



HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED
Making You Feel At Home

Chief Executive: Ian McLean Dip. HS, F.C.I.H.

Secretary: Mrs H Stirling

Date: 27/10/2021

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Scottish Housing Regulator
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Dear Sirs

THIRD ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2020/21 ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF BRIDGEWATER HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

As a result of robust, timely and regular evidence based reporting to the Board and its Sub Committees, along with ongoing self-assessment and internal audit, we can confirm that we are assured of compliance with:

- The regulatory requirements set out in section 3 of the Regulatory Framework.
- The relevant standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- The relevant legislative duties
- The SHR's Standards of Governance and Financial Management

This Assurance Statement should be read in conjunction with the various COVID-19 Up-date reports approved by Bridgewater's Board and published to the SHR Portal and it should be noted that the Board took legal and other independent advice on the bulk of the text of the statement

The Scottish Housing Regulator is aware that since March 2020 our ability to comply with all of our regulatory and statutory requirements has been challenging. The COVID-19 pandemic and the consequential restrictions placed on society by the Scottish Government, affected both our service delivery and our governance arrangements. Throughout the pandemic and particularly during the period that this Assurance Statement covers, our Chief Executive has provided the Board with detailed reports on the impact of Covid-19, including on our service, governance, regulatory, legislative and safety responsibilities. We have shared these reports with the SHR and kept the SHR fully aware of developments through various "Notifiable Events" and we have kept our customers fully updated with developments and temporary changes to services through letters from the Chief Executive and notices on our Web Site and Face Book page.

Core Values of
Bridgewater Housing
Association Ltd

Doing what
matters most
with and for our
customers



Putting
customers first



Getting it right
first time



If you are dissatisfied with any of the services provided by the Association, please ask to see a copy of our Complaints Leaflet



Notwithstanding these challenges, we believe that, whilst there is additional work to do which will contribute positively to our compliance with Regulatory and Statutory requirements, there are, nevertheless, no areas of material or significant non-compliance that require to be disclosed in this statement at this time. This view is supported by an independent audit by Wylie and Bisset of our evidence log.

SHR is also aware, from our first and second Assurance Statements, that through our self-assessment mapping, and independent audit of our governance arrangements and of our evidence base, we identified areas where we felt improvements could be achieved and action plans were prepared and approved to address these. Good progress is continuing in relation to completing these plans and as a consequence of the audit further actions have been agreed.

In relation to equalities data gathering, the SHR is aware that guidance in relation to this matter has only recently been published. Although the Association has well developed equalities policies and recently introduced Equalities Impact Assessments, we intend to consider the guidance over the next few months with the aim of fully implementing it in April 2022.

Whilst not complacent, we are content that the way we deliver services and develop policies would generally be consistent with a human rights approach. We know, though, that this is an emerging agenda and that so far there is little in the way of housing-specific guidance. We are aware that SHR, CIH Scotland the Scottish Human Rights Commission and others are due to produce guidance on some aspects of the human rights approach to housing. Our Chief Executive has recently participated in a number of workshops run by the Human Rights Consortium to help with providing the Board with appropriate advice. We look forward to utilising his advice and using the relevant guidance that is produced in the future, to inform our work, to review our own approach and consider whether any changes might be needed to our services or policies.

We undertake to notify the SHR should there be any supplementary information or changes to the assurances reported in this statement and will make this statement available to our tenants and other stakeholders by publishing it on our Web Site and providing a copy to our Strategic Partners.

The Board considered our evidence bank and approved, in principal, our Draft Assurance Statement at their meeting on 29 September 2021. The Association's Scrutiny Committee considered the independent internal audit report on assurance and approved the final Assurance Statement at their meeting on 27 October and authorised me to sign it on the Association's behalf.

Yours faithfully



Alastair Morris
Chair