



Business Plan 2016 – 2020

Our journey together continues



watford
community
housing

Background

Following the 2015 July Budget and the revised rent settlement of minus 1% for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20, we have undertaken a fundamental review of our activities and have reworked our Business Plan until the end of this parliament in May 2020.

The recent changes in housing policy have resulted in our forecasted income from our social and affordable rental activities being reduced by c£8.5 million over the next four years. This means that, in line with our values, we have to adapt by implementing progressive,

innovative and practical ways of delivering our vision.

Committed to the community

Despite these challenges, we remain committed to being a community-based business that provides quality services to our residents in Watford and Three Rivers. In addition, with an increasingly digital offer, we are no longer constrained by where we offer our services and we will seek opportunities in a wider geographical area, with our heartland being Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire.



The majority of our tenants want a well-maintained home where they feel safe and secure. To enable us to continue to provide this we will ensure that our repairs service is fit for purpose, our housing management service adapts to our tenants needs and that our costs remain competitive. Working closely with our tenants we will develop a 'Super Brand' which will provide this.

Investing in our services

Working in partnership with others, we will provide tangible savings to enable us to invest more money in our customer facing services and in more homes. We are leading on the shared services agenda and aim to deliver a shared service to over 25,000 households to generate economies of scale thus enabling us to continue to provide a quality customer-focused service to our tenants.

Although we remain financially secure we will explore potential strategic alliances that demonstrate 'win win' solutions to our current and future tenants.

We offer the opportunity for people to get into different forms of home ownership and have signed



up to the Voluntary Right To Buy (VRTB), as well as retaining the Preserved Right To Buy (PRTB) for those tenants who transferred from Watford Borough Council.

To enable us to develop much-needed homes in Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire we will be expanding our housing offer to include both outright sales and different forms of shared ownership. By making best use of our existing assets and working in partnership with others we have increased our new homes aspiration to 1,000 over the next four years.



Our Vision and Values

Even with all the recent policy changes our vision of providing **“Better homes, friendlier communities together”** remains as strong today as it was when we transferred in September 2007.

Our twin aims are to provide ‘better homes’ – ensuring a high-quality service offer to our tenants and delivering more homes – and ‘friendlier communities’ with a strong focus on community cohesion.

These aims will only be achieved by working in partnership with other like-minded organisations. We will achieve our goal without selling our soul.

Our values remain integral to how we work at Watford Community Housing and we are proud that together we:

- **Take personal ownership for our actions to provide an excellent service;**
- **Act professionally and with integrity to deliver our promises;**
- **Offer progressive and innovative ways of doing things.**

Our Five Priority Areas

Given the current external context, alongside our vision and values, we have identified the following five priority areas to enable us to grow as an organisation over the next four years:

Super Brand

Strong Financial Position

Partnership Working

Active Developer

Building Community Capacity



Priority Area One: Super Brand

We are committed to providing a customer-focused service to our tenants that is fit for purpose and promotes a 'right first time' culture.

- We will deliver our 'Road Map' 2016 - 2020 to enable us to provide consistent, reliable quality services to our tenants
- We will develop our digital offer so that our tenants can engage with us via digital channels
- We will utilise customer insight data to enable us to adapt our service offer to meet the changing needs of our current and future tenants
- We will deliver our Asset Management Strategy to ensure that we maximise the use of our assets

Priority Area Two: Strong Financial Position

We are committed to remaining financially strong to enable us to deliver our vision.

- We will deliver our Value for Money procurement strategies to ensure that we make the best use of our assets
- We will ensure that our operating margin is equivalent to 30% of our turnover by the end of the business plan period
- We will have robust procurement and financial systems in place to make the best use of our resources
- We will ensure our Treasury Management Strategy is fit for purpose

Priority Area Three: Partnership Working

We are committed to working with others to deliver our vision.

- We will lead on developing a shared service model that provides quality services to over 25,000 homes
- We will explore merger opportunities when they produce 'win win' solutions for our tenants
- We will be an 'organisation of choice' for our tenants, staff and partners
- We will have a clear brand that enables us to manage stakeholders' expectations

Priority Area Four: Active Developer

We are committed to delivering new homes in Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire, providing a range of tenure types that meet housing need.

- We will deliver our Development Strategy to achieve our aspiration of 1,000 new homes over the next four years
- We will work with partners, via joint ventures, to make best use of our resources
- We will deliver our market rent and shared ownership offer through our Clarendon Living brand
- We will develop in six local authority areas across Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire



Priority Area Five: Building Community Capacity

We are committed to building community capacity to enhance the life chances of our tenants.

- We will implement our Communities Strategy to build capacity in the areas where we work
- We will focus our resources on projects that improve our services and produce the maximum social impact for us and our tenants
- We will maximise our funding and external resources to enhance the projects we deliver
- We will deliver our Community Hubs Strategy to enhance our tenants' life choices





watford
community
housing

Watford Community Housing

Gateway House
59 Clarendon Road
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD17 1LA

T 0800 218 2247

E enquiries@wcht.org.uk

W www.wcht.org.uk