



**Brent  
Housing  
Partnership  
Vision &  
Values**

**2014  
2018**

**Building vibrant, diverse and resilient  
communities**

**Great places, great people, great homes**

# Foreword

## From Chair of the Board and Managing Director

Thank you for your interest in Brent Housing Partnership's (BHP) Vision and Values. This has been developed jointly between the Board and Executive Team with wide input from Brent Council colleagues and our customers and stakeholders.

In BHP you will find a proud and customer focused organisation with a strategy that pursues core activities. As a result of our strategy development process, we have a shared view of our role which is being the custodian of the council's housing stock and neighbourhoods and the provision of quality housing management services to tenants and leaseholders.

In our work we aim to ensure that the council's self financed HRA (Housing Revenue Account) business plan is as strong as possible and this means a focus on income maximisation and effective use of resources. This contributes to our overall financial strength and capacity, which we also secure through the effective management of our business and owned housing stock.

As well as a service provider, we are an enabler and supporter of community leadership. This is why working closely with our residents is so important to us and is a core element of our business.

To support our growth, we are delighted to be the council's principal partner in delivering an infill development programme and to be invited to develop interventions to ensure the wider housing market and in particular the private rented sector are improved. We see this as the start of a more substantial programme of development and regeneration activity that BHP will lead over the life of this strategy and beyond, and the ability for us to provide housing products for a wide range of residents needs.

Whilst forecasts for economic growth are positive, we recognise that the council is still faced with the need to make significant savings as public sector funding is squeezed. We have an important role in ensuring residents can access and receive services that are most important to them during this time.

With stronger economic performance, interest rates are likely to rise impacting on home-owners budgets including our leaseholders. Brent is a low income borough and many of our customers are on especially low incomes and are also affected by welfare reform. One of our challenges will be to ensure that as the economy improves all our residents benefit, for example having the ability to access better paid work.

The underlying premise of our strategy is therefore to carefully match our capability to secure our goals. We seek to collaborate with partners who will add to our capability and the achievement of better outcomes in Brent.

As a Board and Executive Leadership Team we share a resolute focus on the success of BHP and the creation of value for our council and customers.

Joanne Drew – Chair, BHP

Tom Bremner – Managing Director BHP

## Background and context

### About Brent Housing Partnership

First and foremost BHP is the council's subsidiary, best partner and chosen agent to deliver Brent's vision of housing for the future. We manage 12,500 council properties in the London Borough of Brent. We also now own and manage approximately 300 of our own properties.

The council delegate authority to BHP to operate under the terms of a management agreement which runs until April 2023 and it provides long-term financing under loan agreements. As our corporate parent the council recognises that BHP, as its best partner, is a key deliverer of its corporate and strategic aspirations and that through close collaboration we can make a substantial contribution to delivery. We have structured and transparent arrangements for working together and for the council to hold us to account for delivery.

As a limited company we exercise independent judgment and take responsibility for the development of the organisation, its strategy, financial health and effectiveness. We are a registered provider and work to the Homes and Communities Agency regulatory framework and have a co-regulatory ethos. With the introduction of HRA Self-Financing, with the council, we are liberated to use our resources more effectively and to plan over the long-term.

Through a strong Board and executive partnership we provide leadership to our staff, customers, communities and on the housing agenda where we aim to support the development of the council's housing and regeneration strategies as well as their delivery.

Our customers are at the heart of our business. This is symbolised by including six tenants and leaseholders on the Board and by a range of structures and opportunities for customers to engage, contribute and communicate with us.

BHP is run by a supervisory Board comprising of 13 Board Members who take collective responsibility for the long-term success of the company. The Board is made up of six residents, four independents, one of whom is the Chair of the Board and three representatives from Brent Council.

There are a number of Board committees:

- **Customer Committee:** Responsible for the overall approach to serving customers and supporting the development of a transformed approach to service delivery
- **Development and New Business Committee:** Responsible for reviewing and overseeing new business initiatives agreed in the BHP strategy
- **Audit Committee:** Responsible for risk management and controls and for considering the financial management arrangements
- **Governance and Remuneration Committee:** Responsible for ensuring BHP operates to high standards of integrity, transparency and accountability

Residents are directly involved through election to the Board, but are also involved in a range of ways that means that BHP is always resident focused and led. This includes residents independently scrutinising the work of BHP.

To support BHP's further development into the private rented sector the Board has co-opted an expert in this field to help shape our strategy and offer. The Board places great importance on ensuring effective governance and risk management.

BHP is run on a day-to-day basis by the Managing Director who has overall managerial responsibility for BHP and all staffing matters. The Managing Director is supported by three directors and together they form the Executive Leadership Team:

- **Director of Finance:** Leads on all key aspects of financial and risk management
- **Director of Operations:** The champion of residents and will ensure that the services provided are of the highest quality
- **Director of Development and Growth:** Responsibility for the aspects of BHP that relate to growth and opportunity

BHP relies on partners and contractors to help deliver services and meet the needs of residents and communities now and in the future. Partnership is in our name and is key to our success. We therefore put a lot of time and effort into choosing and then working with the best partners in the best way, and we pay particular attention to partners who align to BHP's and the council's strategic aims and values.

## **About Brent**

The council has a strong track record in its strategic housing role. It has the second largest programme of housing under development in London, a regeneration programme that has delivered change throughout the recession, achieved a reduction in temporary housing costs and an Asset Management Strategy for its housing stock which will enhance the value of its housing assets and contribute to the delivery of much needed homes.

Nevertheless the borough faces significant housing challenges, which are comprehensively described in its housing strategy. The features of the housing market are a fast rising population, a large average family size, low incomes and high unemployment, rising demand with 19,000 on waiting list, high prices and high rents in a changing market, an expanding private rented sector but quality and affordability a challenge and rising homelessness. This all means that welfare reform is set to impact significantly in the borough.

## **Our view of the national housing landscape**

Our review of the external world is attached at appendix 1. On many levels, this is a challenging climate for housing organisation's and local authorities. However, it also means that the need for our services and our role in society has never been stronger.

## **Our current position**

BHP has a strong legacy of achievement. An excellent service inspection judgment in 2003, early completion of the Decent Homes investment programme, the delivery of additional contractual services including short stay and ownership of long term housing for homeless families enabling them to settle in communities. We have a good reputation in the housing industry and have received numerous awards and recognition from our peers.

We recognise that aspects of our delivery in the past have led to a lack of confidence from the council. We have understood the lessons and are determined to maintain a focus on excellent execution.

At our Board Away Day in September 2013 we reviewed BHP's current position and our assessment can be seen in appendix 2. In summary we are an organisation that, like all housing providers, must transform to respond to changing customer demands and external

challenges. We are confident that we have wide ranging strengths that will enable us to overcome the opportunities and threats we face.

Since September 2013, with our new Executive Team, we have made fast progress on a number of key areas for development. For example the re-procurement of our repairs and maintenance service linked also to services for building new homes, the development of an infill house building programme, a review of governance and the development of a Risk Management, Value for Money and Financial Strategy aimed to support our development to underpin BHP for the future. We are ensuring that our business division is clearly identified and financial and service performance is clear and transparent.

Given this position and our developing capability, we are confidently embarking on an ambitious strategy with a clear guiding vision described below.

## **Brent Housing Partnership's vision and values**

### **To build vibrant, diverse and resilient communities**

By 2018 BHP will be a leading, modern, dynamic and creative housing and regeneration business. We will continue to be Brent's best partner making a difference to communities and local people in particular by enabling them to be more resilient. BHP will be closely aligned to the council's key priorities and yet at the same time be proud, independent-minded and confident.

We will continue to earn the trust and support of the council and key partners because we deliver what we commit to and we are good to work with. We will attract talented staff who are driven to make a difference and love what they do. We will attract the best contractors as we will be a trusted partner and client, understanding their business needs and collaborating to provide the best services at the best value. We will place particular emphasis on supporting local businesses and social enterprises, in particular where these are rooted in our estates and communities.

The involvement of our customers will remain our core strength. This keeps us grounded in what matters and enables us to relate to our customers maximising our effectiveness. We will nurture our community leaders, listen to our scrutinisers and most importantly give them the space and confidence to make a difference. We will be proud advocates of their achievements, which will reinforce community confidence and resilience.

BHP's investment in an intelligence based customer service methodology will have transformed our ability to understand our customers and their aspirations.

This will apply to both current customers and future customers. This intelligence will enable us to reinvent our service and our housing products. With the use of technology we will be offering a wider and more cost effective range of ways to assist customers meet their own needs. We will make this attractive and sustainable by making it relevant and useful to customers and exploring what extra we can offer through technology – e.g. advice and assistance as well as access. Quality, choice, enablement, reliability and personal responsibility will be at the heart of our service model. This will prove instrumental to customers in successfully managing a changing relationship with the council.

We will establish a wide range of effective stakeholder relationships and collaborate on achieving joint goals and outcomes where these represent a shared vision or value. We will be valued because we bring good customer knowledge, links to the community and a solution orientated approach to the table, we will have influenced others to collaborate on common objectives and maximise the leverage of resources especially for customers with more complex needs. We will work with partners to develop solutions that enhance outcomes for those who have health and well-being concerns, those who have challenges to accessing reasonably paid work and our ageing residents. We will ensure that as the economy improves, those that are marginalised and socially excluded are assisted to benefit from growth and prosperity.

We will have grown and developed the business with a firm focus on responding to the priority needs of Brent. We will predict the needs of the future to get ahead of the curve so that we always have an eye on our legacy.

With a proven development track record, more homes in ownership and our developed expertise in the private housing sector, we will contribute to more and better quality housing across a range of tenures and for a range of income groups. This will include a strong stance against illegal or sub-standard subletting both in tenanted and leasehold properties.

We will have established a track record of innovation in place transformation. This will include joined up mixed tenure and public realm management approaches, innovation in investment in homes and inspiring schemes for estate based regeneration and enhanced community facilities. We will be regarded for our commitment to enhancing the built environment and the quality of housing through excellent design. We will take our environmental responsibilities seriously and help tackle fuel poverty by investing in and supporting high environmental and energy efficiency standards.

We will have a strong vision of neighbourhoods that work for people, environments that are inspiring and uplifting and bring a unique sense of character. This will be a vision that is owned by communities and with which they want to contribute to delivery.

To our council shareholder we will be able to quantify an annual housing dividend that will represent an investment in Brent and will be used to contribute to the council's strategic objectives. We will have built a socially and financially valuable and capable business in which it is proud and confident to entrust its most challenging strategic objectives that relate to great places, great people and great homes.

## **BHP values**

- We deliver on our commitments
- We are honest, open and transparent
- We are bold and resilient
- We do good business and work to high ethical standards
- We learn and we innovate

## Making it happen

BHP has 6 Key Strategic Objectives (KSO), each with links to more detailed strategies and plans. In addition these will be consistent with and cross refer to the relevant council strategies and to the management agreement and delivery plan.

### KSO1

**Great Communities:** We will work with local residents and communities to create solutions and achieve our ambitions together. We celebrate the diversity of Brent and see this as a strength and resource.

#### Equality and diversity, community leadership, enabling and partnership strategies

Key milestones		
2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>	<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>	<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>

### KSO2

**Good Value:** We will offer good value for money and carefully manage our own and the council's budgets so that every penny is well spent and well invested. We will expect everyone to take responsibility and play their part so that solutions are lasting.

#### Value for money, investment and procurement strategies

Key milestones		
2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
From Delivery and Business Plan	From Delivery and Business Plan	From Delivery and Business Plan

### KSO3

**Customer Service and Neighbourhoods:** We want to make customers feel special, with services that are relevant to each person. We want to create places that feel loved, give a sense of pride and where people feel they belong.

#### Customer service and resilience strategy

Key milestones		
2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
From Delivery and Business Plan	From Delivery and Business Plan	From Delivery and Business Plan



**KSO4**

**Building New Homes and Regenerating Estates:** The test of our success will be our legacy; we will build great new homes and invest in people and places for our current residents but also for their children and for our future residents.

**Development and new business strategy**

Key milestones		
2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>	<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>	<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>

**KSO5**

**Safe and Well Run:** We give top priority to keeping our residents, ourselves and our colleagues safe. We will manage risks so that we are focused on doing the right things in the right way.

**Finance and risk management plans/strategies**

Key milestones		
2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>	<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>	<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>

**KSO6**

**A Great Place to Work with Strong Partnerships:** We will attract and develop staff who want to make a difference and who love what they do. We will be a trusted partner who will work with contractors and others who will collaborate with us to provide the best services at the best value.

**People strategy**

Key milestones (examples only)		
2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>	<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>	<i>From Delivery and Business Plan</i>

## Delivery

The BHP Strategy will be delivered through a Business Plan that will include key targets and milestones under each of the Key Strategic Objectives. The Business Plan will include:

- **Accountabilities:** Who is responsible for delivering what elements including governance arrangements where there are BHP Board responsibilities
- **Dependencies:** What dependencies there are across BHP and beyond to ensure consistent delivery
- **Costs:** Relevant financial impact
- **Sensitivities and tolerances:** Relevant scenarios, sensitivities and tolerances
- **Risks and mitigation:** Relevant risk management
- **Review:** How and when targets/milestones will be reviewed

The Business Plan will be consistent with the Delivery Plan, but will include additional items not necessarily directly applicable. It will be a four year plan but with an annual review.

## About this document

- Any updates or changes must be:
  - First reviewed by: Brent Council
  - Approved by: Brent Housing Partnership Board
- Any printed versions are deemed uncontrolled

<b>Version</b>	<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Review date</b>	<b>Date approved</b>
0.1	Board Report	BHP Board	25 July 2013	25 July 2013
	Away Day		7 September 2013	
0.2	Board Report	BHP Board	26 September 2013	26 September 2013
	Housing Strategy workshop		11 November 2013	
0.3	BHP Board	BHP Board	30 January 2014	30 January 2014
	BHP Staff Consultation		6 February 2014	
	Youth Editorial Board		18 February 2014	
	All Residents Vision Day		25 February 2014	
	Chair of Board update		2 April 2014	
	Stakeholder consultation		15 April 2014	
0.4	BHP Board	BHP Board	20 May 2014	20 May 2014