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**Providing quality community housing**  
across Northern Ireland

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## Vision Statement

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# “More than just a Landlord”

We know that being a great landlord is more than just providing the ‘bricks and mortar’ or providing a home to rent. We perform a much wider range of functions to support our mission including roles as developer, employer, partner and advocate.

To help us achieve our mission, therefore, we have developed the following vision for the future:

**“To be more than just a landlord, to put our tenants’ voice at the heart of what we do and to deliver great homes and services, supporting communities and improving lives.”**

## Values

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Our values are very important to us; they are our guiding principles driving what we do and how we work. They set standards that our customers can expect from us. They also help us to manage performance, recruit new staff and recognise and reward good work. Our values are what will help us to achieve our strategic and business plan objectives.

### They are as follows:

**Caring:** We care about our staff and tenants and will help and support them in achieving their goals.

**Fair:** We celebrate diversity and are committed to treating everyone fairly.

**Open:** We are open with our staff, tenants and partners about what we do, how we work and our decision-making.

**Honest:** We are honest with ourselves and others and will keep our ‘promises’.

**Professional:** We demonstrate high standards of conduct and a ‘can do’ attitude – solving problems and continuously improving.

**Respectful:** We show others the respect we would wish to receive.



# Combined Chair and Chief Executive Statement



Colin McCusker  
Chairman  
South Ulster  
Housing Association

Kieran Matthews  
Chief Executive  
South Ulster  
Housing Association

We are delighted to present this year's annual report for South Ulster Housing Association. The year under review 2017-18, year 5 in our 5 year corporate planning cycle, has been another excellent year for our Association.

We have had a successful year in delivering on our business plan and that success has been achieved through the hard work and support of staff, business partners, the Board of Management, the Department for Communities and other stakeholders.

Building on the successes of 2017-18 the Association confidently looks forward to delivering more homes and providing all our tenants with the highest possible standard of service.

This report sets out our performance in 2017-18 which the Association measures against the business objectives and targets set at the beginning of the year. Our financial performance was strong and we delivered an operating surplus on ordinary activities of £804k. Turnover for the year was £6.4m, up 3.3% on 2016-17, loan interest paid was £1.1m and property loans outstanding at year end stood at £24.6m. At year end the Association was in a healthy financial position and over the year operated comfortably within the covenants contained within the loan facility agreements with our private funders.

In the year the Association contributed 49 homes to the Social Housing Development Programme, providing much needed homes. This represents a total investment of £5.72m in social housing, supported by £3.69m receivable in Housing Association Grant. We are committed to consistently deliver a minimum of 50 homes each year for the Social Housing



Development Programme and our future tenants. The delivery will be through the acquisition of existing satisfactory properties, new off the shelf properties, the development of traditional new build schemes and competitive land, design and build. To meet our goal of delivering social housing we have continued to forge effective working relationships with the key stakeholders.

Efficient financial management has allowed the Association to deliver excellent services to tenants that included improvements and major works to properties throughout the year at a cost of £837k.

This work contributed to achievement of our corporate objective of improving neighbourhoods and maintaining our reputation as a leading provider in social housing.

The Association exceeded response time targets and achieved high levels of satisfaction with the Contractor's performance. Overall achievement against Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators has been strong and our planned maintenance works programme was completed within budget. Most importantly, 100% of our

Tenants were very satisfied with the contractor's performance. The Association completed the following planned works over the last 5 years (2013-14 through 2017-18).

- 212 kitchen replacements
- External Cyclical Maintenance on 567 homes
- 181 Heating upgrades
- 56 bathroom upgrades
- 28 window/door replacements

Continuing our commitment in the year ahead, almost £952k will be invested in Planned Maintenance works focussed mainly on kitchens, window and door replacements, heating upgrades and External Cyclical Maintenance.

In 2017-18 the Association processed over 5,300 repair orders spending over £500k on response maintenance to meet our service provision to Tenants. 560 quality assurance checks were carried out on completed orders to ensure that work is carried out to the appropriate standard and to the satisfaction of Tenants.

Turnover  
£6.4m  
2017/18

£837k  
in improvements  
and major works  
to properties



10 days

Average re-let period

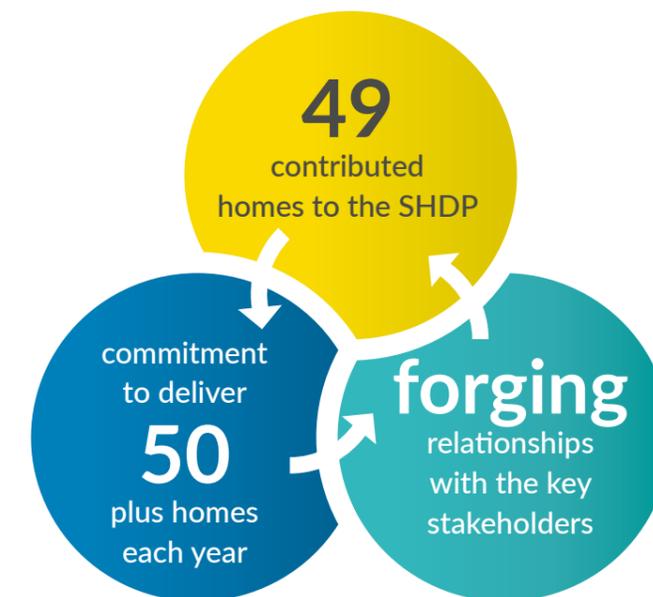
Honouring our commitment to ensuring that Tenants can continue living in their homes the Association carried out disabled adaptation work on 45 properties in 2017-18.

The Association is pleased to have worked, throughout the year, in partnership with Praxis Care and Inspire Wellbeing. It reflects the Association's commitment to supporting the provision of care in the community.

The Association's housing management team worked effectively over the year to sustain tenancies, allocate void properties on a timely basis, maximise rental income, minimise arrears and strengthen our relationship with our tenants. Our average re-let period was 10 days resulting in a rental loss of just 0.18% (excluding Long-term voids) of annual rent and rates receivable. We launched our Tenant Participation Strategy which was designed to achieve increased levels of tenant participation, provide more opportunities for meaningful engagement as well as a range of levels of involvement to suit tenant's lifestyles.

Other initiatives focussed on developing partnerships with external organisations to provide additional housing related support to our tenants who require it. We have an ongoing tenant training programme in partnership with WADE training and continue our involvement in Inter Agency Forums, Community Charter with CRJ, and working closely with the PSNI and other community groups on ways to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour.

97% of tenants surveyed would recommend the Association to family and friends



High levels of satisfaction were recorded from our incoming and exiting tenants and we achieved an overall 94% satisfaction level from our Annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey. Benchmarked against the previous survey, this showed that we either maintained or improved on results in each area appraised.

The Association values its staff and thanks them for their hard work and dedication throughout the year.

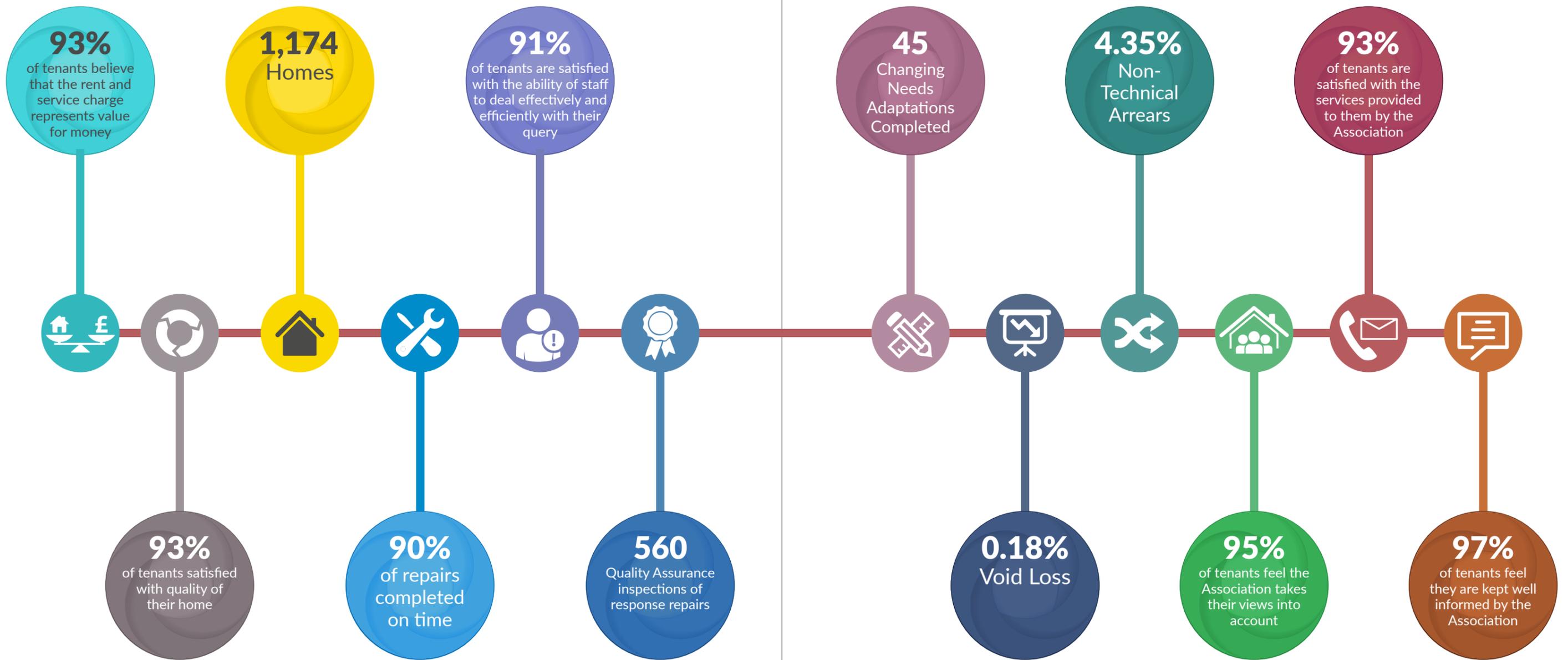
Looking ahead there are many challenges, in particular the need to manage the impact of welfare reform, political and economic uncertainty, the increasing threat from cyber crime and the reclassification of Housing Associations. In responding to the challenges we will seek to ensure Value for Money is achieved from both the services received from suppliers and in services provided to tenants. Where appropriate the Association will look to diversify and to take on and manage more risk. The Association is adapting to meet tenant expectations in the changing economic environment and remains clear on its social objectives.

Our new five-year Corporate Strategy is informed by what we have achieved to date. It also reflects our desire to make a positive difference to our tenants and their local communities in these fast moving times. It is premised on our commitment to growth and our continuing support to our tenants through the provision of high quality services. We will continue to take steps in achieving value for money and are committed to continuous improvement through the professionalism and dedication of our staff.

Despite the challenges it has been a successful year for South Ulster. We are in good financial health and our Board and management team have the skills and experience to make decisions which are in the long term interests of all our tenants and other stakeholders.

Finally, we would like to record our appreciation of the contribution made by those members of the Board retiring this year.

# 2017-2018 HIGHLIGHTS





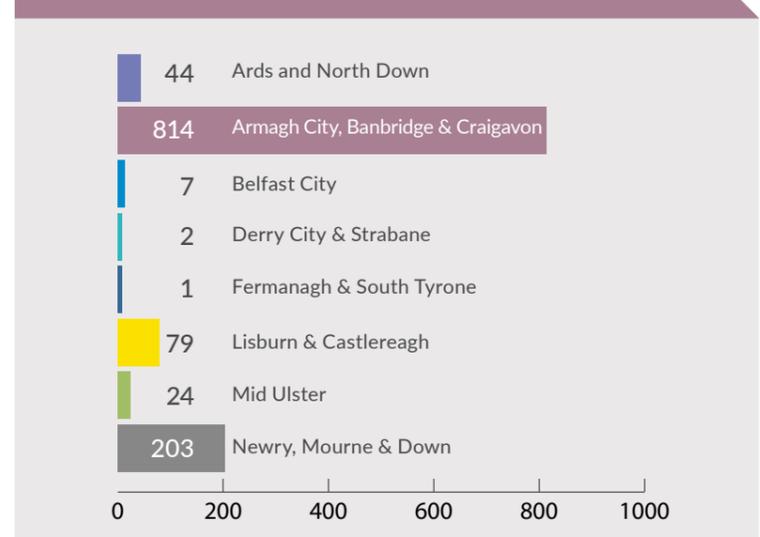
## HIGH QUALITY SERVICE PROVISION

At South Ulster Housing Association our aim is to put our tenants' voice at the heart of what we do. To succeed in achieving this aim, we ensure that the services provided to all our tenants are at a consistently high standard and tenant engagement is fundamental in achieving and maintaining this standard.

## HOUSING MANAGEMENT REPORT

Our Housing Management report shows our exceptional performance throughout 2017 - 2018 and illustrates the high standard of service provided with a commitment to continue to deliver such exacting standards.

## Housing Stock by Council Area



**Rent Collection** from  
1st April 2017 to  
31st March 2018

Rent Charged:  
**£5,496,826**

Rent Collected:  
**£5,444,988**

## Allocations 2017 - 2018

145 properties were allocated in 2017/2018 and the Housing Department recorded a strong performance on rental loss through void properties achieving 0.18% (excluding Long term Voids) of annual rent and rates receivable and exceeding corporate target of 0.25%.

(available for letting)  
@ 31st March 2018 **7 voids**

|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| General Needs Allocations     | <b>145</b>     |
| No of new lets allocated      | <b>66</b>      |
| No of re-lets allocated       | <b>79</b>      |
| Supported Housing Allocations | <b>2</b>       |
| Average Void re-let time      | <b>10 days</b> |



## House Sales

6 properties sold in 2017/2018.

## Arrears

At 31st March 2018, the Association had current and past tenant arrears totalling £109,195. Past Tenant arrears to the value of £7,648 were written off during 2017/18.

|                               | Non-Technical | Actual % | Association Target | DfC Target |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| <b>Current Tenant Arrears</b> | 90k           | 5.17%    | 4.00%              | 5.00%      |
| <b>Past Tenant Arrears</b>    | 20k           | 0.41%    | 0.4%               | -          |

The Housing Department has worked effectively to maximise rental income and minimise rent arrears, arrears were higher than both DfC targets and Corporate target for both technical and non-technical arrears. The Association acknowledges that some tenants find it difficult to pay their rent and ask anyone in such a position to contact the Housing Department for advice and assistance as soon as possible.

## Supported Accommodation

South Ulster Housing Association is pleased to report an increase in the provision of supported accommodation in partnership with PRAXIS and our continued involvement with Inspire Wellbeing to provide a comprehensive support service to our residents in our joint managed schemes.

The Association provides 55 units of supported accommodation in the Craigavon, Newry & Mourne, Belfast, Mid-Ulster, Derry City and Fermanagh & Omagh areas. Support is provided to residents throughout their tenancy to develop the necessary skills to maintain their own accommodation within a community setting.

## Tenant Engagement Report

South Ulster Housing Association is committed to ensuring that Tenants receive the best service possible by engagement with tenants at every opportunity, monitoring levels of tenant satisfaction and providing a range of platforms for tenants to engage and provide appropriate feedback on provision of services.

## Tenant Participation

The Association is committed to ensuring that all tenants receive the best service possible and to achieve this will provide a range of real opportunities for tenants to contribute to and influence decisions and the service delivery of the Association, placing tenants at the centre of our decision making process and to build upon our existing good practices and level of tenant involvement.

The Tenant Participation Strategy has been reviewed by the Senior Management Team and Tenants Forum so that it is shaped to reflect the needs and aspirations of tenants.

**The strategy is designed to achieve increased levels of tenant participation, provide more opportunities for meaningful involvement as well as a range of levels of engagement to suit tenant's lifestyles.**

If you would like further information on tenant participation or would like to get involved

please contact us on 028 3833 9795 or email [housing@southulsterhousing.org](mailto:housing@southulsterhousing.org)



## Tenant Projects

South Ulster Housing Association recognises the benefit of developing partnerships with external organisations to provide additional housing related support to our tenants who require it. APAC is one organisation that provides a floating support service to the Association's tenants. The floating support service is a flexible, free service that provides housing related support. It aims to help tenants who are experiencing difficulties in maintaining their tenancy with the Association. APAC works with people to help address problems that have led to difficulties with their neighbours and wider community and to help sustain their tenancy with the Association. BCM Housing Support for older people also provide additional support to our tenants. The service provides tenants with guidance through areas where they may be experiencing difficulties which could include practical tasks as well as emotional support, signposting to relevant agencies, advocacy, sustaining tenancy, access to health services and safety and security in property.

South Ulster Housing Association was one of the host organisations for the BME Housing Champions project organised by Housing Rights. The aim of the project is to improve BME communities' understanding and knowledge about housing issues and to raise awareness of the advice services that they can access. The Association provided a 16 week placement opportunity for a peer volunteer to complement their accredited training in housing advice. Following placement the peer volunteers will be tasked with delivering outreach sessions within their local community and sharing knowledge with the wider community. The success of this project has led to discussions for it to continue and it is anticipated that we could put forward tenant/s of the Association for this project to receive training to provide advice and assistance within and beyond the scope of the project.

## Website

In February 2018 the Association's redesigned website was launched. Our aim with this new look website is to give tenants and other interested parties a simple way to learn more about the Association, the services we provide and to provide relevant and timely information to both tenants and stakeholders. There is also opportunity for further tenant involvement in the Tenant Participation segment. Tenants are also requested to inform the Association of community development opportunities within their area so that Association involvement and/or assistance can be considered/facilitated.

## Tenant's Needs

In addition to the Tenant Satisfaction Survey we undertook to research and profile the needs of our tenants. Subjects addressed were tenancy support, complaints, and digital and internet access. An outcome of this was the creation of a digital zone in the Association's Offices for tenants to use to apply for or manage their benefits on-line. There is staff on hand for any tenant requiring additional support or where access to the Office presents a challenge to tenants, staff can attend their home with a portable tablet and provide assistance to them.

### Mystery Shopping

Empowering Communities undertook management of a Mystery Shopping Exercise on behalf of the Association between November 2017 and March 2018. A number of service areas were examined by Mystery Shoppers, these were:

-  Application for Housing
-  Anti-Social Behaviour
-  Complaints
-  House Sales
-  Maintenance
-  Rent Arrears
-  Tenant Participation
-  Transfer Requests

Overall it was clear that staff are very helpful and conversant with the procedures however there were instances highlighting areas for improvement. To address this we have ensured:

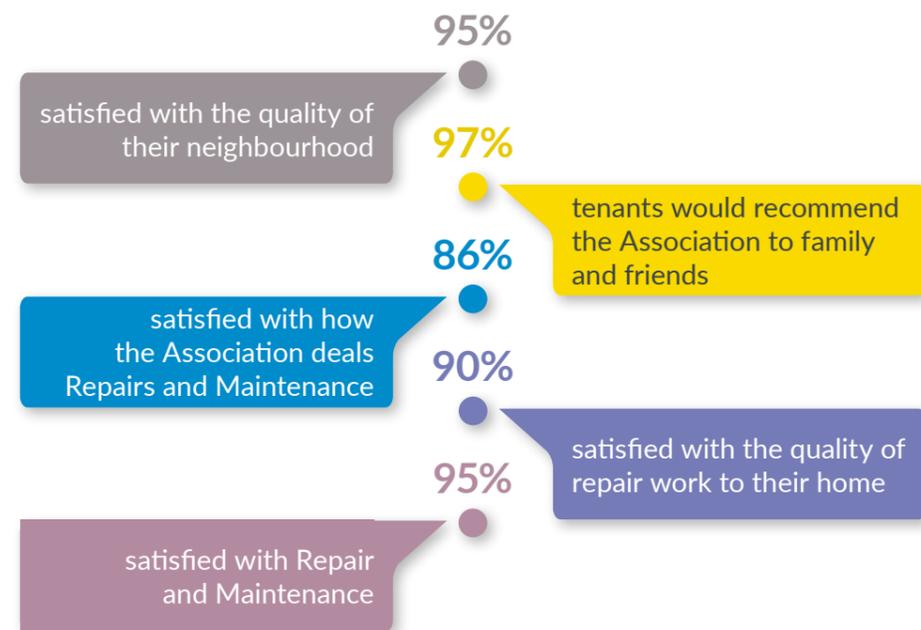
-  Staff use the checklists as minimum standard when dealing with enquiries
-  All departments have a basic understanding of the work of the other departments.
-  Refresher training on complaints policy is provided to all staff
-  Staff provide their name and department when answering a phone-call
-  Staff are cognisant with the Tenants Charter



## Tenant Satisfaction Surveys

South Ulster Housing Association values feedback from our tenants on the services we provide. The results of our 2017/2018 survey illustrates high levels of satisfaction levels across all our services. The purpose of the surveys is to allow tenants an opportunity to effectively assess the services we provide and give them an opportunity to identify areas for improvement which the Association takes on board and undertakes appropriate action. Tenants engagement is vital to ensure that tenants are kept informed of our services and that their views are taken into account.

We continually welcome our tenants to get on board and advise us of areas where we could improve or suggest changes that we could make by contacting us by phone, email [info@southulsterhousing.org](mailto:info@southulsterhousing.org) or by calling into the Office and discussing it with a member of staff.





## Delivering quality homes, services and neighbourhoods

South Ulster Housing Association is committed to providing a first class property maintenance service which meets our tenants' expectations and future aspirations.

### MEASURED TERM CONTRACTOR PERFORMANCE

We are pleased to record that South Ulster Housing Association exceeded Departmental targets across all repair categories in 2017/18.

| Category           | No. completed on time | Total No. completed | % Performance |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Emergency (24 hrs) | 1,520                 | 1,730               | 88%           |
| Urgent (4 days)    | 1,172                 | 1,341               | 87%           |
| Routine (28 days)  | 2,129                 | 2,273               | 94%           |

In order to ensure the repairs service provided meets the needs of our tenants, the Association completed over 560 Quality Assurance inspections on response maintenance works throughout the year.

### Aids & Adaptations

In 2017/18 South Ulster Housing Association completed 45 Disabled Adaptation requests including level access showers, ramps and grab rails. This is an extremely important aspect of our repairs service to ensure our tenants can remain living in their home.

### Stock Condition Surveys

South Ulster Housing Association appointed WH Stephens to undertake surveys on 200 properties in 2017. The results from the sample of 200 properties were extrapolated to represent approximately 560 properties or circa 50% of the Association's total stock profile. Following on from the 2017 surveys the Association is replacing a rolling five year survey with an annual survey of 50 properties with a view to having more timely updates on stock condition.

### Planned Maintenance

South Ulster Housing Association invested over £800k in our planned investment programme in 2017/18 including:

47 Kitchen Replacements

14 Window/Door Replacements

24 Major internal works

18 Heating Upgrades

External Cyclical Maintenance to 200 homes

Quality Assurance Inspections were carried out following completion of the project and we are pleased to note that 100% of our tenants were satisfied with how the contractor completed the works.

As part of the Association's ongoing stock improvement strategy, we have invested over £2.5m in planned works in recent years and we anticipate investing almost £1.0m in 2018/19.

# DEVELOPMENT REPORT



Mill Street, Lisburn



Kensington Mews, Lisburn

The Development department contributed to the success of South Ulster Housing Association during 2017-18 with a contribution to the Social Housing Development Programme of 49 Homes.

### The Homes were delivered to the SHDP as follows:

| Scheme                    | Units     |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Lisburn Off-the Shelf     | 23        |
| Warrenpoint Off-the Shelf | 4         |
| ESP's                     | 22        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>49</b> |

£5.72m

total investment  
in social housing

£3.69m

receivable in Housing  
Association Grant

## New Build Development

In 2017-18 the Association built two schemes, at Hill Street Lurgan (11 units) and Canal Street Newry (6 units) which have now completed.



Canal Street, Newry



Carrick Hill Court, Lurgan

## 2018 and Beyond

South Ulster Housing Association anticipates an onsite start within 2018/19 at Garvaghy Road, Portadown (12 units), Glenavy Land Design and Build (24 units), Sloan Street, Lisburn Land Design and Build (21 units), and to acquire further ESP and OTS properties as they are identified.

Continue to build on the strong finish to 2017/2018 with plans for 2018/2019

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Start onsite Garvaghy Road, Portadown                               | 12 properties |
| Start onsite Sloan Street, Lisburn                                  | 21 properties |
| Start onsite Glen Road, Glenavy                                     | 24 properties |
| Adding further Off The Shelf Properties to our portfolio            | 6 properties  |
| Adding additional Existing Satisfactory Properties to our portfolio | 24 properties |

All in all, Development aim to add a total of 87 properties to the Company portfolio by end 2018-19 financial year. These properties will cover the Council areas of: Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon; Belfast; Lisburn & Castlereagh and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

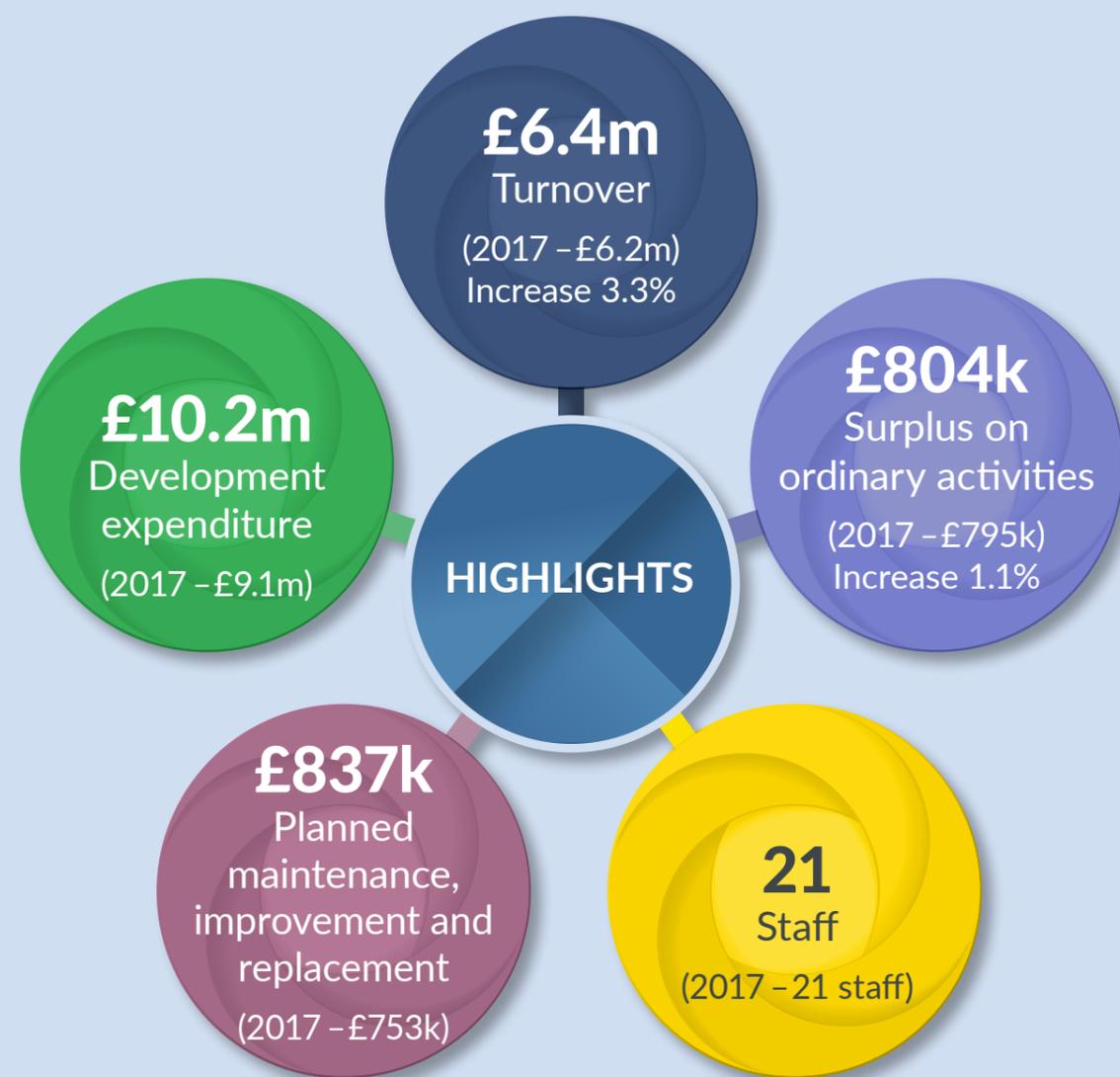
The Association has a further phase of 9 homes to complete at Canal Street, Newry which has been resubmitted for Planning Approval and a site on Eia Street, Belfast for future development and we continue to seek opportunities through Land Design and Build competitions and to source suitable sites for Development.

The Development Team will continue to build strong relationships with local elected representatives, NIHE, DfC, Landowners, Developers, Contractors, Commercial and Estate Agents in areas of need, as identified in the Commissioning Prospectus for the Social Housing Development Programme. Also the team will continue to forge strong links with both the Place Shaping Teams and DPG within NIHE and the Planning Departments of the new Councils.

**Should you have any opportunities you are aware of, please contact:**

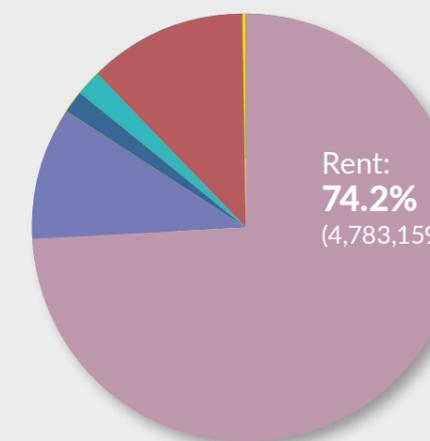
**Development Department**  
on 028 3833 9795  
or email:  
[info@southulsterhousing.org](mailto:info@southulsterhousing.org)

# FINANCE REPORT



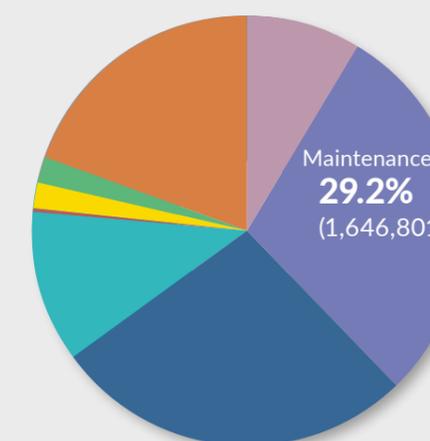
## Turnover analysis

|                                       | £                | %             |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Rent                                  | 4,783,159        | 74.2%         |
| Rates                                 | 649,255          | 10.0%         |
| Affordable Housing                    | 14,928           | 0.2%          |
| Tenant Services                       | 96,161           | 1.5%          |
| Non-social housing activities         | 120,442          | 1.9%          |
| Income from Housing Association Grant | 776,267          | 12.1%         |
| Income from other grants              | 3,702            | 0.1%          |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>6,443,914</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |



## Cost analysis

|                               | £                | %             |
|-------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Property Management           | 488,977          | 8.7%          |
| Maintenance                   | 1,646,801        | 29.2%         |
| Depreciation                  | 1,529,870        | 27.1%         |
| Rates                         | 657,304          | 11.6%         |
| Other social activity costs   | 19,466           | 0.3%          |
| Tenant Services               | 96,161           | 1.8%          |
| Non-social housing activities | 110,273          | 1.9%          |
| Interest Costs                | 1,095,333        | 19.4%         |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>5,644,185</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |



# FINANCE REPORT

## Statement of Comprehensive Income

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Turnover</b>                                | 6,443,914   |
| Operating costs                                | 4,548,852   |
| <b>Operating surplus</b>                       | 1,895,062   |
| Surplus arising from sales of housing property | 285,406     |
| Transfer to disposal proceeds fund             | (258,586)   |
| Interest receivable and similar income         | 836         |
| Interest payable and similar charges           | (1,095,333) |
| Other finance loss                             | (23,000)    |
| <b>Surplus on ordinary activities</b>          | 804,385     |
| Actuarial gain in respect of pension schemes   | 39,000      |
| Retained surplus for the financial year        | 843,385     |
| Retained surplus brought forward               | 13,242,426  |
| <b>Retained surplus carried forward</b>        | 14,085,811  |

## Statement of Financial Position

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| <b>Fixed assets</b>  |                     |
| Housing properties - depreciated cost                          | 83,844,805          |
| Other tangible fixed assets                                    | 716,754             |
|  | <b>84,561,559</b>   |
| <b>Current assets</b>  |                     |
| Debtors  | 987,148             |
| Cash at bank and in hand                                       | 2,591,008           |
|  | <b>3,578,156</b>    |
| <b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>          | <b>(3,115,922)</b>  |
| <b>Net current assets</b>                                      | <b>462,234</b>      |
| <b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>                   | <b>85,023,793</b>   |
|  |                     |
| <b>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</b> | <b>(70,031,891)</b> |
| <b>Pension liability</b>                                       | <b>(906,000)</b>    |
| <b>Net assets</b>  | <b>14,085,902</b>   |
| <b>Capital and reserves</b>                                    |                     |
| Called up share capital  | 18                  |
| Capital reserve  | 73                  |
| Revenue reserve  | 14,085,811          |
| <b>Total funds</b>   | <b>14,085,902</b>   |

### Creditors over 1 year

|                           |                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Loans                     | 23,484,844        |
| Housing Association Grant | 46,279,887        |
| Other                     | 267,160           |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>70,031,891</b> |



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