 

**Barrhead Housing Association: Business Plan 2016-2019 (revised March 2018)**

**Our Vision:**

**Barrhead Housing Association believes that everyone deserves a secure home. We deliver secure homes by providing good quality, affordable, well maintained rented housing to people with a need to be housed. Our qualified staff team provide dedicated personal customer focused services locally from our office in the Main Street in Barrhead. We are committed to continuous improvement.**

CONTENTS PAGE

1. DRAFTING THE NEW PLAN – COMMUNICATIONS, KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND MARKETING Page 4
2. CONNECTING UP WITH OUR MISSIONS, OUR VALUES, OUR AIMS, AND OUR COMMUNITIES Page 5
3. OUR HISTORY Page 6
4. BUSINESS PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Page 7
5. OUR VISION, OUR AIMS, OUR VALUES AND OUR OVERALL OBJECTIVES Page 8-18
6. OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES Page 19
7. OUR OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES Page 20
8. OUR SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER AND KEY PERFORMANCE ACHIEVEMENTS Page 21-22
9. OUR LAST SURVEY RESULTS Page 23
10. VALUE FOR MONEY Statement Appendix E
11. OUR STAFF STRUCTURE Page 24
12. OUR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE Page 25
13. OUR FINANCES Page 26
14. OUR TOP RISKS Page 27-28
15. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS – SWOT and PESTLE Page 29-30
16. KEY APPENDICES
    1. Appendix 1 – Action plan for Strategic and Operational activities
    2. Appendix 2 – Departmental Work plans
    3. Appendix 3 – performance monitoring framework outturn for Charter/Performance Reports/benchmarking
    4. Budget 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19
    5. Value for Money statement, Sept 2016, Sept 2017
    6. 5-year cashflows
    7. 30-year Business Plan, April 2015 and independent review IS4, October 2015
    8. Policy review timetable
    9. LPS Business Plan 2015-2018 – TO BE REVIEWED August 2016
    10. Staff and Governing Board Development
    11. East Renfrewshire Council’s Strategic Housing Investment Plan
    12. ERC’s Single outcome agreement

DRAFTING THE NEW BUSINESS PLAN – COMMUNICATIONS, KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND FEEDBACK

This is our new Plan for the next three years. It comes on the back of a number of events, publications and internal changes affecting the way we work. These changes mean that we have to plan and development our service for the future with feedback from our customers and our staff being part of this conversation.

We would like to thank all customers who have taken the time to give us feedback through our various surveys, feedback forms, questionnaires, opens days and focus groups. This all helps to guide the Association through the difficult economic times and provides a focus for improvements for the future. We know that you want us to focus on our rents to ensure they continue to be affordable, consider value for money across all services, and provide more opportunities for participation.

Our staff are also involved in the business review process too. They are proud to work for the Association, show dedication loyalty and care for the work that we do and to you, our customers, we are here to help. They are also committed to providing the best services we can offer. They have given their ideas and suggestions to shape this new Business Plan.

We have five core values which we feel are important to how we perform – these are integrity, efficiency, responsibility, dependability and dedication – these will guide us through our work and we will use them to measure our achievements. We have provided in this Plan our key strategic objectives and operational objectives for the next three years based on this feedback. These are outlined in this Plan.

The future remains uncertain - the economic climate, increased devolved powers to the Scottish Government and especially welfare reform. But we have set out our aims in this Plan and look for opportunities to improve what we do and strengthen our longer term future. We will continue to work with our customers in order to get this right and we will do so by asking your advice and listening to what you want us to do. We will welcome your input in whatever way you think is appropriate so please feel free to speak to us at any opportunity – we are here to listen and respond. This Business Plan also takes on board the requirements from the Scottish Housing Regulator including their business planning recommended practice.

Claire Boyd, Chairperson

OUR AIMS

Adaptable – we are flexible and react to change

Dedicated – we care about our purpose

Respectuful – we are honest, respectful and trustworthy

**OUR MISSION: ‘*at the heart of our community-investing in your future'***

OUR AIMS- strive for excellence; continuous development; investment in our homes, our neighbourhood and our people; be responsive; grow our business

Responsive – we are efficient and accountable

Aspirational – we are forward thinking and committed to improvement

OUR HISTORY

Registered in 1986, the Association was set up as a locally controlled community housing association, with its foundations in the rehabilitation of the centre of Barrhead. Working in partnership with East Renfrewshire Council, the Association has steadily grown over the year with the refurbishment of stock, the completion of new build projects, and the transfer of homes from Scottish Homes in 2001. Our Rankin Way development was opened on 11th September 2001 by HRH Princess Anne – a day that turned out to be significant for other reasons.

The Association’s geographical area started to spread following the stock transfer when properties from Neilston and Thornliebank were included with the Scottish Homes transfer of 27 sheltered housing properties on the Main Street in Barrhead. All properties were quickly refurbished by the Association following the transfer. Over recent years, new build developments included the creation of Connor Road, a 12-unit supported accommodation project for young homeless people in 2008/9, the 65 new homes in Auchenback and the 24 flats in partnership with Persimmon at St Mary’s, Barrhead during 2009/10. Little development has been possible since then, although our stock numbers have continued to grow on a small scale. As of March 2015, we are about to start on-site with a 15 unit development at Darnley Road – this will become Rankin Court.

Like many housing associations, we became a charity in 2004 and created a private subsidiary company in 2011 to further the aims of the Association’s work, mainly but not exclusively to expand factoring services and create employment for our supported sheltered housing development. Today we have over 900 homes and factor over 260 properties including 2 commercial units within Barrhead.

Our governing Board is made up of local residents – tenants, residents, owners, housing and business professionals and support from the local councillor. Our new Rules, adopted in 2014, allow for 12 Board members. Governing Board members are unpaid and voluntary but are supported through personal and team development to ensure the right skills and experience are in place to guide the Association forward. The governing Board is responsible for the strategic direction of the Association and staff are employed to guide the Board and deliver the operational work of the Association. We have a dedicated and loyal hardworking team of 20 staff members, empowered to take responsibility for their tasks and for services to our customers. We encourage our staff team to contribute to improvements in service and to celebrate in the success of the organisation. We have Investors in People Silver accreditation and a good practice award for Investors in Young People, a standard that focuses on the recruitment and retention of young people through training and development. This demonstrates Barrhead Housing Association as an employer of choice for young people and the Silver accreditation demonstrates our commitment to care for our staff and a progressive approach to business improvement through people. We are proud of this achievement and will go for the Gold accreditation over the next three years.

We have worked to invest in our homes over the years but we also place the wider community regeneration equally important as we commit to making our communities safe, secure and good places to live now and in the future.

BUSINESS PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following is a summary of our key aims over the next three years. We will review progress against the strategic and operational objectives every six months with our Governing Board and will review the Business Plan annually during the next three year cycle. We will also review the risks against the objectives in line with Board reporting.

* We are spending significant amounts on our properties so we need to ensure that we know what we are spending, where we are spending and that we are spending in the most cost effective and efficient way.
* We need to continue to work positively with our tenants and have a strong customer focus, a good understanding of customer needs and expectations now and going forward
* that we positively engage with our customers to deliver services that are required and that in particular,we prepare well for the implementation of Universal Credit and further welfare reform changes
* We need to ensure we have the correct staff resources to deliver the services required, including welfare reform, fuel poverty and digital inclusion and work positively with our partners to avoid duplication and complimentary services
* Through robust financial control, financial planning and procurement , we need to ensure that we offer value for money and cost effective services across all areas of our business
* We have a strategy for growth which needs to be viable for our business and allows us to assess new and emerging opportunities for private finance
* We need to seek external funding opportunities to assist with the wider regeneration of our communitites and if applicable, adopt a partnership approach to assist our customers and grow our communities
* To ensure we have a clear, robust and alert assessment of the business risks we face and are likely to face over the Business Plan period.

Our Mission Statement

‘***At the heart of our community – investing in your future’***

Our Core Values:

The following core values are important to us and to the delivery of services to our customers. We believe they represent the values of our organisation and are used to attract like-minded people through recruitment of new staff

***Respectful – we are honest, trustworthy and reliable***

***Adaptable – we are flexible and react to change***

***Dedicted –we care about our purpose***

***Aspirational – we are forward thinking and committed to improvement***

***Responsive- we are efficient and accountable***

Our Aims

* Strive for excellence across the organisation
* Encourage our customers to get involved in our business
* Be accountable to customers and responsive to their aspirations and needs
* Invest in our properties to provide desirable, safe and secure homes
* Provide quality homes that are affordable for our customers and our overall business
* Provide value for money and be cost aware across all services delivered
* Work in partnership to meet our objectives
* Build new affordable homes if financially viable
* Create opportunities for employment, training and support for our people, particularly our young people and our wider community
* Improve the quality of our customers’ lives
* Grow and expand our subsidiary to further the aims of the Association

OUR overall OBJECTIVES

***What we want to do:***

* ***Create communities that fit the needs and aspirations of our customers***
* ***Create desirable neighbourhoods by investing in our homes***
* ***Be responsive by developing and improving all areas of our work***
* ***Strive for excellence across the organisation***
* ***Grow our business, our communities and our people***

***How we want to do it:***

* ***Empower our people to lead the changes we need to make***
* ***Deliver value for money and sound finances***
* ***Deliver personal services to our customers in a ‘can do’ way***
* ***Be flexible and adaptable to our changing environment***
* ***Prepare for new opportunities***

Create communities that fit the needs and aspirations of our customers

**Fair and equal access to services and advice:** every tenant and customer has their individual needs recognised, is fairly treated and with respect. We monitor ethnicity of existing tenants and housing applicants and work with a range of specialist agencies to ensure fair and equal access to services. We offer ‘Happy to Translate’ services for interpretations, and translations where this is required.

**Housing options and access to social housing:** tenants and people on the housing lists can review their housing options. We ensure that people at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness. We are part of the East Renfrewshire Housing Register, which provides a one-stop shop to providing information and advice on housing options. It also allow applicants to complete one single housing application to allow access to housing available by the three partners – Barrhead HA, Arklet HA and East Renfrewshire Council. People looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice for social housing available and get the information they need on how we allocate homes and their prospects of being housed.

**Quality of housing for re-let:** when a property becomes empty, we ensure it is brought up to a high standard before being let. We carry out safety checks, clean the property and repair any defects. We produce an energy efficiency certificate for each void and this allows us to assess the energy performance of each property.

**Estate management services and** improvements – deal with anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes: our tenants and other customers live in well –maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe. We work in partnership with other agencies on estate management issues including Council services and the Police Scotland. We monitor and record complaints by category and work within locally agreed targets for resolving cases.

**Tenancy Sustainment:** tenants need to get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their homes and we work with other agencies to provide this support. We support our sheltered housing residents, provide much needed medical adaptations to homes, and provide support services with a number of agencies to help vulnerable people remain in their homes

**Minimise the impact of welfare reform – advice on money, benefits and debt –** we have our own dedicated staff member, Jen Wearing, who will provide advice on welfare benefits and changes with the introduction of Universal Credit. We work with local partners on ensuring a co-ordinated approach to services being provided and information being available. This includes the HERO project, run by Citizens Advice Bureau, where tenants can help to complete applications on-line, and an agreement with the local Credit Union to promote membership and allow direct payments of rent from Universal Credit.

**Provide advice on energy efficiency, and fuel poverty:** we have a dedicated energy advisor working with the Association currently and the post provides advice and assistance on home energy assessments, fuel tariffs, tips for the home etc. So far a few energy saving tips and fuel switch options, can result in savings of over £300 per annum.

**Housing and Health – getting older – sheltered housing and support:** we have a dedicated housing support service which is registered with the Care Inspectorate for our sheltered housing complex of 27 self-contained properties. We offer a range of additional support in partnership with other agencies to ensure our residents maintain their independence and look after their health – these include physical activity classes, computer classes, cooking classes etc. We will be working with our local partners on helping to re-shape services for housing, health and social care going forward. We offer properties with support for a range of other specialist services including homeless accommodation for young people, support to people with disabilities, and women’s supported accommodation

**Work with partners to ensure we share what services are available – cafes, creative arts, signing, IT, physical health, etc.**

Create desirable neighbourhoods by investing in our homes

**Focus on Repairs**: tenants’ homes need to be well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required and tenants give reasonable choices about when work is done. We are working now with a single contractor to give more certainty over costs and drive up improvements in performance over the next three years. We offer most repairs via appointments to suit our tenant’s busy lives and we will use feedback from our customers to make improvements in services for the future.

**Investment in our stock through planned and cyclical repairs**: we have a 30 year cycle of planned investment in our stock that is based on the life cycle of each component like the kitchen and bathroom. However we also review the future housing need and demand for our properties to ensure that we are investing in the correct things. We are due to complete a review of this asset management strategy during 2015/16.

**Investment in energy efficient measures for the buildings**: we have been completed energy performance certificates for some years and this provides for an assessment of how energy efficient our properties are. We have been installing new energy efficient boilers, increased loft insulation, new double glazed windows, and more recently internal and external wall insulation. However, during 2015/16 we will be required to report on the energy efficiency standard of our properties to the Scottish Housing Regulator and we will provide more details to our tenants.

**Estate and Handyperson services:** as part of our review of services, and feedback from tenants, we are to give consideration to employing a handy person service to carry out basic low level repairs, to consider estate litter, and refuse bin management across the estates. We will work with our Tenant Scrutiny Panel to develop this project further.

**Environmental services** – bulk uplifts, garden services, stair and window cleaning. We are using our complaints feedback to consider improvements in the way we deliver these services as they are really important to our customers and to the physical appearance of our properties. It is important that we get value for money and quality services from the contractors for these areas and we will continue to review these services.

Be responsive by developing and improving all areas of our work

**New IT, new staff structure** – it is important that we adapt services for the future and we have invested significant resources into installing a new IT system and creating a one-stop shop for customers through our customers services team. We need to develop this further and use technology to improve services for reporting and analysing data but also for improved services to tenants for the future.

**External application for funding**: we have been successful in looking at successful projects that through external funding make a difference to the wider economic regeneration of our communities. Such activities have included our successful arts-based projects, our employability projects, our cookery classes, and more recently our dedicated welfare rights and energy efficiency projects. We will continue to work with our residents to look at improvements that consider employment, training, health, and improving services for our older population. Where we can, we will apply for external funding.

**Communications, engagement and participation:**  we encourage participation and engagement in all that we do. We carry out consultation on rent reviews, service policies, satisfaction surveys for repairs and other services, and have carried out focus groups on specific items including repairs, choices for planned maintenance works, and have also worked with our tenant’s organisations and our Tenant Scrutiny Panel. We work with our partners including Auchenback Resource Centre, Neilston Development Trust, and Voluntary Action-East Renfrewshire to help shape improvement in services where we can. Sometimes our Open Days are not well attended but in 2014 we held a Tea Dance with music, dance, a vintage tea, and a bake off, and invited a range of partners to attend the event – this was a great success and residents have asked for more events of this nature.

**Encourage feedback, compliments, suggestions and complaints to drive improvement:** we implemented a new complaints policy in 2012 and have used this comprehensive feedback to re-shape services. We welcome feedback where these are compliments or improvements and we see this as a positive way to make change.

Strive for excellence across the organisation

**Performance driven improvement**: we use the Scottish Social Housing Charter to provide information on how we perform on a wide range of services and we also compare our achievements with other landlords within our sector. The first Annual Return on the Charter completed for results from 2013/14 show that in many areas we perform well above the average across the sector – this includes achieving the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, average emergency and non- emergency response times for repairs, first time fix for repairs, repair appointments, lost rent on empty homes, total rent arrears, and overall satisfaction from our customers as a landlord. We will use this Charter information to work with our tenants to make further improvements.

**Deliver personal services to our customers in a ‘can do’ way:** we are committed through our staff re-organisation to develop our one-stop shop for customer services to ensure that staff deliver a personal service and to adopt a ‘can do’ attitude to improving standards and services across the organisation. We will continue to use our customer feedback to re-shape and improve services to meet the aspirations of our customers wherever possible.

**Affordable rents and service charges**: our feedback from tenants indicates that customers want value for money. We are reviewing our long term business plan to consider what rent increases we can afford as this relates to our costs. We have now embarked on a rent harmonisation exercise which will see a re-alignment of our rent setting structure with some rents coming down and some rents increasing over a 10-year period. We continue to benchmark and compare our rents with other landlords and issue a rent review questionnaire to every tenant every year – we use this information to report to our governing Board when setting the budget each year. We are committed to listening to our customers while reviewing all our costs. Through re-shaping services at the sheltered housing complex we have reduced service charges over the last three years while maintaining high levels of services including support services and high standards required by the Care Inspectorate.

**Our internal audit process to drive efficiency, performance and improved service delivery:** we are now focusing internal audit to drive organisational improvements and during 2014 have used external consultants as a ‘critical friend’ to help us implement a new repairs policy, procedure and single contractor. The main reason for moving to a single term contractor is for cost control – to drive down costs, while continuing to deliver a high quality repairs service. We believe this type of contract will see a reduction in our overall costs, however working with a new contractor will take time to bed in. The contract is in place for three years. This is a big move away from a list of approved contractors covering different trades, so will take time to get absolutely right. Going forward we have identified a need for internal audit to guide improvements in our factoring service, our repairs processes, and our overall business risks.

**Quality investment of our housing stock**: the government has set standards for housing associations to meet – these include the 2015 Scottish Housing Quality Standard and more recently the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing. We use our asset management strategy for investment to improve the quality of our stock and to ensure that we are investing in the right areas. The SHQS standard has been met with a few exceptions where in mixed tenure tenements owners have not been willing to pay for improvements, for example in new door entry systems. The new EESSH will consider increased standards on the energy performance of our properties and we will work with the new targets to improve our stock condition and ultimately make our properties more economical to heat and save tenants money on fuel consumption.

**High standards for repairs and maintenance for all homes both internally and external environment: W**e spend a great deal of money investing in the routine repairs as well as planned repairs for the future. We set targets for performance targets with our contractors and monitor performance regularly. We expect high standards of service in the quality, cost and in customer satisfaction from our contractors, and this includes both the internal property repairs and external environmental repairs including landscape maintenance and close cleaning. We continue to monitor and review these standards.

Grow our people

**Empower our people to lead the change we need to make:** our staff are keen to work to our values, to be trained to deliver our high standards, be fully involved and influence the strategic direction of the organisation. We aim to be a fair and equal employer, to recognise and reward excellence in the workplace, and to celebrate performance achievements. Though regular review of our business, we identify key targets for individual staff members to achieve.

**Be an employer of choice**: our staff have set out core values which state what is important to promote what we are, and also to promote the Association as an employer where staff can build a career in housing. We have been accredited through Investors in People since 2009 achieving the Silver Standard in 2015. This standard measures our commitment to empowering our staff team to develop our business, by being fully part of celebrating the successes we have achieved, and allowing our staff team to collectively plan our future direction. We also achieved a good practice award for our recruitment and development of young people, under the Investors in Young People standard. We were award winners in 2014 under the East Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Performing Business award, and we also hold the Gold Award for Healthy Working Lives.

**Use leadership and development programmes to train our managers, staff and future leaders:** we have a detailed appraisal system which allows staff to consider the future development of their housing career and we use our training and development budget to promote opportunities for training and qualifications where this is appropriate. While we are a small organisation, it is difficult to therefore allow progression within the staff team so we have promoted other opportunities for personal development including secondments and job shadowing.

**Invest in new technologies:** in order to deliver better services for our customers, we need to develop our new computer systems, to achieve better reporting and analysis of data. We are striving to reduce the amount of paperwork we hold by investing in electronic storage, and have considered mobile technologies to make our governing Board more efficient. We need to continue this investment for staff and to include mobile technology which will improve the way we work when we are also out and about dealing with our customers.

**Invest in our office accommodation ensuring it is big enough and has the right equipment**: we upgraded our office in 2008, and are now in the process of expanding the office accommodation following the purchase of a flat above the office. We plan to integrate this first floor property into the office accommodation providing more office space and a better/bigger staff room to accommodate our team. We will re-organise staff teams during this to provide more space within each department.

**Encourage participation in our services, our work, our governing Board**: being a voluntary governing Board member is a big ask, so we work with our new members to allow them time to develop as an effective member of the governing board team. We provide induction and training and now carry out annual appraisals to obtain feedback and plan ahead. We have a wide range of skills on our Board and this includes retired housing professional and local business professionals too. We have representation on our governing Board from East Renfrewshire Council. We also work in partnership with a range of third sector organisations, and consider appropriate partnerships.

Consider our wider community responsibilities to create healthier, wealthier, safer places to live that are sustainable for the longer term

Grow our business, considering value for money and sound financial planning and control

**Future growth and investment**: we are committed to considering the delivery of new affordable homes where it is economically viable to do so – this will depend on site constraints, subsidy available, a risk assessment, and availability of private finance. We will keep abreast of opportunities for loan funding for the sector. We will invest in our properties to ensure they are well maintained and upgraded through a planned programme of improvements.

**Wider economic and government risks and challenges**: we will continue to provide advice and information on the changes that welfare reform brings including the introduction of Universal Credit, we will assess the risks to our business of these changes. We will look at opportunities for joint partnership work and sharing of services where this benefits our customers.

**Value for money** – we will look at new strategies and good practice for reviewing services on a value for money basis, looking at where we spend money, how much we spend and whether we can make efficiencies across our business on the delivery of services. We will use external procurement of contracts for both the organisation and in partnership with other housing associations where such procurement benefits our customers. This will include an analysis of the benefits of such joint procurement and partnerships including FLAIR and IFLAIR contracts and projects. We will share services where opportunities arise and customers benefit.

**Short, medium and long term finances:** we will take a robust assessment of all our costs starting with our budget process, and have our longer term assumptions and plan validated by external consultants to ensure they meet our financial commitments. We will take treasury and investment advice where required and have continue with a robust approach to identify and mitigate against the risks we face or potentially face. We will work with our internal and external auditors to improve our financial controls and strengthen our business.

**Our risk strategy**: we consider ourselves to be largely risk averse but there may be opportunities for us to reduce this risk to grow the business providing we are able to identify and control the risks we may face. We always identify the top risks and ensure these become part of our business planning and routine planning and reporting framework. We will seek advice where this is required on the options and risks we may face before making decisions.

Be flexible and adaptable to our changing environment and responsive to new opportunities

**New challenges**: we will review the changes required of new legislation, of new Regulatory guidance and recognised good practice to ensure we keep up-to-date and can assess what steps we need to take internally to meet these new challenges. We will equip our staff through training and development to meet these new challenges.

**Future growth, investment and opportunity:** we want to continue to grow our business, so will consider partnership working, external funding and the requirements of regulation where required to make this possible. We will conclude the purchase of subsidised properties via our Rent Off the Shelf scheme, mortgage to rent scheme and where practical and economic to consider open market sales where this fits with our business strategy. We will look at sector wide opportunities for improvement to services including energy efficiency, new funding for social housing, etc.

**Future growth and investment in our subsidiary** – we will review our governance arrangements for our subsidiary, expand our factoring services to provide good quality information, advice and service opportunities to meet the needs and aspirations of our owners. We will use our subsidiary to further the aims of the Association using employment and training opportunities to deliver services in a different and more cost effective way.

**Development of good practice**: we will use internal audit to improve our overall organisation, procure external consultants to develop our business, our policy development and our future strategy where necessary to equip our staff. We will share projects across FLAIR partners where this benefits the organisation and our customers.

Our Strategic Objectives 2016-2019, updated March 2018

1. We will review assumptions, trends, and historical data to ensure our asset management strategy is updated by October 2018
2. We will actively listen to our customers and offer a ‘can do’ approach to the aspiration of our customers.
3. We will review and annually update in September each year, our Value for Money Statement which is based on understanding our costs, our performance, benchmarking information and the demands on our resources.
4. We will support financial advice and service improvements to help minimise the impact of changes to social security reforms including Universal Credit roll out by September 2018
5. We will complete a feasibility report on growth by August 2018 to determine the delivery of new affordable homes where economically and financially viable over the next 3 years to reach our 1000th home.
6. We will support, develop and reward our staff to maintain our status as an employer of choice, maintaining current accreditations especially for the employment and training of young people, maintaining Investors in People silver accreditation throughout 2018/19
7. Maintain the highest standards of governance - review Board skills and experience to ensure retention and succession of governing Board members by end of December 2017 – prioritise this area to discuss succession planning, skills audit, governance review of SHR standards, teambuilding.
8. We will develop a 2-year Business Plan for LPS subsidiary by 31st May 2018.

Our Operational objectives 2016-2019, updated march 2018

1. We will review our service for reactive and void repairs by 31st March 2019.
2. We will develop a 1-year and 5-year IT development strategy to plan future investment, improved data reporting, performance and ultimately improved services for our customers by May 2018 and March 2019
3. We will reduce factoring debts to £24,000 by 31st March 2019
4. We will review our current wider community regeneration strategy outcomes and resources by Sept 2018
5. We will review our Social Housing Charter outcomes and our Performance Reports with a commitment to continuous monitoring, evaluation and performance improvement, each year
6. We will complete a tender for a new 3-year internal audit programme by April/May 2018
7. We will review the development of our data processing map and action plans to meet the requirements of GDPR by 25th May 2018
8. We will review the effectiveness of our estate resident safety action plan in consultation with all stakeholders by 31st March 2019

Our Social Housing charter and performance achievements 2016/17 and 2017/18 – benchmarking updates where available

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| indicator | Barrhead HA  2016/17 | BHA  2017/18 | FLAIR AVERAGE  2016/17 | SCOTTISH AVERAGE 2016/17 | EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL 2016/17 |
| Rent increase | 2% |  | 1.72% |  | 4.9% |
| Average weekly rents  1 apt  2 apt  3 apt  4 apt  5 apt | £44.03  £69.66  £83.97  £88.72  £108.93 | £61.75  £73.72  £86.46  £92.55  £112.90 | 50.31  72.90  80.61  84.87  101.08 | 66.55  71.67  73.13  79.42  88.02 | 58.90  61.97  71.15  79.71  81.65 |
| Meeting SHQS | 98.2% | 98.4% | 95.6% | 93.6% | 97.2% |
| Meeting EESSH | 50.6% | 79.6% | 73.5% | 75% | n/a |
| Emergency repairs | 2.3 hours | 2.29 hours | 1.8 hours | 4.7 hours | 2.6 hours |
| Non-Emergency repairs | 4.92 days | 5.15 days | 4.4 | 7.1 | 5.4 |
| First time fix repairs | 78.3% | 81.7% | 91.2% | 92.4% | 95.3% |
| Repair appointments kept | 90.7% | 97.8% | 96.1% | 95.7% | 99.1% |
| Gas Safety | 100% | 100% | 99.9% | n/a | 100% |
| % rent collected | 100.8% | 100.27% | 101.2% | 99.6% | 102.4% |
| Rent loss | 0.29% | 0.37% | 0.59% | 0.9% | 0.9% |
| Time to re-let | 13.4 days | 17.43 days | 22.3 days | 31.5 | 45.7 |
| Total rent arrears | 2.9% | 3.07% | 4.4% | n/a | 6.7% |
| Overall Satisfaction level | 94% | 94% | 94% | 89.7% | 81.6% |
| Keeping tenants informed | 99% | 99% | 99.2% | 91.1% | 85.2% |
| Opps to participate | 95.7% | 95.7% | 97.2% | 83.8% | 80.4% |
| Repairs satisfaction | 82.3% | 92% | 91.1% | 90.6% | 87.1% |
| Rent – good value for money | 94.3% | 94.3% | 93.2% | n/a |  |

Our last survey results

## We carried out our last comprehensive survey in July 2016 with 349 customers. It is worth highlighting the main findings of the survey as highlighted by our Landlord Report in August 2016

* **94%** said they were satisfied with the **overall service** it provided, compared to the Scottish average of 88.1%.
* **99.1%** felt that your landlord was good at **keeping them informed** about its services and outcomes compared to the Scottish average of 89.3%.
* **95.7%** of tenants were satisfied with the **opportunities to participate** in your landlord􀂶s decision making, compared to the Scottish average of 79.6%. This decreased from 98% for BHA in our 2011 survey.
* **82.3%** of tenants were satisfied with our **repairs and maintenance services**, from repairs reported in the last 12 months – this is down from 93% in our last survey. Dissatisfaction from tenants in Neilston and Thornliebank was highest.
* **92.3%** of tenants were satisfied with the **quality of their home**
* **100%** of tenants were satisfied with the **quality of their new home**
* **94.3%** of tenants thought rents represented good or fairly good **value for money** – with 42% thought this was neither good nor bad
* **90.5%** of tenants were satisfied with **the management of their neighbourhood**
* **63%** of tenants have access to **internet**, although 54% accessed this using a mobile device, and 44% using the internet from home.
* **38%** of customers said they had a **disability or a long term illness**
* In relation to affordability of **heating bills**, more respondents said they found it very or fairly easy to afford electricity or gas bills for their home (20.8%) than found it very or fairly difficult to afford (26.6%). The remaining 52.6% said it was just about affordable.

Our Staff Structure

**Top Team**

Shirley Robison, Chief Executive (Sept 2005)

Helen Sutherland, Director of Corporate Services (May 2009)

Lorraine Dallas, Director of Customer Services (April 2016)

James Ward, Director of Asset Management (Nov 2015)

**Team Structure**

**Corporate Services Department** **Customer Services Department**

Corporate finance officer, Kathryn Brady (p/t) Customers Service Manager, Jen McCann (temp)

Corporate finance assistant, Karen Devon Customer Services Officers - Jackie McColl, Sandra Nelson and Julie Stewart

Customer Services Assistants – Maxine Dock, Siobhan Cannon (repairs)

Income Maximisation and Welfare Officer – Vivien Beveridge

IT Business and Support Officer – Greta McPhail (p/t)

Customer Services Admin Assistant – Jade Byers

Receptionist – Nicola Roy

Housing Support Assistant, sheltered housing – Lyanne McBryan (p/t)

**Property Services Department**

Property Manager, Janice Peters

Community Regneration Officer Bryan Dando (shared)

Project Co-ordinator, Dianne Millare (Temp- Aspiring Communities/Dunterlie)

Property Assistant LPS, Emily Connell (p/t)

Energy Advisor, Amanda Kean (p/t)

Repairs Operative, LPS, Richard Anderson

Our Governance Structure

**Barrhead Housing Association’s Governing Board members:**  **Our Subsidiary, Levern Property Services, Board members:**

Claire Boyd, Chairperson, (2006-2012), Aug 2016 John Hamilton, Chairperson (elected Feb 2017)

Rena McGuire, BEM Vice Chair from 2016

Brian Connelly, MBE, Secretary, from 2002 Laura Hendry, from Dec 2014

David McCready, from June 2010 Andy Dunlop, from April 2017

Michael Mukhtar, from June 2011 Joseph Mc Gribben, from April 2017

Laura Hendry, from Dec 1997

John Hamilton, from August 2014

Drew McKinney, from Sept 2015

Chris Baird, from Sept 2015

Tommy Reilly, from June 2017

Beth Welsh, from Aug 2017

Councillor Annette Ireland, from Jan 2018

**Board Structure**

Board members receive full induction, training and continuous development, annual appraisals are also carried out.

Full Governing Board, meets monthly. Positions are voluntary and unpaid but expenses are provided. Meetings are generally in the evenings. Board members participate in our wider partnership meetings across FLAIR. A governance handbook is provided.

Audit and Risk Sub-Group, quarterly

Development Working Group, as required

Staff and Health and Safety Working Group, meets twice per year

Levern Property Services meets quarterly

Our Finances

We operate by looking at our finances over the short-term (our annual budget), medium term (our 5-year plans) and the long term (our 30 year Plan). The budget is set in February each year, following rent consultation with our customers and discussion with our Tenant Scrutiny Panel. We update our 5-year plans every year also as this is submitted to the Regulator. The longer term Plan is updated normally every two years and we are now in the process of having our current 30-year Plan validated by an external consultant. The consultant will look at the assumptions we have used going forward, what we plan to spend on the investment in our stock, and how we plan to grow, and what the final figures look like 30 years down the line. This is obviously a bit more difficult to predict. As part of the reviewing our longer term plans, we look at testing the plan against certain changing assumptions, for example, what rent increase we apply, or what interest rate we apply for our private loans, etc. With the changes that welfare reform is making, we are also testing our assumptions for this with increasing voids and bad debts, impact on our cashflow and rent arrears, and consider the impact of Universal Credit. We have looked at some of these areas and would provide the following summary of what effect using different assumptions make:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Financial Projections 2015-2018** | **2015-16**  **YR 1** | **2019-20**  **YR 5** | **2024-25**  **YR 10** | **2029-30**  **YR 15** | **2034-35**  **YR 20** | **2039-40**  **YR 25** | **2044-45**  **YR 30** |
|  | £000s | £000s | £000s | £000s | £000s | £000s | £000s |
| **Projected Year- End Cash Balance, assuming 2% rent increase throughout the plan** | 1,955 | 2,364 | 3,177 | 3,799 | 6,730 | 13,144 | 20,301 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Projected Year End Cash Balance after:** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 0.8% reduction in rent increase From Year 2 | 1,955 | 2,046 | 1,584 | -242 | -1,488 | -983 | -1,809 |
| 1.0% increase in rent increase From Year 2 | 1,955 | 2,777 | 5,309 | 9,370 | 17,979 | 32,948 | 52,324 |
| Void and Bad debts increased to 1.5% / 2.5% from Year 2 | 1,955 | 2,222 | 2,881 | 2,756 | 4,761 | 10,649 | 19,304 |
| Libor rates increased:  Year 2 – 1.5%, Year 3 – 2%, Year 4 – 2%, Year 5 – 1% | 1,955 | 2,195 | 2,954 | 3,525 | 6,417 | 12,809 | 19,949 |

Our top risks updated 2017

It is really important that the Association can identify and control the risks we face now and potentially in the future. We do this by regularly reviewing our risk management strategy and up-dating a risk matrix. This is then reviewed by our senior team and our governing Board regularly. We generally believe that we are a risk-averse organisation – this can be prudent and cautious but can also hold us back when considering new opportunities. We regularly review both internal risks of delivering our business plan and we keep abreast of our changing economic and financial climate, the legal framework within which we operate and the regulatory guidance we receive. Over recent years, we have been considered low engagement by the Regulator – they will review our engagement every year based on the performance data and financial plans we provide to them. We will continue to monitor our overall strategy going forward and we have updated our Risk Management Strategy and risk framework with external consultants Arneil Johnston and FLAIR during 2016/17. For the period of this plan, our top risks have been identified as follows:

* Social Security reform and the introduction of Universal Credit – this will potentially put pressure on our cashflow as we receive a large amount of housing benefit and will potentially increase our rent arrears and our bad debts.
* Building new homes – while there is more grant subsidy available, it is still not sufficient to meet all the costs. The financial borrowing market is also becoming more competitive for short tem borrowing and differnet options are being made available. Our new build costs at Rankin Court were be met from existing resources but longer term growth will depend on our ability to borrow.
* Repairs Service – our single term contract has not been as robust as we woult have liked and we have continued to review this contract and the way we deliver our repairs service. We will review our Charter indicators for repairs regularly and have put in place improvement plans where required with contractors. We wish to progress our in-house repairs service to look at better performance, better quality of service, higher customer satisfaction and lower costs.
* IT and communications – IT resource updates have been delivered at significant investment and over time deliver better performance reporting, allow us to analysis results for future planning, better reporting for our Charter outcomes and trends, our governing Board, and ultimately service improvements to our customers. The ability to attract an internal staff resource has finally been fulfilled during August 2017 with a new part-time post in place.
* To review our 30-year corporate plan and asset management plan to ensure compliance with SHQS and EESSH, and integrate this with investment planning and financial planning using Brixx financial model. This risk relates to our ability to up-date fully our asset management plan during 2017/18 which is now a priority.
* To consider longer term financial plans and robust scenario testing via Brixx modelling is critical to ensure our assumptions for investing in our properties is robust, related to a review of our costs, and demand for housing now and in the future. Longer term planning -should include a review of our staff pension liabilities annually and especially at each triennial review (next one Sept 2018), an annual update on our treasury management arrangements and quarterly covenant compliance reports to the Board.
* Factoring debts for our subsidiary – as the main source of income for the subsidiary, a robust plan for debt improvement and income maximisation is necessary. Our business plan for LPS will consider growth and diversification to further the aims of BHA. This will include reviewing our we deliver services including employment initiatives, social enterprise activity where cost effective, and growth of factoring services to owners
* To consider a robust performance framework for planned, cyclical improvements – reviewing contracts where appropriate and monitoring cost and satisafaction levels.
* To consider the withdrawal of East Renfrewshire Housing Register – as Eat Renfrewshire Council consults on choice based lettings, BHA will need to review internal arrangements to establish effect online arrangements for future prospective applicants, our allocations policy and resources. This however will allow us to properly plan for future housing supply based on accurate information.
* To actively consider FOI extension to include housing associations and also new general data protection legislation – the latter due in place by May 2018. FOI expected to apply to RSL 2018/19 – BHA has approved the publications policy and has an action plan for ensuring all is in place.

At March 2017 we re-assessed our top risks to include the following:

* GDPR – to be fully conversant with legislation for implementation 25.05.18
* Fire safety review of all estates – to systematically review the fire safety risks with our residents
* Governance review – identify skills gaps, appraisals, and succession planning before August 2018 AGM
* Support to Chief Officer – through appraisal process being conducted with support from external consultant
* Universal Credit – to be prepared for roll out Sept 2018; review impact on staff resources; work with partners to ensure smooth transition
* LPS subsidiary – recruit new members; review resources and capacity; review QL factoring module; review/set new target for factoring arrears; review costs of services
* Long term finance – complete update to Brixx to include effective scenario testing; external validate Brixx financial model; update geographical reporting; progress private finance tender for new projects
* Development of new housing – effective partnership with ERC/SHIP process; assessment of financial viability for each project and risk
* IT and communications – minimise the risk of cyber attack by adequate external testing
* Property Services – complete the Asset Management Strategy; approve an action plan for next stage; complete and deliver stock condition report; review supervision and management of in-house repairs service

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS, updated March 2018**

In reviewing the previous Business Plan, all staff and members of the Governing Board attend review days to discuss the successes of the last year and consider the main priorities for the coming period. Further discussions take place with the whole staff team to report back on the priorities identified. Senior staff has also reviewed the SWOT analysis. In addition, senior staff discussed changes with Governing Board on the external environmental analysis, which would affect the operating position and plans of the Association. The following PESTLE (political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental) analysis and SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis emerged:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Strengths Weaknesses** | | **Opportunities Threats** | |
| Strong, supportive leadership  Hard working senior team  Loyal hardworking committed staff team  Adaptable to change/aspirational  Supportive council representation  Track record to deliver new housing  Lenders compliance  Increasing independence of LPS Board  Risk aware/averse  Good effective partnership working  Good Care inspection  Staff development  IIP silver award  IIP young people’s good practice award  Experienced Governing Board  Enhanced reputation  Strong customer focus  High satisfaction levels from tenants  Good performance against the charter  Financial strength  30-year Plan reviewed by independent consultant  Community-led locally based Accountable approach to sustainable communities  Gold Healthy working lives award  Community Regen Strategy  Ability to attract external funding  Employment/training opportunities  Added value services for tenants and owners  Good staff incentives  Current website and social media  In-house repairs service  In-house IT resource  FLAIR partnership | Better dept’al communications  Increasing debts  Threat to rental income due to UK welfare reform/UC  SHQS target  QL still developing  ERHR’s withdrawal for applicants  Keeping rents affordable  Cost control –single term contractor  Monopoly of gas contractor  EESSH strategy/cost assessed  Fuel Poverty  Increasing condensation within homes difficult to heat  Assessment of VAT registration  Lack of local political support for RSL new build  Inability to compete on stock transfers  Unpopularity of certain Dunterlie Streets  Resident safety issues | Growth via subsidiary  Growth via increased subsidy  Rent off the shelf buy-backs  External funding  Further partnership with local agencies  Procurement/partnering  Website communications/subsidiary  Expand BHA TV  Technological advances  Opportunity to sell our services  Improvements to efficiencies  IFLAIR investment  Brixx financial modelling  Adaptable staff team – creation of one-stop shop customer approach  QL development to mobile working  Partnership working with ERC  Integrated health and social care  Partnership with wider third sector  Promote living wage accreditation  Promotion of participatory budgeting/success stories  Aspiring Communities funding  De-register Support  Allocations process in-house  Feasibility study – sheltered H | UK Welfare reform/reduction in HB/increasing homelessness and rent arrears  Universal Credit –inability to pay  Inflation/interest rate rises  Impact of current economic  Public sector cuts  Brexit uncertainties  Former tenant rent arrears  Loss of income on cashflow  Factoring debts  Pension investment vulnerability  Increasing demands on staff  Increasing homelessness  Lack of housing supply  Rising cost of new build  Demographic changes/Ageing population  Arklet transfer to larger RSL  Support for vulnerable tenants |
| **Political** | **Economic** | **Social** | **Technological** |
| Additional powers to Scottish Government  Councillor representation  Council support for SHIP  Constituency/boundary changes  Communication from councillors  ERC’s political makeup  Increasing powers of SHR and need for intervention across the sector.  Further SNP independence referendum | Current economic position/recovery unstable  Levern v Eastwood challenges  Sustainability agenda  Energy efficiency measures  Lack of effective SHIP  Competitive private finance  Debts owed to Association  IFLAIR price re-fresh/competitiveness  Loans/interest rates rise  Relationship with lenders  Housing Investment Policy  Inflation/deflation  Introduction of living wage | Demographic changes – increased single household makeup and aging population  Delivery of supported service at sheltered housing  Tenant aspirations  Youth unemployment/general lack of job opportunities  Anti-social behaviour, fear of crime, misuse of substances  Mental health issues  Media influence and power  Tenant profile/ UC direct payments/inability to pay rent  Increase in low paid/part-time employment  Welfare dependency due to ill-health | Improvements to IT system  IT systems hardware up-to-date  Mobile technologies to assist service delivery  Digital Telecare system (complex)  IPads for Board members/staff  Laserfiche |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| LEGAL | ENVIRONMENTAL |
| Social Security Bill – devolved powers/universal credit  New Housing (s) Act 2014  Social Security Bill  Housing (amendment) Scotland Bill – ONS re-classification  GDPR reform  Impact of FOI extension | Energy efficiency measures and targets  Sourcing raw materials  Using local trades  Sourcing electric vehicles  Office environmental policy – saving energy, recycling,  Our Power for cheaper electricity |

Appendix 1 Strategic and Operational objectives workplans

Appendix 2 Top risks, as reviewed March 2017, March 2018