



Corporate Plan 2018 - 2021



Foreword from the Chair

I am very proud of our achievements and of the way we have addressed the challenges we have faced over the past few years. Our customers, staff and Board have pulled together as Team NDH to find practical and sustainable solutions to some difficult external scenarios. Looking to the future and building upon past achievements, this plan sets out our ongoing commitment to our customers, partners and staff for the next three years and how we will continue to develop and thrive as a leading independent Community Landlord focussing on local solutions to the national housing crisis. There is also quite rightly a growing appreciation of the role that housing and we at NDH play in allowing people to achieve their aspirations, build and live successful, healthy and fulfilling lives.

This plan establishes our ambition to be an influential landlord, meeting the demand for additional affordable

housing for those in acute housing need while at the same time balancing the value of the services that we deliver to our existing customers and communities.

In putting this plan together the Board engaged with, listened to and I believe responded to the views of our customers, partners and staff which has helped us develop our NDH strategy. This leaves us well placed to deliver changes that will make North Devon an even stronger and more vibrant community.

We are all proud to do what we do and the Board, everyone at Team NDH and I are committed to meeting the ambitions, targets and ultimately the delivery of this plan.

Robert Stronge
Chair, North Devon Homes



Context and Mission

North Devon Homes is an independent community landlord whose mission is "working together to create communities where people want to live". We will deliver our mission in accordance with our charitable objectives, through this plan and by focussing on providing and managing affordable housing and services for those who need them.

We operate across North Devon which faces a number of challenges in terms of housing, social mobility, transport links and infrastructure, as well as a low take up of Higher Education opportunities. North Devon is in the bottom 10% of local authorities for working life outcomes as there are low levels of high grade jobs and low average wages, yet relatively costly housing and a very limited supply of affordable and private rented homes.

We use all our resources and influence, working with partners, not only to provide quality homes where they are needed but also to address some of the wider social and economic issues that affect our customers and communities. This plan helps us achieve this.

At the present time we are faced with a statutory requirement to reduce our rents until 2020 and an increasing demand for our services. We have had to carefully assess how we can best achieve our aims whilst balancing conflicting priorities. We will continue to provide Value for Money for our customers by controlling costs and working more efficiently. In order to deliver the plan, we will ensure there is sufficient flexibility and capacity to respond to any future events or Government policy changes that may have a material impact on us.

Building on our strong Value for Money performance and becoming even more efficient are key elements of our plan, notably through the use of new IT solutions which will enable our customers to book repairs and find information online, as well as improve the efficiency of our own internal processes.

As we look to become more efficient, we are aware that our customers are also facing difficulties associated with the challenging economic climate, the withdrawal of some public services due to Government budget pressures, and the

introduction of Universal Credit. As a community landlord, we are aware of these pressures and the impacts particularly on our most vulnerable customers. Where we can, we will look to support our customers through our service delivery.

As the Homelessness Reduction Act comes into force, we will proactively seek opportunities to work in partnership with other relevant agencies and the Local Authority to address homelessness in North Devon.

The safety of our customers, staff and contractors is a key focus for us. We will continue to ensure that our homes are safe and take opportunities, where we can, to invest in our properties in order to benefit our customers. We will also continue to focus on staff and contractor welfare, safety and health.

We want our customer satisfaction scores to remain high, but we recognise that, with the limited resources we have available, we cannot always deliver everything that our customers request. We aim to balance the needs and desires of individual customers with the needs of all customers, ensuring fairness and consistency of treatment in line with our equality and diversity approach. We will continue to strive for upper quartile customer satisfaction scores, whilst acknowledging that, in the current climate, we are unlikely to be able to satisfy the requirements of all our customers, although we will always do our best and explain why when this is not possible.

We recognise that there is a housing crisis and that more homes of all types are needed in North Devon. Our ongoing development programme will deliver new homes and grow our stock to help increase the housing provision in the area. However, we will not do this to the detriment of our community landlord activities; we aim to develop as many new homes as we can, whilst also supporting our current customers and communities.

A key element to help us achieve our objectives will be to work in partnership - with the local authority, the statutory services, community organisations, our contractors, local businesses and our customers.

Me Putting the customer at the heart of all we do

- Ensure fairness and consistency of treatment for all customers
- Deliver upper quartile customer satisfaction compared to peers
- Develop and promote easier online ways for customers to deal with us
- Ensure that customers are able to influence and be involved in decisions about NDH policy and practice.

My Neighbourhood Improving, supporting and developing our neighbourhoods

- In collaboration with customers, produce a revised tenancy handbook by the end of 2018, setting out our offer to customers
- Work in partnership to benefit customers by creating and enhancing communities where people want to live
- Continue to deliver services and develop new approaches to support vulnerable customers
- Work with individual customers and on our internal processes to ensure we are prepared for the challenges of welfare reform
- Provide 100 days of staff time to work on initiatives that benefit our communities and customers.

My Home Maintaining and building quality, affordable homes

- Provide safe homes and use our resources to improve homes to benefit customers
- Ensure that properties we acquire or build are high quality and offer good value for money for customers
- Achieve an optimal balance between repairs and planned maintenance, ensuring well informed timely stock investment decisions
- Review the lowest performing 10% properties for possible disposal, and reinvest proceeds in development programme
- Undertake modest scale trials of innovative products that should make homes more comfortable and affordable for customers. Where there is opportunity, we will trial innovative design features in new properties
- Build up our repairs / maintenance workforce and expertise to deliver a more effective and resilient repairs service
- Develop 321 new homes (including open market sale) to meet a range of needs. We will grow our stock to 3,400 homes by 2021.

My Landlord Delivering value for money

- Develop online customer self-service options to unlock efficiency savings by 2020
- Challenge ourselves to work as effectively and efficiently as we can to see improvements in our VfM metrics by 2021
- In order to develop our staff, create a Talent Management programme with clear criteria that provide the skills required for critical posts
- Implement new IT solutions to meet the needs of the business, ensure that our data provides the intelligence needed to successfully implement changes, and support the drive for efficiencies - saving £50k annually
- Through our commercial subsidiary Anchorwood Ltd, develop 172 new homes on Anchorwood Bank by 2021, and develop a pipeline of a minimum of 10 open market sale units annually post 2021
- Reinvest £1m gift aid receipts generated from Anchorwood Ltd commercial activities into meeting our charitable objectives
- Invest proportionately in Head Office to ensure it is fit for purpose for our staff and customers, and financially viable in the long-term
- Ensure our headline social housing cost per unit remains at a level that provides value for money for customers and below the sector median.

"Working together to create communities where people want to live"

Working together, we will focus on:

- **Me** - Put the customer at the heart of all we do
- **My Home** - Maintain and build quality, affordable homes
- **My Neighbourhood** - Improve, support and develop our neighbourhoods
- **My Landlord** - Deliver value for money

As a growing and ambitious community landlord, we will maintain a positive, professional and friendly culture that is underpinned by the following values:

- F** Flexibility in our approach
...open to new ideas to help us achieve the vision, working with stakeholders to implement them.
- A** Accountable to our customers and each other
...keeping customers updated on progress, ensuring we have realistic goals, and learning from mistakes.
- C** Compassionate, professional and polite
...solution focused, inclusive in our approach, always listening to customers.
- T** Team NDH - working together
...supporting each other and working as one team to deliver the vision.
- S** Service excellence
...always looking to achieve the best we can and taking every opportunity to improve.



"Working together to create communities where people want to live"