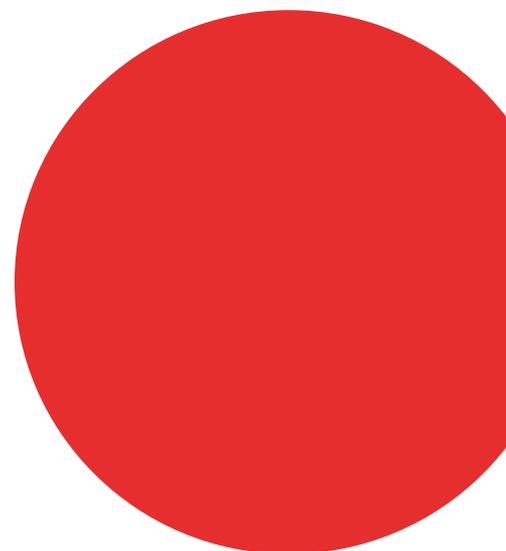


# North Wales Housing

Corporate Plan  
2021 to 2024



# Welcome

The last year has, to put it lightly, been a challenging one thanks to the Covid pandemic, and everyone has struggled in their own way.

I am extremely proud of how everyone has helped and supported each other through this struggle. We couldn't have gone through the last year without the dedication of our staff. Equally we are thankful to our residents for their patience as at times we could only provide limited services. I have seen some amazing examples of acts of kindness and community spirit in the last year, and hope this will continue.

As we hopefully see an end to the Covid pandemic, North Wales Housing are looking ahead and have developed this Corporate Plan which sets the direction for us for the next three years.

The new Corporate Plan covers our intentions to customers, our people, our homes and our finances. Read through this Plan and find out what we intend to do and how we will achieve this.

We hope you join us on this journey as we make North Wales a better place to live and work.

**Helena Kirk**  
**Chief Executive**

# Who we are and what we do

Founded in 1974, North Wales Housing has been providing homes and delivering services for over 45 years.

We are a successful housing association with over 2,700 homes and we are totally committed to our communities across North Wales. We prioritise significant investment in our homes and services. Our in-house repairs team, with pride and good local knowledge, provides our day-to-day repairs, which is of value to our customers.

## Growth

Development is core to NWH's vision of the future. We refinanced in 2019, which improved our value for money and gave us more capacity to continue to develop new homes. In our Development Strategy we set out our ambition of moving incrementally to 5% growth per annum by 2025.

This includes organising fun events and competitions, access to an employee assistance programme Simply Health and occupational health, as well as signposting to useful external services and advice.



## People

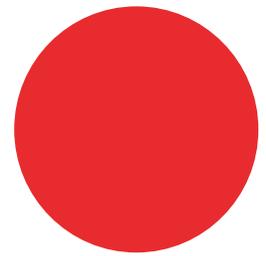
We employ up to 170 people and are proud to display the Investors in People Silver accreditation. People are at the heart of NWH, and their response to the Covid pandemic is testament to how much our people care about our customers. They rose to the challenges we faced positively and with determination to maintain our services.

In return, we like to care for and value our people and have developed a People Strategy. We recognise that our working environment can play a big part in our health and wellbeing and that's why we do as much as we can to help and support NWH's staff health and wellbeing.

We also signed the 'Time to Change' pledge in October 2020, formalising our commitment to change the way we think and act about mental health at work. All Leaders, Health and Wellbeing champions and First Aiders have also been provided with 'I-Act Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing' training, which enables them to support others who may experience a mental health or wellbeing issue.

## Supported Housing

We are proud of our Supported Housing Team and the work we do to tackle homelessness. We have provided homes and services to vulnerable service users for over 20 years. We provide over 300 supported housing units for vulnerable people including the homeless, people with drug and alcohol problems, mental health issues, ex-offenders, people with learning disabilities and young people leaving care.



## Older Persons

There's no getting away from the fact that we're an ageing population, and NWH has developed expertise in homes for Older Persons over the years. We offer several housing options for those aged over 55, including our innovative Extra Care and Sheltered Schemes. Managed by dedicated Scheme Managers, the schemes are often described as a big family, taking care of each other and providing far more than just a place to live.

## Tenant's voice

Engaging with and listening to our residents is important to us and we work alongside involved residents on our Tenants' and Communities Panel who help us understand our tenants' needs for today and tomorrow.

We offer numerous activities and opportunities for residents to get involved with us. This includes the 'Opening doors to the outdoors' project, as well as the Sounding Board and Tenants Forum which further enhance the involvement of tenants in decisions.

## Regulation

North Wales Housing has the highest regulatory rating possible within the Welsh Government Regulatory Framework, according to the last co-regulatory status report in June 2018. The Welsh Government were satisfied with both our 'Governance and Service Delivery' and 'Financial viability'.

## Governance

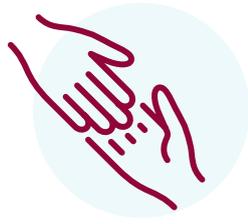
We are committed to achieving good governance at North Wales Housing and comply with Community Housing Cymru's Code of Governance. The code is designed to help housing associations to develop good governance structures and to support continuous improvement. North Wales Housing is led by a Group Board, supported by a Tenants' and Communities Panel, Audit and Risk Committee and a Remuneration and Membership Committee. We have nine Board Members with a varied skillset, who are responsible for providing the strategic direction for the organisation.

# Our Values



## Open

we are transparent in the way we work and make decisions.



## Trust

we do what we say we will do. We behave with honesty and integrity.



## Responsive

to our customers', staff and partners' needs and aspirations.



## Fairness

we're open to all but closed to prejudice. We will actively promote equality and respect diversity.



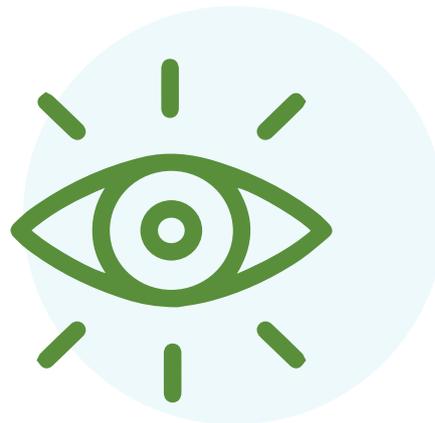
## Learning

we look for better ways in the future. We acknowledge when we make mistakes and learn from them. We look outward to learn from others.

# Vision

Our vision is...

to make a difference to people's lives, by providing homes to be proud of and creating communities in which they can thrive.



# Mission

Transforming lives with great homes, quality services and support.



# Unique Selling Points

The things that North Wales Housing are known for, and are proud of, are our supported and older persons homes, and the services that go with them to support independent living. We are solely focused on working in North Wales, so our name is close to our hearts. Due to our size and our agility we can respond quickly to partnership working opportunities and are financially resilient.

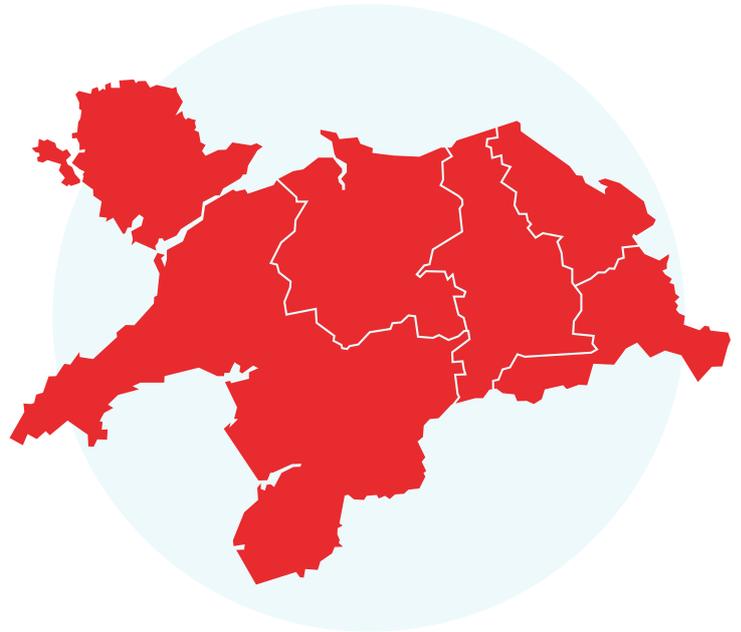


The Unique Selling Points we plan to develop over the period of this Corporate Plan are:

- Greater customer focus
- To become a great employer
- Build upon the harmonious work/life balance for all our colleagues
- Improve the value for money we provide for the rent paid by our customers
- Enhance the quality of our homes.

# The Operating Environment

This Corporate Plan, which sets the direction for North Wales Housing for the next three years, starts as we hopefully come out of the Covid pandemic. The recovery from the devastating effects of the pandemic will be the backdrop to the first year of our Plan. Thus, the focus on supporting wellbeing for our people, customers and the communities where we work is high on our agenda.



Where we live has never been more important to how we live. The big challenges to our climate, our economy and the inequality that exists in the areas we work, particularly health inequality, are still there. The need to find solutions has never been more important.

North Wales Housing supports the vision that good housing is a basic right for all. Good housing, with the right support, where it is needed is crucial for every person, or family, whatever their circumstances.

In our daily work we will act in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and support the seven well-being goals.

Despite concerted efforts, poverty levels remain high in Wales. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation is published every five years, with the last one in 2019. The Index looks at income levels, the health of residents, education levels, housing quality and access to services.

Two parts of the seafront in the North Wales coastal town of Rhyl (Rhyl West 2 and 1) are now the most deprived in Wales. Queensway 1 in Wrexham is also included in the top 10 most deprived areas of Wales.

Good housing can stimulate and extend economic activity locally. For every 1 person employed full time by a housing association, another 1.5 good quality jobs are supported elsewhere in the economy.

We will use our procurement processes to support local businesses in North Wales and focus on the value created by what we spend and not just the cost.

Quality, sustainability and community are at the heart of developments in Wales. What this means in practice is enshrined in the Placemaking Wales Charter, which is a pledge we support in our new developments.

Our health is determined by where and how we live. Wales has higher levels of people who are older, in worse health and poorer than the rest of the UK. Your life expectancy depends on where you live in Wales. The gap in the number of years people live in good or very good health, between the most and least deprived areas in Wales, is 19 years for men and 18 years for women. Poor housing costs the NHS £95M a year in treatment costs.

The most devastating symptom of our combined health and housing crisis is homelessness. A third of homelessness is caused by a health problem. The mean age at death of people experiencing homelessness is 44 years for men and 42 years for women.

Every year we take part in the national rough sleeper count, which feeds into national statistics. Rough sleeping in North Wales is much lower than areas in South Wales. For the year 2019/20 the estimated number of rough sleepers was 31 in Wrexham, 22 in Gwynedd, 21 in Conwy, 5 in Anglesey and 4 in Denbighshire. One positive outcome from the Covid pandemic was the temporary additional provision of housing to ensure no one was on the streets. Welsh Government initially committed £10M followed by an additional £40M in funding to local authorities for projects across Wales. Phase two will focus on longer term solutions to transform services, innovate, and build additional accommodation. We are part of the Phase Two solution in Gwynedd.

For North Wales, the North Wales Growth Deal which was signed in December 2020 commits £240M of investment from the Welsh and English Governments, £120M each. The Growth Deal projects will be implemented by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board. The Growth Deal is founded on the three principles of a smart, resilient, and connected North Wales. As a provider of affordable housing and a significant employer in North Wales we have the ability to contribute to a number of the strategic outcomes and measures the Growth Deal is aiming for.



# Our Strategic Objectives



## Strategic Objective 1

Provide the services our customers want, to a standard which increases customer satisfaction, at a cost which is value for money.

The outcome is that we provide sector leading customer service, evidenced by our performance and customer feedback.

The headline measures we will use for this are overall customer satisfaction from STAR and NET promoter score.



The corporate risks which impact on us achieving this are:

1. Failure to address and improve customer satisfaction and engagement levels
2. That the Association does not challenge itself to improve asset management to more effectively manage costs and customer satisfaction in its homes
3. Customer views are not listened to and acted upon and we become “out of touch” with what customers want
4. We are not agile enough to respond to changing customer expectations

# Strategic Objective 2

A valued and empowered team who put the customer at the heart of everything we do.

The outcomes are that we value our people, and have a work/life harmony that attracts and retains the best talent.

And we consistently behave in ways which demonstrate our values.

The headline measure we will use for this is the Best Companies engagement score.



The corporate risks which impact on us achieving this are:

1. There is a risk that the right staff are not recruited, retained, and developed
2. There is a risk that the Association does not maintain a safe working environment for staff
3. The right culture, values, behaviours, and engagement are not embedded



# Strategic Objective 3

Provide safe, energy efficient homes that support independent living.

The outcomes are that we have safe homes which are affordable for our customers, which includes the rent, service charges and heating costs.

And we make a difference to the people and communities we serve.

The headline measures we will use for this are overall average SAP rating and the proportion of our homes which meet the Welsh Government decarbonisation target, currently EPC at level A.

Full compliance on gas, asbestos, lifts, fire, electric and water hygiene. Along with, from the STAR survey, how satisfied customers are with the overall service of the scheme manager for older persons and the support worker for supported housing.

The corporate risks which impact on us achieving this are:

1. The Association does not maintain safe homes
2. There is risk that the Association doesn't continue to address stock condition and reducing acceptable fails in line with WHQS
3. Impact of Covid-19 on the supply chain
4. There is a risk of changes to future funding for Supported Housing due to Government policy
5. We do not have sufficient resources to achieve the decarbonisation of our homes or we are unable to secure the supply chain to do so.

# Strategic Objective 4

Maintain financial strength and resilience through sound financial management and investment decisions.

The outcome is that we are financially strong and resilient, and in control of our own future. The headline measure we will use for this is interest cover.



The corporate risks which impact on us achieving this are:

1. There is a risk that cash flow and covenants are not adequately managed
2. There is a risk that core ICT systems fail due to IT security incidents, lack of resilience in systems or inadequate back up arrangements
3. There is a risk that core data within systems is not complete, accurate or up to date due to weaknesses in systems or lack of consistency in use across the Association
4. There is a risk of non-compliance with the chosen Code of Governance or ineffective governance
5. The long term impact of Covid-19 restrictions on the local economy and income of customers, leading to higher rent arrears and bad debts.

## Strategic Objective 5

Deliver new homes to meet housing need, grow our capacity and contribute to the North Wales economy.



The outcomes are, we have increased in size by the levels in the Growth Strategy, and we will do it in a way which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

We have homes in Conwy, Gwynedd, Denbighshire, Wrexham, Anglesey and Flintshire.

We support and contribute to the foundational economy in North Wales.

The headline measures we will use for this are number of new homes and the amount in every £ spent in North Wales.



The corporate risks which impact on us achieving this are:

1. Failure to capitalise on opportunities and deliver the development programme
2. Impact of Covid-19 on Development Programme slowing down the availability of section 106 properties in particular
3. Our resources or skill level being inadequate to allow us to effectively compete for scheme opportunities
4. The high level of competition for suitable land and available grant in North Wales.



## Our Risk Appetite

NWH places customers at the heart of everything we do. In relation to our risk appetite, this means that we will take risks where necessary to protect and develop NWH, but not to the detriment of our customers, stakeholders, sustainability, standards or values.

Our risk appetite is to take on the activity and projects which will support us to grow in areas where we are present and committed. We will be quick to respond to new initiatives and opportunities that complement our core service areas and so not place our core services or social housing stock at risk, but which support sustainable and manageable growth.



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We invest in people Silver



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