

# Strategic Plan

2020-23



## Together we make a difference

We are, and always have been a business committed to making a difference to local people. For many years we have described ourselves as a housing association that has diversified into care, however, when we consider what makes Orwell unique, what makes us value our independence, we are far from just a housing organisation. Caring for and supporting people as well as providing them with a comfortable home has become central to what we do. This is a key differentiator and has made us the biggest provider of support and care in Suffolk.

56 years on from our foundation we still value the ethos of why we were created but we now aspire to do more. We will become an organisation that provides the quality and type of housing which meets the needs of all generations at different stages in their life along with providing the support to enable people to have control over their future.

This plan will support us to deliver our vision to provide a customer centric housing, support and care service which puts the ethos of "Together we make a difference" at the centre of what we do.

We are a key local employer, employing over 600 people across Suffolk, Norfolk, North Essex and Cambridge and are committed to being a great place to work. We were in the top 100 of the Sunday Times Best Not for Profit Companies to work for in 2019 and achieved Investors in People Silver accreditation. We now have around 4,000 homes in management across Suffolk, southern Norfolk and north Essex and we provide care and support to 1,110 people across our region. This means that more than 7,500 people have a safe home at a price they can afford giving them the chance to improve their life chances from a secure base.

Our development company Orwell Homes supports the work of the Association by building homes for the private market to generate a profit. This is used by the Association to provide more homes and services to vulnerable people as well as providing development services to Orwell Housing Association.







We enjoy both a G1 (Governance) and a V1 (Viability) rating from the Regulator for Social Housing. We have a strong and well-established governance structure that includes independent board members with a wide range of skills from the public, private and voluntary sector. The Board devolves some of its work to its committees which cover Audit, Governance and Remuneration. Our Resident Steering Group and resident task and finish groups provide a level of scrutiny of the Associations services and we are working to expand their remit and influence.

**“We were in the top 100 of the Sunday Times Best Not for Profit Companies to work for in 2019 and achieved Investors in People Silver accreditation.”**



## Our Operating Environment

The social housing landscape has, and continues to be, shaped dramatically by a number of shifting elements, including central government policy, wider economic trends and of course the unknown impact of Brexit.

Balancing an expanding, ageing and diverse population is a challenge for the sector as we try to meet the sometimes-competing needs of people whom expect to transact online and access products and services immediately, alongside those who are digitally excluded and have support and care needs in addition to their housing requirements.

The affordability gap of the younger population in East Anglia continues to create pressure on both the housing market as well as the private rental and social housing sector. More young professionals and working families are accessing home-ownership through social housing providers and there is also a growing number of multi-generational households as over 18s stay at home longer or 'boomerang' back to save for deposits.

As a sector we continue to face challenging times as we see the continued roll out of Universal Credit and welfare reforms, along with the final year of -1% rent reduction in 2020. The need for our services remains high as street homeless, people experiencing mental ill health and the impact of chaotic lifestyles on housing and health has increased whilst the challenge of adequate funding to support those people has become increasingly difficult to secure.

The need for the sector to be actively engaged with our customers is evident by the findings of the Hackitt Report into fire safety. It is more important than ever for Orwell to ensure that health and safety compliance is fully embedded in what we do and our customers understand the homes that they live in.

While we wait to understand the full Impact of Brexit on the sector it is clear that key areas of legislation have been delayed due to its implementation, however it is beholden on us to not wait for legislation to do the right thing as a good quality landlord.





## Our Vision

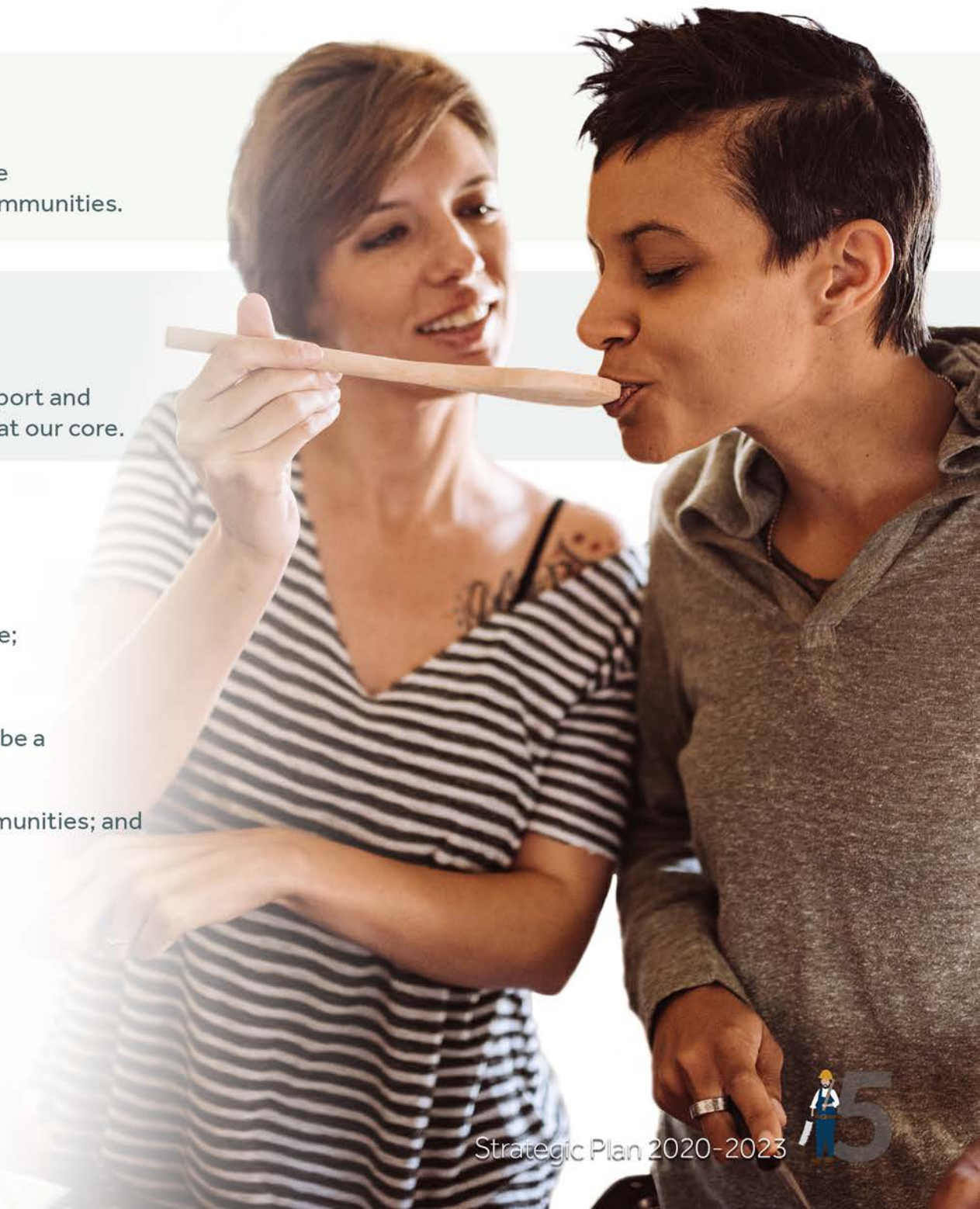
To make a positive difference to the quality of life and future opportunities of our customers, our employees and our communities.

## Our Mission

To provide a sector leading, customer centric housing, support and care service which puts the ethos of “making a difference” at our core.

### We will achieve this by:

- ▲ providing exceptional customer service;
- ▲ supporting customers to have control over their future;
- ▲ making a positive impact on our communities;
- ▲ being a great employer, investing in our people and to be a company people are proud to work for;
- ▲ making a social impact and investing our diverse communities; and
- ▲ working with partners to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the services we can offer.



## Our Values

We will deliver solutions and ideas that overcome the challenges faced by our customers and communities.

Our values will be focussed on P A C E.

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### People-focused

people are at the heart of our business. By recognising people's diverse needs and strengths and treating everyone fairly we can both serve our customers better and support our teams to run a brilliant business and improve services.

### Ambitious

we are ambitious to grow the organisation so that it can do more and realise the full potential of Orwell, our employees and those we support and house.

### Collaborative

we will work in partnership and search out best practice. We will collaborate with tenants, customers, colleagues and like-minded organisations to develop solutions together.

### Effective

we will be economic and embed efficiency across our services ensuring we lead the way with our knowledge and expertise. We will ensure that our teams are committed and competent to be the best at what they do in order that they can provide the highest possible standards of service.

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## Transforming to Succeed

We must continue to modernise and transform Orwell to achieve our ambitions.

We want Orwell to be one of the leading community focussed associations in the housing sector and to achieve this we need to innovate and modernise both our systems and our culture. If we are to realise our ambition to make a real positive impact on people's lives then we need to continue with our plan to transform and modernise. We must ensure that everything we do has a significant impact including, our financial decisions, our service delivery, what we expect from our people and our use of technology and digital solutions.

It is our ambition that by the end of this plan we will have taken our culture of continuous improvement to a higher level and it is completely embedded within the organisation.



## Our Objectives

To deliver our ambitions, we will focus on the following objectives and measures of success for the life of this plan.

# 1

### Providing exceptional customer service - putting customers at the heart of what we do to ensure our decisions are driven by customers' needs and aspirations.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

- ▲ customer satisfaction with housing services at 90%, support and care services at 95%;
- ▲ satisfaction with repairs service: upper quartile Housemark for Benchmark group;
- ▲ up to two residents appointed to the Board by Dec 2020;
- ▲ evidencing that the recommendations received from the engaged customer scrutiny groups have been implemented; and
- ▲ level of customer engagement at 30%.



## To deliver on this objective we will:

- ▲ consult with customers on their needs and aspirations to gain good insight into what is important to them, to understand their diverse requirements and the expectations of current and future customers. This will enable us to use this data to make informed and inclusive decisions about the services we offer;
- ▲ ensure that customers are involved and engaged in designing and scrutinising at least 3 service areas each year to ensure we deliver and develop to achieve best value for money;
- ▲ offer choice to our customers as to how and when they want to engage with us, making digital an option alongside more traditional customer facing services;
- ▲ ensure employees and Board members receive training so they fully understand what our customers are looking for in excellent customer service and develop their knowledge of the wider customer experience; and
- ▲ provide support and mentoring to Resident Board members.

## 2 Supporting our customers to have control over their future - we aim to support them to be independent and have the greatest chance to be healthy, happy and safe.

### Our success will be demonstrated by:

- ▲ 85% of tenants who access the sustainment service to have their tenancy sustained with support from Orwell's Tenancy Sustainment Team;
- ▲ 70% of people successfully moved on from our homeless services into a permanent home;
- ▲ increase the number of people we provide care and support to by 100 people each year of the plan;
- ▲ pilot the use of assistive technology to enable 5 people to live independently; and
- ▲ ensure services maintain a rating consistent with a Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating of GOOD as a minimum.





## To deliver on this objective we will:

- ▲ develop early intervention and prevention support through our Tenancy Sustainment Team to provide support for vulnerable tenants in our general needs housing and those individuals in crisis;
- ▲ work in partnership with others to allow us to expand quality support and care services to increase the provision of viable specialist accommodation and support across our operational area;
- ▲ find innovative ways to provide specialist support to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and determine how services will be funded in future years;
- ▲ grow the support, we offer to older and vulnerable people to enable them to live independently using technology; and
- ▲ use Provider Assessment Management Solutions (PAMMS) software to assess our compliance with CQC standards.

# 3 Making a positive social impact in our diverse communities - through better understanding of needs and developing services that make a positive impact.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

- ▲ completion of a customer insight programme to better understand needs;
- ▲ an 80% reduction in tenancy turnover where high turnover is identified in a community due to negative reasons;
- ▲ 20 customers each year helped into work or further education through our support;
- ▲ double our social impact value to £1.6 million as measured using HACT; and
- ▲ achieving a minimum of 2 grants for community work each year.



## To deliver on this objective we will:

- ▲ work with our customers and community organisations to identify areas of need. Profiling our community and customer base and use this analysis to influence the services we deliver;
- ▲ work with our partners and other agencies for example the County, District Councils and the Third Sector to identify local priorities in terms of the health and social care needs of the community and structure our services to help meet that need;
- ▲ understand the reason for tenancy turnover on our estates and address areas requiring improvement;
- ▲ encourage customers into work or education by offering or enabling them into volunteering experience, work shadowing and career advice and assistance; and
- ▲ identify additional income sources to fund our community work and develop and implement a fundraising strategy.

# 4 Being a great employer, investing in our people and to be a company people are proud to work for.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

- ▲ achievement of 90% employee satisfaction;
- ▲ achievement of a retention rate of 85% each year;
- ▲ 80% of employees are proud to work for Orwell;
- ▲ 80% of employees would recommend Orwell as an employer;
- ▲ be in the top 60 of the Sunday Times Top 100 Best not for Profit company to work for in 2021; and
- ▲ achievement of Investors in People Gold by 2022.





## To deliver on this objective we will:

- ▲ understand what motivates our people to succeed and use this to shape and improve our employment offer;
- ▲ work as one team – “Team Orwell” to ensure we all contribute to our business achievements and celebrate and recognise teamwork;
- ▲ make Orwell an employer of choice by embedding a professional attitude, ambition and focus on delivery into our team; and
- ▲ identify potential future leaders and support their development and invest in developing people who are innovative and passionate through the Orwell Academy.

# 5 Providing new homes and investing in our existing homes.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

- ▲ developing 100 homes each year for the life of the plan;
- ▲ owning and managing 5,000 homes by 2028;
- ▲ increasing the homes managed by Orwell but owned by others by 100 homes by the end of the plan;
- ▲ achieving 90% Customer Satisfaction with the Quality of their home;
- ▲ on a return on asset basis, identify the poorest performing 5% of housing assets and select at least 3 properties each year for disposal and reinvestment of the funds; and
- ▲ increasing the environmental efficiency of our homes by improving the average EPC rating by 10% over the life of the plan.



## To deliver on this objective we will:

- ▲ increase the number of homes in management by identifying growth opportunities, acquisitions, management arrangement and lease deals;
- ▲ use our private housebuilding subsidiary Orwell Homes to build houses for sale to generate gift aid to Orwell Housing Association to enable more affordable homes to be built;
- ▲ deliver our maintenance plan which will ensure we offer homes of a high standard to meet customers' expectations;
- ▲ manage our housing stock, ensuring as many of our homes as possible are occupied, and re-developing or disposing of those that no longer meet our customer's needs; and
- ▲ have real time asset management information available.

# 6 Improving value for money, services and driving innovation and change.

Our success will be demonstrated by:

- ▲ working in partnership with other organisations on a minimum of two initiatives each year for the life of the plan;
- ▲ selling development services to e<sup>2</sup> partners and others and generating an improving surplus year on year;
- ▲ improving the level of productive time of our repairs and estate services teams by 5%; and
- ▲ carry out impact assessments of each partnership.



## To deliver on this objective we will:

- ▲ work with Independent East a group of community-based Housing providers in Norfolk and Suffolk to identify areas of joint working;
- ▲ develop a closer relationship with the Health Authority and Social Services allowing us to structure our services to meet the needs of the Health and social care sector;
- ▲ continue to lead the e<sup>2</sup> development consortium offering development services to other social landlords to both maintain the professionalism of the in-house development team and to share costs;
- ▲ continue to offer repairs and estate services to social landlords in areas where we have a housing presence to increase the efficiency of the in-house teams;
- ▲ be open to innovative Joint Venture opportunities;
- ▲ unify Orwell Repairs Service and the Estate Services teams to allow for closer working between the teams improving efficiency, procurement, and reducing travel time; and
- ▲ continue to be a member of procurement groups such as Eastern Procurement Ltd to achieve best value on property improvement expenditure.





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