

# Rural Stirling Group

Strategic Plan  
2020-2024



**Rural Stirling**  
Housing Association



Quality property  
management services



# FOREWORD

I am delighted to present the 2023 update of Rural Stirling Group's Strategic Plan 2020-2024. We have decided that we wanted to delay the full review of our existing plan given the prevailing economic climate and uncertainties. The period of our plan has therefore been extended as we work towards delivery of a new updated plan in the Spring of 2024.

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, and how you can hold us to account.

This update of our strategic plan describes our mission, vision and sets out our key strategic objectives, those tasks that will be our main focus through to the end of 2024. Importantly, the plan also lists our values, those things that we believe are important in how we go about our work.

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 war in Ukraine and the Climate Emergency. 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 take a resilient approach, adapting to these 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.



**Mark Griffiths**  
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, quality housing and support community aspirations.**

The mission emphasises that we not only build new homes, but we also want to help the people who live in and around our homes and support those facing homelessness. Our development programme is ambitious compared to our size and so by building new homes, we will grow by about a third over the next few years. How we will achieve our mission, is based on seven strategic objectives.



# 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 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 and other service users** – 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).

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

## Developing new homes to meet our communities' needs

– we will continue to 'punch above our weight' and develop new houses to meet the demand for affordable housing in rural Stirlingshire subject to available resources. We will develop new housing that responds to needs of all members of our communities, including developing accessible housing and supporting inclusive communities which meet people's needs as they change. We will also work with our partners to prevent rural homelessness. To achieve this, we will work closely with the Scottish Government, Stirling Council and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs' National Park. This will enable us to grow and strengthen the organisation, the communities in which we operate and in so doing allow us to deliver improved value for money for our tenants. We will work alongside our communities, community councils and development trusts to deliver new homes and to support the development and implementation of local place plans.

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

**Providing safe, high quality energy efficient homes** – 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 (EESH) to improve thermal efficiency and reduce fuel poverty.

The key outcomes for this objective will be that all of our stock complies with Scottish Housing Standards, is safe and secure and tenants are happy with the repairs service.



**Supporting and sustaining our communities** – we will deliver excellent customer services, which place the customer right at the heart of everything that we do. We will further develop our knowledge and understanding of our customers' wants, needs and expectations, including working with partners to address the needs of homeless applicants, and use this information to continue to improve our performance in this area.

Evidence for us having achieved this objective will be; an increased level of sustained tenancies, a lower level of stock turnover and demand for our housing remains high.

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

**Achieving meaningful customer scrutiny and participation** – when we improve the way in which we deliver services, we will not only use our understanding of our tenants and our communities, but we will actively seek the views of our tenants. We will also exploit digital opportunities for service delivery where appropriate for our tenants using digital technology to support engagement and participation and easy access to our services. We will extend our reach and improve how we consult and engage with our tenants.

Our success in achieving this objective will be evident through, more tenants and service users being happy with the services we provide and that we raise the profile of our organisation across our communities.

**Taking action to address climate change and promoting sustainability** – we will minimise the impact of our activities on our environment, promote our initiatives and work with funders and partners towards a carbon neutral position.

Our success in achieving this objective will be our stock is resilient to the potential impact of climate change. We have reduced waste, energy consumption and a reduced carbon footprint.

**Working with partners effectively** – we will work with all our partners to deliver more affordable homes and will continue to work very closely with our development partners. We will also undertake periodic review of possible strategic partnerships, which may offer greater economies of scale, value for money and/or improved service for tenants.

Key outcomes will be; an increased awareness within our Board and staff and openness to opportunities for partnership working, **and that we are seen as the ‘go to partner for housing’ by our rural stakeholders.**

## 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. We have completely overhauled our approach, putting in place a new risk management framework and risk register. The risk register will be kept under constant review to provide assurance that key 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 we have committed additional funding to meet the new Scottish Government standards for safety and energy efficiency in our existing homes. Our staff will be fundamental in achieving our success and are one of our most important assets. Over the period of the plan, we will be investing further by increasing services at the front line and developing our people to ensure that our tenants and other customers get the best possible service.

# 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.



The image shows a row of modern, two-story houses with dark grey roofs and light-colored walls. The houses are set in a green, grassy area with some low-lying shrubs. In the background, there is a large, densely forested hillside with some snow patches on the upper slopes. The sky is clear and blue.

## Further Information

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

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