



Craigowen Housing Association

Asset Management Strategy

2024 to 2028

Version 4

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1.0 Introduction

Craigowen Housing Association (CHA)'s Asset Management Strategy reflects how the Association aims to manage its assets whereby its stock investment decisions are made in a planned and co-ordinated manner. In this way, response repairs can be minimised and disruptions to service users minimised. The Association uses a combination of external, consultant lead stock condition surveys, and the in-house knowledge of its two maintenance officers to plan and coordinate major and cyclical repairs each year. The stock condition surveys act as a guide for our maintenance officers, which help to make informed decisions which will focus our planned maintenance budgets in the right areas.

2.0 CHA Property Services and Stock

CHA currently maintains a stock of 40 properties. The stock has been developed by CHA from 1977 onwards, in accordance with the HAG applicable at the time, to meet the housing and support needs of the service users of three Camphill Communities in Northern Ireland where vulnerable adults are cared for in a life sharing environment. The three Camphill Communities are: - Glencraig, located at Craigavad, Co. Down; Clanabogan, near Omagh, Co. Tyrone and Mourne Grange, Kilkeel, Co. Down. The Camphill Communities in Northern Ireland operate on land owned by the Camphill Community Trust Northern Ireland (CCTNI).

The properties developed by CHA are quite unique in their design, layout and location and this significantly impacts their use as housing stock "assets."

CHA will undertake a comprehensive survey of the condition of its housing stock at least every 5 years, along with annual stock condition reviews. These surveys will inform the planned maintenance programme after taking account of the future use of the properties on a case by case basis, considering identified needs and the viability of each property, in conjunction with the Camphill Communities.

3.0 Value for Money

CHA is committed to planning expenditure in a manner that ensures best value for money. CHA believes the maintenance services provided to the service users in CHA properties are efficient, value for money services. This view is based on the competitive level of pricing

currently being secured by procurement exercises such as the Fusion 21 agreement which has gained the association access to a number of reliable contractors and consultants. All procurements are carried out in accordance with the DFC Housing Association Guide and NI/EU Procurement Policy. CHA is committed to working in partnership with contractors and consultants and their representative bodies towards improving quality and value for its service users.

4.0 Continuous Improvement

CHA is committed to upgrading its housing stock and to maintaining internal elements to The Decent Homes Standard as a minimum, and where possible, exceeding the minimum standard. CHA is also committed to engaging and consulting with service users and other stakeholders to ensure work undertaken on their behalf meets the highest standards. CHA is fully committed to undertaking all of its activities in line with the DFC Housing Association Guidelines, and within CHA's financial resources.

CHA will, in accordance with this Asset Management Strategy, aim to respond to changing demand, changing markets, changing demographics and changing regulatory and customer expectations. In this way, CHA will ensure the viability of its housing stock into the future.

5.0 Strategic Objectives

CHA's Asset Management Strategy is based on the following Strategic Objectives:

- 1.To place service users at the heart of services, delivering empowerment through engagement
2. Delivering quality homes, services and neighbourhoods which meet CHA service users' expectations, and future aspirations
- 3.Enhance CHA as an organisation through a commitment to equality, diversity and value for money
- 4.Providing effective leadership and strong governance to maintain continuing viability and service excellence.

6.0 Health & Safety

CHA's Health and Safety Policy and Procedure demonstrates the Association's commitment to providing a safe environment for staff, customers and the general public.

7.0 Response Maintenance and Re-let Works

CHA's maintenance service is delivered by its in-house maintenance officers, through a variety of specialist contractors who cover all the necessary elements relating to an effective maintenance service. A list of the Contractors used is available upon request from CHA.

Regular Quality Assurance checks are carried out on completed works (currently 10% under £1,000 and 100% of invoices over this amount). A report generated through the Association's asset management software, Omniledger, is submitted to each CHA Board Meeting, providing statistical information on repairs and progress updates on servicing and other items. The timescales for response to repair requests are:

Category – Immediate – 4 hours

Category - Emergency – 24 hours

Category – Urgent – 4 working days

Category – Non-emergency – 2 weeks

Category – Routine – 4 weeks

8.0 Cyclical Inspection Works and Servicing

Cyclical Inspection Works undertaken by CHA comply with various legislative requirements. CHA has a statutory obligation regarding Legionella and Asbestos Management, and servicing of electrics, Fire Equipment, Oil and Gas boilers, emergency lighting and passenger lifts. These are inspected and tested at regular intervals and replaced according to their condition, their recommended life cycles, or whether they are generating an unusually high level of repeat repair callouts, etc. Any changes to legislation will be carefully monitored and policies and procedures updated accordingly to ensure CHA is meeting its responsibilities. Access to properties is organised in advance with the Camphill Communities to minimise disruption to service users.

Servicing certificates covering boiler servicing, legionella inspections, fixed wire testing, lift servicing, fire alarm servicing, emergency lighting testing, etc are currently filed online. Copies of certificates are passed to the relevant Camphill Community office.

9.0 Grounds Maintenance

CHA undertakes a limited number of ground maintenance activities at the communities within the curtilage of each property, e.g. maintenance of paved areas and decking; the Camphill Communities have responsibility for lawn mowing and pruning of shrubbery and for the areas outside the curtilage of CHA properties..

10.0 Window Cleaning Services

Window cleaning at all CHA properties is the responsibility of the relevant Camphill Community.

11.0 Stock Condition, Regeneration, Planned and Cyclical Works

CHA will undertake a comprehensive survey of the condition of its housing stock at least every 5 years. As well as this, before preparing each year's planned maintenance budget, the association's maintenance officers will survey each house in order to prioritise any major concerns at that particular time. These surveys will inform the planned maintenance programme after taking account of the future use of the properties on a case by case basis, considering identified needs and the viability of each property, in conjunction with the Camphill Communities. The information from the Stock Condition Survey will inform CHA's five year planned and cyclical maintenance programme as a first step. It will also be used to plan maintenance, cyclical repairs and elemental upgrades over a 30-year period.

CHA is committed to upgrading and maintaining viable properties to meet the current minimum standards i.e. Decent Homes; Current Health & Safety/Fire Safety legislation; Disability Access; Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority standards.

CHA's planned and cyclical works are presented to the board at the beginning of each financial year. Once approved, the works are co-ordinated and managed by CHA's in-house maintenance staff.

12.0 Tenant Involvement, Feedback & Inspection

CHA engages with service users via a number of channels in determining its Maintenance Works Programmes. This is a key part of CHA's work, given the special circumstances and needs of the majority of CHA service users. Each of the three Camphill sites has an on-site maintenance officer who will raise maintenance matters directly with CHA, either as response repair requests or non-urgent repair requests. CHA's maintenance officers will

issue works orders through its Omniledger software, and forward these works orders to the relevant on site maintenance officer for their records. The on site maintenance officer will also liaise with contractors and CHA office staff on access to properties and if there are any issues or concerns about quality of work, timescales for completing work etc.

CHA has developed Joint Management Agreements in conjunction with the Camphill Communities outlining the division of maintenance and repairs responsibilities between CHA, the Camphill Communities and service users. CHA values and encourages feedback from service users and the Camphill Communities to ensure they are satisfied with the maintenance and repairs service facilitated by the Association. In order to assist service users and Camphill Communities to provide feedback, they are provided with information on the official procedures for contacting CHA if they require any advice on emergency arrangements, target timescales in respect of response repairs, advice on keeping the property to a good standard and the level of service which service users can expect.

13.0 Adaptations

A significant proportion of CHA's housing stock is suitable for persons with disabilities and specialist needs. Where additional work or essential adaptations may be required to enable a tenant to remain in the property, CHA is committed to providing or facilitating the provision of such works, thereby enabling service users to stay in their homes and maximise their independence. Significant investment in this area is expected to continue over the next few years as Health and Housing strategies encourage more people to live longer at home. When a referral is received from an Occupational Therapist, design work where possible will be prepared by CHA's maintenance officers and sent to the Occupational Therapist for approval. Once approved, the works will be assigned to an appropriate contractor to be completed within the required timescale. If the design work is more specialist in nature, CHA will seek to engage an appropriate third party to ensure the adaptation needs are met to the required standard.

14.0 HMO Statutory Registration Scheme

The Housing (NI) Order 2003 introduced a Statutory Registration Scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation in Northern Ireland. The current definition of a HMO is set out in Article 1 (1) of Part 1 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (NI) 2016. This defines an HMO as "living accommodation, occupied by 3 or more persons as their only or main residence and those persons form more than two households and rents are payable or other consideration

is to be provided in respect of the occupation by at least one of the persons of the living accommodation”.

However, Article 2 (2) (b) of Schedule 1 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 states that a building (or parts) are not houses in multiple occupation where the person managing it is a housing association registered under Part 2 of the Housing (NI) Order 1992. All CHA properties therefore fall outside of the definition of a HMO set out in Article 1 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (NI) 2016 and are exempt from the requirements of the licensing laws for Houses in Multiple Occupation in Northern Ireland.

15.0 Stock Disposals or Remodelling

In the event that any CHA property becomes difficult to let or is deemed as a long-term void with no prospect of being allocated, the Association will review the future prospects for that asset in its current form in consultation with the Camphill Communities. After a full appraisal of the sustainability of such property it may be appropriate to consider a change in client type or a change in housing mix, within the existing footprint of the property. Such changes will be supported with a business case for the decision arrived at. CHA will follow DFC Best Practice Guidance and if appropriate, seek funding for remodelling of the property to make it fit for reallocation. In instances where CHA has leased the property for use as social housing, CCT(NI) will be consulted on future use and the option of surrendering the lease will be considered if appropriate.

16.0 Sustainability

CHA is committed to building, maintaining and retrofitting its housing stock with materials, design details, heat sources and other features aimed at reducing energy bills, protecting the environment and alleviating fuel poverty for its service users. With the cost of materials continuing to make budgets more stretched, CHA will proactively investigate any potential grants which could be availed of, particularly in the area of energy saving. The design requirements of the Housing Association Guide have now become less specific as general building regulations become more demanding.

17.0 Procurement

CHA became a member of the Fusion 21 Framework, which allows the Association to benefit from the choice of any contractors or consultants who are also signed up to the Framework. This avoids the need for potentially expensive and time-consuming procurement exercises where possible.

For anything which falls outside of the Fusion 21 frameworks remit, contracts will be procured in accordance with the requirements of the DFC Housing Association Guide, reflecting Northern Ireland and EU Procurement Policy. The procurement method employed will depend on the type of work and the estimated contract value.

18.0 Communication and Review

CHA's Asset Management Strategy underpins the sustainability of CHA stock into the future. Should key events impact on CHA's business and its operating environment, CHA will amend the strategy accordingly. The strategy will be communicated to staff and customers and will be regularly reviewed, at least every 4 years, to ensure it continues to support CHA's annual Business Plans.

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