



Hillcrest



Helping people live better lives

Summary of Business Plans

2024 - 2027

Established in 1967, Hillcrest Homes is one of Scotland's largest housing associations, with over 7,000 good quality homes for social rent across Dundee, Edinburgh, Angus, Perthshire, Fife and Aberdeen.



Hillcrest Futures works to improve the lives of those we support, offering care and support services covering learning disabilities, autism, older people, mental health and wellbeing, homelessness, and drug, alcohol and recovery services.



Hillcrest Enterprises offers good quality mid-market rent homes, as well as being a platform for Hillcrest's commercial ventures.



Hillcrest Maintenance offers a comprehensive, professional trades service across Dundee, Angus, Perth and Kinross, Fife, Edinburgh and Aberdeen.



Hillcrest is a large, diverse and continually evolving social organisation.

Hillcrest is one of the few Scottish Registered Social Landlords with a large and diverse group structure. It operates three trading subsidiaries that engage in various activities aligned with and supporting the Association's objectives.

This is a summary of all of the business plans from throughout Hillcrest, focussing on shared objectives and values.

For further details on each of the company's specific objectives, see their individual business plans [here](#).

Key Strategic Objectives

Each of our companies have their own specific objectives, but the key strategic objectives that run through the entire organisation are:

- Provide good quality, well maintained housing at affordable rents
- Contribute to building sustainable communities
- Provide quality, creative, responsive care and support services
- Contribute to wider social, economic and environmental activities
- Ensure resources, skills and structure to meet objectives

Our Key Values



Inclusion



Respect



Excellence



Innovation



Making an Impact on the People We Support

To help people live better lives, the four companies within Hillcrest are collaboratively working towards shared strategic objectives for 2024-27. All of which are centred around our common values.

These objectives focus on five key areas:

- 1 Development
- 2 Finances/Funding
- 3 Growth Ambitions
- 4 Net Zero/Sustainability
- 5 People

1 Development

Throughout Hillcrest's history, Homes has been a developing organisation and the ambitions are to continue with this into the future. However, given the current operating climate, there are several key areas that we, mainly Homes and Enterprises, need to consider.

It is an extremely challenging environment for a developing organisation for reasons including labour and material shortages, price increases, delayed handovers and overall performance of contracts.

Three councils have already declared that they are facing a housing emergency and more look set to follow. We need to prioritise where and what number of new housing we can realistically support in the short and longer term projects.

To address this, we will review our development strategy, including mid-market rent properties and set out key targets and priorities in this area.

2 Finances/Funding

We have historically always been a high performing organisation underpinned by financial strength and resilience. Over the past year, the finances of our organisation have been put under considerable strain due to high inflation, late handovers, increasing interest rates and the lower than inflation rent increase.

Through a careful review of the Treasury Management in place and a move towards replacing variable borrowing with fixed borrowing, we have steadied the finances and put the organisation back on track. Further work is being undertaken on streamlining and creating efficiencies in processes to consolidate these improvements and build in financial headroom.

3 Growth Ambitions

Several strategies will be developed including a Corporate Strategy, Organisational Development Strategy and Digital Strategy. All of these strategies are interconnected and will shape our evolution and growth. They will guide our direction in key areas, such as adopting a "digital first" approach, introducing digital care management systems, supporting the development of our staff to deliver excellent customer service, and clarifying roles in achieving our vision of "helping people live better lives".

Given the current challenges faced by the care sector, it is crucial for Futures to engage meaningfully with their stakeholders and collaborate effectively with other internal teams across Hillcrest. To deliver care services to a broader demographic and across a wider geographical area, we will also establish a network to identify potential partnership and collaboration opportunities.

Over the next three years, we will increase our housing stock by around 11%, which in turn increases our property maintenance requirements. To manage this growth, we will ensure we have sufficient resources for this work and explore opportunities to expand the range of services provided by our Maintenance team, aiming to reduce the amount of work outsourced to external contractors.



4 Net Zero/Sustainability

We produced our first Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) report in 2023, which will be built upon and the actions identified will be progressed. We have identified a social rent project in Arbroath to retrofit 23 houses which will be managed internally to allow us to learn lessons around works, engagement with tenants and any issues faced.

The Scottish Government has advised that the Scottish Housing Net Zero Standard will be introduced, at the earliest in 2025. An action plan to map out our journey to Net Zero is being developed and we will identify and achieve a sustainability accreditation to align with this. We need to consider how net zero might be funded, what the priorities are and how ambitious to be.

5 People

Our employees are our greatest asset, and supporting and developing our teams is a key focus. Recruitment remains a key area for the entire organisation, but particularly Futures as it is an ongoing challenge for the wider health and social care sector. Working closely with HR, Futures will look to streamline and speed up the recruitment process to get staff in post quicker.

We will explore various areas focusing on recruitment, recognition, engagement, empowerment and development to ensure we have a stable and highly qualified workforce. Areas to be looked at include a review of benefits, terms and conditions, investment in staff wellbeing initiatives, improved communications, modern apprenticeships in care and the implementation of a new HR and Payroll system.

As an accredited Investors in People Gold organisation, we will continue to monitor our activities against the action plans developed for our accreditation. We will also maintain our commitment to delivering apprenticeship training programs, providing school placements, and offering opportunities to young people whenever possible.

We have over 30 Governing Body Members who are responsible for setting and overseeing the strategic direction of the organisation. To ensure they have the relevant knowledge and expertise to make effective decisions, we will review our induction, training and appraisal processes and make improvements where required.

Get in touch



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