

# Corporate Strategy 2019 - 2024



# Chief executive's introduction

In April 2018, Notting Hill Housing and Genesis Housing Association merged to create Notting Hill Genesis. This is our first corporate strategy as a joint entity and sets out how, together, we will be able to do more for our residents and make a bigger difference for those in housing need.

We are planning ahead over the next five years and beyond, but our immediate focus is on successfully integrating our two organisations and strengthening our financial position, at the same time as continuing to deliver a good service to all our residents and supporting our colleagues.

The external environment remains uncertain. The full effects of the decision to leave the European Union are still to be determined, while the Grenfell Tower tragedy and the subsequent Social Housing Green Paper have rightly led

to a renewed focus on transparency, health and safety, and scrutiny of the social housing sector.

We spoke to a wide range of stakeholders as we prepared to merge. Their feedback has helped to shape the strategic priorities set out in this document, and is reflected in particular in the promises that we have made both to our residents and our colleagues.

Notting Hill Genesis is resident focused. We value our roots and remain close to our communities. We are on the side of those we house, and those who need our services. Our staff are motivated to provide a caring, compassionate, personal and localised service. All of us, from board to the front line, spend time in our communities, working with and

listening to residents, elected representatives and colleagues.

Most of our residents, as well as those who want to live in our homes and use our services, want easier and more reliable services. They want online access through their phones and other mobile devices so that they can manage their housing needs just as they do their shopping and social lives. We are working to deliver that.

The housing market is not working properly; the majority of lower-income families and many younger people in our communities are unable to afford a home of their own.

Although we cannot meet the increasing levels of need on our own, we are well equipped to rise to today's housing

challenge, and we will continue to work hard to provide more affordable housing alongside government, local authorities and private developers.

Ideally we would like a much greater supply of low-rent, secure homes, accessible to all who need them. We will protect what we have and strive to produce additional social homes each year.

Nearly one year on from our merger, I am confident that Notting Hill Genesis has emerged as a stronger organisation with a greater capacity to live up to our mission and deliver our vision – to be the best housing association in London.

*Kate Davies*

Kate Davies  
Chief executive

"...do more  
...make a bigger  
difference"



# Who are we?

## Providing homes for more than 50 years

Our legacy organisations – Notting Hill Housing and Genesis Housing Association – announced their intention to merge in July 2017 and formally amalgamated to become Notting Hill Genesis in April 2018. We felt that our similarities in terms of size and scope alongside our shared history and social purpose made us a great match.

Notting Hill Genesis works in the community, providing homes for lower-income households in and around London. This is our primary purpose and everything else we do supports that aim.

We are a new organisation, but our roots reach back to the

1960s when our legacy organisations were established by local people who shared a similar vision – to house west London’s working poor, providing them with a home from which to build themselves and their families a secure future.

Now we are one of the largest housing associations in London and the south-east, providing over 60,000 homes.

Despite our size, we recognise each resident as an individual. Our services are people-centred and delivered at a local level. We strive to be the best we can, and are committed to working with our residents to ensure that everyone has a safe, secure and good quality home, and access to high standard services delivered in the way that suits them



best – whether that’s online or face-to-face.

More than half our homes are general needs properties, charged at social or affordable rent levels. In addition, we offer extra care and supported accommodation for older people, as well as temporary housing, shared ownership, market rent, student

accommodation and commercial properties.

We employ more than 2,000 people, most of whom work at the heart of our communities, building relationships with residents that go beyond bricks and mortar.

Combining a commercial outlook

with a clear social purpose means that we can plan to reinvest surpluses to build around 20,000 new homes over a 10-year period in places where people want to live and do our bit to tackle the housing crisis.

# Our mission, vision and values

We are open, honest and willing to confront difficulties.

**Our values**

We aim to be the best housing association in London.

**Our vision**

Based in the community, we provide homes for lower-income households in and around London.

**Our mission**

Along with the commitments set out in our staff promise, our values help to guide our people and inform their behaviours and decision-making. They underpin the successful delivery of our strategic objectives by supporting a resident-focused service and helping us to work together successfully as one organisation.

It is important that we challenge and support each other, and tackle problems head-on so that we can perform better.

The drive for profit is important to us, not for its own sake, but so we can continue to invest in our social purpose by providing more homes for people in housing need. Ensuring that each area of our business gets results and delivers

value for money is critical to this.

## **Our social purpose**

Our social purpose is as important to us today as when our parent organisations were formed in the 1960s. As Notting Hill Genesis, we can do more.

It's increasingly difficult to produce social and affordable housing with limited government grants, but by continuing to use surpluses generated by our commercial activities to plough back into our core social purpose, we can ensure we create the right mix of Notting Hill Genesis homes – and contribute to addressing the housing crisis in and around London.

Our colleagues have always been at the heart of our



communities, and we want our merger to enhance those links. Whether it's supporting residents to claim the correct benefits, getting involved in community events, or just being there for a resident to talk to in times of need, our relationship with those in our homes goes beyond bricks and mortar. That relationship has always been important for our colleagues and residents and it will remain so in Notting Hill Genesis.

Many of our shareholders have been involved with us for years, even decades, and we want to ensure that their shared traditions and values, which go back more than 50 years, continue to influence how we work in the future.

### **Value for money**

We take a value-for-money approach to all our activities and ensure that it is central

to regular business planning, performance monitoring and decision-making. Understanding and achieving value for money is fundamental to the success of our business and should be evident in everything we do.

A key advantage of our merger is that we will be able, over time, to reduce operating costs and maximise surpluses so that we can secure new investment on good terms and invest in new and existing homes, at the same time as providing a better service for our residents.

Over the last year, colleagues have been working hard to integrate our businesses and structures and to align systems and processes. The focus has been on driving greater efficiency and value for money, as well as on actively engaging

our people in creating our new organisation, including building new teams and developing new ways of working. As part of this, we have reviewed the relative performance of similar business streams across our two legacy organisations to identify where we can be more competitive and cost-effective.

As we continue to bring our two organisations together, we will take more opportunities to raise standards, do more and increase efficiency.

### **Risk management**

We have a robust and fit-for-purpose governance framework, which creates a strong control environment. This ensures we can manage risk effectively and respond to changes in the external environment as and when necessary.





# Our strategic priorities

Our strategy outlines what our new organisation plans to achieve over the next five years and how we will live up to our mission and deliver our vision. It is supported by our staff and resident promises, several other detailed documents, a suite of measures and performance indicators, and our integration programme and governance framework.

There are five core themes in the strategy:

**Our residents:** services and support that our residents need

**Our homes:** places where our residents want to live

**Providing more new homes:** new homes for lower-income households

**Our people:** supporting our colleagues to provide the best service possible

**Our financial strength:** ensuring a robust financial foundation to support investment and growth

Within each of these themes, our immediate focus will be on effectively combining our legacy organisations as part of an ambitious, challenging and complex two-year integration programme.

Although we made significant headway in our first year, progress has been slower than we hoped and could mean we do not realise all the benefits until year three. Our priorities will evolve as integration continues, but for

now we need to focus on the introduction of the most effective structures, systems and processes to enable our businesses to deliver our new operating model and our other merger commitments.



# Our residents:

## Services and support that our residents need

A resident promise co-created with residents to establish a clear and accountable service delivery framework.

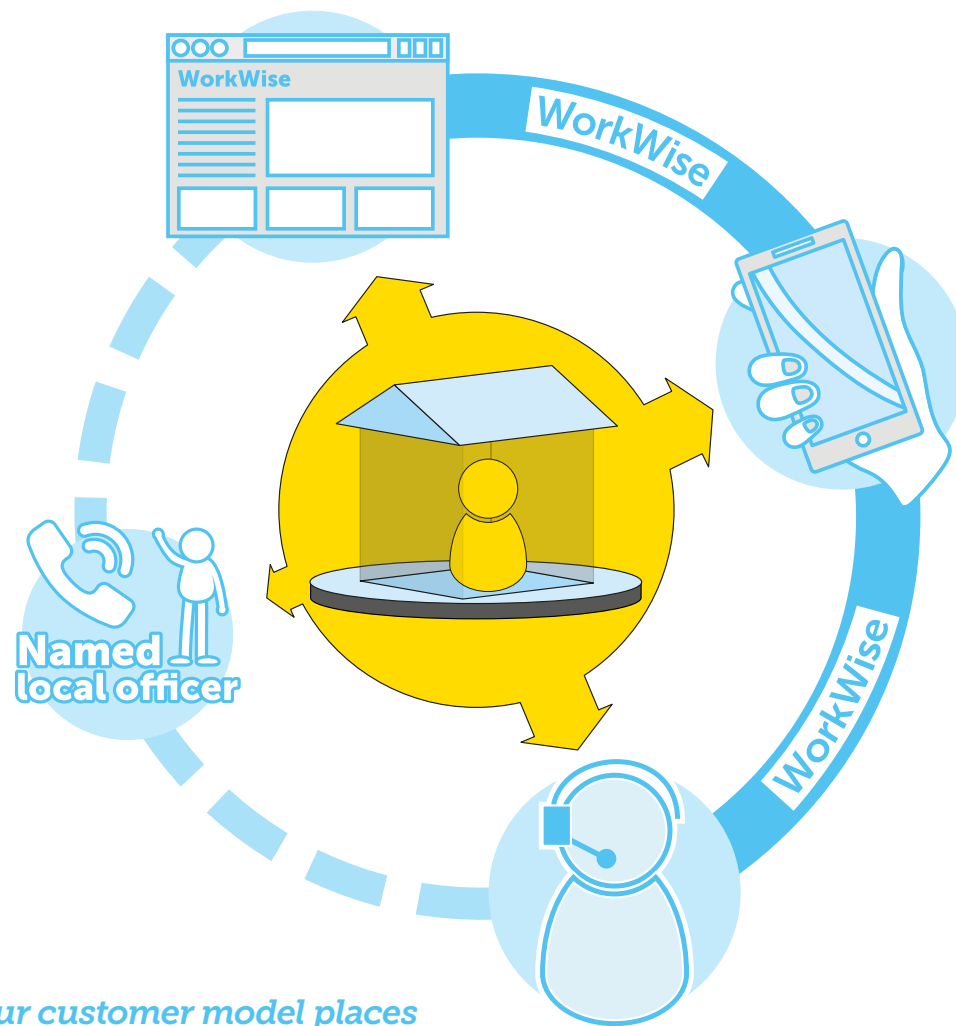
Digital transformation focused on simplifying access and speeding up service delivery.

Since the merger we have worked both with colleagues and residents to co-create a new operating model, which takes the best parts of both legacy organisations.

The new model has our resident promise at its core and is designed so that we can deliver the services and improvements that were identified during the consultation with residents in the lead-up to the merger.

Every resident will have a named officer who is responsible and accountable to them for service delivery. This local officer will be given technical support to help them to resolve complex issues. Automation will be at the heart of the services we offer, with residents able to access an increasing number of services online at a time of their choosing via a bespoke portal on our website.

Key to the success of the promise is



*Our customer model places our residents at the centre of what we do. Making the most of modern automated technologies, in conjunction with personalised support, we're able to deliver services in ways that suit individual customer needs and lifestyles.*

*WorkWise is a major programme to simplify, standardise and automate some of our key business processes, making them available to colleagues and residents online.*





*Our resident involvement model puts residents at the heart of our business. Building on lessons learned it ensures that resident voices are heard across the business, that residents are kept up to date on our work and that they can hold us to account.*

our commitment to putting residents at the heart of our business and enabling them to hold us to account for the delivery of our commitments. Our progress will be shared regularly with residents themselves as well as with our resident services committee and our board.

Our commitment to residents includes the regeneration of the Aylesbury Estate in Southwark, Grahame Park in Barnet and Woodberry Down in Hackney, where we will work to improve our residents' lives by providing a better home, a safe place to live, access to employment opportunities and support for their general wellbeing.

**What we want to achieve:**

Our main aim is to fulfil the commitments set out in our resident promise, with a focus on three important aspects:

- Achieving a consistently positive resident experience of our repairs and maintenance service (also covered by the 'our homes' strategic theme).
- Implementing our new local operating model, including the roll-out of online self-service for repairs, payments and other transactions.
- Embedding a culture to ensure residents are consistently and meaningfully involved.

We will agree with residents the specific measures of success for the resident promise.





# Our homes:

## Places where our residents want to live

A new investment plan for our core London communities, improving quality and delivering more homes.

Ensuring all homes are great places to live.

We provide a range of good quality, affordable and well-maintained homes. Since our merger, we have reviewed how we invest in and maintain our properties alongside our resident services. Our plan is based on what residents have told us matters to them – repairs and safety, as well as being involved in our investment plans.

We want to be sector-leading, and the best we can be so that we achieve more for our residents and our partners and can create great places to live. We

want to ensure that our services are tailored to best meet the needs of each resident and that our homes will be safe and cost-effectively maintained.

### What we want to achieve

- Establishing a repairs service that complements our new operating model and enables simple repairs to be booked online so that local teams can prioritise improving the resident experience.
- Ensuring our homes are safe places to live by implementing

Before



After



a 12-point plan developed by our fire safety task force to respond to the recommendations of the recent independent Hackitt Review of building regulations and fire safety.

- A greater focus on involving residents

and improving the quality of our homes by changing our approach to investment in our properties and to our programme of regular cyclical repairs.

- Through strategic asset management, we will establish

a manageable geographic footprint and redevelop homes where that delivers a better outcome for our residents.

- We will do all we can to retain low-cost rental housing in inner London.

# Providing more new homes:

## New homes for lower-income households

Increased investment capacity supported through strategic partnerships to deliver more homes.

Greater influence over public-sector policy to provide more low-cost homes.

There is a housing shortage in London. Household income has not kept pace with housing costs and the limited supply of new homes is far short of what is needed. Providing more genuinely affordable housing is both more challenging than ever and more urgent and necessary.

We plan to continue to expand our business through development

growth. We will work towards a programme of building around 20,000 new homes over a 10-year period, but the speed of the programme will be scaled according to prevailing market conditions. We will build a range of high quality homes our residents enjoy living in.

We will prioritise opportunities to develop in boroughs where we have an existing strong

relationship with the local authority and where we already have a sufficient level of homes to ensure cost-effective management.

We will increasingly secure more new-build projects through joint ventures and partnerships and are keen to continue to work with others who share our ambitions. Our larger size as a merged entity will enable us to make the most of the opportunities offered by town centre and estate regeneration projects.

### What we want to achieve

- Mixed-tenure developments which promote sustainable and vibrant communities, offer choice to our residents and enhance neighbourhoods in terms of design and build quality.





- An increase in the number of new homes. We will aim to build around 20,000 homes over 10 years, with the majority being affordable tenures to reflect our business priorities. This growth target will be achieved through a combination of our development, regeneration and asset investment programmes.
- We will operate primarily in London, in areas where we can offer a range of affordable tenures and where sales values are attractive to owner-occupiers. We will also look to provide more affordable housing in our heartlands of north and west London.

- We will continue with our major regeneration projects at the Aylesbury Estate and Grahame Park to provide a long-term pipeline of new affordable homes.
- We are keen to create successful partnerships with local authorities, quality private-sector providers and other housing associations if that can help us produce more new homes.



# Our people:

Supporting our colleagues to provide the best service possible

We strive to develop an engaged, diverse and skilled workforce reflecting the communities we serve. We want to create high-performing and collaborative teams, who deliver great personalised services and ways of working that are valued by our residents.

Our staff promise sets out our commitment to colleagues as we go through integration and beyond to ensure that Notting Hill Genesis is a place where we all want to work. It forms the foundation for all the work we need to do around our people as we bring our two former organisations together. A key aspect of this is involving

colleagues in designing services and creating the new organisation.

Delivering the promise will be a two-way process in which we all have a part to play and for which we hold joint responsibility. How we behave, how we communicate and how we work together will be crucial in achieving the aims of the promise.

Our colleagues come from very different backgrounds, with varied outlooks. We value these differences and will continue to embrace them. We want to ensure that our organisation, at all levels, reflects the communities we serve. As part of that, we have committed



to the Greater London Authority Leadership 2025 programme, which encourages organisations to create more ethnically diverse leadership across the housing sector.

Building on our inclusive culture, we will continue to invest and develop the capability and talent of our people, ensuring colleagues have the right skills, approach and tools to deliver excellent services and put our residents at the heart of everything we do.

## What we want to achieve

- We will develop leadership and workforce capability to ensure we deliver our services and respond to organisational change well.
- We will create a great working environment where people want to work, contributions are valued, and colleagues can grow and thrive.
- We will embed a responsive, efficient, and flexible workforce that makes

the most of new ways of working and technology.

- We will build on the commitments in our staff promise, creating a trusted, highly motivated and engaged team.
- We will ensure colleagues are supported through a clear and strong focus on health, safety and wellbeing.
- We are committed to having a diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects the communities we serve.





# Our financial strength:

Ensuring a robust financial foundation to support investment and growth

The purpose of our merger was to bring together two already substantial organisations to make a new, stronger housing association.

Being financially strong gives us the independence to make choices about our future and provide new homes despite the challenging economic, political and social climate.

Efficiency and value for money will be at the heart of everything we do. Our staff are committed to achieving this; they understand that all the money we make is reinvested in providing

homes for lower-income households.

It is important that we maintain our fully compliant regulatory ratings to continue to inspire business confidence and trust. We want investors to choose to partner with us.

## What we want to achieve

- We will continue to use surpluses generated by our commercial activities to plough back into our core social purpose.
- We want all of our individual business to generate a profit,

with commercial divisions making larger surpluses than social ones.

- By being financially robust we will be able to maintain our commitment to building more new homes.

- We will make £20 million full-year savings from April 2020 as a result of the merger.

- We will make a surplus of at least £500 million over the next five years. At least £1.5 billion will be invested over these five years in providing new homes.

