

Corporate Strategy & Business Plan 2016-21

London Housing Trust

May 2016

Contents

London Housing Trust	1
1 CHAIR’S STATEMENT	1
2 MISSION STATEMENT	2
3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
4 VISION AND VALUES	3
5 CURRENT POSITION	4
5 MARKET ENVIRONMENT.....	10
6 FUTURE POSITION	12
7 STRATEGY	13
7.1 Achieve continuous improvement in Service User satisfaction (Objective 1).....	14
7.2 Achieve sustained quality improvement through partnership working (Objective 2)	19
7.3 Growth through diversification in response to unmet needs (Objective 3).....	20
8 RESOURCES	20
9 FINANCIAL BUDGET.....	22
10 FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS.....	23
11 FORWARD PLAN 2016 – 2021	25

1 CHAIR'S STATEMENT

Welcome to London Housing Trust's (LHT) Corporate Strategy and Business Plan 2016-21. This Plan has been developed to outline the trust's current market position and set out its ambitious objectives and direction for the future. This is the Second Corporate Strategy and Business Plan that the trust has produced during my period as Chair of the trust. During this time, we have made significant progress in terms of achieving strong governance, continued growth, and excellent service delivery.

We are of course, operating within an environment of considerable challenge and change, and it is important that we maintain the pace of improvement to ensure that our customers continue to receive first class housing services. Significant drivers of change are the recent Chancellors announcement that the Government will cap the amount of rent that housing benefit (HB) will cover in the 'social sector' to the relevant LHA.

It was announced at the July Budget that the LHA will be frozen for four years from 2016-17.

The documents say this will apply to tenancies signed after 1 April 2016, with housing benefit entitlement changing from 1 April 2018 onwards.

It follows the 1 per cent annual cut to social and affordable housing rents over four years from April 2016, announced in the July 2015 Budget.

There were also announcements in relation to right to buy but as we have no plans to purchase property this would have no impact on our business model.

The introduction of Universal Credits (UC), continues to provide challenges for our clients to obtain UC and HB. The Board has worked with Service Users and volunteers to develop a strategic direction for the Trust that places our Service Users and the diverse communities in which they live at the heart of everything we do.

We will focus our priorities moving forward on improving the quality of our services, and on achieving continued and sustainable growth. We will achieve our vision through applying our commitments to continuous improvement and adopting a flexible and innovative approach to identifying opportunities for growth. We will also develop and enhance our relationships with our partners to maximise the impact we can have in the neighbourhoods in which we operate. These are exciting times, and the Board will ensure that it supports its volunteers to deliver the objectives set out in this plan to the upmost standards of quality and excellence to bring about real improvements for Service Users and communities that we serve.

Miss Nazmun Nahar
Chair

2 MISSION STATEMENT

LHT's mission is to promote social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing homelessness, social exclusion, relieving the needs of those who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society by the provision of social housing to those in housing need with suitable care, support or supervision.

3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document represents LHT's Corporate Strategy and Business Plan 2016-21. It is a five year business plan that sets out our corporate priorities and objectives. It is supplemented by a forward plan which provides a greater level of detail about the delivery targets and timescales that will be implemented over the forthcoming year.

The Business Plan sets out our vision to be a growing housing trust (as defined in the Housing Associations Act 1985) that delivers a quality services to a diverse range of Service Users with support needs. This is to be achieved in accordance with a set of core values, and outline the minimum standards that should characterise all of our interactions with its customers, partners and stakeholders. These values are the culture that we wish all people within the Trust to foster.

Following an outline of our current position, the Business Plan outlines the future position that we intend to achieve. This reflects a dual commitment to improving quality and continued growth. Through a focus on quality, we will bring about improvements in customer satisfaction levels for both the services it delivers and the standard of its housing stock. This will be coupled with a challenging programme of sustained growth through diverse means.

In devising its strategy, LHT have undertaken a market analysis. Reference has been made to the wider housing sector which is undergoing a period of considerable and radical change. This creates both risks and opportunities for LHT, reflected in its SWOT analysis. This Business Plan sets out how LHT will take advantage of the opportunities that exist whilst mitigating the risks.

The next section of the Business Plan outlines our three Objectives. These are to:

- Achieve continuous improvement in client satisfaction
- Achieve sustained growth through partnership working
- Achieve growth through diversification in response to unmet needs

Objective 1 - Achieve continuous improvement in client satisfaction

The Business Plan sets out our commitments to improving customer satisfaction through a concerted focus on improving quality to bring about service excellence. It is through this approach that LHT is also able to strengthen its commitments to continued growth and

expansion. The approach places the Clients at the heart of everything LHT does. It highlights the need to implement our commitment to Client involvement, and to obtain regular feedback on satisfaction with services delivered against agreed standards so that they may shape services and bring about continuous improvement. It also highlights the need for LHT to proactively work to meet the diverse needs of the communities it serves, and it also reinforces the need for LHT to raise and maintain a high profile for the organisation in order to reinforce the positive LHT brand.

Objective 2 - Achieve sustained improvement in quality through partnership working

LHT from time to time reflects on our commitments to satisfy the needs of our clients and stakeholders, both in terms of strengthening our relationship with private landlords and closer working with referral agencies and neighbourhoods. We always focus on quality and service orientated approaches and delivery of these objectives working alongside the HCA requirements, the outcomes of QAF and the CQC.

Objective 3 - is to achieve growth through diversification in response to unmet needs

Whilst acknowledging that further research and analysis of the markets are required, it has identified a number of key areas for potential growth. This includes more supported housing, housing with 24 hour support and housing for people that may require domiciliary care services.

The Business Plan also provides a section on the resources that LHT will require in delivering its programme of challenge and change. A detailed budget for 2016/21 has been produced to support the plan, and a forward plan has been developed to outline the specific actions that are required for LHT to deliver on its objectives during 2016 /21.

4 VISION AND VALUES

Vision

LHT's Vision is to be a growing and financially vibrant housing trust that delivers high quality services to a diverse range of clients who have experienced homelessness.

Values

LHT respects the following values in the pursuance of their common purpose to provide sustainable housing and quality services:

- Listen to, and communicate with clients, volunteers and external stakeholders in a timely, accurate, understandable and respectful manner.
- Understand the value of effective and efficient business processes to bring about positive results.
- Foster an environment that promotes personal and corporate innovation, sharing and maximisation of resources together with a desire for team work.
- Be open to change and flexible in attitude.
- Acknowledge that respect, integrity, trust and fairness are fundamental to personal, customer and interagency relationships.
- Value a culture where everyone is involved, accountable, respected and appreciated.

- Aim to perform at the highest level of competence and take pride in accomplishment.
- To operate at the highest standards of governance and probity

5 CURRENT POSITION

LHT was established in October 2010. The organisation has concentrated on the development and management of accommodation for homeless people in London.

LHT now leases and manages 47 properties in 7 London Boroughs. They are all temporary social housing (TSH) providing specialist supported housing and no public subsidy has been received, whether by way of a grant or by free land.

All our leases are under 5 years and so are exempt from being considered the providers stock.

Under the relevant sections of the Rent Standard Guidance (Exemptions from social rent and the Rent Standard) we understand that these properties are exempt from the Rent Standard. We actively engage with the local councils when starting projects to determine the correct level of service charges. Rent increases each year are typically match the market rent demanded by our landlords. We have little scope to limit this too much below what the market determines. Service charge increases are typically referenced to any changes in services that the projects demand.

We provide a number of floating support and 24hr supported accommodation. All projects have an emergency rapid response phone number and can receive help within the hour.

The Trust has close working relationships with its referral agencies, partners and councils to deliver an excellent service to the clients

Purpose

Our reason for being is to provide high quality and affordable housing whilst contributing to the broader generation of sustainable communities. LHT does this through engaging with its clients and working in partnership with key stakeholders to create neighbourhoods where people want to live today and in the future

Effective Controls and Procedures

Trustees meet every three months to discuss the position of the trust and to make certain that effective controls and procedures are in place to ensure security of assets and the proper use of public funds. The Client Involvement Committee (Tenant Panel) meets frequently and then report to the board.

Monthly meetings are held at the project with clients and their support staff. At these meetings we make sure that the support plan is sufficient for its purpose and the support needs of our clients are being met.

In addition to this clients are contacted at least once every 2 weeks and have an up to date risk, needs and support assessment and a support plan updated at least every 6 months. Our current online support package notifies our staff when the plan is 3 months old so is highlighted for review.

Services

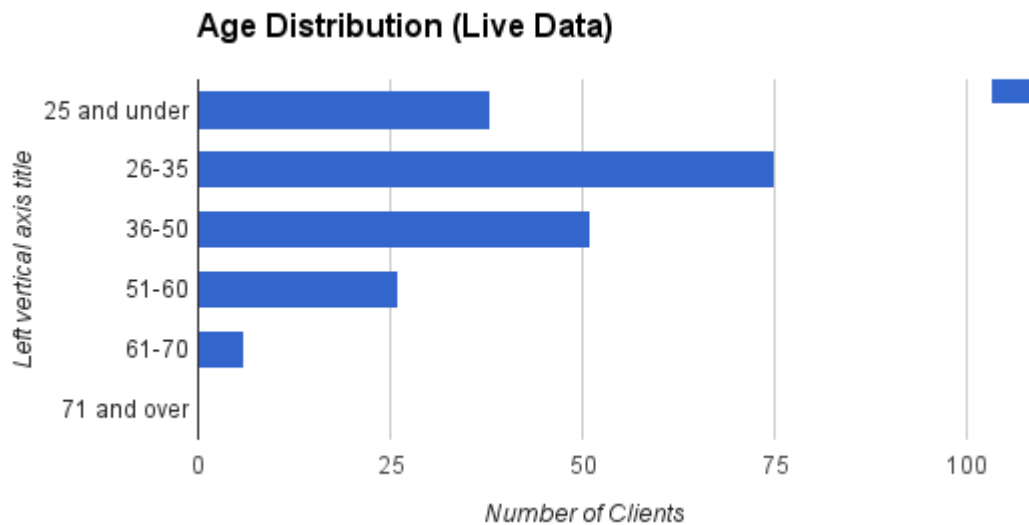
The core housing services that LHT delivers are summarised as follows:

- Housing management services, including: Hostel management; Lettings- and Service User Involvement.
- Property management, including planned and responsive repairs.

Service Users

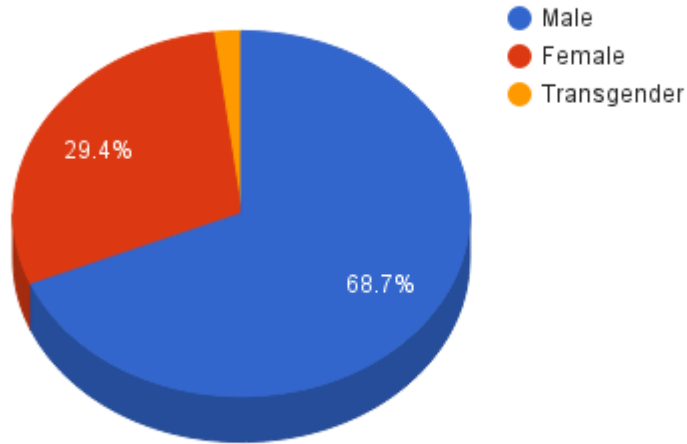
Information from our current database and our most recent customer service survey tool indicates the following key statistic's in relation to our existing client profile:

Current Age distribution: Data Captured 8 June 2016



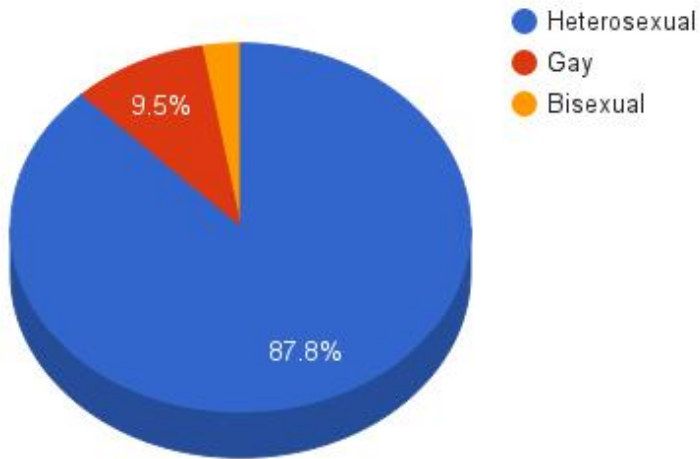
Client Gender Profile Capture 8 Jun 2016

Clients Gender Profile



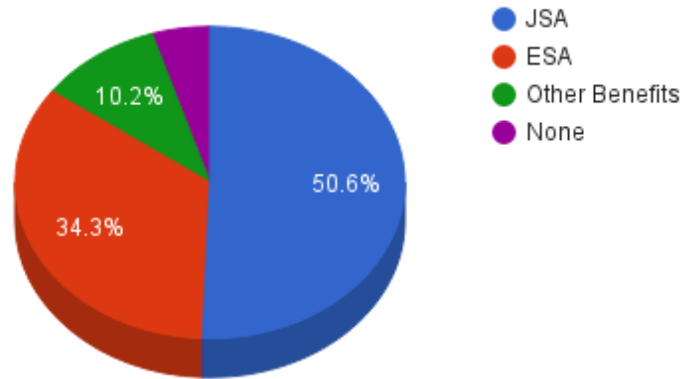
Client Sexuality Profile Capture 8 Jun 2016

Sexuality



Benefits that our clients Claim 8 Jun 2016

LHT Clients Claim these Benefits



Our current client satisfaction rating

We get regular feedback from our Wellbeing Team. We asked our client how they rate the quality of our Support and Maintenance team.

Of those that responded:

84% of our clients were satisfied with the support offered (KPI 90%).

78% of our clients were satisfied with the quality of the maintenance (KPI 90%).

Numbers that gave a grade of	Support	Maintenance
5	57	46
4	39	29
3	23	30
2	10	12
1	6	6
0	7	12

These results are both below our KPI of 90%

We are currently reviewing our internal maintenance reporting controls and have engaged the client involvement team to survey clients independently and make a report to the board.

Responding to the needs of Service Users

LHT shall demonstrate how we respond to Service Users’ needs in the way we provide services and communicate with Service Users. In achieving these specific expectations, we:

- We shall ensure that all Service Users are treated with fairness and respect.

- We demonstrate that we understand the different needs of our Service Users, including in relation to the seven equality strands and Service Users with additional support needs

Stakeholders

LHT is unable to achieve its vision through working alone. Some key stakeholders in whom LHT must engage with include the following:

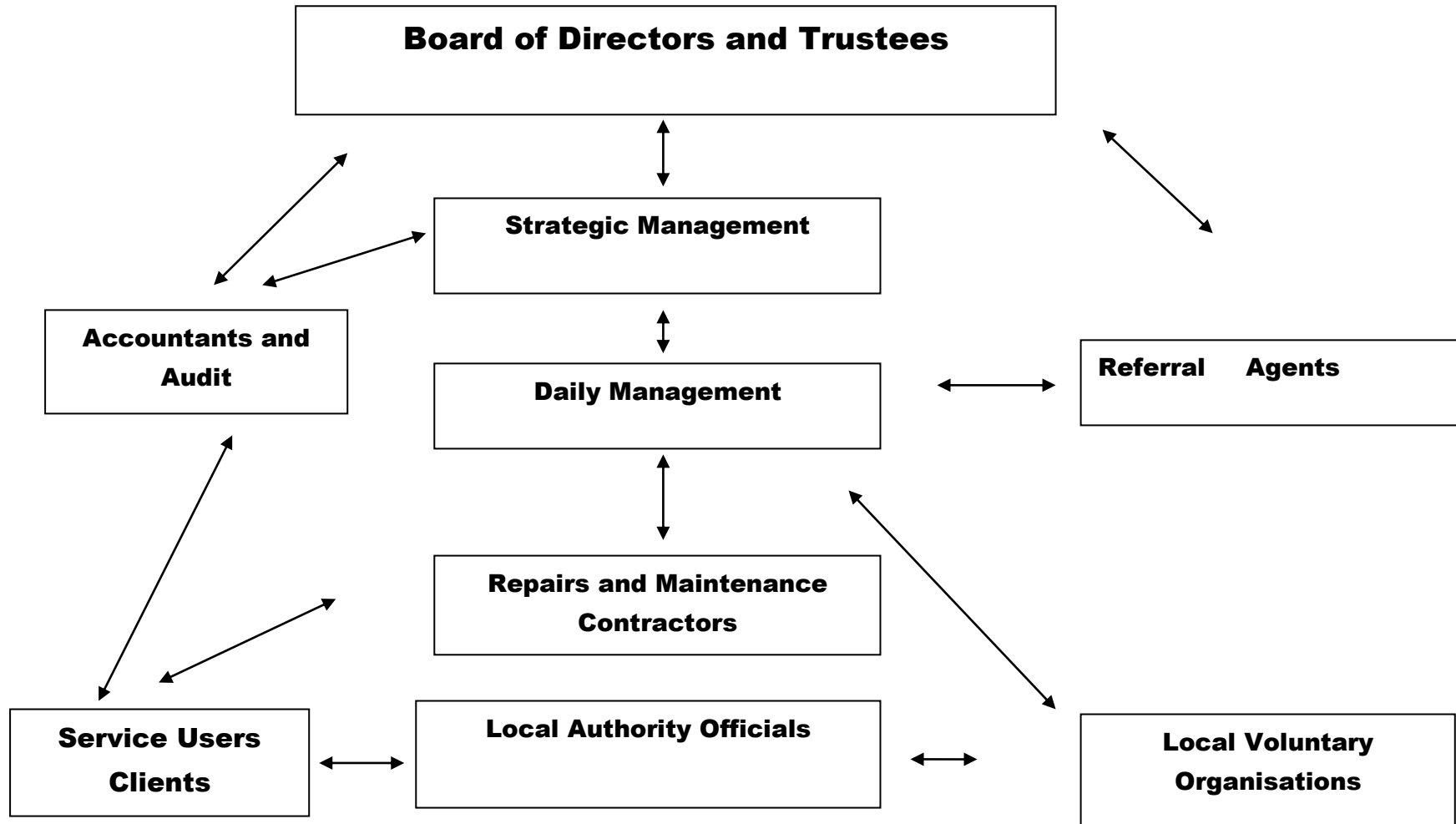
- **Clients** – LHT engages with its Service Users as its core customers to ensure that they shape and tailor our services in line with their aspirations.
- **Local Authorities** – LHT works with local authorities to assist them to meet their housing and neighbourhood agendas. They are also key for achieving planning and community engagement.
- **Regulators** – The Homes and Communities Agency are responsible for ensuring that LHT complies with its legislative, regulatory and best practice requirements.
- **Contractors** – High quality contractors are essential for LHT to be able to deliver and maintain high service standards that represent value for money.

Regulatory Position

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) through the revised framework published in 2015 regulates Registered Providers.

We have taken on board this document and has used the 'Regulating the Standards' document (June 2015) to develop this business plan with a view to compliance with the Governance and Financial Viability standard (April 2015).

LHT considers itself to be in full compliance with the standards detailed in 'Regulating the Standards.' We assess our compliance on an annual basis.



5 MARKET ENVIRONMENT

Market Position

Regional Social Housing Market

LHT has no regional basis, and currently provides social housing within 7 London boroughs.

We have experienced soaring housing markets since our formation in 2010 and rents have increased accordingly. It becomes increasingly difficult to obtain lease property for our homeless clients.

LHT is a small sized provider of social housing, which manages 47 properties on short lease from a number of landlords. We aim to deliver good outcomes through using our initiatives by entering into long term leasing and forming close collaborations with referring agencies and other small organisations in the area.

External Influences

The planned change to the Exempt accommodation rules planned in 2018 will have a significant impact on our business model. As such we do not plan to take any lease over 2 years until the position has been clarified. The NHF and homeless link are in discussions with the government and we will re-evaluate our position in due time.

LHT will review and respond to these external drivers for change on an ongoing basis so that it may continually revise its business plan in relation to change. It is possible to identify four common themes:

- Promotion of increased efficiency and improved value for money in services
- increased community empowerment
- The requirement to ensure Service User involvement and accountability
- Introduction of competition in the marketplace, particularly from the private sector

Rent Restructuring

Our rents are determined by our lease landlords. All our rents are approved by the appropriate local authority and we work hard with our landlords to achieve the best rates possible. We believe that we are exempt from the Rent Standard but will discuss with our landlords this standard as the regulator permits.

However, the implications of rent restructuring upon LHT would be that it would be unable to raise its rents to provide additional service offerings. LHT would then operate within a limited core service income that is set by a pre-defined formula that is linked to inflation.

SWOT Analysis

To better understand our position within the social housing marketplace, a SWOT (Strengths; Weaknesses; Opportunities; Threats) analysis has been undertaken to enable the organisation to focus upon its key priorities. This is reproduced below as follows:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good relationships with clients, keeping them informed and engaged • Strengthening liquidity & Balance Sheet • Experienced trustee and voluntary team • Reputation with Referral Agencies • Flexible approach to service delivery • Relatively strong performance indicators • Registration with the HCA • SITRA Grade B for our QAF • Registration with the CQC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Stock • Rapid growth has proved a challenge • HR and staff recruitment • Competition with larger more established organisations • Limitation of stock • Lack of 3 monthly financial reporting • SAGE Finance Package is new to LHT • Maintenance Management • Quality of Housing Stock
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist supported housing • Participation in regeneration initiatives • Possible joint working with other partner organisations • Working with NHS • Further Partnership working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Relations PR is limited • Pressures from rationalisation agenda • Changes in legislation / regulation and impact of compliance and/or implementation • High expectations from clients • Linking Rents to LHA rates

Strengths and Weaknesses

In pursuing its growth objectives, some key strength's that LHT will market to third parties include the following:

- Successful track record and reliability of delivery.
- Financially stable with ability to draw down finance for future development activity.
- Ability to subsequently manage developed schemes well reflected in its strong performance indicators and improving levels of client satisfaction.
- Ability to work with local communities to gain support for development proposals.

In pursuing a programme of consolidation and improvement, LHT will ameliorate some of its identified weaknesses. This will include the following:

- Staff training and client involvement to improve our integrated client experience
- Through continued growth, the burden of overheads will be reduced and benefits will be realised in overall profitability of LHT to generate surpluses for reinvestment in existing stock.

Risk Management

LHT has developed a robust approach to risk management. Our risk management procedures ensure that there are sufficient controls in place to mitigate the effects of adverse risks, but also ensuring that we put in place systems that minimise the likelihood for opportunities to be missed.

LHT reviews its risk management processes against latest good practice and our work is ongoing to further links between the risk register and the risk management. This is embed in our responsibility for managing risk within LHT.

An annual critical review of our risk map is considered to be part of LHT's annual business planning process.

6 FUTURE POSITION

Over the period 2016-21, LHT will embark upon a programme of challenge and change which will bring about considerable progress for the benefit of its existing and future Service Users and the wider communities in which it operates.

Context

LHT is aware of the wider competitive market in which it operates. This framework provides the context within which LHT measures itself against similar organisations in order to ensure it can compete effectively and maintain competitive advantage.

LHT will maintain a suite of performance indicators, including all those that are reported upon externally in addition to management indicators that assist in monitoring the standard and quality of our services.

The social housing sector is subject to extensive regulation and monitoring. This produces a broad range of performance information that assists LHT to compare its services against similar organisations operating in the sector.

In particular, reference is made to the HCA's suite of performance indicators, against which LHT aspires to achieve top quartile performance. We want to focus on the Clients' empowerment and the ability for client to interview their support worker and landlord. It is essential therefore that LHT adopts a strong focus on service quality and continuous improvement within this Plan.

Service Quality

Over the period of this plan, LHT will:

- Provide high quality services which will be evidenced by satisfaction levels in excess of 90%.
- Provide high standards of accommodation. Satisfaction levels with the product will be in excess of 90% and full decent homes compliance will be achieved and maintained.
- Review and develop a revised programme of asset management, in consultation with its users, and this programme will be widely publicised and fully resourced.
- Provide volunteers with clear guidance through a full up to date policy and procedural framework and support this with training to assist them to deliver the quality of services that LHT aspires to deliver.

Growth

LHT must continue to consolidate its service quality to ensure that the client outcomes and the outcomes of the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) are met. This growth is reliant upon the continuing development of strong partnerships and the exploitation of opportunities both with and without grant funding.

LHT is currently rated by SITRA as delivering the QAF to a B standard. LHT is setting a target to achieve an A Grade by 2017. LHT is maintaining a sustained focus on improved client involvement to deliver quality and excellence. This will enable our clients to achieve their goals and move on into independent accommodation.

7 STRATEGY

Corporate Objectives

Following an analysis of key factors influencing LHT, we have developed a set of three corporate objectives which will drive the business forward.

The objectives are as follows:

- Achieve continuous improvement in Client satisfaction
- Achieve sustained growth through partnership working
- Achieve quality of our housing stock through working with our landlords

Overall Strategy

LHT deliver the highest quality services in an efficient and effective way, and in line with its clients' expectations in order to bring about year on year improvements in satisfaction levels. It will achieve this through implementing the actions set out in this plan.

Our strategy for delivering high quality services is to:

- empower its Clients to exercise influence over the services they receive
- obtain regular feedback on the standards of service that they expect, and use this to identify opportunities for improvement
- retain existing customer base and be recognised as a landlord of choice

Regard is given to the relevant and current regulatory standards set down by the HCA. LHT achieves this through annual re-evaluation.

Through a concerted focus on raising standards and improving the quality of its services, LHT also strengthen its position within the social housing marketplace. This assists the organisation to showcase LHT products and achieve sustained growth by strengthening the quality of offer that LHT is able to submit as part of any competitive bidding processes in which it partakes, both for services and development opportunities

Corporate Communications

Whilst delivering service excellence is the objective, LHT recognises that this must be reinforced by a continuous focus on showcasing its achievements to a range of key audiences in order to strengthen the profile and reputation of the organisation.

A framework and strategy for communications has been developed, and progress against this will be reported to the Board on a quarterly basis to highlight the exposure that LHT is able to receive.

This approach will be enhanced through the facilitation of a series of workshops, outlining to officers how to identify 'newsworthy' items and exploit the media to our advantage.

7.1 Achieve continuous improvement in Service User satisfaction (Objective 1)

Customer Satisfaction

LHT will undertake:

- a formal STATUS survey at least every year
- an interim survey for all major service areas conducted monthly
- feedback from the Client Involvement Committee

This information is used as a baseline for on-going monitoring of service quality and enable management to ensure continuous improvements and raise overall customer satisfaction levels.

Qualitative monitoring is undertaken across a broad range of customer focussed services and used by management to drive up service improvements.

Service Standards

LHT will:

- Develop in consultation with its Clients a revised set of service standards across all areas of its activities. These will be widely publicised and set the levels of service that our customers can expect.
- Following the move to a wide range of contractors for the delivery of its responsive repairs services, implement the findings of the Property Services review, undertaken with external consultancy support. Performance and satisfaction levels are monitored closely over the course of this plan to drive up the standards of service delivered.

Asset Management

The Trust will:

- Maintain our Decent Homes compliance, and maintain these standards thereafter
- Establish a dedicated Asset Management Team, to update and subsequently maintain an up to date stock condition database to inform management decision making and the formulation of an adequately resourced, focussed and publicised planned improvement programmes
- Management strategy and an assessment of stock viability

Performance and Targets and ISO 9001

LHT continues to operate its current performance reporting mechanisms in the Balanced Business Scorecard format as it facilitates many of the principles within ISO 9001. This incorporates an increasing range of qualitative and Clients based indicators.

Targets are reviewed annually, and set with reference to past performance to achieve 'top quartile' performance wherever feasible and realistic to do so.

Continuous Improvement

LHT will:

- Utilise the information it receives from customers to influence its continuous improvement programmes. This includes the undertaking of three best value reviews per annum, which will also include engaging with our customers.
- Publish an annual continuous improvement newsletter to provide Clients with information about how services have improved and how they have influenced these changes

Value for Money

Value for money goes hand in hand with delivering high quality and efficient services. Through the implementation of the value for money Strategy improvements in efficiency and service delivery quality will be achieved.

This approach enhances in 2016 through the continued use of our procurement strategy.

LHT continues to deliver efficiencies in voids management. These are used to improve our liquidity and balance sheet in accordance with our objectives.

Sustainable Communities

The role of registered providers has changed in recent years. The focus for LHT is no longer simply on clients and properties, but on creating safe and sustainable communities. LHT is able to create neighbourhoods where people want to live, and in turn increase satisfaction levels overall.

LHT is a small sized housing trust, and exceptionally well placed to exploit its knowledge and understanding of its Clients' needs and aspirations within the areas in which it operates, respond flexibly to meet these needs, and contribute to the wider neighbourhood regeneration agenda.

It achieves this through:

- Contributing to the creation of safe, stable and cohesive communities by seeking to tackle all forms of anti-social behaviour, making use of a range of enforcement actions where appropriate
- contributing to the objectives by working in partnership with local authorities, the Police and other agencies
- Tackling anti-social behaviour by continuing to develop support mechanisms for both the victims and the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour so that we work collaboratively to change their anti-social patterns of behaviour

Service User Involvement and Complaints

As a customer focussed organisation, LHT will:

- Engage and empower its Service Users to influence the services they receive in order to create vibrant communities that meet the needs of the people that live within them
- work in partnership with local Service Users to improve their quality of life in terms of housing outcomes, as well as wider environmental, social, health and economic regeneration

Our approach to engaging with clients is set out within the Trust's client Involvement Statement, developed in partnership with the Client Involvement Committee to ensure it reflects their needs and aspirations. It creates opportunities for clients to get involved in a range of ways that suit them, and about issues that they are interested in, through the operation of a client's menu of options.

LHT focuses on its approach to improving Client Involvement and empowering activities in the following ways:

- Ensure client involvement in governance through 20% Service User Committee Board membership (currently 0%)

- Develop further the Client Involvement Committee
- Review its Involvement Statements based upon detailed Impact Assessments annually
- Provide a range of options for clients to become involved in shaping our services
- Understand and respond to the diverse needs of our Service Users
- Undertake a “Clients Audit” of our services
- Offer a range of ways to express a complaint, details of how a complaint should be responded to and sets out a clear service level agreement that should be delivered. A regular bi-monthly publication in the form of a newsletter (In Touch) is currently in development made available to all clients including client satisfaction levels, complaints
- Consult with our clients and act reasonably in providing them with opportunities to agree local offers for service delivery

Equality and Diversity

Our overall approach to Equality and Diversity is in accordance with the Equality and Diversity policies of the HCA. Our approach to equality and diversity is at the heart of our efforts to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

Diversity is one of our corporate values and is championed at board and in our Executive Management team.

Equality and Diversity Board Advisory Group

To support us we are in the process of consulting with our client involvement committee with a view to setting and delivering our vision for equality and diversity we established an independent board advisory group.

Reporting to our board and executive team, the Equality and Diversity Board Advisory Group would consist of stakeholders with a commitment to and expertise in diversity issues.

The advisory group would play an important role in developing new ideas, championing diversity and holding us to account.

Equality and Diversity Duties

As a public body the Equality Act 2010 requires us to meet certain statutory duties. These duties are unique to equality law because they give public bodies a legal responsibility to take proactive measures to address inequality.

The purpose of the statutory duty framework is to assist public bodies to tackle persistent and long-standing issues of disadvantage.

The general duty requires us to give due regard to equality in the way we go about our business as an investor, enabler, regulator and employer. In doing this we must take steps to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act

- advance equality of opportunity between people
- foster good relations between people

Diversity and Service Delivery

LHT delivers services to a broad range of client groups. Our expected QAF outcomes include making our services available in a range of formats, including language, large print documents and additional assistance for its clients. An on-going census of its clients diversity needs are undertaken so that our volunteers may pro-actively act to meet our clients' needs.

Aids and adaptations service is provided to assist clients to remain within their own homes in accordance with the social model of disability. In order to meet demand and maximise our impact, LHT assists clients to also obtain disability benefits and signpost to social services and GP where required.

We operate a number of supported housing schemes delivering the specialist tenancy related support suitable for the needs of our client group.

Overall, our approach to dealing with vulnerable and diverse groups is one of flexibility. LHT staff adopt a flexible approach to dealing with our clients' individual needs.

Financial Inclusion

100% of our clients have been in receipt of Housing Benefit during the stay at our Hostels. We assist and support our clients to:

- Open a bank account
- Obtain photo ID
- Claim for the most appropriate benefits
- Claim and manage Housing Benefit payments
- Encourage clients to save for their move on accommodation
- Produce budgeting plans for the payment day to day expenses including utility bills

Sustainable Development

LHT implements the trust's commitments to sustainable development as set out in the Sustainability Policy. It works to minimise the negative effects that it has upon the environment, promote the benefits that may be derived from an environmentally aware approach, and seek to procure sustainable resources wherever possible.

As a minimum LHT:

- Conduct an annual review to take into account client feedback and ensure compliance with prevailing best practice
- Consult with communities and potential end users at the initial stage in the development process, including consideration of sustainability related issues
- Minimise the effect of activities on the natural environment both through planning and design, as well as proactively seeking to promote the benefits of respecting the natural environment through the provision of advice and guidance literature on sustainability issues

- Work with Service Users on an ongoing basis through our client involvement activities to assess its customer's approaches to sustainability and highlighting options that promote their contribution to this global agenda

7.2 Achieve sustained quality improvement through partnership working (Objective 2)

Overall Strategy

LHT pursues an active and ambitious development programme to ensure housing needs are met and continuous improvements in quality is achieved. This requires strong partnerships to be developed and managed to ensure that feedback from partners is gathered, monitored and that the reporting mechanisms and resources are available to support this.

Our objective is to obtain a Grade A in all the QAF outcomes.

LHT has developed a close working relationship with housing benefit departments that increase revenue flow and service provision. This enables LHT to engage in housing and the tenancy related support without placing our financial viability at risk.

Specialist Supported Housing

Through its on-going relationships with local authorities, LHT is aware of the significant demand for specialist accommodation and support services for vulnerable people. LHT is maintaining relationships with a range of providers to support its approach, and who acts as managing agents with specialist knowledge of particular client groups.

LHT has capacity to deliver supported housing schemes across London and would aim to develop approximately one-five bed spaces per annum.

Scheme Development Standards

LHT involves clients at a formative stage of development so that they may influence the vision and design of a scheme. LHT knows that clients have an important contribution to make in ensuring design quality impacts on the lives of the individual and wide community in a positive manner.

Service Growth

We have experienced rapid growth over the past 5 years. The organisation now has 16 staff, an annual turnover of 1.8M (2015) and manages 47 supported housing schemes over 7 London boroughs for over 200 clients. We are focussed on quality and would resist further growth without the provisions in place to ensure quality is maintained. LHT sets out a strategy to actively seek out opportunities to develop new opportunities in the market.

7.3 Growth through diversification in response to unmet needs

(Objective 3)

Overall Strategy

As a housing trust, a key function of our activities is to meet unmet housing need. Responding to these needs is also a means of achieving continued and sustained growth and expansion.

As in relation to our approach to Objective 2, to achieve our commitments to increase quality, LHT requires strong partnerships to be developed and managed to ensure that opportunities for service improvement are maximised and resources are available to support this.

It may also require the assistance of specialist expertise to be appointed to evaluate the outcomes expected. We use a number of external consultants to deliver goals set for, Finance, HR, Health and Safety and delivering the QAF.

Identifying Unmet Need

An initial analysis of the local housing market has identified that significant unmet need exists within the region in which LHT operates. In particular, this includes the following:

- An increasing range of service provision of social housing properties, particularly shared accommodation for all age ranges that have associated emotional health support needs.

8 RESOURCES

LHT is not able to achieve its short or long term targets unless it is able to maintain its financial viability and secure funding to meet its capital development expenditure. It currently utilises its income to meet its planned capital and revenue commitments, and would seek to maintain this strong position over the duration of this plan in order to maintain this viability.

Detailed financial planning and the maintenance of strong relationships with its funders will enable this plan to succeed. Policies and controls have been put in place to enable LHT to exercise effective management practices within a framework of financial control.

Existing Assumptions

Growth

For the financial year 2016/ 2017, it is assumed that there is no net increase in stock numbers.

Rents

Rent levels are set with reference to similar services in the local area. Our service charges have been agreed by all but one of our councils. We are in talk with that borough and hope to have a resolution soon.

No clients have been impacted by this anomaly.

Service Charges

- Eligible service charges are set in line with other comparable local services and each council test this against a range of providers.
- Ineligible service Charges: these are utility payments. This has proved difficult to manage. We have decided to consult our clients most have agreed that pre-pay metering would be an overall advantage in managing these payments in a clear and transparent way.

Balance Sheet

LHT does not have any fixed assets at year-end Oct15.

Capital and reserves have increased to £70,000 in Oct15.

Voids

LHT assumes a void rate of 5% of the budgeted rents receivable for all properties.

We do well here and consistently have a void rate of <5%

Specific Spend

Overall

The majority of costs associated with the actions contained within this plan relate to lease expenditure. The plan has therefore been produced on the basis that there is capacity within to deliver on the undertakings made. This is monitored and subject to continuous review.

Salaries

Expenditure on salaries to Oct15: £282,142

We have 16 staff and currently do not have any staff on salaries over £40k

Repairs and maintenance

The costs associated with repairs and maintenance expenditure has been prepared on the basis of a 40% increase on 2015 in line with our income growth. This service much of our maintenance is part of a service contract with our largest provider of leased accommodation. The average price for this accommodation with full managed service is £150PW per room. This compares with an average rent of single room accommodation of £130PW without additional services.

9 FINANCIAL BUDGET

The following projections have been prepared from a base where the trust's current activities are financially viable and strong. In particular this is due to the good reputation of LHT and the continuing support from our Councils providing a good level of financial support for all aspects of services that we provide. The data illustrates the trust's financial position once the planned growth and expansions take effect. It is accepted that any additional activity will only be undertaken after a full appraisal of its likely impact on the trust. To this end if any or all of the future growth targets are not achieved the trust has the financial strength and capacity to meet its housing obligations comfortably.

Assumptions

Balance Sheet

There has been a rapid growth in the number of bed spaces we provide. It is the agreement of the board that there will be 25 additional bed spaces obtained over during the 2016/2021.

It has also been calculated that the trust is leasing between five additional supported bed spaces over the five year period. As these spaces will be leased to the trust there is no balance sheet impact, with the annual lease payments reflected in the Income & Expenditure account.

Other Tangible Fixed Assets: None.

Other current assets have increased at the inflationary rate of 3% with a pro rata increase for additional units introduced. The balance includes year end rent arrears set at current levels with inflationary and unit increases.

Other current liabilities have increased at the inflationary rate of 3% with a pro rata increase for additional bed spaces introduced. Principal repayments have been calculated from existing data and reflect any uplifts following the conclusion of the original repayment holiday.

Income & Expenditure

Rents have been calculated via the detailed five year rent plan with the target rent for the current year set at 4.4%. Thereafter an inflationary increase of 3% is applied to both rents and services with a pro rata increase for additional units.

Voids have been assumed at 5% for Social Housing based on expectations in the sector.

In respect of routine maintenance, it has been increased on a pro rata basis consistent to existing expenditure, although it is acknowledged that savings will be made in this area.

In respect of management expenditure, this too has been increased on a pro rata basis consistent to existing costs with uplifts for additional bed spaces. It is also acknowledged that savings may be made in this area.

10 FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

The following projections have been prepared from a base where the Trusts current activities are financially viable and strong. The data illustrates the Trusts financial position.

Summary and Assumptions

The five year forecast shows a healthy surplus of £468K over the five year period.

Assumptions: LHT does not take on more leased stock but will increase costs by 3% PA.

London Housing Trust Corporate Strategy & Business Plan 2016-21

RESOURCES REQUIRED							
			2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
DETAILS	Notes	TOTAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5
		(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Fixed costs							
Managed Leases		9,247,043	1,308,619	1,897,498	1,954,423	2,013,056	2,073,447
Rent (Others)		-	-	-	-	-	-
Fixed cost		9,247,043	1,308,619	1,897,498	1,954,423	2,013,056	2,073,447
Variable Costs							
OTHER COSTS		487,756	69,000	100,094	103,097	106,190	109,375
Wages and Admin		1,993,689	282,142	409,106	421,379	434,021	447,041
Other Admin		378,128	43,438	80,000	82,400	84,872	87,418
Premises Costs		153,952	21,787	31,591	32,539	33,515	34,520
General Admin Expenses		392,607	55,561	80,563	82,980	85,469	88,033
Legal and Professional Costs		287,938	40,748	59,085	60,858	62,683	64,564
Total Variable Cost		3,694,069	512,676	760,439	783,252	806,750	830,952
FUND REQUIRED		12,941,112	1,821,295	2,657,937	2,737,675	2,819,805	2,904,400
INCOME PROJECTION							
DETAILS		TOTAL	YEAR1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 3	YEAR 3
		(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Incoming Resources							
Housing Benefit (HB)	1	£13,352,014	1,830,339	2,753,992	2,836,612	2,921,710	3,009,361
Service Charge		£0	-	-	-	-	-
HB Top-up/tenant		£0	-	0	0	0	0
Volunteers reimbursement		£19,449	3,120	3,120	3,214	3,310	3,409
Other Income		£41,673	40,000.00	400.00	412	424	437
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		£13,409,861	1,873,459	2,757,512	2,840,237	2,925,444	3,013,208
Operating Surplus		£468,749	52,164	99,575	102,562	105,639	108,808
NOTES:							
1. Housing Benefit (HB)							
Figure based on HB income at historic rates for of all bedspaces (95% occupancy)							
	Months	Bed Spaces	less 5% Voids	Income Weekl	Total Income	Lease costs	
1	12	202	191.9	183	1,826,120	54,000	
2	12	207	196.65	183	1,871,321	270,000	
3	12	212	201.4	183	1,916,522	540,000	
4	12	217	206.15	183	1,961,723	810,000	
5	12	222	210.9	183	2,006,924	945,000	

11 FORWARD PLAN 2016 – 2021

Quality Services

- Report to the Board on a Quarterly basis. Clear and sustained focus on strengthening the LHT brand and profile maintained
- Undertake an interim Service User satisfaction survey. Clear feedback is received on Service User satisfaction with the full range of services provided by LHT, for use in shaping continuous improvement
- Undertake STATUS Service User satisfaction survey. Clear feedback is received on Service User satisfaction with the full range of services provided by LHT, for use in shaping continuous improvement
- Develop and publish a suite of Service Standards across all service areas. Clear and measurable standards are set for services which reflect customer expectations
- Undertake a review against the Property Services Review to report progress against recommendations. Demonstration of how improvements required have been addressed and implemented
- Achieve 100% decent homes compliance. Full compliance with Government guidelines achieved
- Achieve 100% tenancy standard, the neighbourhood and community standards and the value for money standard compliance.
- Clear strategy for LHT assets put in place on a scheme by scheme basis in light of updated and accurate stock condition information
- Update LHT's Stock Condition Database. Clear and up to date information about stock condition obtained to inform management decision making
- Review options for planned maintenance procurement and bulk purchasing and provide report to Board on proposed route going forward. Clear demonstration that options for procurement have been considered and costed, with preferred routes adopted based upon cost and value for money
- Board to agree suite of performance indicators in balanced scorecard format. Clear targets for performance set and agreed to allow for subsequent monitoring
- Programme of systematic service review and improvement in place
- Deliver 2.5% efficiencies over course of the year (combined cashable and non-cashable efficiencies). Focus on delivering continued efficiencies is maintained
- Recruit another Service User Board Member to the Board of LHT. 33% of Board to consist of Service Users
- Review and issue LHT's 2011 Service User involvement statement. Clear statement of LHT commitment to Service User involvement is published for Service Users
- Undertake a Service Users audit. Service Users are given opportunity to directly shape and influence a service area based upon their experiences as a Service User
- Advice literature to be produced for Service Users to contribute to the sustainability agenda. LHT is able to directly influence Service Users behaviour in pursuance of the commitments to sustainability