

Cardiff Community Housing Association

**Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies
Registered number: 21667R**

Welsh Government registration number: L035

**Financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2021**

Cardiff Community Housing Association

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Cardiff Community Housing Association

Board of Management, Senior Executives and Advisors

Board of Management

Voting members:

Ms J Beauchamp

Ms E Britton

Ms V Nawathe

Mr M Owen (Chair)

Mr S Rooks (Vice Chair from 6/5/2021)

Ms T Stirling (resigned 31/12/2020)

Ms M Wade

Mr A Singh (from 1/11/2020)

Ms L Hansraj Bhardwaj (from 1/11/2020)

Ms A Yusuf (from 1/11/2020)

Mr F Maghiya (from 1/11/2020)

Independent member of the Audit Committee (Non-voting)

Mr N Harries

Senior Executives

Ms H Selway Chief Executive

Mr B Pickett Deputy Chief Executive and Company Secretary

Mr J Jones Corporate Director - Assets and Property

Ms E Evans Corporate Director - People and Communities

Registered Office

Tolven Court

Dowlais Road

Cardiff

CF24 5LQ

External Auditors

Bevan Buckland LLP

Langdon House

Langdon Road

Swansea

SA1 8QY

Internal Auditors

Mazars LLP

First Floor, Two Chamberlain Square

Birmingham

B3 3AX

Principal Bankers

Barclays Bank plc,

One Snowhill

Snow Hill Queensway

Birmingham

B4 6GN

Cardiff Community Housing Association

Strategic report

I have spent my working life working in the social housing sector and have never experienced the challenges which the last year has brought us. I know the pandemic has caused additional hardship for many of our tenants, and we delivered additional support for those hardest hit. Our own operations were severely affected. Fortunately, we had invested in our IT systems in early 2020, which allowed us to move our staff to working from home as we moved into lockdown in March 2020. We worked for the whole year from home, with a skeleton staff operating from our head office. During lock-down we adjusted our support to tenants. This included making contact with all tenants over 70 and providing additional funding for food to those in particular hardship, caused by people having to spend more time at home, including children not being able to attend school and providing additional cleaning in communal areas.

During the year we continued to evolve and adapt our active tenant engagement at a time when we could not meet in person. The resident and governance panel met eight times during the year and worked on 22 areas of work, ranging from policy review to helping with the design of new developments. This panel has access to directly report in and make recommendations to our board. Our scrutiny panel also remained active through the year completing deep dive reviews on aspects of our service delivery. I wish to mark my personal thanks to each and every tenant who spent time whether it is through these formal structures or otherwise helping us improve our services.

When I became chair in mid-2019, I was hearing a clear message of the need to improve our repairs service, as such, we worked in the later part of 2019-20 to form our in-house maintenance team. This became operational in April 2020, but its activity was severely affected by the various lockdowns. As restrictions have eased and will continue to ease, we are actively working to clear our back log of repairs and give tenants the service they deserve and one which we can be proud of. Our planned maintenance programme has also re-started where we are delivering new kitchens and bathrooms and improving other aspects of your homes.

Once we were allowed, we recommenced letting of vacant property. As a key partner with the local authority most of our lets were to those on the homeless register. Not just with our current stock but our new build development programme, whilst has been slightly delayed, provides a positive impact on the housing crisis in Cardiff. During the year we completed 36 new affordable homes with a further 26 homes completed before the summer of 2021.

Our support teams continued specialist support throughout the pandemic through various virtual and social media platforms and telephone advice. As you would imagine our money advice service was incredibly busy, being called upon as many tenants faced additional financial hardship as the financial realities of the pandemic took hold. Our advice team supported over 500 families covering benefit advice, helping families switch utility providers and helping tenants manage rent arrears.

Cardiff Community Housing Association

2020 saw the introduction of real time satisfaction being measured across critical service areas. This data allows us to review and make changes to the way we manage services far quicker than the former periodic survey. 83 per cent of survey responses said they were satisfied with the services received. I want to see that figure increase as we can open up more services as we return to a more normal operating environment.

During the year we managed to maintain our vital work with our tenants and the wider community. Our lottery funded project, Flourish continued to work with communities to help develop initiatives, which are important to them. This included the Tremorfa pantry which provided vital food parcels to 150 families weekly. Our employment programmes such as Jets and Reach continued albeit virtually, booking over 120 courses for participants and helping over 20 people into work.

As this is the foreword to our accounts it would be remiss not to recognise the new debt funding we managed to achieve towards the end of the year. This new £37 million long term debt funding has helped us refinance some uneconomic loans we already had in place and also providing finance for our development programme for the next few years. Our deal with the London bond market through bLEND, a specialist funding vehicle for housing associations, was one of the lowest cost debt deals ever achieved by a Welsh housing association, with an effective fixed rate interest rate of less than two per cent for 33 years. This provides a solid foundation for our business plan and manages the risk of future interest rises. Achieving this is made more remarkable as we had only

regained the top governance rating from the Welsh Government regulator less than nine months previously.

Our access to the low-cost bLEND funding reflects our financial strength and credit worthiness. We generated a healthy surplus from normal operating activities. However, the surplus is affected by a non – cash adjustment in respect of the defined benefit pension scheme actuarial valuation, resulting in an overall loss being recorded for the year.

In a year, which has been so difficult for many, I believe we have made important positive strides forward. A fuller picture where we have done well and also where we need to do better is provided in our annual report. As chair, I will ensure we continue our improvement journey in order to deliver first class services, which our tenants and communities deserve.



Michael Owen
Board Chair
July 2021

Cardiff Community Housing Association

Annual Governance Statement / Statement of Internal Control

Corporate Strategy

The Board set out its strategic direction of the organisation during 2020/21. During this process it amended its Corporate Plan objectives. These objectives have been amended as outlined below:

- A Caring Landlord – formally An Excellent Landlord
- A Community Champion and Anchor Organisation
- An Employer of Choice
- An Exceptional Developer of Affordable Homes – formally A Development Partner of Choice; and
- An Organisation that 'Sets the Standard in Governance' – formally Setting the Standard in Governance

CCHA is a community-based housing association whose main business aims are to provide a wide range of high-quality homes and services, supporting and regenerating the communities in Cardiff. CCHA will achieve this by:

- Understanding the varied needs of the communities we serve and will be an advocate for their well-being and future;
- Work in partnership to develop and sustain prosperous and resilient communities of opportunity;
- Provide great affordable homes and excellent services;
- Be an exemplar in sound governance;
- Work in partnership to develop new homes that contribute

positively to our neighbourhoods and meet the diverse housing needs of the future; and

- Recruiting and retaining a community focussed, diverse workforce who enjoy working as part of the team and act as ambassadors for the organisation.

We have continued to innovate over a challenging 2020/21 with the emergence of the global Covid-19 pandemic. We have maintained services whilst managing planned and emerging risks effectively. Over the last 12 months we have continued to work within our Risk Management Framework that is overseen by the Corporate Leadership Team and the Board. The pandemic required us to adapt quickly, constantly looking at our operations to ensure that staff, tenant, and community safety were highest on the agenda. As we adapted, we achieved several innovative projects. We continue to ensure that we evidence any returns on our core business operations. Innovation continued to focus on the delivery of our core business across a 'do it better and more cost effective' mantra.

Our Board of Management

During 2020/21 CCHA continued its 'standard/standard' (highest) regulatory grading. The Welsh Government suspended formal regulatory reporting during the period with an interim approach. CCHA was assessed as low risk with this interim approach with its planned assessment in 2021/22. We have continued to maintain governance, service delivery and financial viability to the highest levels. During the pandemic we maintained close communications with the regulator as part of their monthly reporting requirements. No concerns have been raised and we continue to