

CORPORATE STRATEGY

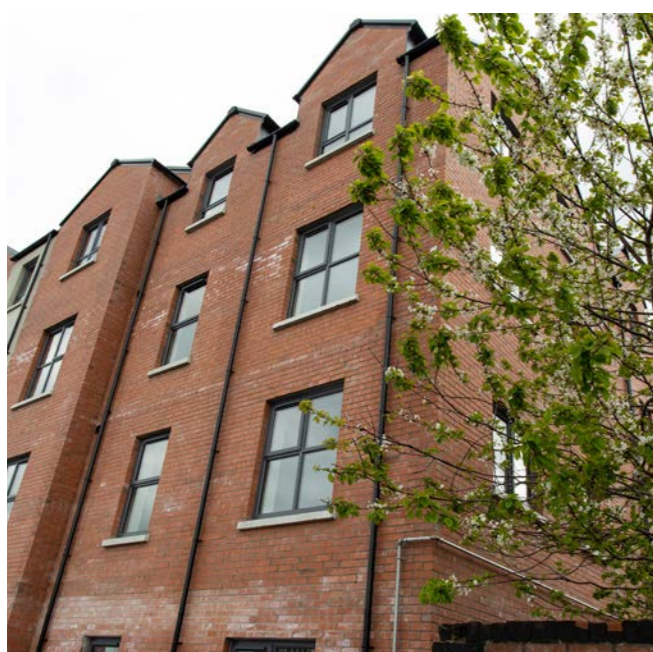
2022 – 2027



**Making a positive difference by
empowering people and communities**



Making a positive difference by empowering people and communities.



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Sensory Garden, Moyard House

Foreword



Tom Doran Chair

In 2017, the Board of Ark Housing launched its most ambitious and progressive strategic plan to date. The plan focused on maximising capacity and a wider contribution to the social housing sector through investment in new and existing homes as well as re-imagining the approach to service delivery and community involvement.

We are pleased to report that we have made good on that commitment, investing over £49m, and achieving our goal of reaching 1,000 homes in management and under construction. The successful delivery of this strategy has inspired us to do more. To that end, this new five-year strategy is focused on replicating and building upon that success, and in doing so, on transforming the lives of many more people who use our services.



Jim McShane Chief Executive

We remain committed to investing in our people. We remain committed to building high quality affordable homes. We remain committed to investing in our existing homes and local communities and we remain committed to the provision of excellent housing and support services.

We remain passionate about our mission, vision, and values, and within a framework of good governance and strong financial prudence, we are determined to deliver on the five strategic themes as set out within this document. There will be challenges and opportunities along the way, but we will respond to those as we have done so before, and by 2027, we will have made a positive and lasting impact on more people and communities.

T Doran *Jim McShane*



Who We Are

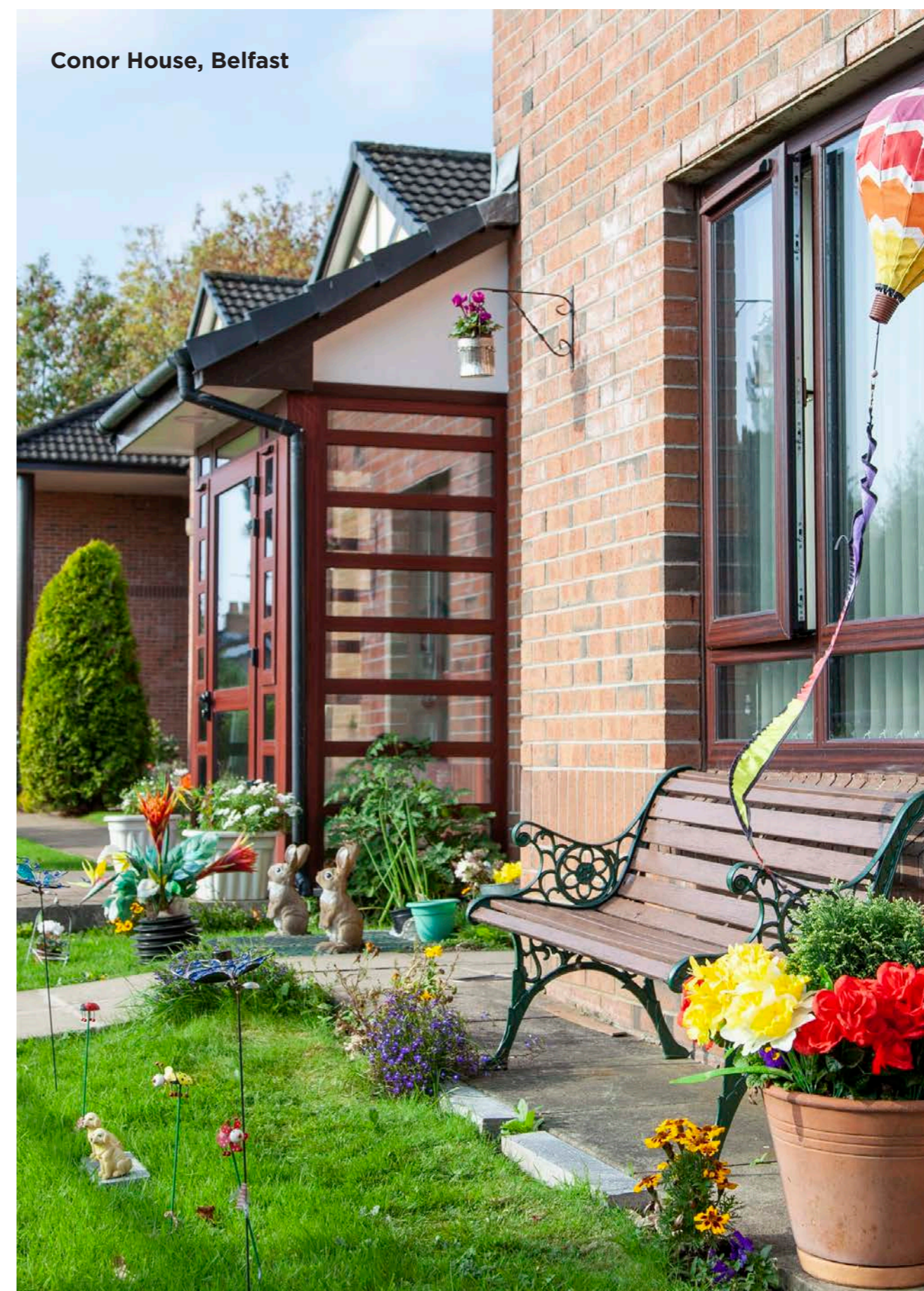


Established in 1987, Ark Housing Association provides affordable social homes and support services to those in housing need. Based in Belfast but operating across Northern Ireland, we are a progressive and ambitious social housing organisation with a focus on delivering better homes and an excellent standard of products and services for our tenants, residents and service users.

At our core, we provide a wide range of specialist homes and services to meet the needs of families, older persons and single person households. Our general needs accommodation comprises of a wide range of house types for general needs families and those with mobility and wheelchair design requirements, whilst our supported accommodation comprises of residential, sheltered, frail elderly and dementia care provision. Additionally, we offer temporary accommodation and support services for homeless families across the Greater Belfast area in partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Supporting People.

Our permanent housing allocations are made in accordance with the Common Selection Scheme for Northern Ireland and we operate several successful partnerships with voluntary and statutory agencies including Threshold, Inspire Wellbeing, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, South-Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, Supporting People and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

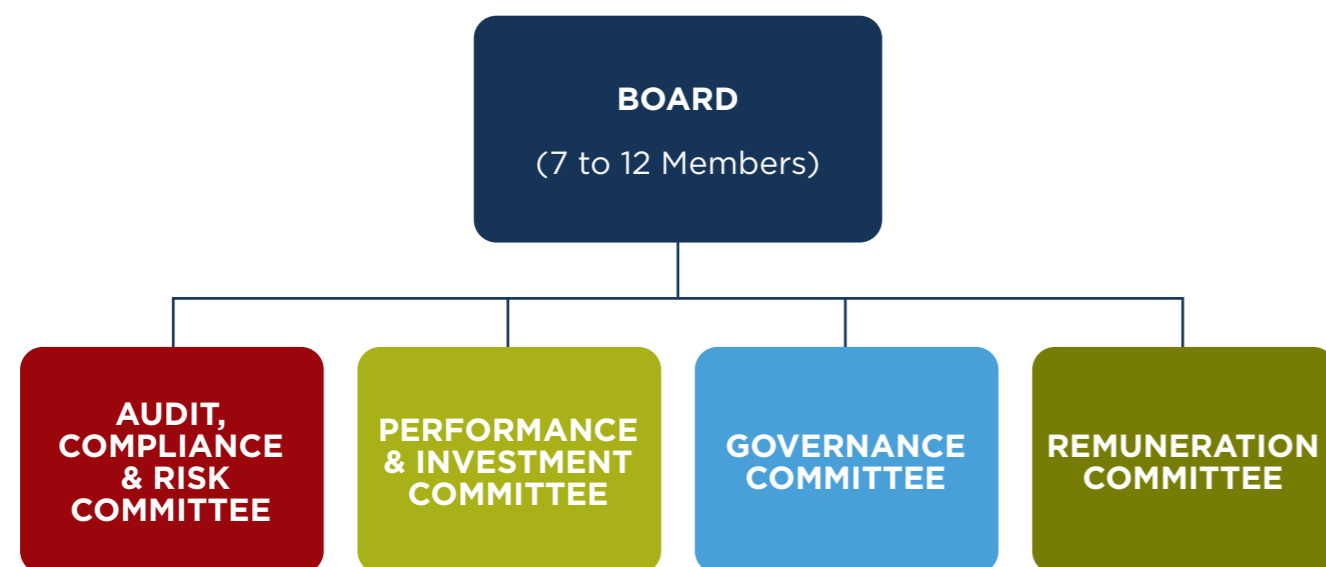
We are funded and regulated by the Department for Communities, and registered with the Financial Conduct Authority and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.





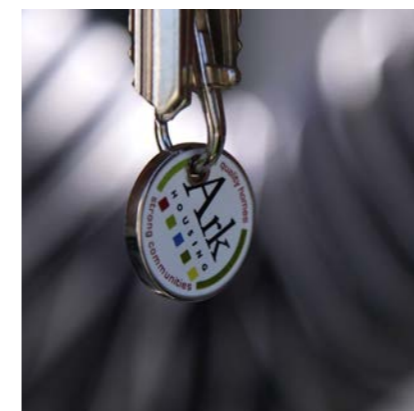
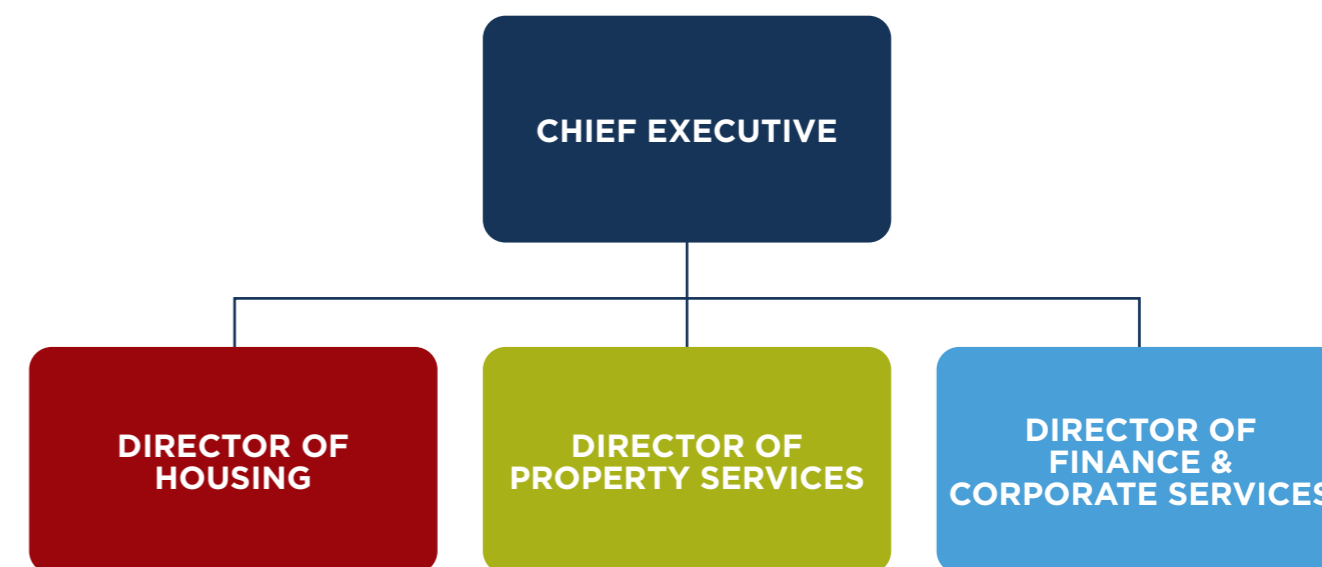
Governance Structure

The Association is governed by a voluntary board of between 7 and 15 persons with a wide range of skills. They meet regularly to oversee the work undertaken, challenge performance and develop strategy. The Board is supported by a committee structure which scrutinises specific areas of the business.



Executive Structure

Our Executive Team is led by the Chief Executive and with the support of our dedicated staff team, is responsible for the delivery and execution of all core frontline services and functions.





Grainia Long, Chief Executive, NIHE
Deirdre Hargey, Communities Minister, DfC
Jim McShane, Chief Executive, Ark Housing

Ogle Street, Armagh



Our Vision
Making a positive difference
by empowering people and
communities

Our Mission

In partnership, provide quality homes and support services to meet housing need and contribute to the well-being of communities



University Avenue, Belfast



Our Values

P **Progressive**
Forward thinking, supporting change and transformational

R **Respect**
Treat everyone with dignity and esteem

I **Integrity**
Maintain the highest professional and personal standards

D **Diversity and Equality**
Value diversity and equality in everything we do

E **Excellence**
Strive to deliver the highest standards of quality and customer care

Strategic Operating Environment



At the time of writing, Northern Ireland is going through a period of political instability with a non-functioning Executive at Stormont and uncertainty as to when this might be restored. This instability could impact on the delivery of some of the wider housing transformational policies set out recently by the outgoing Communities Minister such as reform of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive as well as the ramping up of investment into the new build programme as declared by the Minister in late 2020. The failure to agree a budget or a programme of government reflecting these priorities could potentially affect our growth ambitions, as well as our ability to invest in greener more efficient homes where such funding is not readily agreed. This is an issue which we will need to keep under review as the political situation evolves.

The wider financial climate remains another area of concern for us. Inflation is currently at 7%, with some reports indicating a further rise to 10% by the end of 2022. In response, the Bank of England has moved to increase interest rates in an effort to stem inflation, and this in turn could curtail our longer term investment activity, should the trend continue in conjunction with rising costs.

These challenges arise at a time when we are witnessing greater levels of homelessness and people in housing stress and in many ways the financial climate could exacerbate that challenge. Our response will need to carefully balance our obligations to meet housing need with maintaining financial viability.

The environmental and climate crisis remains another area of focus for us. We are committing to doing our part to mitigate against global warming and its impact and over the next five years we will bring forward a number of plans and initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint. This will include reducing our impact in the everyday operation of our business as well as ensuring that the homes we build and manage are as energy efficient as possible in both their production and everyday use.



Financial Considerations



The Corporate Strategy is supported by a rolling five-year Financial Business plan which is revised each year. The main highlights of the plan are:

- Fixed assets will increase from £81m at March 2022 to £170m by March 2027, equating to 1,300 homes in management by March 2027;
- Approximately £86 million will be invested in building new homes and £3 million in improving existing ones over the five year period;
- Turnover is expected to increase from approximately £5m to almost £10 million by March 2027, with operating costs, including maintenance costs, increasing to over £6.5 million in the same period;
- Net surpluses generated over the five year period to be reinvested in new homes and services will be in the region of £6 million;
- All major bank covenants will be comfortably met with gearing ranging from 32% - 33% over the period.



Castle Street, Comber



Strategic Themes 2022-2027

Leading Employer

Better Homes, Greater Diversity

Engaged Communities, Greater Impact

Service Excellence, Satisfied Customers

Corporate Governance, Sustainability



Strategic Theme 1: Leading Employer

1	DESIRED OUTCOMES	POSITIVE INDICATORS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our staff are highly motivated, engaged, and satisfied with Ark Housing as an employer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased staff retention rates. • Lower staff absence rates. • Increased staff satisfaction / approval ratings.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our staff have been supported in their professional development and afforded opportunities to further their academic and professional qualifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased numbers of staff undergoing academic and professional qualifications through Ark Housing. • Generous training and development annual budget allowances and expenditure of same. • Increased numbers of staff at all levels in the organisation attending strategically focussed conferences and seminars.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our staff are recognised and rewarded for their contribution to Ark Housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our terms and conditions of employment are sector leading and our salary rates reflect at least mid-market rates for their role and responsibilities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our staff enjoy a healthy work-life balance. • Our staff are empowered and feel valued. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased staff retention rates. • Lower staff absence rates. • Increased staff satisfaction / approval ratings.

Strategic Theme 2: Better Homes, Greater Diversity

2	DESIRED OUTCOMES	POSITIVE INDICATORS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have provided more homes for people in housing need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing stock growth to 1,300 homes.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our SHDP has had a significant social & economic impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social & economic impact of SHDP measured and reported.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have diversified our service offering. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have launched an intermediate housing product and developed new partnerships for specialist provision.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our homes are sustainable and energy efficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have increased the energy efficiency of existing homes and built new homes to a higher standard of energy efficiency.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have improved our tenants' homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have invested £3m in improving existing homes.



Strategic Theme 3: Engaged Communities, Greater Impact

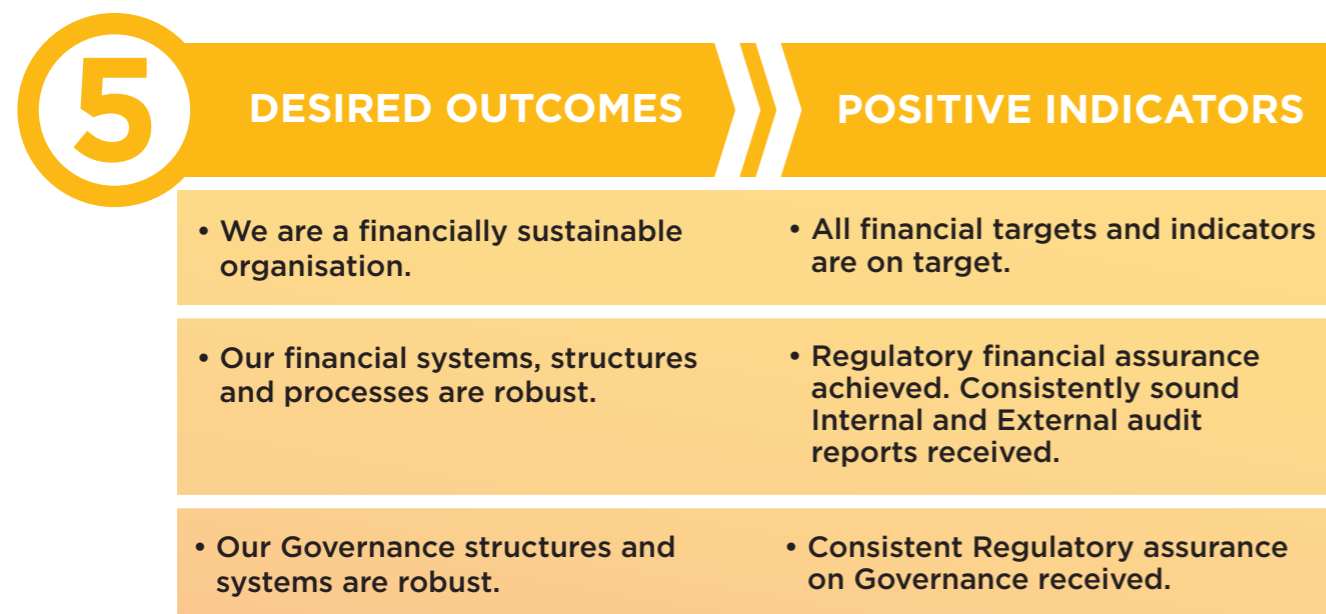
3	DESIRED OUTCOMES	POSITIVE INDICATORS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our tenants and residents have shaped our policies and practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have increased tenant engagement through the delivery of our Tenant Participation Strategy.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our homes and services have enhanced people's lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have increased tenant satisfaction levels.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our homes and services have brought people together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have increased the numbers of inclusive community and social events taking place annually.

Strategic Theme 4: Service Excellence, Satisfied Customers

4	DESIRED OUTCOMES	POSITIVE INDICATORS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our tenants and residents enjoy excellent housing and support services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tenant and resident satisfaction levels. Decreased percentages of formal complaints received. Increased occupancy levels. Improved performance outcomes across our range of KPIs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are recognised as a leading housing association for service and operational delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have achieved consistent positive regulatory reports. We will have achieved recognition and success in local and national awards. We will have performed consistently in national performance benchmarking exercises.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are progressive and forward thinking in our approach to service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have introduced new ways of working and service delivery through the adoption of new technology.



Strategic Theme 5: Corporate Governance, Sustainability





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Dept. for Communities (DfC50) and Charity Commission of Northern Ireland (NIC104547)

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