

**Blairtummock Housing Association**  
**Business Plan 2023/24 – 2024/2025**

**Approved by the Management Committee (26<sup>th</sup> June 2024)**

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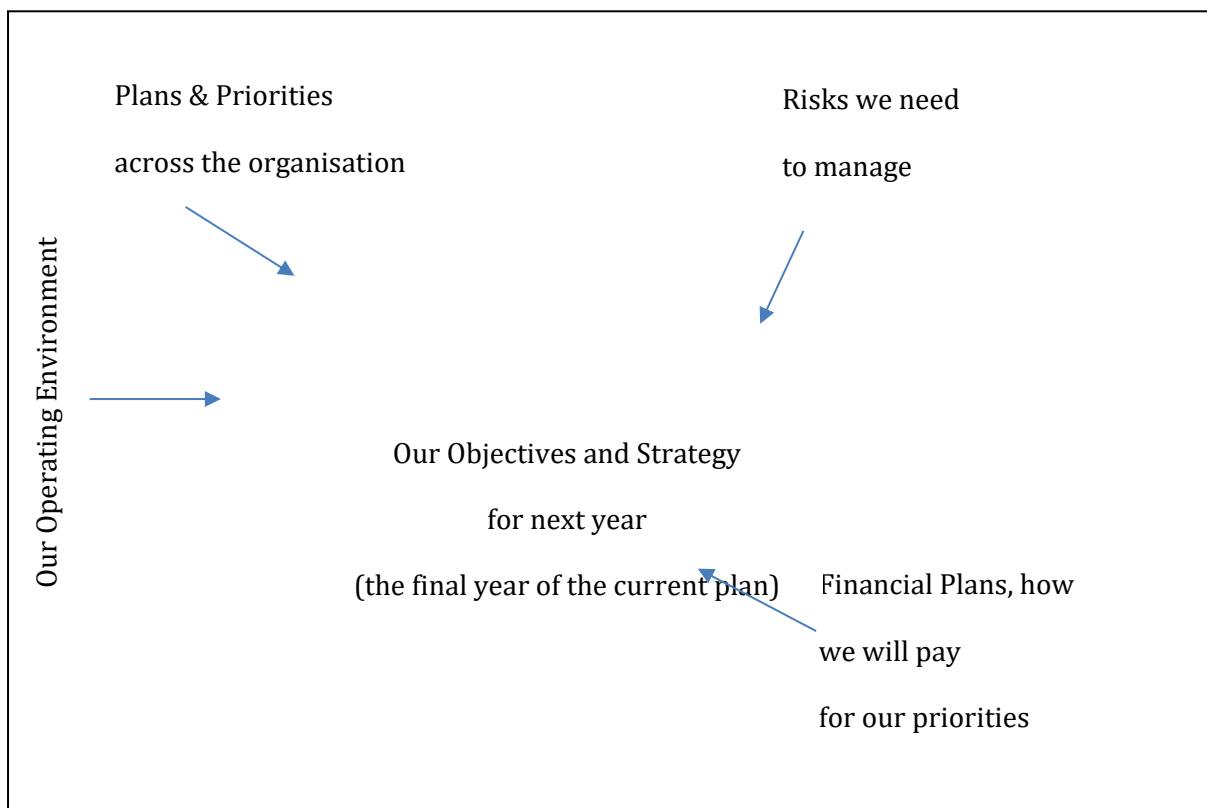
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is the Business Plan for Blairtummock Housing Association (BHA) for the period of 2023/24 – 2024/25.

The Business Plan provides a strategic framework for managing our services and our overall business for a 2 year period.

It also confirms our relationships with BHA's customers, funders, Regulators and partner organisation.

The Business Plan includes information about the following aspects of BHA's future plans.



### BHA's Objectives and Priorities for 2024/25

The Association's strategic direction over the period of the Business Plan is based on:

- Consolidating and improving our core business
- Our core objectives will always be to provide the best service possible to all of our customers whilst managing our assets and resources effectively, for the benefit of our tenants and community.
- Managing our assets and resources well, for the benefit of our tenants and community
- Ensuring resident safety at all times
- Improving opportunities, the local environment and the quality of life for local people

## Strategic Objectives and Key Actions in 2024/2025

### Key Actions 2024/2025

#### 1) Provide high quality and affordable services, homes and environment for our community

- To help alleviate homelessness and provide high quality rented housing at affordable rents through appropriate long-term investment
- Focus on tenant health and safety, ensuring compliance across gas and electrical checks, as well as tackling damp, condensation and mould
- Build our asset management system
- Support tenants through the cost-of-living crisis and changes to benefit systems by providing a local welfare benefits and money advice service
- Use the results of the resident satisfaction survey, complaints received and other feedback to drive service delivery improvements
- Continue to monitor Value for Money in all areas of the business. Continue BHA's interest in new housebuilding or property acquisitions

#### 2) Maintain BHA's financial strength and continued viability ensuring value for money

- Ensure close monitoring of external risks, including those that may place pressure on BHA's financial well being
- Manage the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis

#### 3) Maximise opportunities and reduce inequalities for our community

- Deliver our current and planned community regeneration projects
- Continue to work with residents, local organisations and external partners, to support and strengthen our community
- To maximize community involvement and community spirit through continued involvement in the management of homes, provision of services and across wider role initiatives
- Progress work in relation to tenancy sustainment, alleviating fuel poverty and cost of living activities, including sourcing funding for residents whenever possible
- Work with EHRA to make the case for greater local control and decision-making within Greater Easterhouse

#### 4) Ensure we are well governed and have the skills and knowledge required in the Association

- Ensure business continuity and support the wellbeing of our staff throughout the period of the plan. Continue to develop our approach to succession planning
- Continue to recruit, support, train and develop members of our Management Committee
- Ensure the work of the Association is supported by effective governance and financial controls, and that staff and Committee are accountable to tenants, owners and others accessing our services
- Ensure equality, diversity and strong governance is reflected across all areas of our activity

**And, across all of the objectives shown, safeguard BHA's resilience and support BHA's tenants and the community in the current cost of living crisis.** BHA's guiding principles will be to comply with

public health guidance; provide safe and effective services; support tenants, the community and our staff; plan effectively for future changes; and safeguard the resilience of BHA itself.

## **ABOUT BLAIRUMMOCK HA**

Blairtummock Housing Association is a community-based housing association and an independent not for profit business who owns and manages properties across the Blairtummock & Rogerfield areas of Greater Easterhouse.

BHA is led by a voluntary Management Committee whose members have a wide range of skills and experience. This includes sharing their insight into the needs of our customers and communities, good team working, voluntary and professional experience. The Management Committee is responsible for providing leadership, direction and strategy, while the Director and Senior Management Team lead operational management.

BHA was set up in 1989 and its achievements include:

- Transformation of the housing conditions in our area through investment and new build
- Greatly improved service by taking a responsive approach to service delivery and investment that is based on the needs of our customers and community
- Setting up Blairtummock & Rogerfield Opportunities, which is a fully independent social enterprise offering services to our customers
- Having a local presence, which has made Blairtummock & Rogerfield more stable and safer places.

## **OPERATING ENVIRONMENT**

The Business Plan identifies many external and local factors that impact our business strategy.

Responding to such factors is always important but is particularly so at present when social landlords are experiencing too many uncertainties and risks and many of our tenants are also struggling.

The key pressures include:

- The impact of high inflation and the cost-of-living crisis on Blairtummock HA tenants
- Rising property maintenance costs; caused by Brexit and other global economic factors
- The impact of inflation and increasing interest rates on Blairtummock HA as a business
- Accelerating Universal Credit migration, which is damaging to tenants and BHA's income streams.
- Increasing Regulation and Legislation
- The developing economic impact of the war in Ukraine
- Continuing cuts in Glasgow City Council budgets for essential neighbourhood services

- Climate change obligations for Scotland, we are monitoring the various dates for reaching requirements and we will look at carrying out another stock condition survey to determine how we can achieve them.
- Housing crisis and increasing levels of homelessness.

The Business Plan shows how BHA will monitor and whenever possible address risks caused by our operating environments. This will be particularly challenging in areas we cannot control, such as the performance of the economy. In such cases we will assess the impact and incorporate this in our decision making on these matters we do control, such as our budgets and spending.

## CHAPTER 1

### A Brief Profile of BHA

The following graphic provides some brief contextual information about BHA, to help set the scene for the Business Plan.

<b>Year BHA was registered with Scottish Homes</b>	1989
<b>Legal form</b>	Community Benefit Society (non-profit distributing) Scottish Charity
<b>Number of voluntary Management Committee (MC) members</b>	10 All are unpaid volunteers, majority live in BHA's area of operation
<b>Current number of shareholding members</b>	60
<b>Number of BHA properties for rent</b>	704
<b>Number of factored properties</b>	50
<b>Number of shared owners</b>	19
<b>Tenant satisfaction rate (% of tenants surveyed, 2023 TSS Report)</b>	
<b>BHA's overall service</b>	91%
<b>Rent represents good value for money</b>	92%
<b>Rental Income receivable in 2023/24 from rents and service charges</b>	£2,867,938.78
<b>Average 3 apartment weekly rent 2023/24</b>	£76.22
<b>Total private loan funding (current loan balances)</b>	£2,849,424 (31/3/2024 unaudited)
<b>Loan/interest repayments for 2022/23</b>	£159,875 (31/03/2024 unaudited)
<b>Office-based staff (full time equivalent)</b>	12.5
<b>Budgeted spend for reactive and cyclical maintenance 2023/24</b>	£332,608 £231,568
<b>Budgeted spend on planned and major repairs 2023/24</b>	Major £712,730 Minor £0

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **The Association's Vision, Mission and Values**

The Management Committee (MC) has set the following vision and mission for BHA, with an accompanying statement of the Association's values.

#### **OUR VISION**

Neighbourhoods where people choose to be and are happy to live.

#### **OUR MISSION**

To give local people the power to improve the opportunities for our community

#### **OUR VALUES**

Local people lead BHA. Our values are based on community ownership and control, along with respect for our customers; our committee members; our staff; and our partners.

In everything we do, we will:

Be open, honest and transparent

Keep our promises

Listen to our tenants and be responsive to their needs

Be inclusive and provide equal opportunities for everyone in our community

Be responsible in our management of BHA's resources

Empower our tenants and the community

Respect the environment



## CHAPTER 3

### Strategic Direction and Objectives

#### BHA Strategic Direction and Strategic Objectives 2024/25

BHA's strategic direction in 2024/25 will remain unchanged, but how we address it will be greatly influenced by the cost of living crisis.

#### Strategic Direction

- Seek continued improvement in our performance, increase community engagement and get to know our customer's priorities and aspirations better
- Managing our assets and resources well, for the benefit of our tenants and the community
- Improving opportunities, the local environment and the quality of life for local people

#### Strategic Objectives

The Association has four strategic objectives, each accompanied by a set of success measures that describe the practical outcomes we wish to achieve over the full period of the Business Plan. The success measures in the base Business Plan are shown at Appendix 9.

Following BHA's annual planning day, which was carried out in June 2024, the MC has approved changes to the strategic objectives set out in the base Business Plan. The purpose of doing this was to streamline and simplify the original objectives.

The revised objectives are shown in the box below.

1. Provide high quality and affordable services, homes and environment for our community.
2. Maintain BHA's financial strength and continued viability ensuring value for money.
3. Maximise opportunities and reduce inequalities for our community.
4. Ensure we are well governed and have the skills and knowledge required in the Association.

#### **And, across all of the objectives shown above**

Safeguard BHA's resilience and support BHA's tenants and the community following the aftermath of the Covid 19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

The Management Committee is clear that BHA should support our tenants, community and staff in the difficult times that lie ahead; and that BHA should play an important role in working with tenants, the community and partner organisations in the work that will be needed to "build back" the community in the current cost of living crisis.

## **BHA's Priority Actions for 2024/25**

The Executive Summary shows the most important actions that BHA is aiming to achieve in 2024/25 and that many have been carried forward from 2021/22 due to the pandemic. These are described in more detail throughout this Update and in the Resource Plans at Appendix 6.

### **Review of Strategic Options**

BHA conducted an in-depth strategic options review in 2016, prior to the retirement of our previous Director. This confirmed that we had the financial strength and resources needed to continue as an independent housing association, and this continues to be the case.

### **Staff Succession Planning**

The Management Committee have a policy on Succession Planning for Senior Officer (Model SFHA Policy) which was reviewed in June 2024.

At BHA we value our staff team and take a proactive approach to training and development to allow personal growth, as well as ensuring that our team is adequately resourced in the event of staff turnover.

We have several strategies in place to support staff development, which include:

- Annual appraisal systems which allow staff and line managers to identify any training requirements or opportunities in undertaking longer term training i.e. day release
- Annual training plan
- Regular internal training on key areas
- A staff training budget which is reviewed annually
- Encourage staff to attend forums i.e. SFHA/SHARE/EVH
- Cover the cost of membership of professional bodies if membership is a requirement of the position

As a small organisation we look to recruiting internally if there are any natural successors. When this is not possible, we recruit externally.

In 2020 the Association employed a consultant to Conduct a Governance Review against all 7 of the Scottish Housing Regulators standards. Following this an action plan was drawn up and implemented over 2021/22

Looking to the future, BHA has no plans to extend our activities beyond the neighbourhoods of Blairtummock and Rogerfield. We are clear about what we want to achieve, and that we have the capacity to deliver our plans.

The Management Committee has assurance that the Association:

- Has a viable financial business plan
- Is delivering well for tenants, based on good tenant satisfaction and service delivery results, and continued levels of investment in tenants' homes and neighbourhoods
- Is contributing to the physical and social regeneration of our area
- Has stable and effective governance

- Has not been the subject of any regulatory engagement or intervention.

**Accordingly, the Management Committee considers that there are no circumstances that would require an options appraisal relating to the Association's current organisational structure.**

We may, in due course, conduct options reviews or risk assessments in business areas where impact or value to the Association is potentially significant. For example, this would apply to our wish to resume our development programme, to tackle some of the large areas of vacant land that surround BHA's housing. At this point in time, there are no immediate prospects of Glasgow City Council being prepared to support a renewed BHA development programme.

## CHAPTER 4

### Strategic Analysis: The Association's Operating Environment

The 2021/22 Business Plan described the most significant external factors that could affect the achievement of BHA's strategy. This chapter refreshes that analysis, in the form of a **PESTLE analysis** which was revised in 2023 and 2024 and identifies and comments on relevant Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legislative/Regulatory and Environmental factors.

#### PESTLE Analysis 2024: Other Factors

Blairtummock's business is strongly influenced by external factors. The following pages set out our analysis of the wider operating environment, in the form of a PESTLE analysis which addresses Political, Economic, Social, Legal and Environmental Factors.

#### Social Factors

##### Inflation

CPI inflation was at its highest level for 30 years, 10.1% as at January 2023. However, at the time of reviewing plan it had slowed to 2.3%.

##### Deprivation in BHA's community

The latest edition of the four-yearly Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation was published in February 2020 and is a valuable source of information for BHA.

Changes in SIMD rankings were significant in Rogerfield but modest in Blairtummock, when the 2020 results are compared with the previous SIMD report (2016):

- The overall SIMD rank for Rogerfield improved from the 5% most deprived to the 15% most deprived of all datazones in Scotland. Rogerfield also saw an improvement in its ranking for income deprivation.
- Both Blairtummock datazones stayed in the 5% most deprived in Scotland. One of the Blairtummock datazones recorded a slight improvement in the education domain ranking, moving from the 5% most deprived to the 10% most deprived
- Both areas recorded better results on the level of reported crime.
- Deprivation levels in Blairtummock and Rogerfield and Easterhouse are severe and of long standing
- Scottish Government/Glasgow City Council use of challenge funding means that funding does not necessarily go to the places where it is needed most
- Scottish Government proposals for community empowerment and local democracy lack boldness
- Community organisations should have a key part to play but can only do so much without government support/funding

Appendix 2 shows more information about the 2020 SIMD rankings. This shows that people living in our community experience substantial inequality, for example in relation to low incomes, poor health and educational attainment.

The SIMD includes detailed indicators on health, education etc. that lie behind the rankings, and this allows the results for BHA's area to be compared with those for Glasgow as a whole. This shows that there are unacceptable levels of deprivation and inequality, compared with the city as whole.

## **Economic and Financial Factors**

### **Universal Credit (UC)**

- Causes landlords difficulties in maintaining levels of rent collection and controlling increases in bad debts. Also causes significant hardship for claimants.
- Impacts will increase and intensify: full rollout of UC is now planned by December 2024.
- BHA actions have included close management of UC cases; promoting direct payment of housing costs to BHA; and funding a local money advice service covering UC and other benefits.
- More tenants will move on to UC, as a result of the phasing out of legacy benefits

### **Inflation**

- Inflation reached its highest level for 20 years 10.1% in January 2023

### **Cost of pension contributions**

- BHA is protected from the recent 5.7% cost increase for contributions to the SHAPS defined benefit pension scheme, as it closed the scheme some years ago. It will still need to make past service deficit payments.

### **Interest rates**

- Bank of England base rate reduced to 0.1% as an immediate response to Covid-19 pandemic.
- The latest rate is 5.25% (May 2024)

### **Availability of External Funding**

Current economic climate may create uncertainty about access to new funding. This is not currently an issue for BHA, which intends to self-fund planned maintenance contracts. Should borrowing prove necessary, the Association has unencumbered stock to support this.

## **Political Factors**

### **Scottish Government (SG) policy and priorities**

- Scottish elections in 2026 and possibility of another independence referendum at an unknown time could cause political and economic uncertainty.
- SG's current top housing priorities are new homes, homelessness and Net Zero. Levels of funding and subsidy for new development post-2023 could both reduce.

- SG has helped mitigate the impact of the Bedroom Tax (BT) in Scotland, but its wish to abolish the BT has not been agreed by Westminster.

#### **UK Government policy and priorities**

- Responsible for many areas of policy that directly affect BHA, including welfare reform, immigration, macroeconomic policy and public spending levels. Each of these has a high impact on BHA and there could be changes following the July 2024 general election.
- The impact of Brexit continues to affect cost and supply of materials
- Possible Indy Referendum 2
- UK policy on public spending, taxation and benefits

#### **Glasgow City Council (GCC) policy and priorities**

- GCC faces severe financial pressures, and non-statutory neighbourhood services are particularly vulnerable to cuts.
- GCC is introducing Rapid Rehousing policy, which will increase requests for settled housing from social landlords. GCC has responded to the legal requirement for it to establish locality planning through the Thriving Places initiative. In some parts of Glasgow, community-controlled housing associations (CCHAs) have been designated as “community anchors”, with responsibility for promoting community engagement in locality plans. The Council has not offered any such meaningful role to CCHAs in Greater Easterhouse.

## Legislative and Regulatory Factors

### Building Standards

- Net Zero
- New build developments must now meet the Glasgow Gold Standard set by GCC. This involves considerable cost implications.

### Housing Legislation

- Cost of Living (Scotland) Act – Rent Cap

This legislation was introduced to protect tenants from recent unprecedented inflation increases and has been capped for private rented sector but could be extended in the future to RSLs

### Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

- New SHR Regulatory Framework, and requirement to complete self-assurance assessments against regulatory requirements.
- SHR has set out separately expectations on a wide range of other matters. These include: rent affordability and rent increases; business planning; asset management; governance; financial performance; risk management; cost control; value for money and asset management.

## Environmental Factors

### Scottish Government targets to reduce impact of climate change

- BHA complies with Energy Efficiency for Scottish Social Housing (ESSH).
- Scottish Government to review ESSH2 in 2025 to “strengthen and realign” the standard with Net Zero requirements. (However, at June 2024 the 2025 and 2032 ESSH milestones are temporally on hold)
- The Energy Efficiency Standard for Scottish Social Housing in Scotland (ESSH) aims to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland. This linked to Government objectives to reduce carbon emissions by 75% by 2030, 90% by 2040 and Net Zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2040. These timescales could be changed.
- Despite initial roll out of the ESSH2 standards, the Scottish Government proposes to review ESSH2 in order to strengthen and align the standard as set out in their climate change update, heat in building strategy and the housing to 2040 route Map. “ESSH 2” standard: requires all social housing to achieve EPC Band B by 2032, with a further goal for all social housing in Scotland “as far as reasonably practical” to be carbon neutral by 2040.
- Building Standards  
As part of Housing to 2020, the Scottish Government is planning to introduce legislation for a new cross tenure Housing Standard in 2024/2025, for phased introduction from 2025 – 2030.
- There is uncertainty about what would be satisfactory technical or financial reasons for not achieving the EPC Band B, as is written into the Standard. Financial affordability and support and the capacity of the market to provide the new technological solutions needed are also unclear.
- SHR – New Asset Management Guidance

- Overall – Net Zero aspirations of the Scottish Government and GCC are clear, but the tools for practical delivery are largely missing such as clarity of policy, funding, technology and procurement

#### **GCC policy on climate change**

- GCC commitment to Glasgow becoming a “carbon neutral city” by 2030 – recommendations to GCC from Working Group are under consideration and include a recommendation to replace gas central heating with electrically powered central heating.

#### **Technological Factors**

- Given the increase in cost for SDM software system, BHA will have to carry out a value for money exercise
- Risk of cyber-attacks on BHA system
- Digital exclusion amongst tenants



## SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

In preparing the Business Plan, we have collated a SWOT analysis.

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local and community-controlled</li> <li>• Experienced and skilled committee and staff</li> <li>• Flexibility and good teamwork</li> <li>• High-performing housing and repairs service and high levels of customer service and tenant satisfaction</li> <li>• Commitment to regeneration</li> <li>• Good housing stock and good investment plan for housing and backcourts</li> <li>• Value for Money</li> <li>• Good partnership working with local organisations (e.g. FARE, Blairtummock &amp; Rogerfield Partnership, food bank, Connect and GEMAP)</li> <li>• Service delivery by BRO</li> <li>• Able to change service level agreements</li> <li>• Local employment and training opportunities</li> <li>• Good estate management standards</li> <li>• Adapted to remote working successfully and staff and committee have embraced the changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Derelict land</li> <li>• External validation of stock condition</li> <li>• Fill gaps in environmental services previously carried out by GCC (also a threat)</li> <li>• Improved communications plan to transmit positive messages</li> <li>• Re-engage young people, e.g. a youth committee or sounding board</li> <li>• Committee and staff development</li> <li>• Low-cost home ownership opportunities in South Blairtummock</li> <li>• Seven Lochs project</li> <li>• Joint working with EHRA</li> <li>• General Election</li> </ul>
WEAKNESSES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not good at promoting what we do</li> <li>• No GCC support for new build</li> <li>• Continued impacts from closure of local Housing Benefit and DWP offices</li> <li>• GCC's approach to partnership working on homelessness is weak</li> <li>• Management input and costs in South Rogerfield</li> <li>• Time to manage open spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welfare Reform/expansion of Universal Credit</li> <li>• SHR Regulatory Framework</li> <li>• Continuing cuts in local services as a result of GCC budget cuts</li> <li>• Gaps in environmental services due to GCC priorities and funds (also a threat)</li> <li>• Increases in BHA's cost base arising from changes in the wider economy and effects of Brexit and Pandemic</li> <li>• Failure to maintain compliance with Clydesdale Bank loan covenants</li> <li>• Cyber-crime</li> <li>• Developers in South Blairtummock</li> <li>• Freedom of Information</li> </ul>

WEAKNESSES	THREATS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="790 230 1045 264">• General Election</li></ul>

The Association's key stakeholders are unchanged since the base Business Plan.

Looking to the future, BHA has developed a new planning framework document (Appendix 10). This establishes the points in the overall planning process when we will seek to engage with tenants and other stakeholders in future years.

Both the Summer and Winter 2023 newsletters contained information on how tenants were able to become involved in the Business Plan process.

A copy of the Business Plan is also available on the Association's website.

## CHAPTER 5 Asset Management

### Business Plan Objectives

Asset management contributes to the following BHA strategic objectives:

- Provide high quality and affordable services, homes and environment for our community.
  - Maintain BHA's financial strength and continued viability ensuring value for money.
- and to the achievement of*  
Safeguarding BHA's resilience and supporting BHA's tenants and the community.

### Context

BHA undertakes a wide range of asset management activities:

- Managing and investing in our homes and neighbourhoods, through responsive and cyclical repairs, and major repairs and replacements.
- Improving the thermal efficiency of tenants' homes, to reduce fuel poverty.
- Providing factoring services to home owners.
- Using our role as a landlord and factor to improve standards of neighbourhood management and the quality of the local environment.

There have been minor changes in the housing stock since the 2021/22 Business Plan. We have since sold properties in South Rogerfield, giving a total of 704 rented properties at June 2024. We will seek to buy more properties in the period ahead.

Demand for BHA's stock continues to be good, with ARC data for 2022/23 showing that:

- BHA has a very low rate of tenants giving up their properties each year
- We achieve good results for new tenants who are able to sustain their tenancies
- We lose only a small amount of rent each year because properties are empty.

Indicator and year	BHA	National Average
<b>2022/23</b> Percentage lettable self-contained houses that became vacant in year	5.54	7.42
<b>2022/23</b> Percentage sustainment rate for new tenancies (ARC definition)	98.11	91
<b>2022/23</b> Percentage of rent due lost through properties being empty	0.22	1.4

An expanded version of this table which also compares BHA with similar size landlords is available at Appendix 3.

## Impact of Covid-19

- Area 1 Backcourt Works started back after some delay. However, the other projects that were planned to begin did not move forwards as planned due to delays in Tenant Consultation and other design and statutory issues. Given the increase in inflation the Management Committee have decided to put a hold on any further back court works. This position will be reviewed regularly.

## Performance and Achievements in 2022/23

### Reactive Repairs

BHA's performance in relation to the Charter Indicators for reactive repairs was as follows in 2021/22 & 2022/23

Measure	BHA 21/22	BHA 22/23
Average hours to complete emergency repairs	4.10	4.8
Average working days to complete non-emergency repairs	3.5	4.18
% reactive repairs completed right first time	99.31	96.3
% properties with gas safety record renewed by anniversary date	100	100
% tenants satisfied with repairs service	94.78	97

BHA's performance for the same set of measures was considerably better than the Scottish National Average in 2022/23, the most recent year for which data is currently available.

An expanded version of the table which also compares BHA with similar sized landlord is available at Appendix 3.

Measure	BHA	Scottish Avg
Average hours to complete emergency repairs	4.9	4.2
Average working days to complete non-emergency repairs	4.2	8.7
% reactive repairs completed right first time	96.3	87.8
% properties with gas safety record renewed by anniversary date	100	99.8
% tenants satisfied with repairs service	93	88

**Green shading** means that BHA's result in 2022/23 was better than the Scottish National Average for the majority of these areas.

**Pink shading** means that BHA's result for 2023 was not as good as Scottish National Average for hours to complete emergency repairs

## **Major Repairs & Planned Maintenance**

The Association invested £125,788 on major component replacement works during 2022/2023, as well as carrying out cyclical maintenance works and other essential expenditure needed to meet statutory requirements.

During the year 2022-2023, BHA:

- Ensured that all of our housing stock continues to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard
- Achieved 100% compliance with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Scottish Social Housing
- Put out to tender the backcourt improvement works in Area 1, and appointed architects for Area 2 (suspended)
- Met 100% compliance for Gas Safety checks
- Met 100% compliance with Electrical Safety Checks (EICR)
- Spend £125,788 on ad hoc Kitchen, Bathroom and Boiler replacements

## **Business Plan Priorities 2024/25**

### **Reactive Repairs**

BHA uses a small pool of contractors for repairs works which we are reviewing to ensure that BHA has up to date health and safety policies and insurance details.

### **Asset Management Strategy**

BHA has completed a stock condition survey (SCS), which so far has examined 100% of common closes/blocks and 97% of individual properties.

The SCS results are the key information source to which will inform a new asset management strategy for BHA. The surveys did not reveal any significant differences to the current BHA component replacement plan.

### **Investment Programme: Component Replacements**

During the next 5 years, BHA plans to invest £1.8m in major repairs and cyclical maintenance. Upon completion, we anticipate that this investment will have achieved the following outcomes for BHA tenants:

- 121 Kitchen replacements
- 31 Boiler installations
- 126 new bathrooms
- 107 properties receiving new windows replacements

We intend that all the works planned for the next five years will be self-funded from BHA's cash reserves. This is reflected in BHA's financial projections for the next five years (see Chapter 10 and Appendix 8).

Across all five remaining years of the programme as it currently stands, proposals for component replacements are as follows:

<b>Yr 1: 2024 - 2025</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Total</b>
Bathrooms	55	£3,500	£192,500
Kitchens	61	£3,750	£228,750
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£330,000</b>
<b>Yr 2: 2025 - 2026</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Total</b>
Radiators & Pipes	65	£1,740	£113,100
Bathrooms	17	£3,500	£59,500
Windows	58	£4,810	£278,980
Close Windows	58	£730	£42,340
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£493,920</b>
<b>Yr 3: 2026 - 2027</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Total</b>
Bathrooms	11	£3,500	£38,500
Front Doors	15	£1,000	£15,000
Boilers	6	£3,000	£18,000
Kitchens	5	£3,750	£18,750
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£90,250</b>
<b>Yr 4: 2027 - 2028</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Total</b>
Boilers	23	£3,000	£69,000
Bathrooms	2	£3,500	£7,000
Kitchen	55	£3,750	£206,250
Windows	49	£4,810	£235,690
Close Windows	50	£730	£36,500
<b>Year 5 2028 -2029</b>			
Boilers	5	£3,000	£15,000

Bathrooms	41	£3,500	£143,500
Radiators	28	£1,7400	£48,720
Year 5 Total			£207,220
<b>Total</b>			<b>£1,818,040</b>

## Stock Safety Works

In addition to all routine work, priorities in 2023/24 will be:

Ensuring Asbestos register is up to date with checks on voids and any major works

Continue to meet 100% of all annual gas checks

Continue to meet 100% electrical safety checks (EICR )every 5 years

### Electrical Inspections Programme

<b>5 Year Programme</b>	
2024	154 Properties
2025	86 Properties
2026	186 Properties
2027	158 Properties
2028	120 Properties

## Backcourt Improvement Works

The 2018 Business Plan outlined our plans to invest around £2.5 million in backcourt improvement works during the period 2018/19 to 2021/22 this was extended due to Covid-19. This programme will be delivered in four contracts. The expenditure profiles are reflected in BHA's financial projections for the next five years, and the works will be self-funded by BHA.

As noted earlier, the Area 1 contract went on site shortly before the Covid-19 lockdown took place and all work was then suspended during both lockdown periods. The contract restarted in the summer of 2020 and did not recommence after Christmas 2020 due to the second lockdown but re-started at the end of March 2021.



Area 1 project is now complete and out of defects.

Area 2 did not progress to tender stage due to cost plan not aligning with budgets. This was at least in part due to increased construction costs and cost of materials.

It has been decided to put all incomplete backcourt projects on hold due to the increase in material/building costs.

		<b>No. Units</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Cost incl fees</b>
<b>Area 2</b>	26-28 Errogie St, 7 Easterhouse Place, 137-149 Easterhouse Rd	55	ON HOLD	£653,400
<b>Area 3</b>	1478-1482 Westerhouse Rd, 68-74 Aberdalgie Rd, 1-7 Duntarvie Place	57	ON HOLD	£677,160
<b>Area 4</b>	2-6 Duntarvie Place, 7-13 Duntarvie Road	20	ON HOLD	£237,600
	<b>Programme Total</b>	211		

The backcourt improvement works will be reviewed when the Association is preparing the 25-26 budget and the specification will also be re-visited.

### **New House Building/Acquisitions**

BHA's area has large swathes of derelict land earmarked by GCC more than 15 years ago for private sector housing that had never materialised. BHA was advised in March 2024 that the site in South Blairtummock had been purchased by Miller Homes for private housing. BHA are in discussions with Miller Homes regarding their plans. BHA has been keen to resume a development programme in our area to address this and complete the regeneration of the area.

Efforts to secure GCC support for a renewed development programme have not been successful to date. This will remain on the Association's agenda for the future, but we are not anticipating that any tangible progress will be made with GCC during 2024/25

The Association will explore any opportunities for acquisition of properties through Glasgow City Council's Strategic Acquisition Policy, where funding is available.

## CHAPTER 6

### Housing Services and Community Regeneration

#### Business Plan Objectives

The Association's housing and community regeneration services contribute to the following BHA strategic objectives:

- Provide high quality and affordable services, homes and environment for our community.
- *[through rental income and arrears management]* Maintain BHA's financial strength and continued viability ensuring value for money.
- Maximise opportunities and reduce inequalities for our community.

*and to the achievement of*

Safeguarding BHA's resilience and supporting BHA's tenants and the community.

#### Universal Credit: Impact on Tenants and BHA's Finances

Universal Credit (UC) is the other main challenge facing our housing services.

The number of BHA tenants on UC rose in 2023/4, with the number of known cases increasing by 29:

Year	Total Cases	Cases in Arrears
2020	93	-
2021	150	-
2022	180	90
2023	190	86
2024	209	109

We expect numbers to increase steadily until 2025, which is the latest target announced by the Department of Work and Pensions for finally arriving at full rollout of UC. Some ESA cases may remain on legacy benefit, including Housing Benefit, until 2028 but this will be a small number.

Analysis of UC cases identified that approximately 50% of all tenants on UC had rent arrears. Despite our efforts to provide assistance and advice, this trend has continued through 2024.

Overall, an increase in 29 cases through the year. This is the end of year position and does not take into account claims closed during the year which will have offset total new claims. Total arrears attributed to tenants on UC has increased by £9,847.19 over the past 12 months, an element of this will be technical arrears due to timing of end of period for rent accounting and may also be as a result of tenants with previously existing arrears having a change of circumstances.

Over the course of 2023/24, BHA found that around half of tenants on UC had rent arrears, with an average amount of arrears approx. £213.64. In common with other landlords, our experience is that some aspects of UC lead directly to rent arrears, in particular the 5-week period that new UC

claimants must wait for their first payment, and DWP's inability to match UC direct payments with our timescales for when rent payments are due.

Managing UC arrears cases takes up more of our staff time than other cases and DWP's plans to increase the caseload of its officers is a concern. It is likely this would mean social landlords have to spend more time than we already do, assisting and supporting tenants to claim UC and then maintain their claim with DWP.

Overall, BHA succeeded in keeping the average level of UC rent arrears relatively stable in 2023/4. This was partly due to proactive practice in getting tenants to agree that DWP will pay the housing costs part of their UC to BHA. Such arrangements are in place for around 58% of all tenants on UC.

## Performance

The following table shows the headline results from the latest tenant satisfaction survey (2023) and compares these with the Scottish national average from the 2023 ARC, for all social landlords in Scotland. An expanded version of the table which also compares BHA with EHRA landlords in Greater Easterhouse and GHA is provided in Appendix 3.

### Tenant Satisfaction Results

Measure	BHA 2023 survey	BHA 2020 survey	Scottish Avg (2023 ARC)
% tenants satisfied with overall service provided by landlord	91	91.7	87
% tenants who feel landlord is good at keeping them informed about services and decisions	99	96.6	90
% tenants satisfied with opportunities given to them to participate in landlord's decision making	100	91.5	86
% tenants satisfied with quality of home	79	88.9	84
% tenants satisfied with repairs service	97	91.0	88
% tenants satisfied with management of neighbourhood	91	93.4	84
% tenants who feel rent for their property represents good value for money	92	92.1	82

**Green shading** BHA's result in 2023 was better than the compared averages from the 2022/23 ARC

**Pink shading** means that BHA's result in 2023 was not as good as the compared averages from the 2022/23 ARC

BHA's latest results (2023) are not as good as the previous 2020 survey, although the results are better than the national average, apart from satisfaction with the repairs service. BHA can also draw reassurance from the result on whether rent is good value for money.

## Benchmarking Results

BHA also performs strongly in service delivery (housing management and repairs) when compared with the Scottish National Average. The results shown below are for financial year 2022/23, which is the most recent year for which the ARC information is available. An expanded version of the table which also compares BHA with similar size landlords is available in Appendix 3.

### ARC Results Comparison, 2022/23

Measure	BHA 2022/23	Scottish Avg 2022/23
% tenancy offers refused	27.5	30.9
ASB cases resolved within local target	100.0	94.2
% tenancies began in previous year remained more than a year - applicants assessed statutory homeless LA	100.0	90.3
% tenancies began in previous year remained more than a year - all	98.9	91.2
% lettable self-contained houses that became vacant in year	5.54	7.4
% collected of rent due	99.4	99.2
% gross rent arrears of rent due	3.45	6.9
% former tenant rent arrears written off	29.61	27.1
% of rent due lost through properties being empty	0.2	1.4
Average calendar days to re-let properties	16	55.6
% of court actions initiated which resulted in eviction	50	17.2
2 Apt - Average weekly rent	£66.93	£83.46
3 Apt - Average weekly rent	£72.59	£86.28
4 Apt - Average weekly rent	£82.57	£93.96
5+ Apt - Average weekly rent	£89.09	£103.72
Total - Average weekly rent	£77.80	£91.86

**Green shading** BHA's result in 2022/23 was better than the national average (2023 ARC)

**Pink shading** means that BHA's result in 2022/23 was poorer than the national average

**Orange shading** means BHA's result was the same as the national average

These results show that:

- BHA had low rents
- BHA performed well in sustaining new tenancies
- BHA dealt quickly with antisocial behaviour complaints
- BHA had a low level of tenancy turnover
- BHA had a low level of rent arrears, although the level of former tenant arrears was relatively high
- BHA had an above average level of refusals when making offers of housing, but this was cancelled out by an exceptionally low amount of lost rent on empty properties
- BHA was also quick to re-let empty properties

BHA continued to perform strongly in service delivery in 2023/24, as indicated in our most recent ARC return to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Measure	2021/2022	2022/23	2023/24
% tenancy offers refused	27.5	27.5	22.6
ASB cases resolved within local target	100	100	100
% tenancies began in previous year remained more than a year - applicants assessed statutory homeless LA	100	100	91.7
% tenancies began in previous year remained more than a year – all	97	97.9	91.5
% lettable self-contained houses that became vacant in year	7.09	5.54	5.97
% collected of rent due	100.18	99.44	99.61
% gross rent arrears of rent due	3.38	3.45	3.8
% former tenant rent arrears written off	0.03	29.61	34.74
% of rent due lost through properties being empty	0.38	0.22	0.34
Average calendar days to re-let properties	18	16	21.9

## Homelessness

In 2023/4, BHA received 21 section 5 referrals from Glasgow City Council, with 16 offers made of which 13 were permanently housed. This was equivalent to 32% of all BHA lets during the year.

There has been an aspiration from GCC for 67% annual lets in 2024/25 but it has consistently failed to give us enough referrals to reach that level. This is because the Council's working practices are frequently inefficient and ineffective (e.g. when BHA contacts the people referred, we find out they have already been housed or that they have expressly said they can't stay in Easterhouse).

## Priorities for 2024/5

Taking into account our four key objectives as set out earlier we are confident about our future and in our skills, abilities and ambitions. We will continue to build the respect of our customers and the wider community and improve on our performance.

## Tenant Satisfaction Survey

We will be due to complete another Tenant Satisfaction Survey in 2025.

## Rent Collection and Arrears Management

BHA has faced challenges not only from Universal Credit but also the impact that Covid-19 and cost of living crisis may have on tenants' circumstances.

We anticipate that rent arrears may increase for these reasons, we are presently above our arrears target (Performance 2023/24 was 3.8%, compared with the current tenant arrears target of 3% of rent debit). We will seek to mitigate the risks of arrears continuing to increase by:

- Continuing BHA's current disciplines of effective arrears management, as reflected in our long-term performance results
- Contacting all new claimants, where possible, to explain the UC process in relation to rent and to discuss payment options
- Encouraging direct payment of UC housing costs to BHA and seeking to increase the number of UC recipients who agree to do this.

## **Welfare Rights/Money Advice**

BHA will continue to provide tenants with access to a local money advice service funded by the Association, to help maximise tenants' incomes and their ability to pay rent.

We will continue to work in partnership with Provanhall and Gardeen Housing Associations, and with Connect Community Trust which is employer for the post which meets the needs of all three housing associations.

## **Homelessness**

The Council requested a target of 67% of all BHA lets in 2024/25, which we consider to be unrealistic based on past performance in making competent referrals to us. We also have concerns that setting the target at this level will restrict access to rehousing for applicants in other categories who also have pressing types of housing need. We will continue to support the housing of homeless people by offering 40% of lets to section 5 referrals.

## **Service Development**

### **Resident Involvement**

Having had success in encouraging BHA tenants to participate, we will aim to build on our engagement activities during 2024/25. We will offer a range of ways for residents to engage with us, focusing on smaller and more targeted groups – e.g. themed sessions/events, digital engagement and our traditional methods such as newsletters.

### **Digital Access to BHA's Services**

BHA has introduced a number of enhancements via the SDM Web Portal, to give tenants greater choice about how they wish to use BHA's services.

The Portal allows tenants to access current arrears, recent payments, print rent statements, request and view recent repairs, view the progress of outstanding repairs and make online payments.

We also have a Facebook and X which we use to engage with tenants.

In 2024/25, we will introduce additional social media options and promote their use by BHA tenants who wish digital access to services.

## **Community Regeneration**

Our successful programme of community regeneration will be more important than ever, due to the anticipated social and economic impacts of Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis. Working alongside local delivery partners, particularly those involved in Blairtummock and Rogerfield Partnership, BHA's priorities in 2024/25 will combine established and new services/activities:

### **Established**

- Continuation of FARE's work providing activities in the community hall.
- A Community Chest
- Men's Shed
- Walking Group
- Community Hall as a hub for activities and services
- Employability – through our subsidiary, Blairtummock & Rogerfield Opportunities

### **New**

- Land Transfer in Rogerfield, through a long-term lease from GCC, to develop a community asset
- Further joint efforts to address the increased Cost-of-Living and associated destitution and impoverishment – through amplifying existing interventions such as Community Chest and Rainbow fund and creating new projects

BHA will continue to work with our subsidiary Blairtummock and Rogerfield Opportunities (BRO). BRO will provide services to BHA under service level agreements in three areas (Grounds Maintenance, Stair Cleaning, and Gutter Cleaning), as well as void clearances, handy man service and other ad hoc repairs/maintenance when commissioned by BHA. Providing jobs and apprenticeships is key to BRO's remit and this contributes to BHA's community regeneration objectives.

## **Performance Management**

The Management Committee has set a number of targets and key performance indicators for 2024/25, as shown in Appendix 6.

## CHAPTER 7

# Governance, Leadership and Organisational Management

### Business Plan Objectives

Good governance will help BHA to achieve all our strategic objectives. This is recognised explicitly in the following BHA strategic objective:

- Ensure we are well governed and have the skills and knowledge required in the Association.

We need to ensure that the Association is well governed, has sufficient resources and is able to monitor and manage risk. We need to ensure value for money in all aspects of our work and retain the confidence of our customers, regulators and funders.

### Governance Framework

Our governance is shaped by the work we do to comply with the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management, our policies and working practices. Our approach to this includes:

- Being clear about Blairtummock's purpose, values, strategy and objectives and communicating these openly to all our stakeholders.
- Allowing the Management Committee to provide leadership and strategic direction
- Expecting Management Committee Members to:
  - Take part in an annual appraisal
  - Prepare for and contribute to meetings and other events
  - Be committed to learning and development
- Making sure that we are accountable to our members, tenants, service users, the wider public, our stakeholders and regulators
- Observing the highest standards of integrity and behaviour

### Context

#### Management Committee Membership

The MC currently has 9 members and 1 Co-opted Member (see details at Appendix 1).

- 9 Members are local residents
- 5 Management Committee Members are tenants of the Association, two are partners of tenants and two sharing owners.

The MC has three Office Bearers – the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer – who are elected annually by the MC. The current Office Bearers are:

**Chair:** Catriona Jamieson

**Secretary:** Margaret Pirrie

**Treasurer:** Donna Miller

All our Committee members are volunteers who contribute their knowledge, skills and experience for the good of their community.



This has been a feature of BHA since we were first set up more than 30 years ago as part of a Glasgow-wide initiative to transfer the ownership and management of housing to local communities. We ensure that committee members receive feedback, training and any other support needed through annual review meetings and training opportunities provided through EHRA and other support organisations such as SHARE and EVH.

## **Senior Staff Structure**

BHA's full organisational structure is also shown at Appendix 1, along with short biographies of our senior managers. The Management Committee delegate responsibility for BHA's day to day running to the Director, who in turn is supported by the other members of the Management Team (Housing Services Manager, Senior Housing Officer, Finance Manager and Community Regeneration Manager).

## **Organisational Management**

### **ICT**

BHA replaced our server in June 2020, as part of our normal cycle for hardware replacement and regularly monitors and updates equipment.

### **Staff wellbeing**

BHA has a good track record in supporting a number of successful staff wellbeing initiatives, from resilience and mindfulness practice to a cycle to work scheme and the option to purchase up to 5 days additional annual leave each year.

We offer individual and group training to address the requirements of all staff.

We also offer access to a counselling service support with both work and personal issues.

### **Staff pensions**

BHA closed the SHAPS defined benefit scheme some years ago, based on the increasing level of employer contributions required and affordability for staff. We will, however, have to continue to meet SHAPS past service deficits, and these are factored into the Association's budgets and cashflows.

## **Business Plan Priorities 2024/25**

### **Governance**

- 1) Ensure that all Committee Members understand the Regulator requirements.
- 2) To carry out the annual reviews of committee members' skills and contributions and implement an updated committee training plan.
- 3) To continue to develop our approach to succession planning.
- 4) To monitor the approved business plan for BRO.
- 5) To review the role and responsibilities of BHA sub committees.

## **Organisational Management**

- 1) Ensure that staff have access to appropriate systems that allow them to carry out their duties efficiently and effectively as possible.

## CHAPTER 8

### Rents and Affordability

#### Business Plan Objectives

The Association's rental policies contribute to the following BHA strategic objectives:

- Provide high quality and affordable services, homes and environment for our community.
- Maintain BHA's financial strength and continued viability ensuring value for money.

*and to the achievement of*

Safeguarding BHA's resilience and supporting BHA's tenants and the community during the cost of living crisis.

#### Context

Along with service quality and tenant satisfaction, rent affordability is one of the most important factors the Management Committee considers in seeking assurance about value for money.

#### BHA's Average Rent Levels

BHA has a long history of charging rents that are extremely competitive in relation to sector averages. This has been due to the Management Committee's wish to keep rents as affordable as possible, as well as low levels of debt and low operating costs.

BHA's average weekly rents for 2022/23 are shown below.

House Size	Current Year 2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
2 Apt	£66.77	£65.83	£65.10
3 Apt	£74.22	£71.35	£72.05
4 Apt	£82.45	£83.03	£80.33
5+ Apt	£89.09	£92.04	£87.09
Total - Average weekly rent	£78.13	£78.06	£73.05

In setting rents for 2022/23, the Association implemented the recommended rents associated with our rent restructure (see below), rather than the normal practice of stating a percentage by which all rents would increase. However, the increase for 2023/24 was agreed following a very detailed review of the 30-year plan and a very detailed rent consultation process.

The following table illustrates how our rents in 2022/23 compared with other landlords.

Measure	BHA	EHRA Average	Scottish Avg
2 Apt	£66.77	£77.56	£87.79
3 Apt	£74.22	£87.89	£89.85
4 Apt	£82.45	£*98.78	£99.10
5+ Apt	£89.09		£109.33
Total - Average weekly rent	£78.13	£83.71	£96.51

As can be seen, BHA and EHRA average rents were substantially below the national average.

### **Rent Restructure 2020/23**

BHA has implemented a new rent structure, effective from 1 April 2020. This was carried out because BHA's existing rent structure had become complex and difficult to understand. BHA also wished to address differences between the original stock and additional properties purchased through stock transfer.

BHA worked with tenants and specialist consultants to arrive at a new system that is fairer and easier to understand. Tenants and BHA's Management Committee each had a strong preference for a much simpler rent structure based only on property size and types, and this is the solution that has now been adopted.

The restructure outcomes do not increase BHA's overall income, instead some tenants will pay more and others less in order to achieve greater fairness in rent setting for comparable properties.

For tenants whose rents will go up, increases in any one year are capped at no more than £5 per week until the "new rent figure" is reached. Some rents will reach the new rent figure in year 1 or year 2, and a small number will take up to 4 years for the new rent figure to be reached.

In the longer term, BHA's future budgets and cashflows assume that rents will increase in line with inflation only, to help keep rents affordable. Current rent levels also give headroom to introduce rent increases, if this was unavoidable to manage future risks.

### **Rent Affordability**

The affordability test set by the Association is based on a rent: income ratio of 25%, meaning that **rent should be no more than 25% of household income.**

North Star Consulting prepared a rent affordability assessment during the rent restructuring review, and BHA has further developed this in the course of preparing the Business Plan Update.

### **SFHA Affordability Tool**

North Star Consulting analysed BHA rents by house size, comparing them with the income levels assumed in the SFHA Affordability Tool, market rent levels and the Local Housing Allowance.

In the following table, the percentages shown in the column shaded green represent the results of the affordability tests using the SFHA Tool.

**Table 1: Affordability Results, using the SFHA Affordability Tool**

Bed Size	Rent	Household Type	Rent as % of Income	% of Market Rent	% of LHA	Income after rent
1 bed	£59.72	Single Person	20.9%	47.1%	64.9%	£225.57
1 bed	£59.72	Couple = 1xFT, 1XPT	14.0%	47.1%	64.9%	£368.22
1 bed	£59.72	Couple = 2 FT	10.5%	47.1%	64.9%	£510.86
1 bed	£59.72	Pensioner Couple	14.0%	47.1%	64.9%	£368.22
1 bed	£59.72	Single Pensioner	19.0%	47.1%	64.9%	£254.10
2 bed	£67.25	Single Parent (1 child)	18.1%	41.9%	57.7%	£303.63
2 bed	£67.25	Single Parent (2 children)	14.7%	41.9%	57.7%	£389.21
2 bed	£67.25	Small Family (2 children)	11.2%	41.9%	57.7%	£531.86
3 bed	£76.43	Small Family (2 children)	12.8%	47.7%	65.6%	£522.68
3 bed	£76.43	Large Family (3 children)	11.2%	47.7%	65.6%	£608.27
4 bed	£84.14	Large Family (3 children)	12.3%	23.9%	40.8%	£600.56

The results show that:

- The BHA rents for all house sizes and household types fell comfortably within the target rent: income ratio of 25%, with only one household type slightly above 20%.
- All of the BHA rents were less than half those charged in the private rented sector, and comfortably within the Local Housing Allowance threshold.

### Further Assessment of Rent Affordability

The SFHA Affordability Tool does not fully meet BHA's needs, because it is based on higher incomes than many BHA tenants in low paid work would typically have. In addition, the SFHA Tool incomes are too high to qualify for benefits, whereas BHA has many tenants who rely on both wages and benefits to make ends meet.

BHA has carried out further testing, to go deeper into the specific circumstances that often affect affordability for tenants in low-paid work. To do this, we have examined:

- **Number of hours worked per week** – working less than full-time hours is not always a positive choice, it can also be the result of zero hours contracts where the worker has no control over their hours or working pattern
- **Level of earnings** – most of the tests we have carried out are based on the Minimum Wage, but we have also tested the Living Wage and a higher level of earnings of £20,000 per year which works out at £11 per hour for somebody working full-time
- **Whether a household has one or two people in work**
- **Eligibility for Universal Credit (UC)** - we tested this rather than housing benefit since UC is now the way of receiving help with housing costs for new tenants and for those whose circumstances have changed.

The results are shown in Table 2 and are based on BHA's average rents for 2020/21. The total income column includes earnings from work, and any Universal Credit the household would qualify for. The last column of the table is colour-coded as follows:

- **Green shading** means that BHA's target rent: income ratio of 25% or less of household income is achieved
- **Pink shading** means that the rent: income ratio is greater than 25%.

**Table 2: Affordability Results for households working for low wages**

Household Composition	Employment Profile	Total income (monthly)	Rent: income ratio
<b>2 APT</b>			
<b>Couple age &gt;25 years</b>	1 partner works full-time at Min Wage 1 partner works 20 hours per week at £11 per hour	£2,136	13%
<b>Couple age &gt;25 years</b>	1 partner works full-time at £11 per hour	£1,439	20%
<b>1 adult working age, &gt;25 yrs</b>	Works 35 hours per week for Living Wage in Scotland hourly rate	£1,264	22%
<b>1 adult working age, &gt;25 yrs</b>	Works 35 hours per week for Min Wage	£1,204	23%
<b>1 adult working age, &gt;25 yrs</b>	Works 21 hours per week for Min Wage	£901	31%
<b>3 APT</b>			
<b>2 parents, 2 children</b>	1 parent works full-time for £11 per hour	£2,139	15%
<b>2 parents, 2 children</b>	1 parent works full-time for Min Wage	£2,053	15%
<b>2 parents, 2 children</b>	1 parent works 28 hours per week at Min Wage	£1,986	16%
<b>1 parent, 2 children</b>	Parent works 21 hours per week for Min Wage (child care costs netted off UC payment)	£1,716	18%
<b>1 parent, 2 children</b>	Parent not working	£1,238	25%
<b>4 APT</b>			
<b>2 parents, 2 children</b>	Both parents work full-time for Min Wage	£2,534	14%
<b>2 parents, 2 children</b>	1 parent works 28 hours per week at Min Wage 1 parent works 16 hours per week at Min Wage	£2,246	15%
<b>5 APT</b>			
<b>2 parents, 3 children, 1 grandparent</b>	1 parent works full-time at Min Wage	£2,247	17%

### Comments and Conclusions

The results shown in this chapter provide assurance that BHA rents are affordable at the 25% ratio, for all but one of the household types earning very low wages (single person working 21 hours per week at the Minimum Wage).

Table 2 shows that even with help from Universal Credit, those on the lowest earnings will generally spend a bigger share of their household income on rent compared with tenants who have higher earnings (Table 1).

Affordability results are better for households with children, this has long been built into the system

of tax credits and now Universal Credit. The calculations in Table 2 do not include child benefit as household income, since this is money that should be spent on the child rather than household bills such as rent.

The household types that fare least well are single people working full-time or part-time for the Minimum Wage, and single parents who are not in employment and have dependent children.

In this respect, BHA's results are typical of the picture across the housing sector. This is because the tax and benefit systems treat single people less favourably than households with children. Single people may find it much harder to afford a tenancy, unless they are in better-paid employment. This is also the case for single people under 25, where North Star's report shows that even with BHA's low rents, younger people will find it extremely difficult to afford a tenancy.

# CHAPTER 9

## Strategic Risk Assessment

### Business Plan Objectives

The Association’s identification and management contributes to the achievement of all of BHA’s strategic objectives. Effective risk management has become more important than ever, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and current high levels of economic uncertainty.

### Strategic Risk Register and Key Risks

The Association’s Strategic Risk Register is included in the Business Plan, at Appendix 5.

BHA’s risk assessment method follows HM Treasury guidance by examining identified risks for **inherent risk** (the level of risk if no action is taken) and **residual risk** (the level of risk after measures to control it are applied).

BHA’s method also assesses the likelihood and potential impact of each risk. This involves scoring likelihood and impact from 1 to 5, using the scoring descriptions shown in the ‘heat map’ graphic below.

Chance/Likelihood of Harm	Very High (no controls in place)	5	10	15	20	25
	High (very few controls in place)	4	8	12	16	20
	Medium (some controls in place)	3	6	9	12	15
	Low (most controls in place)	2	4	6	8	10
	Very Low (all controls in place)	1	2	3	4	5
		Slight (no lost time)	Minor (< 7 days absence)	Medium (> 7 days absence)	Major (long term disablement)	Fatal
		Probable Severity/Seriousness of Harm				

The two scores are multiplied and then the score for impact is added again, to clearly highlight risks that have the greatest potential impact. In the heat map:

**Red** means the residual risk score is 15 or more

**Amber** – risk score is between 8 and 12

**Green** – risk score is 7 or less



## BHA's Most Significant Strategic Risks

The Risk Register is a snapshot of risks at a given point in time. For example, Covid-19 would not have appeared on a risk map prepared prior to February 2020, whereas it very quickly became the highest-scored risk in the whole Risk Register.

The categorisation of risks at the time of the Business Plan Update is shown in the following summary table. This is based on **the eight risks that have been scored most highly based on residual risk**, which is the level of risk that remains after measures to control it have been applied.

The summary table deals only with describing the risks and their possible impacts/triggers, and how they have been scored. The actions BHA is taking to mitigate each risk are described in the Risk Register itself.

### Risk Register Summary: BHA's "Top 8" Risks

RISK & POTENTIAL IMPACTS	RISK SCORE (RESIDUAL)
<p><b>1. Nursery facility lying empty</b></p> <p>Continue to advertise premises and speak to local partners. Consider change of use. If still void in winter months, turn water off. Engage in discussion with Pavillion Youth Café regarding disorder.</p>	<p>Impact 5</p> <p>Probability 4</p> <p><b>Score 20</b></p>
<p><b>2. Impact of external political/financial factors create threats to BHA's Business Plan</b></p> <p>For example, the impacts of Brexit and conflict in Europe and Middle East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Referendum 2</li> <li>• Increase in unemployment and reduced ability to pay rent</li> <li>• Possible increases in inflation and interest rates</li> <li>• Possible increase in repairs and maintenance costs if imports cost more</li> <li>• Increased risk of contractor financial failure</li> <li>• Increase in BHA's operating costs</li> <li>• Welfare Reform and UC</li> <li>• Housing to 2040</li> <li>• Net Zero by 2045</li> <li>• Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHN 25)</li> </ul>	<p>Impact 4</p> <p>Probability 4</p> <p><b>Score 16</b></p>
<p><b>3. Affordability of BHA Rents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants not being able to meet increases.</li> <li>• Rental Income not sufficient to meet the cost of running the organisation</li> </ul>	<p>Impact 3</p> <p>Probability 5</p> <p><b>Score 15</b></p>
<p><b>4. Reductions in BHA income and tenant ability to pay rent due to Universal Credit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steady increase in number of tenants on UC</li> </ul>	<p>Impact 3</p> <p>Probability 5</p>

RISK & POTENTIAL IMPACTS	RISK SCORE (RESIDUAL)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further roll out of UC</li> <li>• Arrears occur on new tenancies due to UC payment waiting time</li> <li>• Jobcentre Plus is in Shettleston so not easily accessible</li> <li>• Benefits sanctions</li> <li>• Barriers to applying for benefits online</li> <li>• Rent collection demands reduce staff time available for other essential work</li> <li>• Migration of majority of benefits moving to UC</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score 15</b></p>
<p><b>5. GCC cut backs have an adverse impact on the local environment and residents' quality of life.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressure on BHA to "fill the gaps" at extra cost, to maintain quality of the neighbourhood environment</li> <li>• Changes to GCC Cleansing Services</li> </ul>	<p>Impact 3</p> <p>Probability 4</p> <p><b>Score 12</b></p>
<p><b>6. There is a sudden collapse in one of the banks BHA has money deposited with</b></p>	<p>Impact 4</p> <p>Probability 3</p> <p><b>Score 12</b></p>
<p><b>7. Failure by Management Committee to exercise sound governance, leading to regulatory intervention</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breach of Regulatory Standards</li> <li>• Notifiable Events and whistleblowing complaints</li> </ul>	<p>Impact 3</p> <p>Probability 3</p> <p><b>Score 9</b></p>
<p><b>8. Failure to meet tenant safety obligations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of harm to tenants</li> <li>• Regulatory attention (HSE and/or SHR)</li> <li>• Damage to BHA's reputation</li> </ul>	<p>Impact 4</p> <p>Probability 2</p> <p><b>Score 8</b></p>

## **Business Plan Priorities**

The Risk Register is reviewed and updated by the Director, with input from BHA's managers, each quarter and is then reported to the Management Committee. Committee reporting is currently on a three-month cycle, to reflect the increased level of risk associated with the cost-of-living crisis.

The Committee's role is to review any material changes to existing risks, any new risks that have emerged, and any areas where action is needed to safeguard the interest of the Association and its tenants and service users.

## **CHAPTER 10**

### **Financial Plans and Projections**

#### **Business Plan Objectives**

Sound finances and strong financial management are the foundation for achieving all of BHA's strategic objectives. This is recognised in the following BHA strategic objective:

- Maintain BHA's financial strength and continued viability ensuring value for money.

#### **Context**

This chapter provides an overview of BHA's financial position, drawing on the detailed data contained in our budgets, financial projections and audited accounts.

The chapter provides information in the following areas:

- Financial objectives
- The main assumptions used in our financial planning
- Financial viability
- The stress testing carried out to assess the resilience of the business plan
- Compliance with covenants.

#### **Financial Objectives**

The 30-year budgets are based on the following objectives:

- To provide quality homes at affordable rents for tenants.
- To provide a quality and responsive management and repairs service which also provides value for money.
- To ensure that improvements and major repairs are provided for and carried out as required to protect existing investment in our stock.
- To maintain a minimum cash balance to ensure that the Association always has sufficient cash reserves to meet its obligations as they arise, along with headroom to respond to unforeseen events.
- To comply with all lenders' financial covenant requirements at all times.

## Summary of Key Assumptions used in BHA's Financial Projections

The main assumptions used in the 5- and 30-year financial projections are shown below table.

Budget Heading	Assumptions used
<b>Inflation</b>	Year 1: Increase by 7%; Year 2 onwards: Increase by 4%.
<b>Interest rates on loans</b>	Gradually rise from 4.5% in year 5 to 5.5% by 2036 and remain at that level for the remainder of the plan
<b>Rents, factoring and service charges</b>	Year 1: Increase by 5.5%; Year 2 onwards: Increase by 4% (assumed rate of inflation only).
<b>Salaries</b>	Year 1: Increase by 5%; Year 2 onwards: Increase by 2.5%.
<b>Insurance costs</b>	Year 1: Increase by 7%; Year 2 onwards: Increase by 4%.
<b>Reactive repairs</b>	Increase by inflation rate: Year 1: Increase by 7%; Year 2 onwards: Increase by 4%.
<b>Major and cyclical repairs</b>	Following the completion of the stock condition survey in 2022 and a financial review in early 2023 our 30-year plan and 5-year plan were reviewed (Appendix 8).  We will continue to monitor any proposed legislation and guidance which may enforce changes to our major and cyclical programme and subsequently our budget planning.  Next stock condition survey is programmed for 2026/27, with results feeding through to future financial projections
<b>Pension costs</b>	Final salary scheme closed.

## Financial Viability

The Base Case demonstrates that BHA will be financially viable over the next 30 years.

- The Association is projecting that surpluses will be made throughout most of the 30-year period. Though there are periods where it is predicted that borrowing may be necessary, the budgets are prepared on a prudent basis. Should borrowing be necessary, the Association is in a strong position to do this.
- If required, there would be scope to generate additional income (e.g. if inflation increases, or if the Association needed to increase rents above the levels assumed in the base case, in the event of major economic shocks).
- The Association has repaid debt early before and has capacity to do so again. In periods when cash deposits are attracting negligible interest rates, paying off debt can be an efficient use of surplus cash.

## Stress Testing

It is important for BHA to assess the risks to the Business Plan and our resilience to withstand these.

The base cash forecast shows that borrowing will not be required until 2040. All repairs and replacement works are expected to be funded through cash reserves and revenue up to that point.

However, there are challenges in predicting and budgeting for unexpected events such as BREXIT and the global Covid-19 pandemic.

The full impact of these events may not be felt for several years. As there is currently little concrete evidence upon which to base assumptions which would support an updating of the base case budget, the budget has been left with the assumptions it contained when it was passed by the Management Committee in January 2024.

At present:

- The Bank of England's initial assessment of the impact of Covid-19 (May 2020) is that the UK economy will experience a deep recession, but that this will be very short-lived and the economy will recover to pre-Covid levels as soon as key sectors are restored to full activity;

The Association will continue to track developments during 2024/25 and we have made allowance for the potential impact of adverse changes to key variables within our financial projections. In this regard, we have addressed five stress testing scenarios:

- 1) Increase the cost of cyclical maintenance by 5% above inflation each year for first 5 years;
- 2) Salary costs increase by an additional 1% each year for the first 10 years of the projection;
- 3) Rents do not increase for first 5 years;
- 4) Increase cost of planned major repairs by 5% above inflation each year for first 5 years;
- 5) Increase cost of reactive repairs by 5% above inflation each year for first 5 years.

Each of these five scenarios show the expected cash balance dipping below zero (borrowing required) from 2040. With the exception of scenario 3, where there's no rent increase for 5 years, there's a short-term recovery for years 2041 to 2045, before reverting to a cash shortfall position.

The graphics on the following pages provide a visual representation of each scenario.

# Scenario 1 - Increase cyclical maintenance by 5% above inflation each year for the first 5 years





## Scenario 2 - Salary costs increase by an additional 1% each year for the first 10 years



### Scenario 3 - No rent rise for first 5 years



## Scenario 4 - Increase planned major repairs cost by 5% above inflation each year for first 5 years



## Scenario 5 - Increase reactive repairs cost by 5% above inflation each year for first 5 years



## Covenant Compliance

### LOAN COVENANT CALCULATION

	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2025/26</u>	<u>2026/27</u>	<u>2027/28</u>	<u>2028/29</u>
Operating surplus/(deficit)	(110,018)	477,918	663,069	255,993	651,579
<u>Add back:</u>					
Bank interest receivable	67,814	51,006	59,293	70,186	75,473
Depreciation (housing)	678,297	709,308	723,592	742,563	754,916
Planned maintenance	712,730	217,400	75,250	517,940	207,220
Net operating surplus (adjusted)	<u>1,348,823</u>	<u>1,455,632</u>	<u>1,521,204</u>	<u>1,586,682</u>	<u>1,689,188</u>
Interest Payable	<u>160,000</u>	<u>144,100</u>	<u>134,700</u>	<u>124,800</u>	<u>114,400</u>
<b>INTEREST COVER</b>	<b><u>8.43</u></b>	<b><u>10.10</u></b>	<b><u>11.29</u></b>	<b><u>12.71</u></b>	<b><u>14.77</u></b>

**Note: Virgin Money covenant is 1.2 times**

There is also a loan to value covenant requirement which is currently well met.

We provide the Management Committee with confirmation of compliance as part of BHA's Management Accounts. Compliance testing is also carried out as part of the financial projections, and we expect that existing loan covenants will continue to be met comfortably.

Later in 2024/25, we plan to discuss the release of security with Clydesdale Bank as we have repaid a significant amount of loans in the past 3 years.

## Treasury Management

BHA has loans from Nationwide Building Society and Clydesdale Bank. As at the end of Financial Year 2022/23, £3.026 million remains to be paid, with £193,377 of that due in 2023/24.

Nationwide holds security over 184 properties and Clydesdale Bank currently over 170.

Cash flow projections have shown that the repayment of capital and interest can be met without recourse to refinancing.

The loans are due to be repaid between 2029 and 2040.

### Loan Portfolio

<u>Lender:</u>	<u>Maturity</u>	<u>Fixed or Variable</u>
Nationwide	2035	Variable
Nationwide	2036	Variable

Nationwide	2036	Variable
Clydesdale	2029	Variable
Clydesdale	2040	Fixed

## **Investments**

Blairtummock Housing Association complies with the CIPFA code on Treasury Management and focuses primarily on protecting invested capital.

Deposits are reviewed quarterly by the Finance and Audit Committee.

Liquidity is monitored and investments altered in line with projected cash needs.

## **Treasury Management**

The main treasury management issues likely to arise during 2024/25 are as follows:

- The external economic environment will be monitored closely, to provide early warning of any factors that will increase BHA's costs or reduce its income.
- BHA has financial capacity to raise additional loan finance if required but does not anticipate that this will be necessary for the purposes of the services and future investment shown in the Business Plan.
- The financial projections confirm that BHA will be able to meet loan covenants. Covenant compliance assessments will be reviewed quarterly and reported to committee.
- BHA will review the securities it has given for loans, and this will inform any proposals to rationalise loan securities where this would be beneficial to the Association.

## **CHAPTER 11**

### **Implementing and Reviewing the Business Plan**

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Director is accountable to the Management Committee (MC) for managing the Association's overall performance, including the delivery of the Business Plan and the priorities it sets out.

MC scrutiny will include:

- Reviewing overall performance in relation to the Business Plan twice a year, at the mid-year point and when approving the following year's Plan.
- Reviewing financial and services performance, including targets or key performance indicators, as part of the ongoing cycle of committee meetings during the course of the year.

#### **Oversight of Risks**

The Director will maintain oversight of risks, and report to the Management Committee any emerging risks to the Association's strategic objectives, financial position or reputation. As directed by the MC, the Association may undertake additional risk analysis and reporting for business areas that are considered to involve higher levels of risk to BHA.

#### **Internal Communications**

The Director will discuss the Business Plan with the staff team, including the associated action plans by service/business area. The aim will be to give all colleagues a strong connection with BHA's organisational aims and priorities and their role in helping to meet these.

#### **Annual Business Plan Updates**

The Business Plan Update took place in June 2024 for the period 2024/25. The main purpose of the Update was to:

1. Confirm that the current strategic objectives continue to be appropriate.
2. Update the strategic analysis, to identify changes that could affect our strategy or risk exposure.
3. Review achievement against the Action Plans for the previous year and prepare new Action Plans and targets/key performance indicators for the year ahead.
4. Update the strategic risk register.
5. Update the financial projections for the next 5 and 30 years, with appropriate stress testing carried out.

The completed Business Plan Update document was presented to the Management Committee on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2024. In the following year (2025/26), the Association will produce a new Business Plan.