

Our Future

Corporate Plan

2024-2027



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ABOUT US

Building Stronger Communities, Together

For more than two decades, we have been more than just a housing association, we've been a part of the communities we serve. Since our formation in 2002, we've grown to own and manage 6,800 homes across Cheshire and Warrington, along with garages, shops, community play areas, and green spaces. But beyond bricks and mortar, our real vision has always been about people, about creating thriving, inclusive neighbourhoods where everyone has the opportunity to live well.

As we look to the future, we remain deeply committed to making a meaningful difference. The 'Our Future' Corporate Plan provides strategic direction for the Trust to meet both the challenges as well as opportunities presented and covers the period April 2024 to March 2027. The plan reinforces our dedication to putting customers at the heart of everything we do and ensuring fairness and opportunity for all. Our vision is clear and focused –

Working together to provide quality homes, places, and services, making a positive impact for people.

Our vision is a commitment to continually improve, adapt, and respond to the needs of our customers and communities. Whether it's through investing in our homes, enhancing local services, or supporting customers in times of need, our vision is to build a future where everyone can thrive.

To guide us on this journey, we have embraced a set of values that define how we work and interact every day –

Compassionate
Accountable
Respectful
Exceptional

Together, these values spell C.A.R.E. – because caring is at the very heart of our culture. These principles shape every decision we make, from how we support customers, to how we invest in our neighborhoods. We know that a good home is just the beginning, true wellbeing comes from strong communities, access to opportunities, and a sense of belonging. That's why we're focused not just on providing housing, but on creating places where people feel proud to live.

Looking ahead, we are working to improve our homes, strengthen our services, and find new ways to connect and support the people we serve. We know that by working together, with our customers, partners, and wider communities, we can achieve so much more.

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In August 2024 we were awarded a C1 grading from the Regulator of Social Housing. We were one of the first landlords in England to earn a C1 grading, which was introduced in April 2024. The new Consumer grading is focused on ensuring customers are safe in their homes, treated with fairness and respect and able to influence the quality of services. We have also retained the highest grades for both Viability - V1 and Governance - G1.

The three gradings cover:

- How well our governance arrangements enable the Trust to effectively manage risks, adequately control the organisation and ensure it continues to meet its objectives (G grading)
- Our financial viability and whether we are in a good financial position to deliver our business and corporate plans (V grading)
- A new consumer grading (from April 24) focused on ensuring tenants are safe in their homes, treated with fairness and respect, plus able to influence the quality of services received (C grading)

We continue to shape our plans for the Trust, and we know there's still work to do. We want to continue to improve our services and make a positive difference to customers and communities. It is customer voices that matter most, and we will keep listening.



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In developing our plan, our key priorities and strategies, we have developed several 'principles' to help guide us to maintain a focus on what matters on our journey towards the Vision, namely:

Governance excellence

Keeping everyone safe

Service excellence, agility and innovation

Values, and a performance driven culture

Value for money and return on investment

Effective engagement and communication

Data driven decision making

Environmental, social and governance

Partnership working

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

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The Board has established a set of key overarching priorities which will ensure resources are both balanced and focused, to enable continued investment in services, existing homes, regeneration, and sustainable growth.

- Maintaining strong financial viability.
- Delivering excellent front-line services and a person-centred experience that makes every contact count.
- Ensuring tenancy sustainment and customer resilience remains a key priority to mitigate cost of living pressures.
- Providing well maintained, energy efficient and safe homes - delivering all investment / maintenance and keeping all promises made.
- Continuing to strengthen the customer voice and embed the value of lived and living experience.
- Maintain strong engagement with our people and maintain high levels of positive engagement and feedback.
- Meet housing need, sustainable growth and regeneration through new homes and stock rationalisation opportunities.
- Continue to grow grant funded support services that support the vision, customers and return of any Trust investment.
- Ensuring all relevant regulatory and legislative requirements and expectations are met.
- Continuing to strengthen local and regional partnerships, ensuring the Trust is well positioned in respect of planned regional devolution.
- Deliver year one technology and knowledge roadmap, realising service improvements and efficiencies.

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We have developed five strategies to deliver the 2024-27 'Our Future' Corporate Plan.



Our Customers

A person-centred customer experience:

- **Keep our promises:** always do what we say we will to the best of our ability and to a high standard – this is our business as usual.
- **Be accessible:** provide easy-to-use, multi-channel, accessible services, removing barriers, promoting self-service and involvement.
- **Follow a person-centred approach and make every contact count:** be there to listen to and support individual customers when needed.
- **Improve Communication:** provide simple ways to communicate with, and keep customers informed.
- **Understand our customers:** ensure all customers can feedback their needs and experiences, so we can use this to improve what and how we do things.



Our Homes & Places

Homes and places that are safe and desirable:

- **Provide safe homes and places:** by responsibly investing in keeping customers safe and responding appropriately to their needs through quality services.
- **Maximise investment in homes and places:** using accurate stock condition data and customer insight and feedback to support what, when and how we invest and to actively manage all homes and places.
- **Neighbourhood Experience:** develop tailored services in partnership with others, to support tenancy sustainment and satisfaction across our homes and places.
- **Grow by at least 800 homes in the next 5 years:** continuing to develop and acquire high quality, energy efficient homes to meet the needs of existing and future customers.
- **Work in partnership to regenerate:** improve well-being, safety and perceptions of our homes and places.



Our Money

Ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the Trust:

- **Effectively manage resources:** to ensure we can meet our commitments and safeguard the future of the Trust.
- **Generate sufficient surpluses:** to ensure continued investment in new, existing homes and services.
- **Prepare robust stress testing** (including reverse stress tests) and mitigation plans: aligned to the strategic risk register and the sector risk profile.
- **Active Treasury Management:** to ensure we have adequate funds to deliver our strategies and corporate plan, whilst maintaining compliance with Golden Rules and funder covenants.
- **Income management:** maximise the amount of income collected.
- **Income generation:** produce/maximise viable sustainable income streams or contributions (grants) to reduce our operating costs.
- **Social return on investment:** to maximise the social returns from our support services to both improve customers quality of life and to support our key objectives for rental income and tenancy sustainment.
- **Implement the Technology and Knowledge Roadmap**

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Our People

A culture of trust, openness, and inclusivity where all colleagues can flourish, be safe and deliver excellent services to our customers (internal and external)

- **Organisational Development:** maintain a highly skilled workforce which is professional, people-centred, high-performing and lives our Values.
- **Leadership:** enable colleagues to thrive through effective performance management, support, delegation, motivation, and empowerment.
- **Communication:** building our culture so colleagues live our Values, feel connected to the Vision, contribute, and have a voice.
- **Health, Safety & Wellbeing:** focus on physical and mental wellbeing within a safe and healthy environment and culture.
- **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I):** continue to build a culture where diversity is embraced and where accessibility and inclusion are embedded in our ways of working, to create a sense of belonging.



Our Environment

Improving the environmental sustainability of the Trust, our homes and places

- **Culture:** develop a culture of organisational awareness of environmental impacts to drive positive habits and sound strategic and day to day operational decision making in our people and customers.
- **New homes and regeneration activity:** ensure new homes are developed to high standards for energy efficiency and regeneration activity developing sustainable homes and future proofing neighbourhoods.
- **Existing Homes:** develop environmentally sustainable methods of work and specifications which focus on safe, healthy, and affordable homes.
- **Partnership:** work in collaboration and partnership with stakeholders and peers to support and learn from wider local and national activity to reduce carbon emissions.
- **Ecology:** ensure our approach to the management of open spaces considers biodiversity and protects natural habitats.
- **Fuel Poverty:** support customers to address fuel poverty through direct support and advice.
- **Social Value:** develop our procurement processes to ensure that our work with contractors and suppliers maximises additional social value and minimises environmental impact.

