Committee(s): Barbican Residential Committee	**Date(s):** 16 November 2026
Subject: Climate Action Strategy Phase 2: Barbican Housing: Decarbonisation & Resilience Programme	**Public report:** For Decision **Note, non-public appendix**
This proposal: **delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes**	Leading Sustainable Environment; Flourishing Public Spaces; Providing Excellent Services
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community & Children's Services
Report author:	Rachel Evans, Senior Sustainability Manager, Housing Kate Neale, Climate Action Programme Director, Innovation & Growth

Summary

The Climate Action Strategy supports a responsible, resilient and competitive City. It reduces emissions and climate risk, improves the performance of the Corporation's assets and supply chains, and strengthens the City's credibility as a global centre for sustainable and transition finance.

The Court of Common Council approved the Strategy in 2020, with £68m to March 2027. In February 2026, the Policy and Resources Committee endorsed £49m for Phase 2 from 2027/28 to 2032/33, maintaining the 2040 targets and prioritising the highest-impact measures. Phase 2 is delivered through twelve programmes. This report seeks approval to initiate the Barbican Housing: Decarbonisation & Resilience programme.

The Barbican Housing programme sets out a systematic approach to decarbonising the estate's communal structure, fabric and services, while building resilience to overheating, flooding and water stress. Whilst no dedicated budget is allocated, spend is expected from associated major and minor works programmes, subject to separate approvals.

Establishing this as a CAS programme provides the coordination, specialist support and sustained focus needed to turn evidence into delivery. It will align climate interventions with major works and maintenance, connect the Barbican Estate to

expertise across the wider CAS portfolio, and focus investment on the outcomes that matter most to residents: more comfortable and healthier homes, improved indoor air quality, efficient energy use, manageable costs and a greener, more resilient estate.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

i. Approve the initiation of the Barbican Housing programme, as set out at Appendix 1.
ii. Note annual progress reports and gateway papers under the Project Procedure.

Main Report

Background

1. In October 2020 the Court of Common Council approved the Climate Action Strategy. The Strategy commits the City Corporation to support net zero in the Square Mile by 2040, to build climate resilience in its buildings, public spaces and infrastructure, and to reach net zero across its own operations and value chain. A funded envelope of £68m was approved to deliver the first phase to March 2027.

2. In February 2026, the Policy and Resources Committee endorsed continued funding of the Strategy at £49m for the period 2027/28 to 2032/33, on the basis of maintaining the 2040 targets and prioritising the measures needed to achieve them.

3. Phase 2 runs from 2027/28 to 2032/33 and is delivered through twelve programmes: Operational Estate; Investment Property; Housing; Barbican Housing; Green Skills; Heat Networks; Square Mile Buildings: Decarbonisation & Resilience; Responsible Procurement; Circular Economy; Financial Investments; Nature Recovery; and Climate Resilience.

Current Position

4. The Barbican Estate is Grade II listed, with over 2,000 homes. Around 98% of homes are owned by leaseholders. The Corporation, as freeholder, is responsible for the communal structure, fabric and services. Leaseholders are responsible for improvements within their own homes.

5. Most estate emissions come from the communal electric underfloor heating. Heritage status has historically limited many conventional retrofit solutions. The concrete structures absorb and retain heat in a central London heat island, exacerbating overheating challenges.

6. Landlord area emissions fell 44% between 2018/19 and 2024/25. Resident emissions fell 30%, largely due to improved data quality and a cleaner electricity

grid. In 2024, a specialist study of the communal heating system was commissioned, testing options to improve cost, carbon, control and comfort, reporting by March 2027.

Options

7. **Option 1 (recommended):** approve the initiation of the Barbican Housing: Decarbonisation & Resilience Programme as set out in the Programme Initiation Document at Appendix 1. This Programme delivers an agreed plan for the heating study's priority recommendations by 2028, an estate resilience action plan by 2030 and all relevant major works projects assessed against decarbonisation and resilience objectives by 2030. No additional funding is sought at this time.

8. **Option 2 (not recommended):** do not approve the initiation of the programme. Without programme approval, the heating study would lack a coordinated route into delivery; opportunities to incorporate affordable climate measures into planned works could be missed; and action on resident priorities such as comfort, indoor air quality, energy efficiency and estate greening would remain fragmented.

Proposals

9. CAS programme status gives the Barbican a structured route from technical evidence to implementation. It provides coordinated governance, performance monitoring and access to specialist expertise across heat networks, climate resilience, nature recovery, circular economy and building performance. This will help avoid duplicated work, strengthen project specifications, identify funding opportunities and ensure climate measures are incorporated into planned works at the most cost-effective point, rather than added later.

10. Delivery is organised around five workstreams, which work together to deliver **healthier, more comfortable homes**, **better value and cost efficiency,** and **a greener, more resilient estate:**
    a. Behaviour change. Resident education, engagement and awareness.
    b. Heat decarbonisation and optimisation. Acting on the heating study, in communal systems and homes.
    c. Fabric and building optimisation. Upgrades through major works and asset replacement.
    d. Renewable energy generation. Where feasible, within heritage and planning constraints.
    e. Resilience and nature recovery measures. Shading, ventilation, cooling and green infrastructure in high-risk locations.

Key Data

11. The programme tracks the heating study, resilience planning and major works.

Measure	**Phase 2 target**
Heating and building performance recommendations implemented (Ambue study)	100% of recommendations by 2033
Completed resilience interventions, reported by principal climate risk	100% of sites by 2033
Meter consumption access	100% of sites by 2033
Resident engagement on climate planning activities	% of residents feeling 'well informed' by 2033 TBC
Estimated residential energy savings (cumulative)	To be decided
Barbican Estate emissions (tCO2e)	Reduce from baseline year-on-year
Resident health benefits delivered (cumulative) (£)	To be quantified
Resident satisfaction with climate-related projects	Baseline set, then improving each year

12. The Corporation's 2025 climate risk assessment rated 47 risks. Of these, 8 are relevant to this programme. None are rated very high today, but without action, 6 could be very high by mid-century.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

13. **Strategic implications** The Climate Action Strategy supports delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024-29, and in particular the Leading Sustainable Environment, Flourishing Public Spaces and Providing Excellent Services outcomes. It builds on existing strategies and policies including the Local Plan and draft City Plan 2040, the Transport Strategy, the Air Quality Strategy, the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, the Biodiversity Action Plan, the Responsible Investment Policy and the City Procurement Strategy. Phase 2 programmes are governed under the Project, Programme and Portfolio Policy Framework, with tiering and gateway routing set under that framework.

14. **Financial implications** Spend is expected through minor and major works. Community Infrastructure Levy and government grant contributions are to be confirmed.

15. **Resource implications** No roles are funded from this programme. The Lead Officer also leads the Housing programme.

16. **Legal implications** No new legal implications arise from the recommendations in this report. Individual projects will be delivered within the Corporation's existing contractual, procurement and charity governance arrangements, and where

activity is delivered through charitable assets it must support the relevant charitable objects.

17. **Risk implications** The Corporate Risk Register recognises the risks posed to the Corporation and the City by climate change, covering both the physical risk from more extreme weather and the risks associated with the transition to a low-carbon economy (CR30). Mitigating action is delivered through the Climate Action Strategy. Each Phase 2 programme maintains its own risk register, scored against the City Corporation Risk Score Matrix and reported to its Programme Board. Further programme specific risks and dependencies are outlined in Appendix 1 chapter 14.

18. **Equalities implications** An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this programme. It demonstrates due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty. Leaseholders are consulted on relevant works under Section 20.

19. **Climate implications** Together, the Phase 2 programmes support the City's competitiveness by protecting assets and infrastructure, reducing exposure to climate-related costs, improving the quality and resilience of the Square Mile, and reinforcing the City's position as a centre for sustainable and transition finance.

20. **Security implications** None.

Conclusion

21. The Climate Action Strategy is a recognised and well-established approach to reducing the Corporation's climate risk and to creating a responsible, sustainable and competitive City. Phase 2 converts the Corporation's climate commitments into practical investment in resilient assets, efficient operations and a competitive Square Mile. It uses the Corporation's property, procurement, investment and convening powers to reduce financial and climate risk, support sustainable growth and demonstrate leadership in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

22. As part of CAS, the programme will bring together Barbican major works, maintenance, resident engagement and specialist climate expertise, helping to deliver interventions at the right time and at best value. This will focus delivery on what matters to residents: healthier and more comfortable homes, improved air quality, efficient energy use, manageable costs and a greener, more resilient Barbican Estate.

Non-Public Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Barbican Housing: Decarbonisation & Resilience Programme Initiation Document

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