

North & East Housing Association



Strategic Plan 2016-2020

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Foreword from the Chairperson



In late 2014 the Board, in conjunction with the CEO, agreed that North & East required a new Strategic Document that would guide its development for the coming five years. That task, in partnership with the Board and Staff of North & East, was led by Crowe Horwath.

I am honoured as Chairman of the Association to introduce the completed Strategic Plan which will guide the organisation's growth and development for the next five years. I also take pride in the fact that at this time the organisation is a vibrant and a respected player in the voluntary housing sector in Ireland.

We have come quite a way since the days in summer of 1992 when three friends met and agreed that it would be a good thing to found a Housing Association. Those three friends, soon joined by others of a like mind and commitment, are still involved with the association. The challenges faced over the years were often immense and varied not least in recent years with the reduction in the capital funding available for Approved Housing Bodies. This has brought about a significant changed environment for North & East. Much of our Strategic Plan puts in place objectives that enable us to develop in this new environment.

The association has now reached maturity and is ready to consolidate its position as a respected organisation within the sector. We have moved from a

development phase, when most of the work was undertaken by the Board, through a transitional period, as the Board hired its first CEO, to what is now a well established and respected organisation

This strategy has given us the time to reflect and review where we stand in the voluntary housing sector and where we want to be as an organisation in five years' time. We have looked again at our original vision and values to see if they are still relevant to our association. We as a housing association have always prided ourselves on our commitment to our tenants. We do not want our developments to become big and impersonal because we want to be true to our core values. This strategy has given us a chance to decide again what our core values are and increase our commitment to them. We want to continue to be a leading Voluntary Housing Association because of our values and because we are unique.

The buy-in and commitment shown by staff and Board to the process of the making of this strategy has been exemplary. Our organisation is about commitment to people, particularly tenants, staff, and Board, and this commitment was apparent during this process. I want to sincerely thank all for their participation in the making of this strategic document which will provide the template for our continued growth and development.

**Pat Lennon,
Chairperson**

Official Opening of McArdle Green, Moneymore, Co. Louth, September 2015



Spring Clean at An Chearnóg



Introduction and Message from the CEO



We would firstly like to thank all the partners and stakeholders of North & East Housing Association, who took time out to input into the development of our Strategic Plan. The views of local authorities, policy makers, lending institutions, other AHBs, and housing practitioners have ensured that this plan is realistic and reflects the real challenges and opportunities for North & East Housing in the years ahead. In particular I wish to acknowledge the work of our Board members and staff who attended many meetings in developing this Strategy.

The Strategy is balanced and at its heart is the ongoing commitment to our tenants and the communities in which we wish to continue to serve. North & East Housing in this Strategy remains committed to the continuous improvement of our housing and community services. The implementation of the strategy by our team will be a challenge that we as an organisation are ready to embrace, and are confident that we can deliver on. We are aware of the responsibility entrusted to us by the board and our current and future tenants. It is our responsibility to lead and provide responsible stewardship of North & East Housing for the benefit of our tenants and society as a whole.

While our Strategy lists a number of objectives under the three pillars of **Growth, Operating Model**, and **Tenant Engagement**, equally important to us is that the values that drive us lay out a clear

direction on how we will conduct our business with all our stakeholders. We will build on our strong relationships with all those we deal with and develop similar relationships with those we will work with in the future. This will add value to the services we provide to the tenants and also assist in the delivery of our Strategic Plan through partnership arrangements that will deliver more homes and better quality of service to our people.

We will conduct our business in an open and transparent manner, not merely applying the codes to which we have signed up to but endeavouring to emulate best practice in the not-for-profit sector.

Our Strategy commits to an ambitious growth plan that will be primarily financed by non-state funding sources. It is a credit to both the board and staff that access to these sources has already been achieved. However, to continue to finance the future development plan it will require that North & East implement the highest standards of good governance, the strategic objectives lay out the key milestones for us in the years ahead that when delivered will not only ensure the delivery of this plan but will ready North & East for the next stage of its development.

We look forward to working with all our partners in delivering this plan, and it is my privilege to lead the staff team that will bring this to fruition.

Vincent Keenan,
Chief Executive



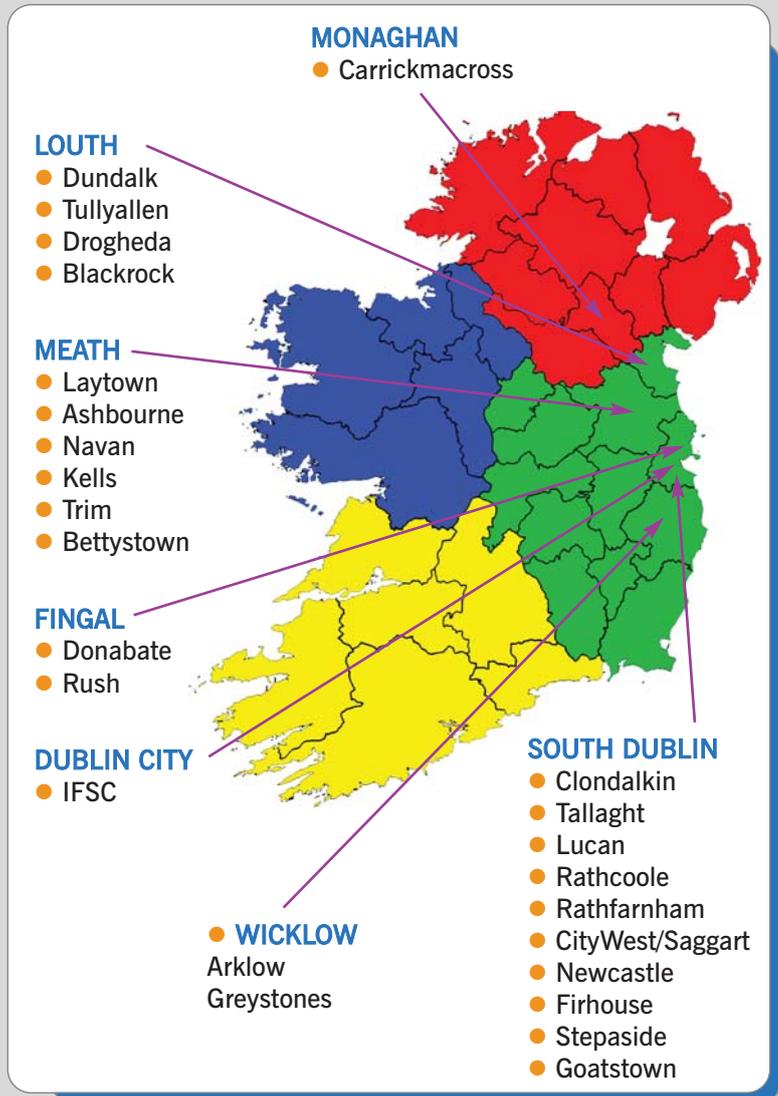
North & East Housing Association – History

North & East Housing Association (North & East) was established in 1992 by a small number of volunteers who recognised a need for a locally based mainstream housing association in the north east of the country. In the past 23 years, North & East has developed from a small-scale, mainly voluntary organisation into a well-established social enterprise with a proven track record in the delivery of high-quality homes, comprehensive housing management services and tenant supports.

North & East believes that everyone has a right to a quality home within the community. We strive to achieve this objective by working in partnership with local authorities, community and voluntary organisations. Our first housing development comprised 12 homes in Killegland, Ashbourne, Meath, in 1993; this was followed by Blackthorn Grove in Kells in 2000.

In 2004 North & East, in partnership with Dundalk UDC, built its first estate in Dundalk: 43 homes in An Chearnóg. This was followed by further projects in the town and county, including 16 homes in Saltown in Dundalk, 11 units, constructed in partnership with Louth County Council in Tullyallen, and 17 homes purchased in Stamanaran in 2012. More recently, North & East handed over the keys to 25 two, three and four bedroom homes in a mixed tenure estate in McArdle Green, Moneymore, Drogheda.

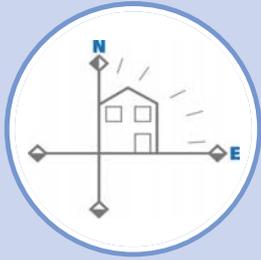
We currently have some 370 homes in management and plan to increase this to 500 by the end of 2016. We provide housing that meets a wide spectrum of needs, including families, older people, homeless households and people with physical and learning disabilities. We continuously strive to innovate in the areas of housing design and maintenance. We constantly review our services and procedures against the sector to ensure best practice. We are members of the Irish Council for Social Housing and participate in the Housing Association Performance Management (HAPM) framework.



Community is at the heart of what we do, we remain a social enterprise that works hard to look after the neighbourhoods where we have homes and we strive continuously with our tenants to support the development of vibrant, sustainable communities.



Structures and Governance



North & East Housing Association is a company limited by guarantee (company number 197791), and is also a registered charity (CHY number 10970). North & East is governed by a Board of Directors, whose principal responsibilities include strategic direction, financial and risk management, monitoring performance and good governance. The Board meets every month, with the exception of January, July, and August. It conducts an annual review of the skills required and new trustees are chosen to ensure that the Board has an appropriate balance of experience and skills relevant to the operations of North & East. The Board delegates the day-to-day operation of the organisation to the CEO and a small team of highly skilled staff.

We believe in strong and transparent Governance and signed up to “The Voluntary Regulation Code for Approved Housing Bodies” in 2013. We are also in the process of ensuring we comply with “The Governance Code for the Community, Voluntary and Charitable Sector in Ireland”. We very much welcome the appointment in 2014 by the Irish government of a Charities Regulatory Authority and are registered with it (registration No 20029074).

The **Board of Directors** of North & East Housing Association currently comprises:

PAT LENNON, Board Chairman

Barrister at Law, BA, H.dip Ed, B.Sc (hons) Psychology, B.Sc (Hons) Counselling & Psychotherapy. Member IACP, Ireland.

Pat is a founder member and first Secretary of North & East and the current Chair of the Association. He retired from the Health Service Executive after thirty three years as a Community Welfare Officer [CWO] and eleven years as a Superintendent CWO. Pat is a founder member and first Chair of Dun Laoghaire Money Advice and Budgeting Service [MABS]. He was also the National Chair of S/Community Welfare Section of SIPTU [2005-2011].

BARNEY O’NEILL, Association Secretary

BA BAI MSc CEng MIEI

Barney joined the Board of North & East in 2011 and is the Secretary of the Association. He obtained a Bachelors degree and a Masters degree in Engineering from Trinity College, Dublin and is a Chartered Member of Engineers Ireland. Barney has 20 years’ experience in Engineering having worked in Germany, Texas (USA) and Ireland. He was one of the Project Engineers during the construction of the original LUAS Green and Red Lines. Barney has established his own Engineering Consultancy based in Ratoath, Co Meath.

TONY GILMORE, Board Member

MA HDip Ed

Tony is a founder member of North & East and was the Chair of the Association for a number of years. Formerly a member of the ICSH Management & Development Sub-Committee, Tony has also represented the Association at the Grant Thornton Associate’s Chairs Forum. Tony works as a maths teacher in the Liberties in Dublin. Over the years he has acted as a lobbyist for educational services in the VEC sector. Tony was awarded the Irish Council for Social Housing Board Member Award in 2007.



ADRIENNE SMITH, Vice Chair

Architectural Association Dip (Grad), MA Health and Social Care.

Adrienne Smith is the National Policy & Social Care Co-ordinator for Camphill Communities in Ireland. She has extensive senior management experience in the housing, refugee, health and social care sectors. Adrienne worked extensively in the housing co-operative sector and was national lead on Tenant Services at the Housing Corporation. Her work with asylum seekers & refugee integration won national awards and she set up the National No Recourse to Public Funds Network (NRPF). She worked as a local authority Transformation Programme Director for Adult Social Care Services between 2006-09 and was subsequently National Adult Social Care Lead for a leading UK charity (2009-11). Adrienne previously worked as a Director of Housing & Community Services for a large Irish housing organisation. Adrienne is also chair of a bereavement charity.

BARRY MAGEE, Board Member

BCL, BSc, LLM, MSc, FCI Arb.

Barry is a Solicitor and the current Chairperson of the Refugee Appeals Tribunal. Previous to this he held legal roles with an involvement in conveyancing, procurement and development with Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Co. Council, the Railway Procurement Agency and the office of the Chief State Solicitors. He has recently completed a Masters in Business and Management; his final dissertation was on Governance.

ALAN RING, Board Member

Alan is a banking analyst with the National Treasury Management Agency. He is currently on secondment to the Department of Finance Shareholding Management Unit. Prior to joining NTMA, Alan held senior roles in KBC Bank Ireland and Elavon Financial Services. Alan is a Chartered Accountant having completed his training with KPMG. His areas of expertise include, banking, corporate finance and financial reporting.

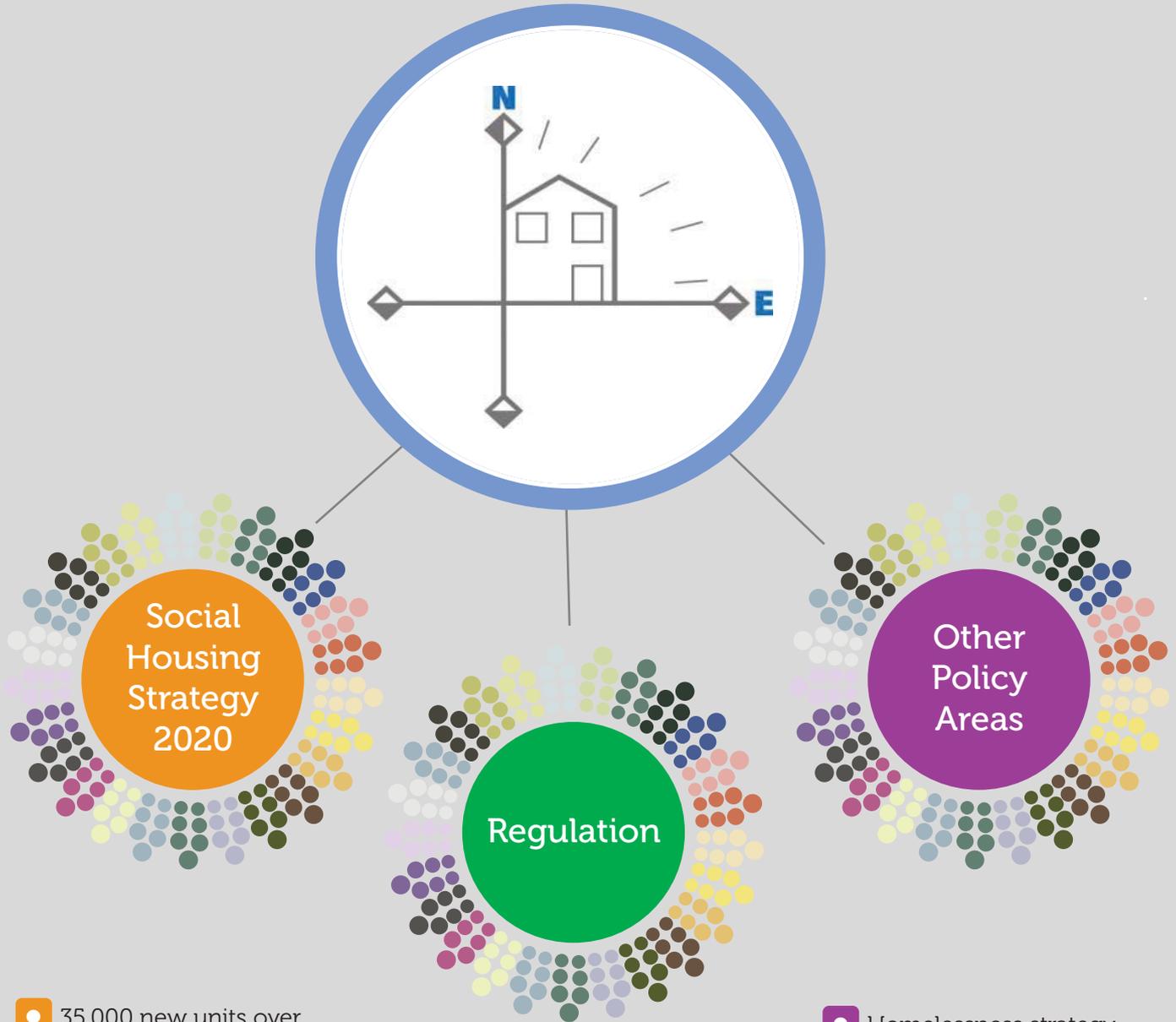


There are three Board Sub-Committees Risk, Audit & Governance, Development and Finance each of which meets quarterly and reports back to the full Board.



Policy Context

North & East operates within a multi-faceted national policy and strategy context:



- 35,000 new units over six years

- Changes to funding and regulation of approved housing bodies (AHBs)

- €1.5 billion spending announced to 2017

- Housing Agency regulation of approved housing bodies
- Charities Regulatory Authority regulation of not-for-profits
- Residential Tenancies Board

- Homelessness strategy and crisis response measures

- National Housing Strategy for people with a disability



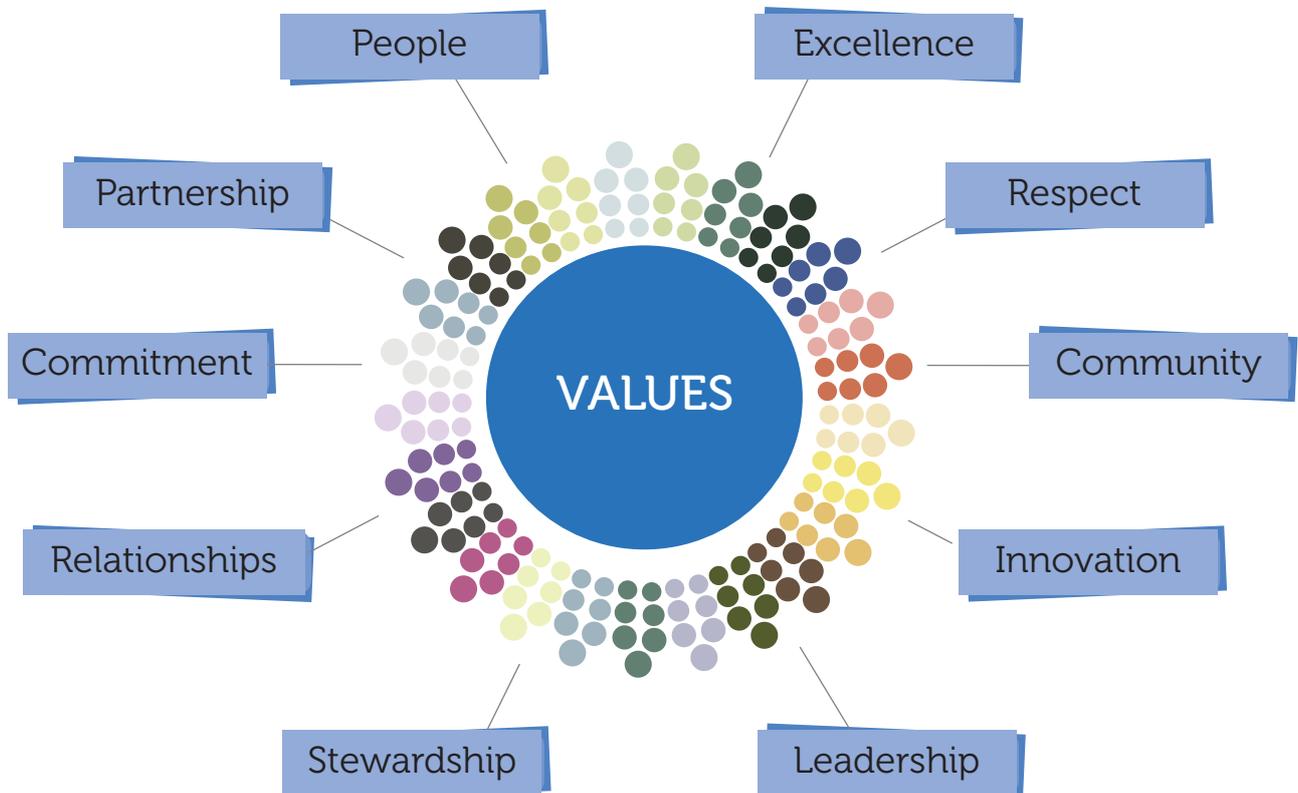
Mission, Vision and Values



To provide quality homes and support communities.



Everyone is entitled to a quality home within the community.
North & East will lead the way in providing quality homes and supporting communities.





Key Challenges for 2016-2020

Current strengths and values

We will maintain the Association's core ethos and values and preserve and develop what is good about North & East.

Capacity/resources in organisation

We will address the need for additional resources and capacity, and will put in place the appropriate number of staff to enable us to achieve our aims.

Changing funding environment

Considerable future funding will come through borrowing, either via the Housing Finance Agency or private lending.

Partnerships

The strategy will take account of potential partnerships that will enable us to better meet the needs of our tenants and stakeholders.

Risk appetite and management

We will consider and manage risk carefully, setting a risk appetite and assessing risk at all stages of development projects and in relation to financing.

Geographical location

We will continue to operate within the North and East region, increasing our presence where we currently provide housing and expanding to counties within the region where we have few or no units at present.

Availability/ opportunities for expanding housing stock

The capacity to deliver housing units in certain areas is limited by the lack of availability of housing.

Governance and compliance

We will ensure we have the capacity and resources to meet existing and future compliance requirements as well as to ensure we operate under effective and appropriate governance.

Sustainability

We will embrace sustainability throughout our organisation, from all perspectives: financial sustainability, sustainable communities, sustainable housing stock, and innovative approaches.

Community support

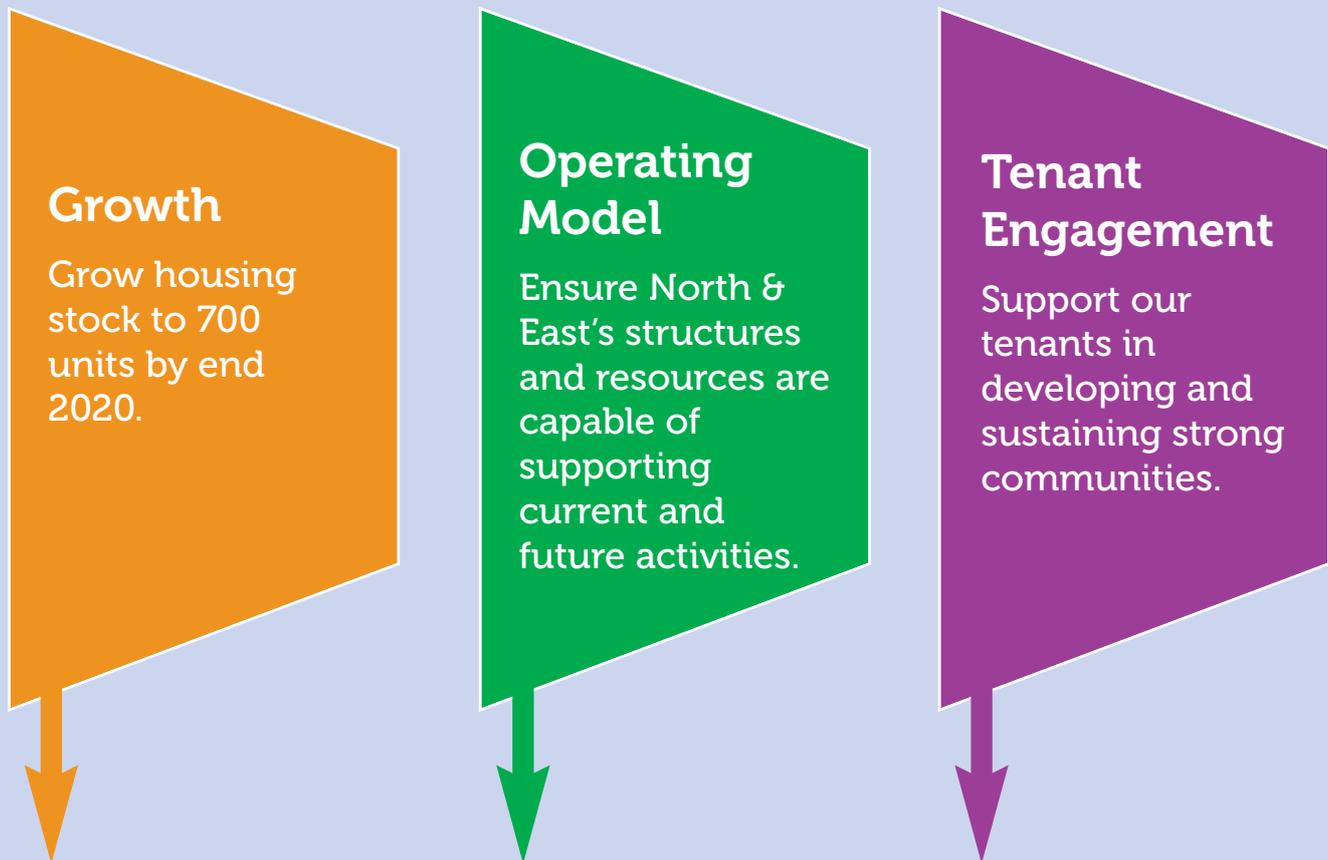
We will support the development of thriving communities for our residents, seeking innovative ways of engaging with tenants and communities.



Our Strategic Objectives

Core Strategic Objectives for North & East Housing Association

Taking into account our key challenges for the next five years, North & East has identified three principal pillars for its strategic direction, as follows:



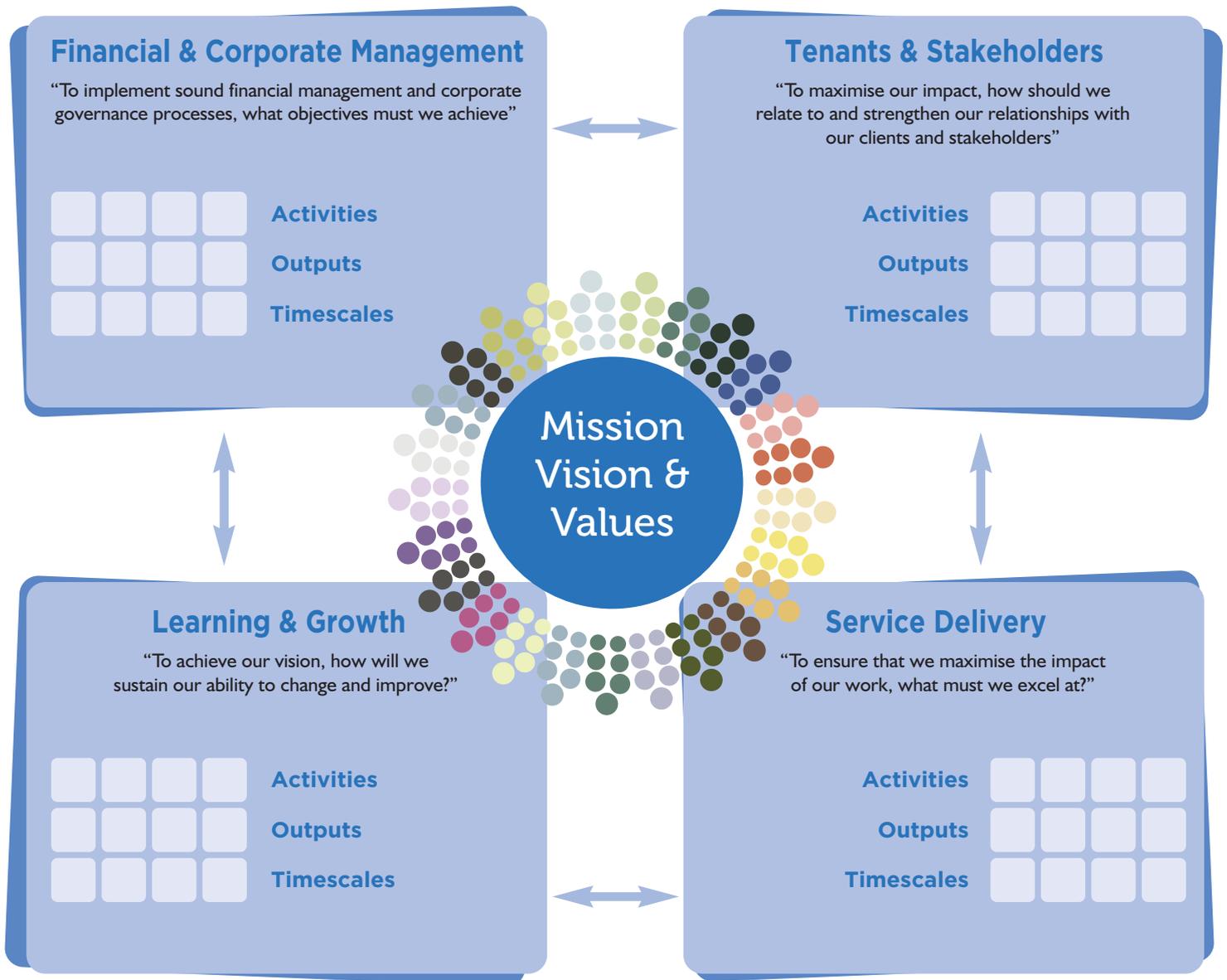
Within each of these key areas, North & East has identified the following objectives:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Grow housing stock by means of acquisitions, development, and long-term leasing <hr/> 2 Expansion within existing North & East counties and others within the North and East region <hr/> 3 Implement appropriate financial model to fund growth <hr/> 4 Take a partnership approach to expansion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Ensure organisation is compliant with regulatory requirements and has robust governance, risk management, and financial management in place <hr/> 6 Implement the right staff structure, development programme, and resources to ensure capacity to deliver <hr/> 7 Develop an asset management strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Housing services that are customer-focused, high-quality, and innovative <hr/> 9 Commitment to ensure tenant voice is heard <hr/> 10 Community enhancement and support <hr/> 11 Continuous communication and engagement with tenants |
|--|---|---|



Translating Our Strategic Objectives into Service Delivery – the Balanced Scorecard

To measure our corporate performance over the period 2016-20, North & East Housing Association will use the Balanced Scorecard system, which sets out our key objectives and timescales over four quadrants, representing the main areas of our focus as an organisation – our commitments to our tenants and stakeholders; our plans for learning and developing as an organisation; our responsibility to maximise the value of the work we undertake and our arrangements for sound financial management and good governance. Use of the scorecard provides both North & East and our external stakeholders with a clear and straightforward mechanism for measuring our performance in the areas which are of greatest strategic importance.



The Core Strategic Objectives presented earlier in this document have been grouped under themes within the four quadrants (depicted above), with a short series of targeted activities and outputs, alongside clear timescales, in order to facilitate ongoing monitoring of progress and measurement of our performance.



Core Strategic Objectives – Scorecard Breakdown

Responding to the challenges set out previously, the strategic objectives for North & East in 2016 to 2020 against each of the quadrants of the balanced scorecard are as set out below – progress on each of these items will form part of our annual report, and will be scrutinised on a regular basis by our Board:

Scorecard Quadrant	Reference to Key Objective	Objectives and Activities	Output	Timescale
Service Delivery	Growth 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source units via NAMA schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 units leased under NAMA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End 2016
	Growth 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire units in existing and neighbouring counties Undertake building development to supply units in relevant counties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire 20 units Acquire and build 180 units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End 2016 End 2020
	Operating Model 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset management strategy developed to manage North & East stock, to maximise value, income and performance of North & East assets to enable North & East to achieve its mission of providing quality homes for its tenants. Source/implement IT software to improve our technical services to enhance our housing stock and service to our tenants Continue to be innovative in construction and energy efficiency in our housing stock to ensure sustainability and to minimise environmental impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset management strategy developed and implemented Refine North & East Stock condition survey programme Rigorous technical assessment of acquisition, leased and new build units Using IT software to capture information to streamline responsive repairs service and cyclical/ planned maintenance programmes Achieving high standards and reducing energy cost for North & East tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q2 2016 Ongoing Ongoing Q2 2016 Ongoing



Lavin Park



Scorecard Quadrant	Reference to Key Objective	Objectives and Activities	Output	Timescale
Tenant Engagement	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide high quality housing services to tenants, both current and future Develop innovative service provision and engagement mechanisms for tenant services Review all tenant service policies every two years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-quality housing services delivered to 700 households by end of strategy Innovation plan for the development of new services and/or new ways to deliver existing services to tenants Implementation of plan Tenant service policy review report to Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Q2 2016 2017 onwards Every second year in strategy
	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide individual and community enhancement and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of individual community enhancement/support developed Implementation of programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End 2016 2017-2020
	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide easily accessible information to tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible, quality information to tenants Exploit potential of website and Social Media for engagement with Tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Q1 2016



Public Sector Magazine Award for McArdle Green, Moneymore, Co.Louth



Scorecard Quadrant	Reference to Key Objective	Objectives and Activities	Output	Timescale
Tenants and Stakeholders	Growth 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and develop relationships with local authorities in the relevant counties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good relationships with local authorities in all counties in which North & East will have a presence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
	Growth 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop partnership arrangements – formal and informal – to leverage North & East’s capacity to develop additional units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships and collaboration on projects to deliver growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
	Tenant Engagement 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop mechanisms to ensure tenant voice is heard and incorporated into tenant service provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for tenant participation/ representation developed Implementation of plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q2 2016 End 2017
	Tenant Engagement 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain good communication and engagement with tenants by means of housing officer engagement, printed materials, and social media Develop organisational communication plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular housing officer engagement Periodic news and updates to tenants by printed materials Social media presence developed and used as communication tool Organisational communication plan in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Q1 2016



Noel McArdle Education Bursary Award



Scorecard Quadrant	Reference to Key Objective	Objectives and Activities	Output	Timescale
Learning and Growth	Operating Model 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff development to ensure capacity to deliver on objectives and reduce turnover of staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff development plan each year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year in strategy
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review staff structure to ensure the appropriate resources and skill mix are in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual review of staff structures and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year in strategy
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture information from service provision to enhance organisational learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use IT system to capture appropriate information and disseminate learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR strategy to incorporate development programme for all staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR strategy developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q2 2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop HR policies and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of Staff Handbook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q2 2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board annual self appraisal and board training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-appraisal of board mix, skills, competences, etc Annual board training and development plan Board training and development activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year in strategy Each year in strategy Ad hoc as per plan developed annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety procedures and practices reviewed annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H&S annual review report to Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year in strategy





Scorecard Quadrant	Reference to Key Objective	Objectives and Activities	Output	Timescale
Financial and Corporate Management	Growth 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place an appropriate financial model to fund the acquisitions and construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate and sustainable financial model with long-term finance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By end 2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain Housing Finance Agency approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HFA approval received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q1 2016
Operating Model	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Agency Voluntary Code HA financial chapter Charity Regulation Residential Tenancy Board requirements The Code Of Governance for Community & Voluntary Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with regulatory requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance as per requirements of regulatory bodies
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review governance structures, including the Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance structure reviewed and if necessary revised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End 2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop annual operation plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual operational plan with detailed targets and KPIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year in strategy
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop 5-year business plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q1 2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review IT and ensure that software systems add value and assist our management of our assets and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT systems review Develop plan for appropriate software procurement and implementation Source and implement appropriate software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q1 2016 Q2 2016 Q3 2016
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update formal risk register 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated risk register for organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual basis



Our Partners





**North & East
Housing Association,
3 Kirkfield Cottages,
Clonsilla Road,
Dublin 15.**



www.northandeast.ie