

Bridgewater Housing Association

# Business Plan 2023–2028 Summary





# Welcome

**This Business Plan sets our priorities for the next five years. Our strategy is ambitious, and our intentions are to achieve step changes in service delivery and redesign, growth, and continued strong financial performance. This will ensure we continue to modernise, innovate and continuously improve. We aim to build on our successes of the last 25 years and develop an organisation which will be fit for the future needs of our customers, our people and communities.**

To deliver this plan we will need to work with our tenants and customers, colleagues, partners and other stakeholders. We will establish a Customer Experience Panel, who will bring honest and constructive feedback as we implement this plan and we will increase and improve the ways in which we engage and listen to our customers voice, to capture a wider and more diverse source of understanding

and maintain our high levels of customer satisfaction.

Relationships with external stakeholder groups will be strengthened to support both our business and our communities – aligning ourselves to our partners in the Federation of Local Housing Associations in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire (FLAIR), Local Authorities, third sector

partners, contractors, and funders to allow our strategic delivery to be maximised, whilst protecting Bridgewater and ensuring its core social purpose is delivered.

We will always continue to protect the financial strength of the organisation and ensure it is stronger for the future at the end of this period than it was at the beginning, despite the challenges the current cost of living crisis and recession may present.

The realisation of our new Business Plan will help to make us the truly modern housing association we imagine today.



**Andy Thomson**  
Chief Executive

**Alastair Morris**  
Chairperson

# SECTION 1: About Us

We were established in 1998 as a result of a stock transfer from Scottish Homes. As we celebrate our 25th anniversary, we continue to demonstrate strong performance as a **Community Anchor Organisation** providing, high quality, affordable housing and services to our tenants and customers in Erskine and beyond.



We are one of 5 locally based Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in Renfrewshire, and the smallest of these is Ferguslie Park Housing Association which owns only a few less units than Bridgewater. The other 3 RSLs are Linstone, Paisley and Williamsburgh Housing Associations. Other national Associations have stock in Renfrewshire, usually of a more specialist nature.

Bridgewater is well respected and connected in the housing sector, through our membership and work with FLAIR, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and the Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum. This helps us to keep up to date with developments in the sector and enables us to ensure that our voice is heard.

Our geographic focus enables us to be part of the conversation in Erskine and Renfrewshire more widely, working closely with our tenants and residents, the wider community, stakeholders, and local businesses.

# SECTION 2: Our Strategy

Our strategy provides an over-arching framework and guides all our activities. It helps us articulate our ambitions in a clear and consistent way, steer an agreed course towards achieving these, maintain our pace, and deliver the standards set by our Board. Our strategy comprises three core elements: our Vision, Values and Strategic Objectives.

## Our Vision

Our vision is to be:

*A customer focused organisation that delivers the best affordable housing and services to people who need them most.*

## Our Values

We have recently reviewed and updated our organisational values to reflect the positive, modern, progressive approach that our Board and Staff have towards our customer base and each other and help guide our actions. We put people first and are proud of our culture underpinned by our new BRIDGE values:

**B**

### Be Customer focused

We take ownership and responsibility, are positive and engaging and put residents at the heart of everything we do.

**R**

### Respect

We show empathy, consideration, treat everybody with fairness and value our customers and colleagues.

**I**

### Integrity

Integrity is the foundation of Bridgewater. We will take responsibility for our actions and will display our moral conduct in every decision we make.

**D**

### Doing what matters most, with and for, our customers

We are committed to providing quality - not just in the homes we build and maintain but also the services that we deliver, in partnership with our customers.

**G**

### Getting it right first time

We will ensure a consistent approach to service delivery and strive to make sure that our customers experience a fast, reliable, and helpful service that aims to answer their query or sort out their problem, first time - however they choose to make contact.

**E**

### Enthusiastic

We go the extra mile, are passionate about achievement and eager to learn.

# SECTION 2: Our Strategy

## Our Strategic Objectives

We will deliver our 2028 vision through six strategic objectives:



1

Manage and maintain, safe, high-quality, sustainable, affordable homes.



2

Protect and enhance the value of the local environment.



3

Deliver a quality, value for money, customer service experience, in partnership with our customers.



4

Invest in our people.



5

Promote innovation and collaboration for improvement and growth.



6

Demonstrate strong, strategic governance and financial control.

Each strategic objective is supported by more detailed strategic priorities on which we will focus our efforts throughout the duration of this plan. We also have set out our desired outcomes where we have asked ourselves 'what will success look like?'. These are set out in the full Business Plan which is available from our website.

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 1



Manage and maintain, safe, high-quality, sustainable, affordable homes



## We will do this by:

- Strengthening Tenant Safety
- Strengthening our approach to asset management
- Meeting national energy efficiency targets
- Improving opportunities for those facing homelessness in Renfrewshire
- Reviewing our environmental impact
- Integrating access to skills within the care and repair service

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 2



Protect and enhance  
the value of the local  
environment

## We will do this by:

- Improving the Environmental Appeal in our Communities
- Enhancing our “Wider Role” within the Community
- Utilising External Funding to Help Owners Maintain and Improve their Homes
- Improving Local Visibility



# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 3



Deliver a quality, value for money, customer service experience, in partnership with our customers

## We will do this by:

- Encouraging Tenant Involvement on our Board
- Getting it Right First Time
- Developing Care and Repair Accreditation
- Introducing Initiatives to Enhance Customer and Community Involvement
- Strengthening our Digital Services to Support Participation
- Strengthening our Use of Market Information and Customer Insight
- Strengthening our Income Collection and Advice Services
- Modernising our Application Process
- Reviewing our Factoring and Land Management Processes
- Investigating Customer Service Accreditation



# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 4



Invest in our people

## We will do this by:

- Delivering a New, Modern Structure for our Services
- Exploring Employability and Training Opportunities
- Developing our Culture
- Embracing Change and Encourage Diversity
- Strengthening our Role as an Employer
- Developing a People Strategy
- Developing our Social Value





# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 5



Promote innovation and collaboration for improvement and growth

## We will do this by:

- Reviewing Existing Tenancy Support and Provision
- Reviewing our Supported Accommodation Projects
- Exploring Cloud-based, Office365 Windows 1st Approach & Blended Approach to Working
- Continuing to Adopt Modern Working Practices
- Investigating the Internet of Things
- Developing Virtual Housing Assistance

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 6



**Demonstrate strong, strategic governance and financial control**

## **We will do this by:**

- Demonstrating Value for Money in Delivering Maintenance Services
- Developing a Post-COVID Legacy
- Demonstrating Effective Governance
- Improving our Business Continuity Systems
- Embedding a Value for Money Approach
- Developing our Policy and Risk Strategy
- Reviewing our Performance Framework
- Diversify the Care and Repair Business
- Strengthening our Procurement Processes
- Developing our Financial Resilience



# SECTION 3: Governance and Risk

## Governance

Bridgewater is not only a landlord or factor, but we are also an employer, strategic partner, and active community anchor. The daily operation of the business is managed by our employees who work towards our goals and objectives, including those laid out in this Business Plan.

As a registered social landlord and registered charity, our Board and staff must ensure compliance with a range of legislation and regulatory standards. This ranges from housing, employment, care sector and health and safety legislation through to regulatory standards from the Scottish Housing Regulator, OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Register) and the Financial Conduct Authority.

## Risk Management

Our Board is responsible for overseeing risk management. It is charged with monitoring the management of high-level strategic risks, reviewing Bridgewater's risk appetite, ensuring certain controls are in place and reviewing our approach to risk management.



# SECTION 4: Resource Planning

Our Board have clear oversight of the short, medium and long term financial plans of the organisation. Our business is on a sound financial footing and has a strong financial plan in place, based on sound assumptions.

Just over  
**£5m** of  
outstanding  
loan finance



**75%** of our  
stock secured  
against loan  
funding



**£4.85m**  
of net  
current  
assets in 2022



**92%** increase  
in net worth  
since  
2013



## Financial Planning

Our focus and objective is to outperform the financial plan assumptions, for example, through effective cost control, void, arrears and bad debt management. When actual performance outperforms the financial plan assumption, this will then feed through to rent uplift decisions.



# SECTION 5: Supporting Strategies

To achieve the objectives outlined in this Business Plan, there are several key plans and strategies (and a policy schedule) that support the core Business Plan in delivering our business objectives. The supporting documents go into the detail of each area and examine the impact each will have on the business.

## How will we know we have been successful?

As part of the full business plan we have a Delivery Plan which has a detailed set of key outcomes. These will be reviewed by the Board every year. If you would like a copy of the full Business Plan and Delivery Plan please see our website [www.bridgewaterha.org.uk](http://www.bridgewaterha.org.uk) or contact us and we can send you a copy.





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Property Factor Registration Number PF000105, Registered Society No 2525R (Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014), Scottish Housing Regulator No HAL 301  
Bridgewater Housing Association is a recognised Scottish Charity No SCO 35819