

## RSHA our History and the Board Member's Role

### Our History

Rural Stirling Association Housing Limited (RSHA) is registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, a Scottish Registered Charity and registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). We are also a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator and in accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. We registered as a social landlord in 1990, and in 2020 we celebrated our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

We currently own and manage 628 socially rented homes. We have 14 shared ownership houses also remaining in management. We have 5 homes leased to our subsidiary Venachar Limited, for letting on a mid-market rent basis. Our subsidiary also manages one property for a private landlord. We provide a factoring service to a small number of homeowners in the area.

RSHA was established with the support of Stirling Council, Scottish Homes and local Community Councils to develop new homes to meet an established shortfall of affordable housing. Nearly all of our homes have been developed directly by us and we remain the main provider of new affordable homes in the area, with a healthy ongoing new build development programme.

We currently employ 19 people. Our turnover for the year ended 31 March 2021 was circa £3.7m.

In 2013, we established a wholly-owned non-charitable trading subsidiary, Venachar Ltd. to carry out activities that deliver our objectives, but which we are unable to carry out ourselves. Our subsidiary operates in accordance with an Independence Agreement and a Service Sharing Agreement. Staff support to Venachar activities is undertaken by RSHA staff.

This is an exciting time to be joining our Board as we continue to work on our Group Strategic Plan 2020/23 and our newly launched Customer Engagement and Participation Strategy.

RSHA never stopped development even in the most grant constrained times. We now have an agreed development programme of circa 152 new homes to be delivered by 2023. We are ambitious and work closely with the communities we serve to maximise opportunities through community empowerment legislation and Scottish Land reform.

### MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

#### Mission Statement

Our mission is ***to provide affordable, quality housing and support community aspirations.*** The mission emphasises that we want to build new homes but we also want to help the people who live in and around our homes.

## Vision

The vision of the RSG is for ***Strong and attractive rural communities***. Our vision highlights the geographical area in which the RSG operates, it does not serve one local community, but many communities spread throughout a large rural area.

We will build and manage affordable homes and provide other services to help our communities grow and thrive. We will do this by working closely with our customers, communities and local stakeholders. Great service and value for money will be at our core and we will strive relentlessly to balance both.

## Values

The following values will shape how we do business to achieve our mission, vision and the strategic objectives set out in this plan. They underpin all the work that we do.

The values of the Rural Stirling Group were reviewed at the group strategy day in autumn 2019 by the Board of RSHA and Venachar and senior staff. We developed a set of guiding values that will steer our behaviours and help us to achieve our mission. The values that we hold dear include:

- **Accountable** - our Board, as the governing body, and our leadership team 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. We will ensure that all of our staff and others that work for us are accountable, and that our actions are always transparent.
- **Ambitious** - we are committed to striving for excellence, and maximising opportunity for our people and the customers that we are here to serve. An example of RSG's ambition is its development programme, which is significant for an RSL of its size but will have a very positive impact on the communities in which it operates.
- **Caring** - the services that we deliver will meet the needs of our customers and be delivered by professional and caring staff. We are here for the long-term, so we care deeply about the design, life-long quality and cost of our homes, and their impact on the physical and social environment. We believe that a healthy community is a socially inclusive one and, through our landlord and other services, we will meet local needs, provide ongoing support and help tackle rural disadvantage. We also want to build a happy healthy and engaged team, and we value and care for everyone that works for us.
- **Collaborative** - we will work collaboratively with all sections of the local community. This includes working collectively and individually with our customers and with other housing associations, statutory, public and voluntary sector 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. We will work with communities and explore ways of maximising opportunity through community empowerment to ensure local voices are heard in the planning and delivery of services.

- **Inclusive** - we recognise that the communities in which we operate have a diverse mixture of people and we are committed to reflect that by having a diverse and inclusive staff and board. More than that, we value the perspectives and contributions of everyone connected to the RSG.
- **Respectful** - RSG will treat everyone with respect: this is equally important for those outside the organisation as it is our employees and Board members.

---

*More information about the Association is available from our RSHA Business Plan 2020/23 and RSHA Strategic Delivery Plan 2021/22, both of which are available to download from our website: <https://www.rsha.org.uk/about-us/>*

---

### **Being a Board Member**

We are controlled and led by a voluntary and unpaid Management Board. This governing body is made up of tenants and other individuals from a variety of different backgrounds.

Our Board make the key decisions about the organisation and provide challenge, scrutiny and oversight over our senior staff team to ensure that all decisions and activity are in the best interests of our tenants.

Our Board of Management come from a wide range of backgrounds and bring a wealth of varied skills and experience to our organisation. We have a comprehensive induction programme in place for new Board members, carry out an annual programme of training needs assessment and have a Board Learning and Development programme to address any skills gaps.

The Board of Management is ultimately responsible for the work of the housing association. Being a Board Member is therefore a serious responsibility but at the same time can be rewarding, fun, interesting and enjoyable.

Being a Board Member requires a commitment of time and effort (a rough estimate is given below of the expected time commitment).

The Association has a Board Members' Expenses Policy which details how members can be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses involved in, eg travelling to meetings.

### ***Estimated Time Commitment***

<i>Attendance at around 7 Board of Management meetings</i>	<i>20 hours, plus travel per year</i>
<i>Reading and preparation for Board meetings</i>	<i>16 hours per year</i>
<i>Attendance at Committee meeting</i>	<i>Audit &amp; Risk Committee meets at least 3 times per year with meetings lasting approx. 2 hours. Travel in addition.</i>
<i>Reading and preparation for Committee meeting</i>	<i>1 hour per meeting</i>
<i>Attendance at annual planning days</i>	<i>1 full day</i>
<i>Serving on occasional/ad hoc working groups</i>	<i>Dependent on Working Group volunteered for and remit of Groups.</i>
<i>Training and conferences</i>	<i>Dependent on events volunteered for.</i>