Rural Stirling Group

Strategic Plan 2024-2027

Rural Stirling Housing Association

Venachar
Quality property management services

FOREWORD

I am delighted to present this update of Rural Stirling Group's Strategic Plan 2024-2027 in my role as Chair of the organisation.

Our Strategic Plan was reviewed and refreshed by our Board and Senior Management Team in 2024. As part of the review process, we adjusted some of our Strategic Objectives to reflect the changes in our operating environment. We also consulted with our tenants and key stakeholders, listened to their feedback and fed it into the Plan. Since then, the Board have reviewed and updated our plan on an annual basis with the plan last reviewed in 2025..

We remain a small housing association with big ambitions: as such, we have set out what we want to achieve for the people we serve, how we will go about doing it, bearing in mind our finite resources, and how you can hold us to account.

Our Strategic Plan describes our Mission, Vision and sets out our key strategic objectives, those tasks that will be our main focus during the final year of the current plan period.. We are confident that our plan is fit for purpose and will help to guide us through this final year- to achieve our goals. Importantly, the plan also lists our Values, those things that we believe are important in how we go about our work.

During 2026 we will begin the work of developing our new Strategic Plan to guide our priorities and objectives in the coming years. We will involve all of our tenants, partners and other stakeholders in the development of our new plan which we will launch by April 2027.

We continue to operate in an uncertain world and the degree of uncertainty is growing due to factors such as the relentless cost of living crisis, the continuing wars in Ukraine and the middle east, the homelessness crisis and the Climate Emergency. We are aware that our population is also ageing and we will continue to do all we can to support and help our tenants to live as long as possible in their homes and communities.

What is certain is that the financial climate will become more difficult for us all. We know, therefore, that we will have to continue to be resilient, adapting to these and other changes but providing an excellent, cost-effective service to all our tenants and service users remains an absolute top priority.

I hope that the objectives set out in this document capture the real sense of energy, urgency and optimism that all of us in RSG feel. There really is a strong desire to not only meet the demand for more affordable housing in Rural Stirlingshire but to continue to support our many communities.

Fiona Boath
Chair Rural Stirling Group

OUR VISION

Strong and attractive rural communities.

Our vision highlights the geographical area in which we operate: we do not serve one local community, but many communities spread throughout a large rural area.

MISSION

Supporting the vision is our mission statement:

To provide affordable, high quality housing and support community aspirations.

The mission emphasises that we not only build new homes, but we also invest in our existing homes, want to help the people who live in and around our homes and support those facing homelessness. We have an impressive track record in building new affordable homes given our size, and aim to grow by a further 10 new homes over the next year.

How we will achieve our mission, is based on **four** strategic objectives.

Breaking ground at Balmaha image courtesy of Dave Arcari

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

In developing our objectives, we have listened to our tenants and service users who have shared with us what is important to them.

The activities associated with each of the strategic objectives will form the basis of the Business Plans for Rural Stirling Housing Association and Venachar, our property management subsidiary.

We have developed a Strategic Delivery Plan which sets out the outcomes, actions, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and the targets we aim to achieve each year.

This will enable us to monitor progress. All the activities will be given SMART (specific. measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) goals.

Delivering excellent services to our tenants – this means being the best social landlord that we can be, delivering a high standard of customer service with sufficient resources spent on housing management, maintenance, tenancy support activities, finance and corporate support, and meeting the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). The above relies upon achieving meaningful customer scrutiny and participation.

Our success in achieving this objective will be; high customer satisfaction levels and services that represent Value for Money, fewer complaints, strong operational key performance indicators (KPIs), and positive engagement with, and good feedback from, the SHR.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Working with our communities to provide homes that meet their needs – this means we will respond to the needs of all members of our communities, including the need for accessible housing and supporting inclusive communities which meet people's needs as they change. Over the remaining life of this plan, we will work with our partners to address the rural homelessness crisis and we will support initiatives that prevent homelessness and help to sustain tenancies.

The above relies on working closely with the Scottish Government, Stirling Council and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs' National Park.

Key outcomes for this objective will be an increase in the number of houses we own and improved quality and choice for tenants.

This relies on having robust information about our homes and tenant priorities and ensuring we have effective financial planning in place to meet current and future investment requirements.

Providing safe, high quality energy efficient homes resilient to the impacts of climate change – this means we will carry out effective maintenance to our tenants' homes and ensure they are safe. This applies to reactive maintenance, relating to urgent or emergency situations, and planned maintenance when properties are upgraded (e.g., new kitchens/bathrooms).

We must also meet government standards for energy efficiency and the new Social Housing Net Zero Standard to improve thermal efficiency, reduce fuel poverty and our impact on the environment.

The key outcomes for this objective will be that all of our homes comply with Scottish Housing Standards. Our homes are safe and secure, our carbon footprint is reduced, and we will work towards a carbon neutral position. Our homes will be resilient to the potential impact of climate change, and we will reduce waste and energy consumption. Our tenants are happy with the repairs service we provide, and our homes are attractive and in demand.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Building organisational resilience – this means that we will focus on the financial health and resilience of our business. In doing so we will:

- ensure that our business is sustainable, and that our financial health is strong.
- ensure that our people have the capacity and resources they need to achieve our objectives.
- ensure good governance and leadership, we will have a diverse Board from a variety of different backgrounds who are skilled and knowledgeable, and we have effective succession planning in place.
- help our communities to be resilient to the pressures and challenges that they face.

The above relies on building our financial reserves, investing in the leadership, development and wellbeing of our people and working closely with our communities to understand the needs that they have and where we can provide support.

Our success in achieving this objective will be that our business is financially viable in the long term; our people are happy, healthy and engaged; and our communities are supported and resilient to change.

HOW WE WILL MANAGE RISK

To ensure resilience in uncertain times will require a robust approach to the identification and management of risks that we may face. Our key risks will be kept under constant review to provide assurance that risks are being managed effectively and that our tenants' interests are protected.

RESOURCING OUR PLAN

We have set out ambitious plans for growth and continuous improvement in the quality of services provided to our tenants. We need to be confident that our proposals are realistic and that we have the resources we need to deliver our promises. We have raised additional finance to ensure that we can build more new homes, and continue to invest in our existing homes.

VALUES

We have set out our vision, mission and the objectives we will deliver, and on which you will be able to measure us. We will do this according to our values:

Accountable Our Board will provide strong strategic leadership and oversight, ensuring tenant and other service users' priorities are protected and at the forefront of all that we do. All our staff will be accountable, and we will always be transparent.

Ambitious We are committed to being excellent, and maximising opportunity for our people and the tenants and service users that we serve.

Caring The services that we deliver will meet the needs of our tenants, future tenants, applicants and service users and will be delivered by professional and caring staff. We care deeply about the design, life-long quality and the cost of our homes, and their impact on the physical and social environment.

Collaborative We will work collaboratively with all sections of the local community, our tenants, applicants and service users, and with our partners to improve the lives of our residents. We will be a proactive member of our local communities, seeking out new, innovative ways to address issues that impact our residents.

Inclusive We are strong advocates of equality and diversity, and value the perspectives and contributions of everyone with whom we are connected.

Respectful We will treat everyone with respect: this is equally important for those outside the organisation, such as customers, other service users, communities and partners, as it is for our employees and Board.

Further Information

Comments, questions or feedback about this strategic plan should be made to:

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