



Digital Strategy

2023 - 2027

Introduction

This strategy sets out our ambition for digital change and highlights how these ambitions are aligned to support the business to successfully deliver the strategic plan.

We live in an ever-changing world, and this is especially evident within the continually evolving and fast paced industry of Information Technology. Whilst this digital strategy sets out our ambition for the next five years, the strategy will be reviewed annually, to ensure that that it continues to meet the changing needs of the business and keeps pace with the progress of Information Technology.

The overarching objective of the IT team is to provide a flexible, reliable, secure, and efficient technology and reporting service, that is aligned to our business objectives and meets the needs of both our employees and customers.

Historically, we have added a number of separate IT solutions, which have successfully met the needs of individual teams. Whilst this has provided short term results to the business, it has resulted in an IT platform consisting of many separate IT solutions with disparate data and processes.

To ensure that we have a more cohesive IT platform with centralised data and process, we have committed to moving our data and processes into the Dynamics platform wherever possible. Where this is not possible, we will consider solutions which sit on, or integrate with the Dynamics platform.



Digital: How we will achieve our objectives

The key ambitions for this strategy include:

- ↗ Increasing customer engagement.
- ↗ Improving our customer experience and range of self-service solutions.
- ↗ Ensuring that all employees have access to the IT solutions needed to undertake key tasks through digital self-service.
- ↗ Ensuring that all employees have the IT solutions needed to work efficiently and effectively.
- ↗ Rationalising the number of key IT solutions and ensuring that data can flow between solutions to create efficiencies.
- ↗ Reviewing all key solutions to ensure that they are fit for purpose and meet our business requirements.
- ↗ Creating business focused information to help drive good business decisions.
- ↗ Providing a secure IT environment that retains the confidentiality, integrity, and accessibility of all information.
- ↗ Ensuring that cloud technology and our move to agile working is considered for all new solutions.
- ↗ Expanding the use of Dynamics to centralise key data and processes.
- ↗ Keeping pace with new technology solutions that can be used to help drive efficiencies and improve customer service.

We will achieve this by:

- ↗ Improving digital services.
- ↗ Driving the consolidation and Integration of existing IT systems.
- ↗ Enhancing business intelligence (BI) and reporting.
- ↗ Continually improving IT security.
- ↗ Moving to a consolidated Dynamics platform and cloud solutions.
- ↗ Monitoring evolving technology.



People focused

Our ambition is to evolve towards a digital, self-service approach to accessing our services. This approach aims to increase the flexibility of services offered to both our customers and employees, by empowering people to self-serve at a time and location that suits them. The move to self-serve has the potential to provide significant value for money to the business.








It should be noted that although we will be investing in and promoting digital self-service to all customers, we will be adopting a 'digital by choice' approach to ensure that we remain inclusive.

To ensure that all digital solutions create efficiencies, provide flexible and easy to use processes, we will review and improve all self-service solutions used by employees.

We will ensure that all employees across the business have the training and confidence required to use the suite of IT solutions provided.

To keep pace with both technology and business requirements, we will ensure that our Information and Technology team undertake continual professional development.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

-  Improvements to our payment solutions to improve flexibility and the range of payment methods available for our customers by the end of 2023.
-  Supporting the Customer Involvement team with the implementation of a customer engagement solution by the end of 2023 and a customer insights solution by the end of 2024.
-  Improved functionality of our customer self-service solutions, to include planned works and property compliance information by the end of 2024.
-  Increased use of our customer focused self-service solutions year on year, for the life of this strategy.
-  All employees using digital self service solutions for key processes such as additional hours and expenses.
-  The creation of a role-based training programme for all employees.
-  Employing an efficient, motivated, and professional Information and Technology team.

To deliver on this objective we will:

- Collaborate with both the Customer and Communities and Communication teams to support the promotion of our customer focused self-service solutions.
- Integration of our key solutions to ensure that data is saved centrally, and is accessible via our self-service solutions.
- Review and implement new payment solution(s).
- Support the Customer involvement team to review and implement a customer engagement and customer insights solution.
- Improve our employee self service solutions to ensure that a flexible efficient solution is available to all employees.
- Review requirements for each role and develop a suitable baseline training programme to provide knowledge and confidence for all employees.
- Develop a Personal Development Plan for each member of the Information and Technology Team.

Ambitious

Over the life of this strategy, we will migrate all solutions and key infrastructure to cloud based solutions. Where possible, this will be achieved by moving data and processes into our platform of choice – Microsoft Dynamics.








The move to cloud-based solutions will provide us with the ability to work securely from any location, at any time. This modern, agile approach will ensure that we have a physical and virtual work environment which is inclusive and flexible for all employees.

We will continue to invest in appropriate solutions to drive digital change, and to ensure that we keep pace with technology. To ensure that we are able to take advantage of technological advancements, we will aim to keep up to date with modern technology trends and solutions.

We will review each key business solution to ensure that it is fit for purpose and meets both our current and future business needs. Whilst reviewing solutions, we will also review key processes to improve our working practices. All key processes will be documented and stored within a centralised business process mapping solution.

We understand that a significant amount of energy is used for the production and running of Orwell's IT provision, and this impacts our carbon footprint. Throughout the life of this strategy, we will ensure that we quantify the impact that our IT solutions have on the environment and where possible, take active steps to reduce our carbon footprint.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

-  Reviewing each key business solution to ensure that it is fit for purpose and meets our current and future needs by the end of 2024.
-  The digital requirements for each area of the business are captured with a view to working towards a unified data platform by the end of 2024.
-  Our file storage solutions comply with our data retention policies and meet our current and future needs by the end of 2025.
-  Implementing a centralised process mapping management solution by the end of 2025.
-  Reviewing, documenting, and collating all key business processes by the end of 2027.
-  Understanding and reducing our carbon footprint by the end of 2027.
-  All IT solutions moved to the cloud by the end of this strategy.

To deliver on this objective we will:

- Migrate our digital solutions to the cloud in a secure and methodical manner.
- Undertake a full review of our file and folder requirements whilst also investigating modern approaches to file and folder management.
- Review all key business solutions and the digital requirements for each team.
- Review, agree and document key business requirements from each team within the business.
- Review and implement a centralised process mapping management solution.
- Create a baseline for our existing carbon footprint and understand how we can work to reduce this.






Collaborative

We will use digital project teams, steering groups and regularly communicate with individuals and departments to ensure that a collaborative approach is taken for all new IT solutions.

To keep up to date with best practice, to learn from others and to share our own knowledge and experience, we will contribute and participate in a variety of sector or technology focused forums and working groups, such as Independent East and the Housing Information security forum.

When considering the use of innovative technology, we will be business led and ensure that any new technology solutions solve a business need. We will take a collaborative approach to the introduction of new technologies and ensure that partnership-working, and project teams are used to review and deliver solutions.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

-  Working with the Property and Construction team to review the use of Internet of Things (IoT) technology, with a view of trialling a solution in our properties before the end of 2025.
-  Reviewing how 5G functionality may provide additional business benefits to our remote working and agile employees by the end of 2025.
-  Undertaking a review of AI (Artificial Intelligence) and/or machine learning technology, with a view of trialling a solution before the end of 2026.
-  Reviewing how wearable tech could be used to support our existing Support and Care team to provide care services by the end of 2027.
-  Working with our Support and Care team and the Customer and Communities team to review how technology may be used to enable people to live independently within their own homes by the end of 2027.

To deliver on this objective we will:

- Collaborate with the Property and construction team to identify and trial the use of IoT devices to monitor and report on property assets.
- Collaborate with the Support and care team to review options and costings to upgrade our warden call provision within Extra Care.
- Collaborate with the Support and care team to review assistive technology solutions, with a view to enabling people to live independently.
- Collaborate with the Support and care team to review the progress of wearable technology and IoT relating to wellbeing.
- Create time and space both within the IT team and wider business to research and review new technology solutions.

Effective








Following the successful implementation of Microsoft Dynamics within the Customer Services team, we will continue to develop and expand the Dynamics platform to incorporate additional teams and business processes. The development of Dynamics will assist us to improve the service provided to our customers, create efficiencies for colleagues, allow us to centralise data and improve our ability to report on customer interactions and key business processes.

We will use digital solutions and services to assist the business to create value for money in all that we do. To rationalise the number of key solutions used, any data residing outside of our key business solutions will be consolidated into existing solutions.

Integration between solutions will be developed to increase the cohesion of information, centralisation of data and provide efficiencies.

Where possible, we will reduce the amount of print generated by the business. The reduction of print volume will create efficiencies within the business as well as reducing the impact that we have on the environment.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

-  All property and asset data plus any associated processes incorporated within our responsive repairs or asset management solutions by the end of 2023.
-  Increased functionality implemented within Dynamics, including key Customer Service and Housing Management processes, Temporary Supported Housing support, Tenancy sustainment, key tracking and Safeguarding by the end of 2024.
-  Key data centralised within the Dynamics platform and our data warehouse by the end of 2024.
-  Improved integration of key employee data such as HR, training, and payroll information by the end of 2024.
-  Consolidation and centralisation of all finance data and processes by Q2 2025.
-  Integration between our invoice approval solution and repairs solution to provide efficiencies by the end of 2025.
-  A reduction in the number of disparate solutions used across the business throughout the life of this strategy.

To deliver on this objective we will:

- Consolidation of all property repair and compliance data and processes within our centralised asset management solution.
- Expansion of Dynamics functionality to including key Customer Service and Housing Management processes, Temporary Supported Housing support, Tenancy sustainment, key tracking and Safeguarding.
- Integration of Property (Asprey), Repairs (Connect), Tenancy (Cx) and Care (PMS) data into Dynamics and/or our data warehouse for reporting.
- Support our People and culture team with the implementation of a new Human Resource Management solution.
- Support our finance team with the implementation of a new Finance solution.
- Work with the business to consolidate data and processes into the Dynamics platform or key business databases.








Effective - Cyber Security

To counteract the ever-increasing risk of cybercrime, we will take a proactive, risk-based approach to mitigating against cyber-attacks.





Cyber security is an important area for our business and as such, we have created a separate cyber security strategy which details how we will approach this area.

As we migrate to more cloud-based solutions, we will ensure that our security solutions remain fit for purpose. This includes a 'zero trust' or 'always verify' approach to ensuring the confidentiality, integrity and availability of our solutions and data.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

-  Reviewing ISO27001 cyber security principles and align our cyber security processes with ISO best practice and the NCSC Cyber Assessment Framework by the end of 2024.
-  Retention of our Cyber Essentials (or equivalent) accreditation throughout the life of this strategy.
-  The improvement of our overall cyber security maturity level, year on year for the life of this strategy.
-  Implementation of security principles and solutions to meet our cloud technology ambitions.
-  All Orwell employees understanding the importance of Cyber security.

To deliver on this objective we will:

-  Be an active member of information security forums and maintain good working relationships with cyber security specialists to ensure that awareness of the threat landscape is continually kept under review.
-  Review the ISO27001 cyber security principles and the NCSC Cyber Assessment Framework with a view to applying the appropriate best practice measures to our cyber security provision.
-  Review and implement a formalised and documented Information Technology Service Management (ITSM) approach to managing cyber security.
-  Review and implement a defence in depth approach to cyber security to protect our cloud based solutions.

Effective - Business Reporting

Good business intelligence, reporting tools and associated data must be available to our leadership team to enable good business decisions to be made.

We will undertake regular reviews of our reporting technology, methodologies and solutions to ensure that our reporting services meet our business needs.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

- Expansion of our existing data warehouse to include all key datasets.
- Organisational level dashboard/report which collates data from multiple sources to provide a snapshot for organisational KPI's by the end of 2023.
- Performance reports in place for all Directors, Managers and Head of Service by the end of 2023, with a view to expanding this to all leaders across the business by the end of 2024.

To deliver on this objective we will:

- Move our data warehouse into the cloud and ensure that key data from disparate solutions is located within the warehouse to expand our reporting functionality.
- Create performance reports for each team within the business.
- Create an organisational performance dashboard/report.
- Continually review our reporting solutions to ensure that they are fit for purpose.



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