



Wider Role Policy

Date approved by Management Committee:
Latest review date:

August 2022
August 2025

Wider role policy



1. Introduction

- 1.1 Wider role is defined as activities that the Association is involved in that go beyond the provision, improvement, and management of housing with the aim of improving the economic, social and environmental circumstances of the communities within which the Association operates.
- 1.2 Cernach Housing Association Limited operates within Drumchapel and this wider role policy has been prepared in order to make it clear how we will maximise the positive impact we endeavour to have on the community. The Association will primarily carry out wider role activities which benefit the community in the Association's area of operation to maximise benefit to Cernach Housing Association residents, however will also look to support the community as a whole.
- 1.3 The Association has been operating since 1991 and we have a proven track record as a successful business, with strong links to the community, both in terms of location and commitment to tackling local issues. Furthermore, we are considered as an attractive organisation in terms of funding provision as we have professional staff and are regulated by The Scottish Housing Regulator, as well as being responsible to Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).
- 1.4 Through the wider role policy, the Association will outline how we will utilise the Association's skills, experience, and resources to improve the quality of life of the local community.

2. Policy aims

- 2.1 The key aims of the policy are:
 - To maximise the prosperity of the Drumchapel area of Glasgow
 - To set out the Association's ethos regarding wider role objectives
 - To define the Association's role as a Community Anchor organisation
 - To seek opportunities for developing further strategies to tackle issues within the community.
- 2.2 Each of these is discussed in sections 6.1 to 8.3

Wider Role Policy



3. Legal and regulatory framework

3.1 In fulfilling its obligations with regards to wider role, the Association works closely with The Scottish Government and actively participates in wider role activities with DRUMCOG and with other local groups, such as COPE Scotland.

3.2 In addition and where appropriate, the Association operates within the following legislative framework:

- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
- Data Protection Act
- Health & Safety at Work Act
- The SHR's Standards of Governance & Financial Management
- Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005
- Association's own Rules

3.3 With particular reference to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Association considers the following charitable purposes to be most relevant:

- The prevention and relief of poverty
- The advancement of health
- The advancement of citizenship or community development
- The relief of those in need by reason of age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage (including relief given by the provision of accommodation or care)

3.4 The Association's wider role policy also contributes towards meeting the aims of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, particularly sections as listed below:

- Outcome 11 – Tenancy Sustainment

tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

- Outcomes 14 & 15 – Rents and value for money

Wider Role Policy



a balance is struck between the level of services provided, the cost of the services, and how far current and prospective tenants and service users can afford them

4. Risk management

- 4.1 The Association will adopt a 'risk-aware' approach to wider role activity. Whilst this is an area which can offer attractive benefits to the community and the organisation, it can attract a commensurate level of risk and so this must be balanced appropriately.
- 4.2 A large proportion of the Association's wider role activity is planned, managed and budgeted under the Community Connector project, for which the Association receives funding from Glasgow City Council under the Thriving Places programme. It is necessary therefore that Glasgow City Council have a level of involvement in agreeing programmes for wider role activity which the Association welcomes.
- 4.3 Some of the Association's wider role activities will be carried out in consultation with The Scottish Government as a partner organisation and major funder. Much of this is currently granted to carry out projects in conjunction with COPE Scotland, and the Association therefore receives full funding for these initiatives.
- 4.4 Therefore, in considering risks attached to wider role activities, the Association works within the funding conditions laid down by Glasgow City Council, the HCSP and the Scottish Government. Similarly, the Association includes reference to wider role activities within its risk matrix which, in turn, forms part of the internal management plan.
- 4.5 In operating the wider role policy, the Association will work within its charitable objects outlined in its Rules and will ensure projects undertaken are compatible and complementary to the strategic and operational objectives contained in the Association's Business Plan.
- 4.6 Whether ideas are acted upon as a direct consequence of community request or as a proposed solution to an issue identified by the Association, community consultation is paramount. The Association will keep its residents informed of progress on wider role through its Resident Engagement Strategy.

Wider Role Policy



- 4.7 Failure to approach wider role activities within the conditions of funding by the Scottish Government would likely result in funding requests for future projects being refused and/or funding provided for existing projects being re-claimed and it is therefore of the utmost importance that funding conditions are followed.

5. Equality and human rights

- 5.1 The Association's Equality and Human Rights policy, which was approved by the Committee in April 2021, outlines the Association's commitment to promote a zero tolerance to unfair treatment or discrimination to any person or group of persons, particularly on the basis of any of the protected characteristics¹. This includes ensuring that everyone has equal access to information and services, and, to this end, the Association can make available a copy of this document in a range of alternative formats including large print, translated into another language or by data transferred to voice.
- 5.2 We are also aware of the potential for policies to inadvertently discriminate against an individual or group of individuals. To help tackle this and ensure that it does not occur, best practice suggests that organisations carry out Equality Impact Assessments to help identify any part of a policy that may be discriminatory so that this can be addressed (please see section 6 of the Equality and Human Rights policy for more information).
- 5.3 In line with section 6 of the Equality and Human Rights Policy, the Association carried out an Equality Impact Assessment on this policy and no remedial action was identified as necessary. The full assessment is appended at the end of this policy.

6. Current wider role programme

6.1 Community Connector

- 6.1.1 Cernach Housing Association is identified as a community anchor organisation through Glasgow City Council, and therefore employs a Community Connector on behalf of the Thriving Places programme. This role

¹ The Equality Act 2010 identifies the "protected characteristics" as age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, gender reassignment and sexual orientation.

Wider Role Policy



serves as a point of contact for community activities and projects throughout the Drumchapel area and has been in place since 2016.

- 6.1.2 This role is presently fully funded by Glasgow City Council through the Thriving Places programme. This fund is applied for on an annual basis and therefore is subject to this funding being successful.
- 6.1.3 Funding for the main project costs is applied for from a range of sources and can be single project, annual or multi-year funds. Project applications and funding requests are generally managed by the Community Connector with the support of the Association's management team and Management Committee.
- 6.1.4 The focus of this role is predominantly guided by community feedback and priorities, as well as emerging issues in the local area.
- 6.1.5 Discretion is given to this role to take on volunteers and temporary members of staff in line with budgets and funding conditions in order to further the work of ongoing projects.
- 6.1.6 Oversight of this project is given by the Association's Management Team, Management Committee and by key funders such as the Scottish Government.
- 6.2 **COPE Scotland**
 - 6.2.1 The Association serves as a partner and funding conduit for the organisation COPE Scotland which is a community mental health charity operating in Drumchapel.
 - 6.2.2 Applications for various projects have been made to the Scottish Government which have been consistently successful.
 - 6.2.3 Projects have taken place around a range of initiatives including social isolation, digital participation, environmentalism and mental health issues.
 - 6.2.4 This project is almost entirely overseen by COPE Scotland, with administrative and financial checks being carried out by the Association as the relevant funding conduit.

Wider Role Policy



6.2.5 Oversight of this project is given predominantly by the Assurance & Improvement Co-ordinator, and the Management Committee where appropriate.

6.3 Welfare Benefits Advice

6.2.1 In 2019 the Association took the decision to bring a mainstream welfare rights services to the Association. This takes the form of a full-time Welfare Rights and Tenancy Sustainment Officer. This service is offered out to the Association's residents and offers a holistic welfare rights and benefits service.

6.3.2 Through this role, access to funding for one-off projects such as energy advice and advocacy, voucher schemes and COVID-19 relief schemes has been possible.

6.3.3 This is a full-time permanent role within the Association and funding for this has been built into long-term financial considerations.

6.3.4 This role sits within the Associations' Housing Management team and is supported by the Association's Management Team and Management Committee. Quarterly reporting is made on welfare rights 'gains' to the Operational sub-Committee, alongside regular reports and promotion in the Association's newsletters.

6.4 Internal Activities

6.4.1 The Association also operates minor wider role projects without formal funding from external agencies. Annual events such as the 'gala day' serve as an open invitation for community participation, and one-off activities such as pensioner's lunches serve as an important activity for social cohesiveness, as well as meeting resident engagement objectives.

6.4.2 The Association will continue to offer services on an ad-hoc basis which is generally budgeted within resident engagement activities.

6.5 Community Benefits

6.5.1 Whilst the Association has few contracts which qualify for formal 'community benefits' when being procured, the Association will strive to ensure that any

Wider Role Policy



such benefits are agreed in advance by the Management Committee and will seek to provide the greatest benefit to the community when reviewing options available dependent on contractor proposals.

7. Consideration of future projects

7.1 The Scottish Government's continues to have wider role priorities to provide funding to help registered social landlords undertake activities that assist the regeneration of their communities. RSLs have tenants in some of the most economically disadvantaged areas in Scotland and many of them, including Cernach, have developed a strong commitment to improving their local communities.

7.2 The Association's commitment to wider role is noted in the business plan which notes delivery of such projects as a strength. We will develop new wider role projects at a local level in response to local needs, ensuring an appropriate fit with one or more of the following Government objectives, and demonstrating a focus on the following priorities:

- Improving employability
- Tackling Poverty and making early interventions
- Improving the quality of the environment

We will also ensure that projects should also demonstrate that they fit with any local regeneration plans that may exist.

7.3 The Association will consider the impact any wider role activity may have on some or all of the following areas:

- Improving health
- Increasing educational attainment
- Improving levels of community safety, including reducing levels of anti-social behaviour
- Employability
- Improving transport
- Increasing environmental sustainability
- Increasing levels of income or access to affordable credit
- Building the skills, motivation, networks and confidence of local people

Wider Role Policy



- 7.4 Where appropriate, we will consider projects which would be best delivered in conjunction with other DRUMCOG RSLs. Should this be the case, each wider role activity will be proposed at DRUMCOG senior officers' meetings or at joint meetings attended by the Management Committees of the DRUMCOG RSLs. The overriding consideration will be how the local community can be positively affected by joint working for each proposed project.
- 7.5 The Association will consult periodically on wider role activity in line with the Resident Engagement Policy and Strategy. Where new projects are being considered, wider community consultation may be appropriate and will be carried out prior to approval of any projects. Where it can be demonstrated that there is or is not sufficient community and resident support for a particular project, this will be a primary consideration in moving to implementation of projects.
- 7.6 In addition to fitting in with national strategies, the Association will ensure activities fit with local plans. This will be achieved not only via the Community Planning process, but by consulting with other agencies such as local authority, police, community council, the Scottish Government and other local voluntary organisations.
- 7.7 Before undertaking any wider role activity, the Association will firstly ensure we can demonstrate a clear rationale for involvement in such activity based on analysis of community needs, the contribution made by others to meet these needs and the Association's own capacity to meet them.
- 7.8 Before proceeding we will ensure that we are legally and constitutionally permitted to undertake the wider role activities we have identified and that we have taken account of any regulatory guidance and good practice publications.
- 7.9 We will ensure that the risk attached to the any wider role activity does not represent a threat to the Association's core activities or overall financial viability.
- 7.10 We will, through the financial management systems, account separately for all wider role activities.

8. Funding, monitoring and evaluating wider role activities

- 8.1 For the majority of externally funded projects, the Association is required to provide a report to the funder at the preliminary, interim and completion stages. These reports will ensure that the project is meeting the funders' requirements, determine sooner rather than later whether the proposed outcomes are being met and whether the project is achieving what it set out to do. It is the responsibility of the lead officer of the project to co-ordinate these.
- 8.2 In addition, depending on the nature of the project, evaluation report(s) for a specified period of time after the completion of the project will be required. These will be determined prior to funding being issued and it is the responsibility of the lead officer of the project to co-ordinate these.
- 8.3 For all projects that the Association contributes financial resources to, an evaluation will be required. The framework for this will be set by the Assurance sub-Committee prior to commencement of the project and will be reported to the sub-Committee periodically throughout the duration of the project and following completion.

9. Policy review

- 9.1 The wider role policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner as deemed necessary by legal, regulatory or best practice requirement or on the request of the Management Committee. The next review will take place by August 2025.

Wider role policy



<h2 style="margin: 0;">Cernach Housing Association Equality Impact Assessment Tool</h2>	
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Name of the policy / proposal to be assessed	Wider Role Policy	Is this a new policy / proposal or a revision?	Revision
Person(s) responsible for the assessment	Emma McShane, Assurance & Improvement Co-ordinator		
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy / proposal	To define the Association’s approach in relation to wider role activity.		
2. Who is intended to benefit from the policy / proposal? <i>(e.g. applicants, tenants, staff, contractors)</i>	Tenants, owners, stakeholders and those residing in the community		
3. What outcomes are wanted from this policy / proposal ? <i>(e.g. the benefits to customers)</i>	By defining what services the association will consider providing outside the core activity as a registered social landlord, the community will know what actions the Association can take to improve the lives of those in the local area.		

Wider Role Policy



4. Which protected characteristics could be affected by the proposal? (tick all that apply)

Age
 Disability
 Marriage & Civil Partnership
 Pregnancy/Maternity
 Race
 Religion or Belief
 Gender
 Gender Reassignment
 Sexual Orientation

5. If the policy / proposal is not relevant to any of the protected characteristics listed in part 4, state why and end the process here.

All groups are impacted by the policy in the same way and there is no obvious effects of the policy on any group more than another.

	Positive impact(s)	Negative impact(s)
6. Describe the likely positive or negative impact(s) the policy / proposal could have on the groups identified in part 4		
7. What actions are required to address the impacts arising from this assessment? (This might include; collecting additional data, putting monitoring in place, specific actions to mitigate negative impacts).		

Signed: (Job title): Assurance & Improvement Co-ordinator

Date the Equality Impact Assessment was completed: 27/07/2022

Please attach the completed document as an appendix to your policy / proposal report