



# Business Plan

 2025 TO 2030

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# Who we are

We are Almond Housing Association, a community-based housing association servicing Livingston and wider West Lothian. We are making a huge difference to the lives of our customers and want to do more.

We have transformed the way we work and continue to modernise as part of our journey towards moving from a good business to a great one – delivering a consistently high-quality service for our customers and recognised as an organisation people want to work with and for.

With over 2,500 properties we are a landlord of size and scale with the necessary resources to have real impact, whilst at the same time retaining the advantages of being local, community based and small enough to truly care about our customers and colleagues.





# Mission Statement

Homes, people and communities to be proud of



# Vision Statement

Striving to improve life experiences and opportunities

# Our Values and Behaviours

Reflective, innovative,  
willing to try/find new ways  
of doing things  
**Open to Change**

Listen, show empathy,  
have patience  
**Kindness**

## Work Together

Be helpful, provide support,  
encourage each other

## Respect

Treat each other the way  
you want to be treated -  
don't do to others what you  
wouldn't want done to  
you/treat others with  
respect and civility/safe  
space/environment

## Social

Being friendly and upbeat  
translates to a positive  
work environment where  
customers enjoy better  
service and communities  
can get involved





# Our Culture

We are a housing association with a passion for excellent customer service. As we enter our new Business Plan for 2025 to 2030, we are continuing on our change journey. Our aim is to continue to build upon the positive improvements delivered over the previous three years with regard to service delivery.

As an employer of passionate people, we continue to believe in an ethos of trusting colleagues to deliver their role in a way that works for customers, for them and for the organisation. Our approach remains agile and flexible, giving our people the freedom to choose how and where they work.

We will further nurture our focus on the importance of how we do things as much as what we do. At the core of our culture is our shared desire for providing great homes and services which support improved life chances.



# Our Strategic Priorities

**Delivering excellent customer service**

**1.**



**3. Homes and places to be proud of**



**Empower, develop & engage our colleagues & our communities**

**2.**



**4. Business strength**



# 1. Delivering excellent customer service

We want to make it easy for our customers to interact with us and to get the information and services that they need with minimal fuss. And when we provide the service they have requested, we want it to compare favourably with the experience they receive from those businesses that get it right.

To achieve the above, we need to make service delivery as personal as possible and tailored to the needs of each customer. We will be using data and technology to help ensure that we can provide services which meet specific needs.

Great customer service is also about the how, in terms of service delivery, not just the what. We will be investing in customer service training across the business to ensure that we are all focussed, with the right skills, to ensure our customers feel heard and cared for every time.



The customer service outcomes that we will deliver are:

- Easy to access services
- Personalised service delivery
- Delivering on our promises

# This is what we will do to achieve this



- ✓ New Housing Management System
- ✓ Improve how we collect and manage data
- ✓ Understand and monitor what our customers are telling us
- ✓ Review participation in West Lothian Council Common Housing Register
- ✓ Establishment of new partnerships
- ✓ Obtain regular feedback from customers
- ✓ Deliver customer service training programmes across the organisation
- ✓ Assess our ongoing contribution to West Lothian Homeless Emergency
- ✓ Obtain external validation of our processes via Customer Service Excellence Accreditation
- ✓ Provide 24/7 digital services offer
- ✓ Establish customer care standards / Customer Charter
- ✓ Ensure our estates are well maintained and meet tenant aspirations via an estate inspection programme
- ✓ Review approach to customer surveying / feedback with view to moving towards customer aspirational surveys

## 1. Delivering excellent customer service

# Success measures\*

\* See BP action plan by year for full details

- ✓ **Customer satisfaction of 92%**
- ✓ **Reduced number of complaints**
- ✓ **Percentage of customers who would recommend us**
- ✓ **Percentage of tenants satisfied with the management of the neighbourhood they live in**
- ✓ **Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation**
- ✓ **Increase in the number of local partnerships**

## 1. Delivering excellent customer service



## 2. Empower, develop and engage our colleagues and communities

We have made significant progress over the last five years with regard to our people, in terms of our flexible and agile working model, and establishment of our values. A feature of this new Business Plan is to both continue to develop our people offer but also to expand our people focus to the wider community.

Our plans for providing training and employment opportunities to the communities that we work with, will take us forward towards our mission statement of striving to improve life experiences and opportunities.



The people related outcomes that we will deliver are:

- Training and development opportunities for the local community, delivered within the community, which enhance employability prospects and foster community cohesion
- Colleagues will feel supported, motivated, and rewarded within their role
- Colleagues will be provided with opportunities to develop

# This is what we will do to achieve this



- ✓ We will review our People Offer
- ✓ Launch development plans with line managers
- ✓ Create local training and employment apprenticeship opportunities
- ✓ Gain external accreditation of our people processes
- ✓ We will make use of ground floor office space as a vehicle for social enterprise / community use
- ✓ Review how teams are organised
- ✓ Create a new website and re-branding
- ✓ Establish a management succession plan
- ✓ Implement a communications strategy
- ✓ Implement a DEI strategy
- ✓ Implement the outcomes from the review of our team structure

## 2. Empower, develop and engage our colleagues and our communities

# Success measures\*

\* See BP action plan by year for full details

- ✓ **Occupancy of ground floor office space by local community group or groups**
- ✓ **Competitive remuneration in place benchmarked across the sector**
- ✓ **Low percentage of employee turnover maintained**
- ✓ **Number of colleagues who have benefited from personal career development**
- ✓ **Number of apprentices / training placements delivered**
- ✓ **Investors in People (IIP) or equivalent accreditation achieved**

## 2. Empower, develop and engage our colleagues and our communities



# 3. Homes and places to be proud of

As a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) providing safe, warm and comfortable homes is our primary reason for being and is reflected in our mission statement of Homes, people, and communities to be proud of. We have made significant investment in our homes on an annual basis ensuring that they meet the required regulatory standards and that they are as energy efficient as possible.

We also invest in the external surrounding areas of our homes as we are aware that this is an important aspect of providing welcoming communities and homes which our tenants can be proud of. Local partnerships, such as Growing Together, allow us to support and help make genuine improvements to these communities.

Recent events have provided significant challenges, in particular, with the discovery of Reinforced Aerated Autoclave Concrete (RAAC) in just over 200 of our homes which has required substantial planning and financial resources to address the issue in a timely manner.

As we commence with the delivery of the required remedial work, we will also be developing a longer-term approach to development and regeneration of homes which we identify as either uneconomical to invest in, or which no longer meet the aspirations of today.



# 3. Homes and places to be proud of

Development and regeneration of existing homes presents a new approach for the association and, whilst challenging in comparison to the provision of new homes in areas outside of our current stock, it presents an exciting opportunity for the association to lead on both the physical and social regeneration of the area. Importantly we believe that it is the right thing to do.



The homes related outcomes that we will deliver are:

- Homes which are energy efficient, safe and affordable
- Underperforming homes replaced with modern quality homes
- Physical and social regeneration of our communities

# This is what we will do to achieve this



- ✓ Delivery of a new Development and Regeneration Strategy
- ✓ New customer focussed responsive repair service in place
- ✓ Active reprofiling of under-performing stock

- ✓ Regeneration & placemaking approach developed with partners such as the local community, WLC and other stakeholders
- ✓ Respond to Scottish Housing Net Zero standard to ensure required progress against Net Zero targets

- ✓ RAAC remedial work programme delivered with as minimal disruption to tenants as possible
- ✓ Adopt an Almond property standard

# Success measures\*

\* See BP action plan by year for full details

- ✓ **Percentage of RAAC programme completed within timescales**
- ✓ **Percentage satisfaction of RAAC affected tenants re: support provided during programme delivery**
- ✓ **Repairs service procured with enhanced appointments and tenant communication process**
- ✓ **Regeneration and placemaking approach developed with partners**
- ✓ **Action plan in place and delivered against new Net Zero standard in line with requirements**

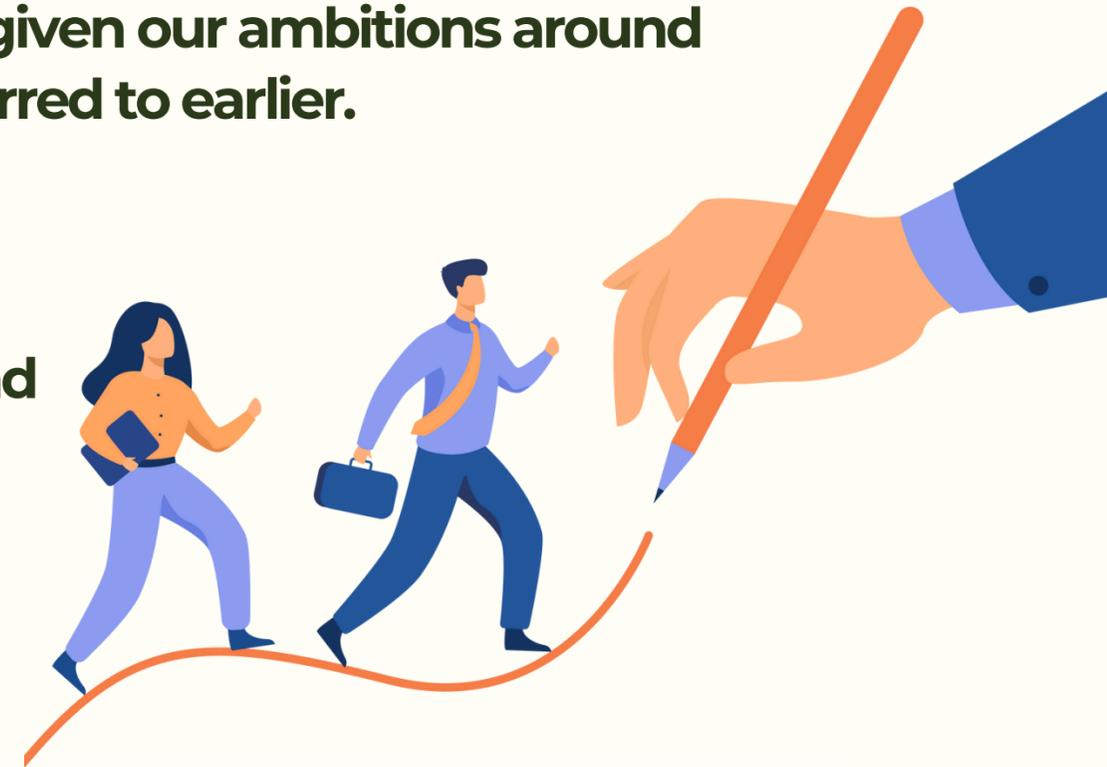
## 3. Homes and places to be proud of



# 4. Business strength

A strong and effective back-office core team is a key feature of a successful housing association and we are fortunate that this has been an area of strength for Almond. We are aware however that to maintain this position it is important to continue to provide focus in this area. This is particularly true given our ambitions around development and regeneration and in tackling the challenges of RAAC, as referred to earlier.

Our ability to deliver excellent service to our customers and to continue to be a supporting employer can only be achieved by the support of a strong effective Board and the wider corporate team, which provide the resources (financial and systems) we need and help us to continually review and improve how we do things.



The business related outcomes that we will deliver are:

- Development and regeneration ambitions achieved
- Continuous improvement which aligns with our strategic objectives
- Effective governance and financial stability

# This is what we will do to achieve this



- ✓ Support the board to deliver excellence in governance
- ✓ Reinvigorate journey mapping as a business improvement tool
- ✓ Provide support and analysis for the development of new build and asset investment plans
- ✓ Review rent formula
- ✓ Obtain funding to support additional RAAC spend requirements
- ✓ Continue development of performance management framework with particular focus on reporting and report development
- ✓ Achieve Cyber Essentials Plus
- ✓ Implement project management software
- ✓ Prioritise enhancements and establish the new Housing Management System as a supportive and effective tool
- ✓ Develop Value for Money (VFM) strategy and targets

# Success measures\*

\* See BP action plan by year for full details

- ✓ Regulatory compliance maintained
- ✓ Top quartile performance achieved across KPIs
- ✓ Funding in place to enable delivery of RAAC remediation works
- ✓ Number of revised processes implemented via journey mapping
- ✓ Development and investment programme fully supported financially
- ✓ Cyber Essential Plus accreditation achieved

## 4. Business Strength



# Supplementary information

This Business Plan is supported by the following key strategies:

- ✔ Development and Regeneration (to be established in Year 2 of the plan)
- ✔ Asset Management
- ✔ DEI (to be established in year 2 of the plan)
- ✔ Communications (to be established in year 1 of the plan)
- ✔ Community Impact



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