





# Foreword by Convener of Development & Technical Sub Committee – Catriona Blyth



The timing of this departmental strategy means that it sets a course for our development and technical functions through what will almost certainly be a period of great change; change more significant than during any prior period in my time as Convener.

The view of social rented housing taken by the still relatively new Scottish Government, its abolition of Communities Scotland in the short term, and how that will impact on public expenditure on social housing and the availability of grant funding for our development programme, will have fundamental impacts on us in the medium and long terms. At local level, the North Lanarkshire Local Plan and the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan are likely to be key documents, publication of which will also affect us over these timescales.

The immediate future for our development and technical functions is brighter than it has been for a number of years. Early 2008 sees the second and final phase of the major Mossend project on site, and 3 other high quality development projects in the programme. Our planned maintenance programme continues to be delivered on time and on budget, with high levels of customer satisfaction, and progress towards meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) has been quicker and less expensive to us than originally projected. For several years now, wider role initiatives have been delivered almost continuously, and that should continue through 2008 as all our tenants and sharing owners are able to benefit from an innovative energy efficiency advice project.

I am delighted to commend this plan for the future, and believe that it again demonstrates that we are a progressive and innovative organisation, capable of meeting the challenges and taking the opportunities presented by a

complex, changing and uncertain environment following the Scottish Government's proposal to radically reform the housing system as we know it. It is important that we engage positively with this changing external environment, to ensure that we continue to provide quality sustainable houses that people are happy to live in; and maintain our successful partnerships with North Lanarkshire Council (NLC), the Scottish Government, and other supportive agencies.

*Catriona Blyth*

# Achievements Against 2005-2008 Plan



2005-2008 Strategic Plan Objectives	Current Position (February 2008)
<b>Short Term</b> Achieve a site start for the first phase of the Mossend housing and regeneration project	A site start was achieved in late 2004. Phase 1 was completed in March 2006, and has since received a Special Mention in the Saltire Society Housing Design Awards
Establish Lanarkshire Initiatives Ltd as a subsidiary company to deliver community regeneration objectives which compliment the activities of its parent	Lanarkshire Initiatives Limited was established in 2004, and completed its first project, the retail element of Mossend Phase 1, in March 2006
Advance proposals for the new build project at Coronation Road, New Stevenston	The project was advanced to tender stage, however, was subsequently aborted following extensive site contamination which contributed to the project being unaffordable
Progress a feasibility study for the second phase of the Mossend project	The feasibility study, and all other design work for the second phase at Unitas Road, Mossend has been completed, and a site start was achieved in January 2008
Establish a framework agreement for all planned maintenance over the next three years	The consultant and contractor have been appointed, projects are ongoing
Complete the Forgewood Wider Action project	A range of funding was raised and environmental works carried out under an intermediate labour market project
Finalise a review of departmental performance and set targets for improvement related to Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and housing quality	Reports were produced and presented to Committee in 2004 and 2005
Implement the Association's Sustainability Policy and Action Plan	There has been continuous delivery of sustainability policy objectives over the medium term. See medium term objectives overleaf
Complete a review of the Procurement Policy and related procedures	The Procurement Policy has been reviewed annually in response to changing external policy and legislation, most recently in 2007 to address new Construction (Design and Management) Regulations
Deliver the Association's short term Wider Action Policy objectives	Wider Role initiatives have been pursued continuously. Intermediate labour market projects have been delivered in Forgewood (completed in 2005) and in Mossend following completion of a feasibility study in 2006. Starting in late 2007, for a year, all tenants will have the opportunity of individual energy efficiency advice through a partnership with the Wise Group

2005-2008 Strategic Plan Objectives	Current Position (February 2008)
<b>Short Term</b> Complete the Standard Delivery Plan for the SHQS by April 2005	The submission to Communities Scotland was made on time, and has been acknowledged as demonstrating how the Association will progress towards the achievement of the SQHS by 2015
<b>Medium Term</b> Develop proposals for the second phase of the Mossend project, including community consultation exercises	As noted overleaf, all design work is complete, consents and funding are in place, and a site start was achieved in January 2008
Progress plans for the project at Coronation Road, New Stevenston, including community consultation	The project was advanced to tender stage before being aborted following excessive costs
Advance other development opportunities, where appropriate, as identified in the Association's Strategy and Development Funding Plan	The Association has progressed a number of other high quality projects throughout the plan period including Dalziel Street, Motherwell, which was progressed to tender stage; the Liberty Road, Bellshill project which has reached cost plan stage, and a site has been acquired at Hamilton Road, Bellshill
Continue to review and develop policy and procedures for tenant participation in development and maintenance projects, including the planning stages	Tenant focus groups have been run to provide input to the design brief for new developments, and to help compare Lanarkshire's developments with others
Complete a review of departmental Quality Assurance procedures	Implementation of ISO 9001 : 2000 has now been investigated and costed, but not progressed. There will be a further review in the next 3 years. The Association continues to maintain Clients' Charter status
Continue to address the Sustainability Action Plan	The design brief for all new developments now has specific sustainability targets. Committee has received training on sustainability, and there have been presentations to tenants' conferences. A project has been initiated to ensure that all tenants will have had access to individual advice on energy efficiency by the end of 2008
Examine opportunities for promoting equality and diversity in both development and procurement	Standard contract preliminaries now have clauses based on the Commission for Racial Equality's guide on <i>Race Equality and Public Procurement</i>
Develop the Association's Wider Action programme to engage with the Community Planning process and deliver established medium term and strategic objectives	The Association has engaged with the Community Planning Partnership, and secured Community Regeneration Funding for the Mossend intermediate labour market project

### Achievements above and beyond 2005 – 2008 Plan

Additional tenement improvement work was completed at Holytown Road, Mossend, in 2006 after a long period of work with NLC and an owner who had abandoned the last of the unimproved flats

The Association has gained valuable experience through an innovative project acting as the developing association at Liberty Road, Bellshill involving the construction of mainstream housing for itself and very sheltered dwellings for a specialist Registered Social Landlord

# Strategic Plan Introduction



1.0 Lanarkshire started life as a developing Association, and has consistently delivered a high quality programme of new building and refurbishment. Plans for the future envisage development activity continuing at a high level in the short term, and a continuous involvement in development activity in the medium term based on us successfully engaging with any national procurement strategy that may be implemented in the next 3 years. The prospect of a national procurement strategy echoing some of the proposals currently being made in *Firm Foundations*, the Scottish Government's discussion document on the future of housing in Scotland, is the greatest single challenge to the Association's development activities in recent years.

As an established housing provider, the Association, in addition to its development role, has an efficient technical services function and a refined methodology for life cycle costing and major repairs. Since the introduction of the SHQS in 2005, setting the national target for the condition and quality of housing, this has expanded from the maintenance of its existing housing to its improvement to meet and exceed the Standard.

The development staff team deliver all of the Association's property development functions, including the Standard Delivery Plan for the SHQS, and is also responsible for planned maintenance projects and wider action. The remit of the Development and Technical Sub Committee, to which staff report, is set out in the Association's Internal Management Plan (IMP), with delegated authority to the Sub-Committee and staff also outlined in the IMP. The Sub Committee additionally deals with the Association's relationship with Lanarkshire Initiatives Limited, the wholly owned subsidiary company set up to carry forward initiatives that the Association itself is unable to because of its status as a Registered Social Landlord (RSL).



# Operating Context



- 2.0 This departmental plan is based on an analysis of the Association's external environment and the opportunities and threats it presents, and also of internal strengths and weaknesses. A summary is given in section 5, in the form of a SWOT analysis.

## THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

### 2.1 The Policy Environment

The Association's development priorities tie-in closely with those detailed in NLC's *Local Housing Strategy 2004-2009*, and the range of development projects being undertaken reflects the variety and complexity of challenges in the Association's area of operation:

- an ageing population;
- assisting people with particular needs;
- rates of household formation;
- household income and housing affordability;
- land supply;
- infrastructure provision;
- site contamination and derelict land; and
- obtaining statutory consents.

The Association's consistent delivery of a range of wider role and regeneration initiatives has been underpinned by its ability to connect with partner agencies' priorities at policy level and obtain a wide range of public sector support for project delivery. It might be expected that the Scottish Government will continue to recognise that Community Planning has a significant role to play, however the future of Community Regeneration Funding and of the Wider Role Fund are understood to be under consideration as part of the Scottish Government's spending review. It

may therefore be that more innovative ways of financing wider role activity will have to be found if it is to continue at anything like its current level in the medium term.

### 2.2 Legislation

In the last few years, an abundance of new legislation from different levels of government has affected the development and technical functions. Together with housing legislation, that has impacted on the Association overall, new building standards and the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 resulted in significant policy and procedure reviews.

During the period of this plan, it is expected that any legislation following from *Firm Foundations*, the Scottish Government's discussion document on the future of housing in Scotland, will have to be considered carefully by the Association where appropriate, to ensure that its consequences are addressed.

### 2.3 The Efficiency Agenda

This broad term is understood to describe various moves to increase outputs from public expenditure. It is expected to affect the Association most directly in the procurement of new housing. It is also likely to have wider implications by impacting on the Association's public sector partner organisations, such as the Scottish Government's new Housing and Regeneration Directorate, which took over the former Community Scotland's non-regulatory functions in early 2008, and Scottish Enterprise, with whom it traditionally worked on development and regeneration programmes.

### 2.4 Regulation

It is apparent that the regulatory environment in which the Association works has itself been under considerable scrutiny recently and that a more risk-based approach to regulation is likely to be

adopted in future. Achieving the SHQS will be one of the key regulatory requirements that the Association will have to address in the short and medium terms. The role of Lanarkshire Initiatives Limited in the Association's simple group structure, which was established primarily in response to regulatory requirements, may require to be reviewed.

### 2.5 Sustainability

Since 2003, the Association has had a Sustainability Policy and Action Plan in place, recognising the need to contribute to a sustainable future for all. These have successfully been translated into action, particularly in the fields of energy efficiency and resource conservation.

The Design Brief for new developments is reviewed annually, and the need to minimise pollution, waste, and energy consumption, and promote the use of natural sustainable resources informs these reviews. New build projects are assessed for housing quality throughout the development process, and the formalisation of this over several years has allowed a full understanding of strengths and weaknesses to be built up, and design priorities set as part of the cycle of continuous improvement.

### 2.6 Procurement

The already complex area of procurement promises to become even more so in the immediate future. A range of measures has already been implemented to meet the needs of the Association's maintenance programme, and will be extended to meet future SHQS requirements. After several years in which joint procurement of development projects with other RSLs has been discussed, it is expected that the first such initiative in which Lanarkshire will participate will proceed in the short term, at Liberty Road, Bellshill, where an agreement with Trust Housing Association will be required so that Lanarkshire can

build a very sheltered housing complex for Trust.

However, the greatest single challenge facing the Association is the Scottish Government's proposal that Housing Association Grant (HAG) will only be available for a single social housing developer in each area. This has the potential to effectively deny the Association the opportunity of developing new stock. Some change to current HAG arrangements is seen as unavoidable, and the highest priority will now be attached to engaging as proactively as possible with any new national procurement policy so that the Association can maximise its potential for continuing to initiate development activity in the medium term and beyond.

## THE INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

### 2.7 Competence, capabilities and culture

In 2002, the Association was one of the first RSLs in Scotland to achieve Clients' Charter status, and the award has been reconfirmed each year since then in recognition of a commitment to continuous improvement, and delivery of a rolling five-year action plan. Key areas addressed by the plan include client leadership, partnering, learning from feedback, sustainability, and promoting equality and diversity. These themes have been drivers for change in recent years, and will remain so in the future.

The advantages and implications of achieving ISO 9001:2000 accreditation for development and technical functions will be investigated during the period of this plan. It is likely that if pursued it would be part of a broader review of departmental quality management.

The Association aims to deliver continuous improvement and value for money. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used at corporate level to set and monitor priorities

in service delivery. A departmental level system of KPIs for both development and planned maintenance projects has been established to measure performance, allow comparison with others' performance, and inform those affected by the Association's services whether value for money is being achieved.

### 2.8 Structures

Lanarkshire Initiatives Limited was originally established to carry out community regeneration through the provision of shops within a residential project. Its future role will be investigated as the procurement climate develops.

### 2.9 Customer Focus

The Association has continuously sought feedback on completed developments and used the results to drive improvement in current and future projects. Various techniques are used, including: customer satisfaction surveys; consultation with tenants at conferences, public meetings and focus groups; obtaining information about tenants' views through housing management; and examination of the implications of any complaints. Customer satisfaction is a historic strength, supported in particular by the results of post completion reviews of our recent new developments.

It is expected that customer focus will continue to be a priority in the future, and wherever possible and practical, ways will be sought to involve tenants in the decisions that affect them.

### 2.10 Implementing Modern Procurement Practice

Modernising procurement practice has been an exciting challenge in recent years. Policies have been reviewed to ensure that clear standards for both cost and quality are established. Quality based selection of consultants and contractors has become the norm, and all projects now involve entering into partnering charters. In these,

teams concur to work together to meet agreed client needs and quality standards, within price and on programme.

Ensuring value for money in the context of rising construction costs has been and will be a continuing priority. In the past, the Association has been exposed to the adversarial nature of the construction industry. Significant progress has now been made in focusing on longer term arrangements with the supply chain, allowing a flow of work to contractors and consultants who deliver against clear and specific measurement frameworks. These are now, and will in future, be both qualitative and quantitative. This commitment to high standards and innovation means that attention will be given to selection of the most appropriate procurement route for each project. The Association's staff therefore now has significant experience in this area.

The Association has an established policy in place to allow land banking and front funding of development projects. As land values continue to rise this should maximise the flexibility required to deliver a continuous programme, allowing best value principles to be applied to all procurement activity.

### 2.11 Wider Initiatives

Relative to its size the Association has a particularly strong record and experience in delivering or helping partner agencies deliver projects aimed at tackling poverty, building communities, and supporting people back into work.

## 3.1 Development

The Association's key operational objective in the next 3 years will be to plan and implement a rolling programme of high quality house building and refurbishment in accordance with NLC's and the Scottish Government's strategic priorities particularly as detailed in the Council's first Strategic Housing Investment Plan, published in 2008. This will ensure that new investment is targeted on meeting strategic objectives.

The development planning process is well established internally, and following consultation with partners, produces the Association's Strategy and Development Funding Plan each year, which in turn informs the IMP.

Within the operational objective there are 7 specific development aims as follows:-

- i. Housing provision will be principally for rent and appropriate to housing need, delivered through a **quality** development service, which promotes community consultation and ensures that customers are the primary focus.
- ii. The Association will endeavour to provide housing, which is appropriate to **housing need**. Reference will be made to national and local demographic trends, which demonstrate the requirement for smaller units in order to reflect population changes. This requirement, however, needs to be balanced with the aspirations of applicants and in this respect, the Association will consult with the Council for each new build housing project to formulate house type and mix for that area, including any special needs provision.
- iii. Promotion of greater housing **choice** through the provision of low cost home ownership where appropriate.
- iv. Promotion of **Equal Life Opportunities** by assisting those with particular

housing needs through the provision of accommodation, which meets *Housing for Varying Needs* standards. The Association will also coordinate with authorities to assist in the provision of wheelchair housing and the alleviation of homelessness, where need is established.

- v. **Sustainability** issues will be at the core of the development process and the Association's policies and activities are designed to promote this.
- vi. Implementation of the agenda to modernise procurement, as the Association builds on its status as a **best practice** construction client.
- vii. Involvement in the **Wider Agenda** in support of North Lanarkshire Partnership, to address the priorities in the Community Plan.

The Association endeavours to ensure that its development activity fully reflects the above and appropriate procedures are in place so that this occurs.

A healthy workload is projected in the short term, including the final phase of the Mossend project at Unitas Road, a particularly challenging and exciting town centre development at Dalziel Street, Motherwell, a major joint project with Trust Housing Association at Liberty Road, Bellshill, and a further site acquisition at Hamilton Road near Bellshill Town Centre.



### 3.2 Planned Maintenance and Meeting the SHQS

It is anticipated that planned maintenance projects will continue to form an increasing proportion of the department's workload in the future. This will require close liaison and integration with the Association's Maintenance Policy and Procedures, as well as coordination with the Housing Services Plan (Maintenance).

The Association has been developing new housing and refurbishing acquired stock for almost 30 years with the average age of the Association's stock (after improvement) presently standing at approximately 11 years. As a RSL, the Association is required to accumulate designated reserves from rental income to meet the cost of replacing components at the end of their anticipated life. Expenditure on major repairs has been estimated for the next 60 years, based on a life cycle costing programme, which was developed using a forecast of expected life spans and elemental replacement costs for each development.

Projected major repairs starting each year form a complete costed programme. The level of planned maintenance expenditure identified has been reviewed to establish that it is affordable given the levels of contribution to the designated reserve that may be achieved.

The life cycle costing methodology is linked closely to the Association's maintenance strategy. Both have been integrated into global financial planning, to ensure that planned maintenance funding decisions are made with reference to the Association's wider financial planning. The exercise completed and periodically reviewed shows that there is an appropriate strategy in place for identifying and funding the long term programme.

The Scottish Government has set the SHQS and the 2015 timetable for completion, and RSLs such as Lanarkshire have

responsibility to ensure that it is met in full. The technical and financial plans that are now in place show that this target can be exceeded, and the figures from the original Standard Delivery Plan, produced in 2005, were acknowledged by Communities Scotland as demonstrating that the Association will progress to achieving the Standard by 2015. In common with all RSLs it is anticipated that a revised submission will be required in 2010.

During the period of this plan one of the key tasks will be to comprehensively review the assumptions on which the life cycle costing programme is based and integrate a fully updated technical and financial plan for the planned maintenance programme with the revised Standard Delivery Plan.

In general the Association's relatively young stock should present few difficulties in meeting the SHQS, and it includes some particularly energy efficient recent developments. Plans to meet the Standard include provisions which exceed the Energy Efficiency criteria in most areas and it is anticipated that all insulation work will be completed by 2009 with the programme then moving on to focus on window replacement. There are a few cases where mixed tenure and the "pepper potting" of properties amongst those owned by others may require working in partnership with a range of other interested parties.

Long term planning of maintenance work has allowed the contractual framework under which it is carried out to be rationalised, addressing many of the issues identified in the former Communities Scotland's Procurement Guide, ensuring value for money and minimising exposure to tender price inflation.

### 3.3 Wider Action

For several years now, the Association has delivered wider action initiatives in

partnership with residents and other agencies, to maximise the social, economic, and environmental benefits of housing and regeneration. There have been significant achievements: 15 local beneficiaries have been able to participate in employment and training initiatives run during the last 3 years, extensive programmes of community engagement have been delivered, and in Mossend an Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) project started at Bruce Street, East Dean Street and Greenmoss Place in 2006 and will be completed in early 2008.

Because of the Association's aim to take a broad approach to community regeneration, and its status as a community owned and run organisation, it is acknowledged that wider action activities should be an integral part of the Association's business strategy.

A broad range of funding options will be considered for any specific activity or project, including the possibility of an appropriate contribution from the Association. It is also possible that funding, including grant funding from external sources, may be directed towards other agencies or voluntary organisations, on the basis of partnership working.

Strategic objectives are considered in developing wider action activities. These objectives take cognisance of the objectives of partner agencies, and in particular those of NLC and the North Lanarkshire Partnership, the Scottish Government, and the UK Government. In response to this, and to demand from tenants, a project will be run in 2008 to provide energy efficiency advice to all the Association's tenants.

The Association's policy on wider action was last rewritten in 2004, and in the last few years, it has delivered a range of projects, and successfully engaged with Community Planning, including securing Community Regeneration Funding for

project delivery. During the period of this plan there will be a further policy review, which it is anticipated will be informed particularly by the Scottish Government's view of regeneration priorities and of the agencies it uses for delivery following the abolition of Communities Scotland.

### 3.4 Risk Management

Departmental activity is characterised by the sizable budgets involved, the range of activities, and the relative complexity of the contractual arrangements.

The movement towards cultural change in the construction industry in recent years has not yet shifted the reality that it remains an adversarial business, and that exposure to building contract claims and other disputes in the development process is one of the most significant threats the Association faces. Proper risk management is therefore recognised as important to the Association's long term health. Risks are addressed by the extensive policy and procedural framework that has been put in place at departmental level. The procurement policy requires that when undertaking projects key risks are identified within a framework for risk management. The nature of construction activity is that it always involves risks; these should be clearly identified, together with their effects, and arrangements made to manage or transfer them.

Joint working with other RSLs, which has already started on a significant development project at Liberty Road, Bellshill, will need a particular focus on allocation of risks during projects' early stages, and is likely to require considerable focus on risk management issues in the medium term.

# Delivery of Objectives



- 4.0 Over the next 3 years the development department will continue to provide development, planned maintenance and regeneration projects for the Association and Lanarkshire Initiatives Limited, closely linked with partners' objectives. Fundamental to this will be the Association's continuing drive to pursue best practice, and the setting of challenging targets for the future.

The range of development projects in the programme in particular reflects the variety and complexity of challenges in the Association's area of operation.

## Short Term Objectives 2008-2009

- 4.1 Achieve site starts for the second phase of the Mossend housing and regeneration project, and for the new build housing at Dalziel Street, Motherwell.
- 4.2 Conclude the necessary agreement with Trust Housing Association and achieve a site start for the new build very sheltered and general needs housing at Liberty Road, Bellshill.
- 4.3 Achieve a site start at Hamilton Road, Bellshill.
- 4.4 Complete the Mossend ILM environmental improvements project at Bruce Street, East Dean Street and Greenmoss Place, Mossend.
- 4.5 Complete the "Energy Wise" wider role project, offering energy advice to all tenants and sharing owners.
- 4.6 Complete all insulation work necessary to meet the SHQS, and commence replacement of the remaining single glazed windows in tenemental stock.

## Medium Term Objectives 2009-2011

- 4.7 Advance a range of development opportunities, where appropriate, as identified in the Association's Strategy and Development Funding Plan.

- 4.8 Proactively engage with the Scottish Government's national procurement strategy, so as to protect the Association's future ability to expand its stock, and ensure that joint working with other RSLs is properly risk managed.

- 4.9 Continue to deliver projects to meet the SHQS and keep the Standard Delivery Plan under review to allow for future policy changes or changes in the wider strategic or financial environment.

- 4.10 Review the life cycle costing programme and have technical and financial plans in place to support a revised submission of the Standard Delivery Plan for the SHQS in 2010.

- 4.11 Complete a review of departmental management systems and quality assurance procedures particularly addressing the advantages presented by continuous Clients' Charter accreditation, and any overlap with possible ISO 9001: 2000 accreditation.

- 4.12 Review the wider role policy and prospects of delivering wider role projects in view of any changes in public policy, priorities or funding. Continue to deliver projects in the medium term if possible.

- 4.13 Continue to review policy and procedure in response to new legislation.

- 4.14 Continue to review and develop policy and procedures for tenant participation in development and maintenance projects, including the planning stages.

- 4.15 Continue to address the Sustainability Action Plan.

- 4.16 Review Lanarkshire Initiatives Limited's role as the procurement climate develops.

- 4.17 Investigate new initiatives such as mid-market housing as proposals and legislation develop from *Firm Foundations*, the Scottish Government's discussion document on the future of housing in Scotland.

# SWOT Analysis



5.0 The Association has carried out an analysis of the internal strengths and weaknesses and the external threats and opportunities facing the business. These are summarised below;

SWOT ANALYSIS	Issues for Consideration	Issues for Consideration
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skilled and experienced development staff</li> <li>• Proven track record of delivering a wide range of projects in different contexts</li> <li>• Ability to build high quality sustainable housing and achieve excellent levels of customer satisfaction</li> <li>• Standard Delivery Plan for the SHQS in place, and programme of work well underway, with the Association having the financial strength to meet the costs</li> <li>• High quality policies and procedures in place</li> <li>• Clear departmental objectives, which link to the IMP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well developed life cycle costing programme linked to the Association's overall financial planning</li> <li>• Good interdepartmental relations and consultation procedures</li> <li>• Track record of successful partnership working with a range of other agencies</li> <li>• Development of Wider Action activities with partners</li> <li>• Excellent record of formally recorded ongoing staff training and development to ensure that high standards are maintained</li> <li>• Tried and tested procedures for dealing with building contract disputes</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Association's relatively small size may be regarded as a handicap within an increasingly competitive arena</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restricted staff resources in the Development Department</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A more strategic means of identifying and meeting housing need may present the opportunity for the Association to work in partnership with other local RSLs to obtain improved value in procurement</li> <li>• A consistent approach to modernised procurement and continuous improvement should provide customers with better quality and value in the planned maintenance and SHQS programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with other agencies to deliver the aims, objectives and targets identified in the Local Housing Strategy, Strategic Housing Investment Plan, and Community Plan, particularly those relating to housing and environment</li> <li>• The Association's financial strength and long-term viability allow it to consider initiatives such as land-banking and front-funding of development projects. These activities improve the Association's competitiveness and allow more flexible and effective development planning</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The risk of concentration of development funding to fewer RSLs</li> <li>• Uncertain and unpredictable flow of development funding, militating against achievement of the capital programme and financial stability of the development department</li> <li>• Risk of poor performance by building contractors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As with all developing RSLs, the exposure to building contract claims and disputes, including adjudication, arbitration and court action</li> <li>• Exposure to tender price inflation and skill shortages</li> <li>• Prospect of reduced public sector grant funding support for wider role and regeneration initiatives</li> </ul>

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