Shropshire
Towns and Rural Housing

Better data, clearer *insight*

New Dawn

"New Dawn" a Data Strategy
for STAR Housing 2026 - 2028

Introduction

EVERYONE and ALL Systems

Data underpins every aspect of STAR Housing's work from keeping customers safe, to managing homes, meeting regulatory standards and demonstrating value for money on behalf of Shropshire Council.

Over recent years STAR has invested in new systems, strengthened governance arrangements and launched a wide-ranging programme of business transformation. However, the organisation recognises that good data is not delivered by systems alone. Data quality starts with people. Systems only support what people choose to do. Strength therefore lies in having clear partnerships between those who deliver services and those who enable, secure, and support systems.

This Data Strategy describes how STAR will place greater value on data as a key business asset and take a collaborative, organisation wide approach to data. It makes clear that EVERYONE has a role to play, with defined responsibilities, in ensuring data is accurate, trusted and used well across the whole organisation and every single system we use.

Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy aims to ensure that:

- **EVERYONE** in the business takes responsibility for good data treating it as a key business asset
- **EVERYONE** is trained in how to be data literate
- **EVERYONE** in the business will be performance managed according to how well they deliver their responsibilities for good data
- **EVERYONE IN THE BUSINESS** has confidence in the accuracy and completeness of STAR's data
- **EVERYONE** understands who is responsible for data across the organisation and there is clear ownership and accountability for data at service level with clearly defined roles and responsibilities at individual post level
- **EVERYONE** uses all STAR systems effectively and is well supported by IT expertise and strong, effective, controls
- **EVERYONE** produces consistent, reliable information for decision making and assurance and uses information effectively to improve services and manage risk
- **EVERYONE** is inspection ready at all times

Our Data Vision

"An organisation where Everyone takes responsibility for good data. Service Delivery and Support Teams work in partnership with IT owning and controlling data respectively, and leaders use trusted information to improve outcomes for customers."

The Data Strategy directly supports delivery of the STAR Corporate Plan and enables the organisation's wider strategies.

The New Dawn Partnership Model

At the heart of this strategy is a clear principle:

Good data relies on EVERYONE prioritising good data every day and all teams having a strong working partnership with IT, with clear segregation of responsibilities.

Service Teams are responsible for:

- The accuracy, completeness and timeliness of the data they create and use
- Defining what data is needed to deliver safe, compliant and effective services
- Defining the meaning of data items relevant to their service delivery and in the context of STAR as a whole.
- Working with IT to develop the systems to hold and report the data
- Using data to manage performance, risk and service improvement
- Identifying data issues and working with colleagues to resolve them
- Ensuring third parties who provide STAR with data do so in a timely manner and with high levels of accuracy

IT teams are responsible for:

- Providing secure, reliable and integrated systems
- Ensuring appropriate access controls, cyber security and resilience
- Supporting automation, validation and system-based data controls
- Enabling reporting, dashboards and insight tools
- Overseeing a programme of agreed quality assurance
- Robust change control ensuring full assessment and management of impacts across systems, data flows, and business processes for all operational change requests



The New Dawn Partnership Model

EVERYONE is responsible for:

- Taking personal responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of the data they create or update.
- Using STAR systems as intended, following standard processes and avoiding unnecessary workarounds and as well as keeping up to date with any changes in process and/or data definitions.
- Checking and challenging data that looks wrong, missing, or inconsistent rather than working around it or ignoring it.
- Keeping data up to date so it can be relied on for decisions, reporting, assurance, and regulation.
- Handling data responsibly and securely, in line with governance, confidentiality, and retention requirements.

This distinction ensures that:

- Data quality is not seen as an IT issue alone
- Service accountability is clear and visible
- Systems support good practice rather than compensate for poor process



The Three Pillars of the **New Dawn Data Strategy**

The STAR Data Strategy is built around three pillars, each reinforcing the partnership between people, governance and information.

Pillar 1

People and Culture

Building shared responsibility through partnership

Our ambition

STAR will foster a culture where data is the responsibility of EVERYONE, owned by services and supported by IT.

What this means in practice

- Every individual is clear on their specific role in data governance
- Service managers own and are accountable for the quality of their data
- IT is an enabling partner, not the owner of service data
- Staff understand how their actions affect data quality downstream
- Staff are diligent in the collection and stewardship of data
- Data issues are spotted quickly and addressed collaboratively

How we'll achieve this

- Embed clear expectations of data ownership
- Reinforce the role of IT as a strategic partner and enabler
- Align data responsibilities with job roles and management expectations
- Appoint digital champions throughout the business to support delivery of New Dawn aims
- STAR will train staff across the organisation to be data literate, enabling confident, responsible use of data in every role.
- Ensure that quality data forms part of everyone's performance management discussions



The Three Pillars of the **New Dawn Data Strategy**

The STAR Data Strategy is built around three pillars, each reinforcing the partnership between people, governance and information.



How we'll measure success

- Our data literacy baseline is quantified and well understood – by Autumn 2026 (HOP&C)
- 100% of People Trained in Data Literacy by end of Strategy period (HOP&C)
- Data literacy Training embedded in induction process by Summer 2027 (HOP&C)
- 100% of Job Descriptions updated to include post specific expectations around data governance by end of Year 1 (HOP&C)
- Master List of Data Governance Expectations per role embedded and maintained (HOCS)
- Data Quality Assurance performance forms a key role in Performance Management through incorporation into Balance Scorecard Reporting (HOCS)
- Digital Champions are in place covering each priority data set and are actively promoting good data behaviours throughout the organisation by Autumn 2026 (HOCS)
- Clear service level ownership of key datasets through an up to date Information Asset Owner Register (HOCS)

The Three Pillars of the **New Dawn Data Strategy**

The STAR Data Strategy is built around three pillars, each reinforcing the partnership between people, governance and information.

Pillar 2

Governance and Systems

Clear roles, clear rules, strong foundations, firm control

Our ambition

STAR will have clear data governance arrangements underpinned by systems that support, rather than obscure, service accountability and high levels of data quality.

What this means in practice

- Decisions about data standards, definitions and changes are transparent and controlled
- Services and IT understand where responsibilities begin and end
- Systems enforce controls where appropriate, without duplicating effort

How we'll achieve this

- Implement a robust change control framework for all data related processes and procedures throughout the business
- Introduce a robust quality assurance framework
- Cleanse and remove bad data
- Define Data Owner and Data Steward roles within Service Teams
- Ensure governance links data, risk, information governance and cyber security
- Ensure Policies, business processes and procedures are fully documented.



The Three Pillars of the **New Dawn Data Strategy**

The STAR Data Strategy is built around three pillars, each reinforcing the partnership between people, governance and information.

How we'll measure success

- 100% of System Changes are controlled by end of Strategy Period (IT)
- A programme of QA (Quality Assurance) routines will be in place for each key data set by end of Year 1 (IT and HOS)
- Each team will allocate QA resource which will operate on a peer to peer basis and will be embedded by end of the Strategy period. (IT and HOS)
- A routine of independent checks on KPI delivery is in place and delivering at least 80%+ Quality Assurance across the board (IT)
- We will review our Operational KPIs and identify a use case for each ensuring we are only monitoring that which adds value and are doing so accurately (HOS)
- We will identify and address gaps in our data and a programme of Data Cleansing work will be in place. with demonstrable delivery of results throughout the Strategy Period (IT)
- All Key business processes identified and mapped by end of Strategy period (IT)
- Ability to reconcile financial data between the core HMS and Primary finance system to 80% accuracy by end of Strategy period (HOF)
- All STAR templates and forms are cleansed, consistent and in the STAR tone of voice with base templates always used first time every time (All HOS)
- Engage a Data Protection Partner to oversee the security of our data by Summer 2026 (HOCS)



The Three Pillars of the **New Dawn Data Strategy**

The STAR Data Strategy is built around three pillars, each reinforcing the partnership between people, governance and information.

Pillar 3

Information and Reporting

Turning shared data into trusted insight

Our ambition

STAR will produce clear, consistent, and trusted information to support timely, evidence based decisions at all levels.

What this means in practice

- One agreed version of the truth
- Reporting that leaders trust and actively use to manage service delivery
- IT enabled dashboards that reflect service owned data
- Reporting that focusses only what the business needs to know to optimise service delivery and provide the best experience for customers

How we'll achieve this

- Agree corporate reporting standards and definitions
- Align service reporting with system-based data wherever possible
- Strengthen collaboration between service leads and reporting specialists
- Use insight to inform risk management, planning and assurance
- Streamline what we measure and report on and what we use to make business decisions
- Keep our system developments simple and straightforward
- Share our agreed approach to data meaning and data control widely

How we'll measure success

- A structured reduction in the reliance on unmanaged spreadsheets for core business data, through the adoption and effective use of agreed corporate systems as the single source of truth - by the end of the Strategy Period (HOS)
- The suite of reports is reduced to report on specific key data items and ad hoc reporting is minimised -by the end of the Strategy Period (IT)
- A commitment to ensuring that Key data sets are reflected to the business via (at least) trusted monthly refreshing dashboards – by end of Strategy Period (IT)
- Central Glossary of STAR Terms is in place giving common understanding of definition and meaning across the business – By Autumn 2026 (HOCS)
- Introduce meaningful and concise dashboard reporting, centred around a data platform, into monthly EMT and board reporting, reducing the need for lengthy word documents - by the end of the Strategy Period. (HOS)

In Summary

Across all three pillars, STAR's approach to data is grounded in clear principles: services own and are accountable for the data they use, while IT enables, secures and integrates systems to support the business. Accountability for data is explicit, collaboration across teams is expected, and data is treated as a tool to improve outcomes rather than an end in itself.

Delivering and Monitoring the Strategy

The Data Strategy will be delivered through the New Dawn delivery plan, aligned with service improvement and system change programmes. Progress and assurance will be provided through existing governance arrangements, including SMT, Board and Audit & Risk processes.

In Summary

STAR's Data Strategy makes one thing clear: good data is everybody's responsibility, delivered through partnership.

By clarifying roles between Service Teams and IT, and focusing on people, governance and information, STAR will build confidence in its data and strengthen its ability to deliver safe, compliant and high-quality services.

Shropshire
Towns and Rural Housing