

Broadland Housing Group

Corporate Strategy 2019-2023



Introduction

Broadland Housing Association was established in Norwich in 1963, initially to provide affordable rented homes just in the Norwich area but over the succeeding decades has grown to provide homes for people who cannot afford the open market across Norfolk and North Suffolk.

The Association, still headquartered in Norwich, but with bases in Great Yarmouth, Colton, Dereham and Kings Lynn, provides not just housing and asset management services, but also has a maintenance workforce looking after responsive, cyclical and planned works. Over the years the Association has established a Group structure with two subsidiaries, Broadland St Benedicts and Broadland Development Services, focussed on providing new homes across Norfolk and Waveney, and Broadland Meridian, a charitable fund, working with the Norfolk Community Foundation, supporting mental health and wellbeing charities in Norfolk.

Broadland Housing now employs over 230 people and is strategically led by 13 non-executive directors of independents and tenants over the four companies, working with an executive of five who manage the Group operationally.

What we were set up to do: -

Our primary purpose is to help families and individuals in housing need access high quality affordable homes in Norfolk and North Suffolk. Everything we do within the Group is connected to delivering our purpose.

What this means in 2019: -

We offer a range of housing options, including low-cost rented and low-cost home ownership, as we are committed to helping people on low incomes access high quality well managed and well-maintained homes.

Our overall priorities

Our overall priorities are: -

- Providing good services that meet tenants' expectations
- Managing and maintaining our properties well
- Ensuring the safety of our tenants in their homes
- Supporting our tenants and minimising the number of tenancy failures
- Involving our tenants in scrutinising our performance and shaping our priorities
- Optimising the number of new homes we build
- Helping reduce levels of homelessness in Norfolk and North Suffolk
- Reducing our operational carbon footprint and that of the properties we manage

To help us achieve these priorities we will:

- Focus on being a good employer, recruiting, retaining and developing staff who have customer focus
- Ensure that we have the right digital tools for both tenants and staff to use
- Continue to review and improve the Value for Money of our activities
- Maintain good standards of governance

Values and behaviours

Our values form a central part of our working culture and how we want to work with tenants, employees, partners and stakeholders. All members of the Broadland Team, whether non-executive directors, staff or volunteers are expected to behave in ways that are consistent with our values.

Trustworthy

We will behave professionally and with integrity in a way that enables our tenants and partners to trust us

Honest

We will be open and transparent with our tenants, regulators and partners

Collaborative

We will work in equal partnerships with others to deliver our objectives

Innovative

We will be creative and imaginative in finding solutions that work for our tenants and partners, learning from successes and setbacks to deliver our objectives

Fair

We will treat our tenants and our staff fairly and with impartiality

Reliable

We will take ownership of issues and deliver against our commitments

Responsible

We will allocate our resources carefully to optimise the community benefits of our activities

Ongoing review

This is a four-year corporate strategy, which the Board will start reviewing during Financial Year 2021/22 with the aim of agreeing a new rolling Corporate Strategy in the summer of 2022.

Our Customer Facing Activities



Statement Number 1	Frontline Services
Statement	We will provide a high-quality housing management and repair service.
What we are going to do:	<p><u>Housing Management</u></p> <p>Lettings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will ensure that the lettings process is as easy as possible for applicants ➤ We will encourage use of Tenants online as part of signup <p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will, in partnership with our local authority partners, operate flexible allocation and eligibility policies that allow individual applicants' unique set of circumstances and housing history to be considered. ➤ We will work with partners so we each do what we are good at and can achieve more together to benefit our tenants and communities. <p>Relationships with our tenants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will ensure that tenants are aware of their responsibilities under the terms of their tenancies. ➤ We will respond promptly to reports of anti-social behaviour and seek to resolve issues through dialogue and mediation, before any tenancy enforcement actions. <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenancy and Neighbourhood and Community Standards and report against these regularly to the Board. <p><u>Repairs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will improve our scheduling of repairs to ensure that at least 98% of repairs are delivered within approved and publicised timescales <p>Health and Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will prioritise any repairs with health and safety implications. <p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will improve our communication with our tenants about scheduling repairs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will ensure that all tenants are aware of what repairs the Association is responsible for and what repairs tenants are expected to undertake themselves <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing’s Home Standard and report against this regularly to the BHA board <p><u>Access to services</u></p> <p>Tenants online</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will continue to develop Tenants online so that tenants can access our services online, including scheduling repairs. ➤ We will ensure that Tenants online works effectively on both Desktop Computers and Mobile Devices ➤ We will develop our digital offering from the perspective of the tenant and not us as landlord ➤ We will develop “Chat Box” and “Conversational BOT” functionality on tenants on line so that tenants can engage with us on issues without having to telephone customer services
<p>Why we are doing this:</p>	<p>We know that tenants want and deserve good quality management and maintenance services. We also know that we are not consistently meeting their expectations and we need to deliver improvements to grow tenants trust in and satisfaction with us.</p> <p>Many, although not all, of our tenants expect us to provide easy to access and easy to use online tools for them to manage their relationship with us and access our services. It is important that we provide the right digital environment that not only meets tenants needs but is also cost effective and efficient for Broadland. There will be some tenants for whom accessing services online is not appropriate and we need to ensure that we have the resources to invest more time with digitally excluded tenants, both face to face and on the telephone.</p>

Statement Number 2	Sustaining Tenancies
Statement	We will support tenants at risk of losing their homes by engaging with them to minimise the number of failed tenancies.
What we are going to do:	<p>Working with our tenants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will continue to invest time with those tenants most at risk of losing their homes by providing a tenancy support service that includes budgeting support, access to benefits and signposting to other agencies ➤ We will ensure that first time tenants are provided with suitable support, including, where appropriate, a pre tenancy household management training course , including digital skills. ➤ We will work with tenants with hoarding tendencies to support them in reducing the risks hoarding represents to both them and their neighbours ➤ We will proactively work with any tenant, who is positively engaging with us, to prevent their eviction and homelessness. ➤ We will continue to promote awareness of this work. <p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will ensure that homes let to homeless and other vulnerable people are ready to move into <p>Measuring impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will explore and develop qualitative measures of tenancy support so that there is a more tangible way of gauging our success.
Why we are doing this:	We believe that when a tenant loses their home unwillingly it is a personal calamity for the tenant and normally expensive for the Association. If we can support tenants to stay in their homes, it is a win-win situation.

Statement Number 3	Asset Management
Statement	We will invest in our homes to Improve quality and energy efficiency
What we are going to do:	<p>Knowing our homes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will undertake regular stock condition surveys of our properties in order to develop and deliver planned programmes of work to maintain 100% decent homes compliance ➤ We will use our knowledge of our properties, together with tenant experience and satisfaction data, to inform and prioritise our resources <p>Improving Energy Efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will reinvest surpluses from property disposals, and some profits from sales of open market homes by Broadland St Benedicts, in improving the energy efficiency of properties we own ➤ We will support people to move from homes that are not economical to bring up to acceptable standards, if they wish to. <p>Delivering asset management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will deliver a quality maintenance service using, where possible, Broadland Repairs Service ➤ We will prioritise works to our tenants' homes and communal areas that affect their wellbeing and particularly their health and safety ➤ We will use the return on assets model to identify and plan for investment / redevelopment of homes which don't reach our benchmark, subject to the agreement of individual tenants living in these homes <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's Home Standard and report against this regularly to the BHA board ➤ We will continue to ensure that the homes we own comply with the Decent Homes Standard
Why we are doing this:	We are custodians of the properties that we own and need to make sure that they are good places to live now and, in the future, as judged by our tenants

Statement Number 4	Involving Tenants
Statement	We will involve tenants in shaping our services and in scrutinising our performance
What we are going to do:	<p>Local engagement and scrutiny</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will continue to hold Community Conversations and undertake “Out and About” visits, aiming to visit each scheme at least once every four years ➤ We will encourage, support and listen to tenant groups and consult them when we develop new policies that affect them <p>Shareholding membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will change the title shareholder to member and encourage tenants to become actively engaged as Members of Broadland Housing Association, alongside other members of our local communities. <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing’s Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard and report against this regularly to the BHA board ➤ We will support scrutiny of our compliance with the RSH regulatory standards through tenant engagement and will report their views to Board. <p>Digital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will use digital tools to engage with a wider range of tenants in a way convenient to them. ➤ We will ensure that we respond in a timely way to tenants’ questions, comments and feedback on social media.
Why we are doing this:	Broadland exists to provide affordable homes and the people that live in our properties are our most important stakeholders. We need to listen to our tenants, and they must have an influence on our priorities and activities, as well as the ability to scrutinise our performance and hold the organisation to account.

Our ambition to address unmet housing needs



Statement Number 5	Homelessness
Statement	We will, working with others, seek to reduce homelessness in Norfolk and North Suffolk and will lobby for policy changes nationally that reduce the likelihood of homelessness
What we are going to do:	<p>Partnership working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will work with our partner local authorities to support them in the development and delivery of their homelessness strategies. ➤ We are committed to helping meet the needs of vulnerable tenant groups and will work in partnership with others to provide homes for young people seeking shared accommodation ➤ We will work in partnership with others to develop Housing First pilots in Norfolk ➤ We will work in partnership with Norfolk County Council's People from abroad team to develop housing options for migrants and particularly people with no recourse to public funds. <p>Lobbying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will actively support and engage with Homes for Cathy, helping to run the group nationally and promoting the nine commitments to other social landlords in the East of England. ➤ We will actively lobby policy makers, nationally and regionally, to support Crisis'2018 plan to end homelessness
Why we are doing this:	Affordable homes are the solution to homelessness and as such Broadland is a key player in helping to solve the problem of homelessness in our communities. Broadland was established to provide affordable homes to those excluded by circumstances and, if there is homelessness, both visible and hidden, in our neighbourhoods, we need to play our part in finding solutions.

Statement Number 6	Development
Statement	We will optimise the number of new affordable homes we build each year, without compromising our ability to maintain our existing homes and ensure the safety of our tenants and without threatening our long-term viability.
What we are going to do:	<p>Meeting housing needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will aim to deliver an average of 150 new affordable homes each year over the next five years in Norfolk and Waveney. At least 100 of these new homes will be for rent at social, intermediate or affordable rent levels ➤ We will build an average of 50 homes in mixed tenure schemes each year for sale into the open market to generate surpluses, subject to ensuring our overall exposure to the sales market is kept within acceptable limits. These will be used to bridge the funding gap for new affordable homes and to invest in energy efficiency initiatives in our existing housing stock, <p>Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will build environmentally sustainable homes, normally achieving a minimum EPC level of B <p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will work in partnership with Homes England and local authorities in Norfolk and Waveney to identify and deliver appropriate housing schemes that meet local needs ➤ We will work in partnerships with other housing associations and private developers when as a result of working together we are better able to meet housing need in our area.
Why we are doing this:	We have a national housing crisis – both in the lack of new housing supply and in the unaffordability of both the owner occupied and private rented markets. Housing delivery in Norfolk and North Suffolk has not kept pace with demand. As a result, many more families and individuals are being excluded from the private market due to their financial circumstances. Broadland was established to help meet housing need and we must continue to provide new affordable homes when there is proven need in our communities.

Our Infrastructure



Statement Number 7	Value for Money
Statement	The focus of our financial management is to maximise efficiencies across Broadland, to provide better value for money for our tenants
What we are going to do:	<p>Value for Money will be integral to our activities, including</p> <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Challenging and prioritising spend against our strategic priorities, to maximise the benefit to our tenants and those in local housing need ➤ Manage increases in our operating costs by finding ways of saving money without impacting on the services we provide. <p>Procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will, when procuring services and materials, seek to spend money locally when possible. ➤ We believe that quality and social value is integral to value for money when awarding any contracts <p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will work in partnership with other local organisations to consider the potential benefits of supporting or sharing services <p>Digital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will improve online services for tenants so they can transact with us when convenient to them.
Why we are doing this:	We need to spend money responsibly in order to optimise the impact of our financial resources in delivering our purpose. Value for money underpins all the strands of the corporate strategy

Statement Number 8	Financial Resources
Statement	We will manage our financial resources sensibly, borrowing funds and maximising grant funding to deliver our strategic objectives and improve the Group's financial performance
What we are going to do:	<p>Borrowing money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will raise medium and long-term loans to support our strategy and financial plans including our agreed growth ambitions, in accordance with our Treasury and development plans ➤ We will comply with Funding Covenants and Repayment Plans contained within our loan agreements ➤ We will consider risk and reward in our funding for homes and services. <p>Grant Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will seek to maximise capital grants from Homes England and our local authority partners to help fund new affordable housing schemes <p>Growing capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will use our Group structure in order to deliver efficiencies in procurement and to optimise the delivery of our strategic ambitions. ➤ We will use surpluses generated by Broadland St Benedicts to support both the development of new affordable homes and investment in the energy efficiency of homes we already own.
Why we are doing this:	We need to responsibly borrow money, secure grants and generate our own subsidies in order to help meet housing need and to deliver great asset management.

Statement Number 9	Governance
Statement	We will ensure that our boards and committees are fit for purpose, reflecting good practice and compliant with all regulatory expectations We will also ensure that we have effective executive management to lead and manage the staff team and deliver on the Board’s ambitions
What we are going to do:	<p>Capable Boards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will undertake Annual Board Effectiveness Reviews of each Board within the Group, including a compliance review with the appropriate Governance Code, and will implement any agreed changes to improve our governance arrangements. ➤ We will, every three years, appoint external consultants to undertake a Governance Review of the whole Group and will implement any recommendations, if agreed by the respective board. ➤ We will regularly review what skills and experience each of the Boards within the Group need to undertake their responsibilities and shall openly recruit to fill vacancies when they occur. ➤ We will continue to ensure that we have tenants on the Association’s board <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing’s Governance and Financial Viability Standard <p>Shareholding membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will change the title shareholder to member and actively encourage tenants, business partners and members of the wider community to become Members of Broadland Housing Association and participate in general meetings and other events that we hold from time to time
Why we are doing this:	To succeed organisations, need effective strategic leadership. We therefore need to ensure that our boards are effective and well qualified to both determine our strategy and undertake scrutiny of our performance. We also need an effective executive team, with appropriate skills and experience, to lead the staff team and deliver against the Boards’ strategies.

Statement Number 10	Environmental Responsibility
Statement	We will reduce our carbon footprint and our impact on the environment. We will consider sustainability in all our activities.
What we are going to do:	<p>Better scheduling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will, through better scheduling of BRS operatives, seek to improve productivity <p>Agile working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will encourage and optimise the use of area offices, video conferencing and agile working <p>Reducing waste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will prioritise sustainability in our development and maintenance programmes ➤ We will reduce our use of paper through digital solutions, including cloud storage <p>Environmental Champions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will support and encourage the work of the Group's environmental champions
Why we are doing this:	The planet's resources are finite and increasingly under pressure. We need to minimise the harmful environmental impact of our activities.

Statement Number 11	People
Statement	We will ensure that we are a good employer with high levels of staff engagement and staff commitment to our tenants.
What we are going to do:	<p>Staff Remuneration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will undertake a review of our pay and reward systems across the Group in 2020/2021 to ensure that they are still appropriate <p>Staff Agile working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will ensure that we provide our staff with the right digital tools and devices to work effectively ➤ We will continue to invest in Broadland Business Systems and other digital tools to provide staff with effective tools to do their jobs. ➤ We will ensure that our workplaces are appropriate for our purposes and that they particularly enable staff to work and interact effectively <p>Staff engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We seek high levels of staff engagement and will review messages annually from the Best Companies Survey and implement changes, when possible. <p>Staff Representation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will actively support our staff consultative group, CARE, to represent employee views, provide confidential support to colleagues and to organise social programmes. <p>Staff Training and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will recruit and train apprentices across the business, utilising the Apprenticeship levy, subject to financial resources ➤ We will continue to train and develop our staff to enable them to do their jobs <p>Staff Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will not just recruit against skills and experience, but also taking account of potential recruits' attitude to our enduring purpose, our residents, to our digital agenda and to teamwork.

Why we are doing this:

Broadland is a people business – it is run by people for people.

Our success lies in recruiting, developing and retaining the right people. We must provide the right environment to attract good people, with appropriate attitude, skills and experience, to enable us to deliver this strategy, specifically in the medium term, and the organisation's purpose in the longer term.