



# INVITATION TO TENDER

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## Internal Audit Services

Tenders must be received at the Association's Head Office no later than  
12 noon, Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Background**

Ark Housing Association provides social and affordable homes for those in housing need across Northern Ireland. 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 supported accommodation comprises of residential care, sheltered housing, frail elderly and dementia care, self-contained apartments for those suffering mental ill health and temporary accommodation for homeless families.

The Association is required to work within the regulatory framework for Northern Ireland Housing Associations which is the responsibility of the Department for Communities. We are also registered with the Financial Conduct Authority and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. Our permanent housing allocations are made in accordance with the Common Selection Scheme for Northern Ireland which is administered by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE).

We operate several successful partnerships with specialist agencies and statutory bodies. Our strategic partners include Threshold, Inspire Wellbeing, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, Supporting People and the N.I.H.E.

We continue to be a developing Association and have ambitious plans for growth over the next five years.

In 2024 - 2025, our turnover was in the region of £8million with fixed assets of over £125 million. Our five-year development plan is expected to expand our housing stock by more than 600 units with capital investment in the region of £130m.

The Association currently employs 42 people.

## **1.2 Terms of Reference**

The Association is seeking to establish a contract for the provision of internal audit services, initially for a period of three financial years from 2025/26 to 2027/28 with the possibility of a further 2 year extension, subject to satisfactory performance.

An internal audit is required to ensure the Association's compliance with regulatory and statutory obligations.

Service Providers are expected to be experienced in the internal audit requirements of housing associations and be fully compliant with all standards and regulations as appropriate (i.e. Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), including the requirements of the Industrial and Provident Society and Department for Communities' Regulatory Framework.

### **1.3 Internal Audit Deliverables**

The internal audit is expected to deliver:

- A comprehensive and independent audit report;
- The provision of an audit letter on internal controls and system weaknesses;
- An assessment of the organisation's compliance with all statutory, regulatory and recommended codes and best practices in relation to the financial management of the Association's assets;
- In compliance with the new Global Internal Audit Standards.

### **1.4 Tender Response Process**

In response to the tender, service providers are required to complete and submit the attached documents:

- A Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ)
- Detailed Tender Response (including financial costs)

Notes for completion together with evaluation and scoring criteria are provided with each individual document.

### **1.5 Timetable for Submission**

Three copies of each of the completed PQQ and Detailed Tender Responses should be sent to Ark Housing Head Office for the attention of Mr Jim McShane, Chief Executive, in separate sealed envelopes clearly marked as follows:

**(1) Ark Housing Internal Audit Services - PQQ**

**(2) Ark Housing Internal Audit Services – Detailed Response**

Tenders should be received no later than 12 noon, Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025. Any tenders received after this date and time will not be accepted.

Ark Housing Association (NI) Limited will not be liable to reimburse any costs incurred by the Service Provider during this tender process. Ark Housing Association (NI) Limited is concerned to maximise the value obtained from the available internal audit resource. However, the Association does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender.

## 2. Selection Process

- 2.1** If it is considered necessary by the selection panel, all successful tenderers will be invited for interview. Interviews will be an opportunity for the assessment panel to clarify elements of the tender response and not an opportunity to present new information.

It is expected that Service Providers would determine the necessary audit inspection programme required following an initial assessment of the Association's current business activities and that such a programme would cover the normal financial business activities of the Association.

Working files or papers produced during the course of the contract will remain the property of the Association and must be handed over to the Association in the event of contract termination.

A panel will be convened to assess the PQQ and Detailed Tender Response in accordance with the agreed selection criteria.

### **2.2 Stage 1: Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ)**

If the PQQ meets the Association's evaluation requirements, the remainder of the tender submission will be considered by the Panel. Tendering companies that fail to pass all sections will **NOT** be considered for Stage 2.

### **2.3 Stage 2: Detailed Tender Response**

For the Service Providers selected to take part in the detailed tender response stage of the procurement, evaluation of the Tender Price stage will be undertaken on the basis of most economically advantageous tender where the price/quality ratio will be 70/30.

### **3. Further Information**

#### **3.1 Further Information**

Where a Service Provider seeks clarification or further information or would like to raise any questions regarding particular aspects of the tendering process, all communication must be in writing (email is acceptable) and directed to:

John McVey  
Director of Finance & Corporate Services  
Ark Housing Association (N.I) Limited  
Hawthorn Office Park  
43 Stockmans Way  
Belfast  
BT9 7ET  
Tel: (028) 90 752310

Email: [john.mcvey@arkhousing.co.uk](mailto:john.mcvey@arkhousing.co.uk)

Any enquiries must be received no later than 12 noon on Monday, 23rd June 2025.

A written response stating the question and answer, but not identifying the enquirer, will be sent to all Service Providers.

#### **3.2 Cross Undertaking**

Contractors should note that Ark Housing Association shall seek to recover all expenses and losses arising out of any objection, complaint or legal challenge to the implementation of this agreement.

Encl.     Pre-Qualification Questionnaire  
             Detailed Tender Response Requirements