ongoing project underpins the daily delivery of IT services across the organisation, ensuring systems are secure, reliable, and aligned with business needs. It includes the provision of Level 1 and Level 2 support, regular system maintenance, security enhancements, and process improvements—enabling smooth operations while continuously evolving to meet emerging challenges and opportunities. By year-end, regular support metrics demonstrate high service reliability and reduced recurring issues. Incremental improvements and automation are logged and communicated. Stakeholder feedback reflects improved service satisfaction.	3 & 5	Red