



Paisley Housing Association  
**Connected Communities Strategy**  
**2026 to 2029**

A Safe, Happy, Healthy and Thriving  
Community

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## 1.0 Executive Summary

We are proud to launch our Connected Communities Strategy outlining our strategic approach to enhancing community engagement and investing in fostering resilient communities across the areas we serve. This strategy is rooted in our mission and values which outline our commitment to social justice, inclusion, and community resilience. The strategy sets out a framework for delivering meaningful engagement and building community resilience that reflects the diverse needs of our tenants and communities.

Community investment is central to our mission. We will work collaboratively with local stakeholders, voluntary organisations, and public services to co-design and deliver projects that build social capital, reduce inequalities, and create opportunities to enhance resources within our communities to make them resilient, diverse, welcoming and thriving.

To deliver this strategy we will engage with our tenants and the wider community to make a social investment in the people within the community and the essential resources and partners that operate in the same areas.

In delivering our Connected Communities strategy we will accompany this with a delivery and action plan which are underpinned by robust data analysis, tenant feedback and continuous improvement. We will monitor outcomes through a framework of key performance indicators and impact measures, ensuring transparency and accountability in everything we do.

By aligning our Connected Communities Strategy with national policy priorities, we reaffirm our role as a trusted anchor organisation committed to inclusive growth and sustainable communities.

## 2.0 Our Mission and Values

We are proud to work in the vibrant town of Paisley and share appreciation for the rich and long history and heritage of our community.

Our mission reminds us and others of why and what we do and is core to the Paisley Housing Association Way. Our core mission which is:

**'To be a sustainable innovative and inclusive, community-led organisation.'**

This then leads on to the values that we hold most important and guide us in what we do, these are:

- **Integrity** We are open, honest and accountable
- **Respect** We offer tolerance and compassion
- **Positive** We offer tolerance and compassion

- **Community** We are community-focused and collaborative

The mission and these values act to underpin the approach outlined in this strategy.

### **3.0 Strategic Direction**

This strategy outlines the Association's approach to Connected Communities for the period covered by the Paisley Housing Association's Strategic Map from 2025 to 2028. In particular the outlined areas of *Responsive Services, Productive Partnerships* and *Resilient Organisation*.

The Connected Communities Strategy focusses on two key themes:

- **Community Engagement** through events and opportunities to participate
- **Community Investment** through investing resources and gaining external funding, to improve Social Impact within our communities, access and resilience.

Through innovation, engagement, and partnership, we aim to build a brighter future – placing people and communities at the heart of everything we do.

These plans have been prepared as part of a suite of plans that link together to form the planning, performance, and governance management of Paisley Housing Association Group.

Our Business Plan is the comprehensive planning document for Paisley Housing Association. The Connected Communities Strategy sets the strategic objectives for this function within the business. It is accompanied by an Operational Delivery Plan and Action Plan which set out clear timescales and targets for the staff team to deliver and monitor.

This will be updated annually to ensure that the goals outlined in this Strategy are delivered and that the Board will be provided with assurance that these are being met.

### 3.1. Our Strategic Map 2025-28



### 3.2 Our Strategic Priorities

We recognise the need to continually adapt, improve, and innovate. Our Board has pointed our strategic direction towards growth particularly in relation to engagement across the wider community.

In delivering this strategy we will accomplish this by engagement with our tenants and linking with our Customer Insight and Influence Strategy to deliver on tenant's needs and aspirations for their communities.

In doing this we will strengthen our response to the strategic objectives:

- **Responsive services** by enhancing engagement with our tenants, owners and the wider community to ensure our services are fit for purpose and provide pathways for these groups to become more involved.
- **Productive Partnerships** by working with other partners within the community that will assist in delivering services that promote resilience within the community. Where appropriate acting as a lead partner in relation to potential funding bids that will provide new, or enhance existing, services.
- **Resilient Organisation** by ensuring that we operate transparently to provide assurance relating to our community activities and ensure that our obligations, whether they be to a regulator, funder or partner, are met.

#### Our priorities for delivering Responsive Services;

| Strategic Objectives  |
|---|
| Ensure that we have adequate staffing resources and budget to deliver Community Engagement and Investment |
| Maximise engagement with our services through delivery of an annual program of events                     |
| Maximise funding opportunities to deliver services and social investment within our communities           |
| Ensure a data driven approach to designing and delivering Community Engagement and Investment             |
| Maximise partnership working in delivery of services  |

#### Our Priorities for delivering Productive Partnerships

| Strategic Objectives   |
|--|
| Build on our record of strong project management and project delivery.                                     |
| Review and strengthen our approach to partnership and collaboration.                                       |
| Continue to work with others to secure additional resources for our most vulnerable tenants and residents. |
| Develop the opportunities to work collaboratively within FLAIR.  |

Act as a lead partner, where appropriate, through initiatives operating in our community

## **Our Priorities for delivering a Resilient Organisation**

| <b>Strategic Objectives</b>                               |
|---|
| Strengthen our organisational resilience                  |
| Invest in our people and organisational culture           |
| Strengthen our approach to risk, assurance, and reporting |
| Explore opportunities for growth                          |

The delivery of these strategic priorities will be outlined in the Action plan which will be reviewed annually

### **4.0 Background Information**

Paisley Housing Association has a long-standing legacy of community investment.

The Association was established in 1984 by a steering group committed to revitalising the south of Paisley. Initially, the Association focused on the comprehensive rehabilitation of tenement properties. In 1993, it expanded its efforts by completing its first new-build project.

In 1998, after years of negotiation, former Scottish Homes properties in the Foxbar and Rivers areas were transferred to the Association.

In 2004, the Association became a registered charity with the primary objective of supporting those in need due to age, ill health, disability, financial hardship, or other disadvantages within the community of Paisley. This is achieved through the provision, construction, improvement, and management of housing. The areas in which the Association operates are among the 24% most deprived in Scotland.

In 2016, the organisation rebranded as Paisley Housing Association to reflect its broader reach. Today, the Association owns and manages over 1300 rented homes, part-owns 1 shared ownership property, and factors over 280 properties.

The Association is committed to delivering high-quality, affordable homes and excellent customer service. It remains a charitable, registered Social Landlord.

Paisley Housing Association is governed by a Board of volunteers, which includes tenants, housing professionals, and individuals with a strong interest in Renfrewshire's housing sector. The Board's strength lies in its diverse mix of experience, skills, and backgrounds. Professional staff are employed to oversee

the management of properties and ensure the Association continues to meet the needs of our community.

In recent years, our priorities for Connecting Communities have focussed around the improvement of the data that we hold and use, mitigation and alleviation of social issues, poverty and to improve opportunity and resilience amongst our tenants and the wider community.

This has involved delivering on multiple initiatives through our previous Community Engagement Action plans to support improved resilience in the community and opportunities to participate:

- Feedback on the format of our Annual Charter Report and implementation of improvements based on this
- Increased opportunities for tenant feedback which has been achieved through surveys
- Increased visibility within our communities
- Increased content available on our webpage and Social Media
- The successful introduction of a Bulletin which has now expanded into a seasonal newsletter
- Closer relationships with partners within the Community
- Securing external funding and expanded Advice Service focusing on Income Maximisation and Fuel Poverty
- The provision of crisis schemes and Fuelbank schemes to alleviate poverty caused by COVID lockdowns, increased inflation and cost of living pressures
- The provision of assistance to allow vulnerable tenants to make their house a home
- The provision of cycle lockers in 78 homes in 13 tenement closes to make active travel and cycling to work and school a more viable option
- Reintroduction of our annual Children's Christmas party and Garden competition following Covid
- The provision of Panto tickets to local schools
- Engaging with partners operating in the local community
- Being a provider of funded work placements and employability opportunities across the business

Each of our communities has distinct characteristics, which develop unique challenges and opportunities. Through previous research we have also identified 'hotspots' where turnover was increasing, despite an overall trend for decreasing turnover.

#### **4.1. Breakdown of Community Characteristics**

| <b>Community</b>  | <b>Characteristics</b>   |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>South Area</b> | Largely urban area, little green space outwith back courts. A small number of suburban areas with more green spaces. |



|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
|                    | <p>Largely sandstone tenement properties, many mixed tenure</p> <p>Some other types of flats and a small number of Houses</p> <p>Largely good access to amenities such as shops, GP surgeries etc.</p> <p>Limited access to Libraries in local area.</p> <p>Community Centre in local area</p> <p>Easy Access to railway station with links to Glasgow.</p>                                      |
| <b>West End</b>    | <p>Urban area, little green space outwith back courts</p> <p>Largely sandstone tenement properties, with some tenement properties developed post war. Including Mixed Tenure</p> <p>Excellent access to amenities such as shops, libraries and GP surgeries.</p> <p>Community Centre in local area</p> <p>Easy Access to railway station with links to Glasgow, Greenock and North Ayrshire.</p> |
| <b>Town Centre</b> | <p>Urban area, little green space outwith back courts</p> <p>Largely sandstone tenement properties</p> <p>Excellent access to amenities such as shops, libraries and GP surgeries.</p> <p>Community Centre in nearby area.</p> <p>Easy Access to railway station with links to Glasgow, Greenock and North Ayrshire</p>  |
| <b>Foxbar</b>      | <p>Suburban area with more green spaces</p> <p>A mix of post-war tenement properties, houses, cottage flats and one multi-storey</p> <p>Some local shops and a local library</p> <p>No GP surgery in local area</p> <p>Community Centre in local area</p> <p>Rivers Hotspot</p>  |
| <b>Glenburn</b>    | <p>Suburban area with more green spaces</p> <p>Modern houses and cottage flats</p> <p>Excellent access to amenities such as shops, libraries and GP surgeries.</p> <p>Community Centre in local area</p>   |

## 5.0 Local Context

Paisley is located in Renfrewshire, West Central Scotland, and covers a land area of approximately 270 square kilometres. Over 184,000 people live in Renfrewshire, with a population projected to continue to grow over the next ten years, particularly the older population aged sixty and over. It is also expected that the number of households will increase to over 90,000 by 2028, driven by

an increasing number of single adult or two-adult households without children. While Paisley is less ethnically diverse than Scotland as a whole, we know it is a place of growing ethnic diversity, with primary schools particularly reflecting this increase. Paisley has a rich history, strong cultural identity, and a tradition of creativity and innovation.

Paisley neighbourhood areas we cover are in the Town Centre, West End, South, Foxbar and Glenburn. These are historically significant neighbourhoods that continue to grow and evolve.

Renfrewshire ranks as the 9<sup>th</sup> lowest Local Authority area out of 32 according to SIMD rankings with 13.3% of zones in the lowest decile and 10.7% ranking in the second lowest decile (SIMD 2020)

In terms of Paisley HA stock, the majority of our stock in Foxbar, particularly the areas around the Rivers and Oliphant Court, are in the lowest 10% decile.

The remaining areas of our stock lie within the 20% and 30% decile. Overall, our stock lies in areas which are more deprived than Renfrewshire as a whole.

In the last few years, Paisley Housing Association has made significant strides post COVID to engage further within our communities and expand our reach. Examples of this include:

- Co-hosting a *Cost of Living* event at Paisley Southend Action Centre with Renfrewshire Community and Learning Development services
- Launching frequent surgeries within our South, Foxbar, West End and Glenburn Communities
- Supporting the delivery of Welfare Rights and Energy Advice in Williamsburgh Housing Association by sharing externally funded staff.
- Delivery of £56,883 in the form of fuel vouchers within the community between April 2021 and March 2025
- Delivering on our traditional events (i.e. our Annual Garden Competition and Children's Christmas Party)
- Focusing on building informal partnerships and creating a Community Hub resource which will be made available to other community partners.

## **6.0 Wider Issues Affecting Housing Associations in Scotland (2025)**

The following sector wide challenges have informed the development of our service delivery approach to Community Engagement and Investment.

The Scottish Social Housing sector in 2025 is navigating a complex landscape shaped by economic constraints, political reform, technological advancement, and a growing emphasis on sustainability. Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

are expected to deliver secure, affordable housing while adopting community-focused, collaborative approaches to service delivery.

Wider issues we have considered in shaping this delivery plan include;

### **6.1 Housing Supply and Demand Pressures**

Scotland continues to face a significant housing crisis, with demand for social housing far outstripping supply. This imbalance has led to:

- Increased pressure from Local Authorities on RSLs to prioritise Section 5 homeless referrals who will often require an increased level of support to transition to a permanent tenancy.
- Reduced mobility for existing tenants, who may struggle to transfer to more suitable accommodation (e.g. larger homes for growing families), making it more important for tenants to be settled in the property in which they live.

### **6.2 Rising Support Needs Among Tenants**

There is a marked increase in tenants with complex support needs, often linked to repeat homelessness and other vulnerabilities. This emphasises the need to have strong and enduring partnerships across the business.

Fostering and maintaining these partnerships are a Community Investment, and are vitally important for delivering our services, and supporting our tenants and the communities we serve.

### **6.3 Political Developments**

A new Housing Bill is expected to introduce additional compliance and operational requirements for RSLs. Simultaneously, RSLs are expected to continue to;

- Empower communities
- Increase tenant engagement
- Maintain high satisfaction levels, all while managing constrained resources.

### **6.4 Financial Constraints**

PHA, like other RSLs, is facing rising costs across maintenance, development, and service contracts. This has direct implications for:

- Stock investment and improvement programmes
- Affordability and rent-setting strategies
- Tenant satisfaction and property desirability

Balancing financial sustainability with service quality and affordability remains a core challenge.

## **7.0 Regulatory Requirements and Charter Outcomes for Housing Associations in Scotland**

In Scotland, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) are regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) under a comprehensive Regulatory Framework, most recently updated in April 2024. This section outlines the key regulatory requirements, Charter outcomes, and relevant legislation that guide housing management practices.

### **7.1 Regulatory Requirements**

The table below summarises the key regulatory requirements for Tenancy Support and Community Investment as defined by the Scottish Housing Regulator:

| <b>Requirement</b>         | <b>Summary</b>   |
|----------------------------|--|
| Tenant & Resident Services | Deliver high-quality, accessible, and responsive services focused on safety, affordability, and satisfaction.                  |
| Annual Assurance Statement | Submit by 31 October annually. Must confirm compliance or outline improvement plans. Promotes transparency and accountability. |
| Performance Monitoring     | Report on KPIs such as rent arrears, tenant satisfaction, and homelessness services.   |
| Risk-Based Regulation      | SHR focuses on homelessness, affordability, and systemic failures.   |
| Tenant Involvement         | Tenants must be actively involved in shaping services and decisions.   |

### **7.2 Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes**

Introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, the Scottish Social Housing Charter sets standards and outcomes that RSLs must aim to achieve when performing service activities.

- **Outcome 1: Equalities:** Ensuring that every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.
- **Outcome 2: Communication:** Keeping tenants and other customers informed about services and decisions that affect them.
- **Outcome 3: Participation:** Ensuring tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.
- **Outcome 13: Value for Money:** Tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

### 7.3 Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) and Key Housing Legislation

Each year the Association reports to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) on our performance in achieving the standards and outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

We then publish an annual report to tenants on our performance, including comparisons against the Scottish averages and other landlords such as our Local Authority, Renfrewshire Council, and Williamsburgh Housing Association.

### 7.4 Key Housing Legislation for Community Engagement and Investment includes:

- **Housing (Scotland) Act 2010:** Established the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR), introduced the Scottish Social Housing Charter, and requires RSLs to meet Charter outcomes and submit performance data.
- **Housing (Scotland) Act 2001:** Introduced the Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) and Short SST, set out tenants' rights including succession, assignation, and subletting, and required RSLs to have tenant participation strategies.
- **Equality Act 2010:** Requires RSLs to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in housing services, including allocations, lettings, repairs, and governance.
- **Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002:** Applies to RSLs since 2019, requiring them to respond to FOI requests and proactively publish key information.
- **Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR:** Governs how RSLs handle tenant and staff data, requiring lawful, transparent, and secure data processing.

## **7.5 National Standards for Community Engagement**

The Scottish Community Development Centre developed the National Standards for Community Engagement in 2016. The National Standards for Community Engagement are a set of good practice principles designed to support and inform the process of community engagement.

The National Standards set out good practice expectations with regard to the following:

- **Inclusion**
- **Support**
- **Communication**
- **Methods**
- **Planning**
- **Working Together, and;**
- **Impact**

## **8.0 KEY OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES**

Our key goals are:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Community Investment                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise and explore applications for external funding to support projects that work with community partners to the benefit of our tenants, factored owners and communities. In particular multi-year funding which will deliver transformative benefits</li> <li>• Maximise opportunities for community partners to make use of our new Community Hub for events and regular sessions</li> <li>• Maximise opportunities for tenants, factored owners and other community stakeholders to participate</li> <li>• The creation of a Community Benefit Fund which local charities and community groups can apply to for support with a project.</li> <li>• Continue the use of periodic and regular surveys and data collection to inform service delivery</li> <li>• Maximise engagement opportunities to encourage participation in our Customer Insight and Influence Strategy once developed</li> <li>• Support employability in the local community by partnership with agencies offering work placement and work experience opportunities to local people</li> </ul> |
| Community Engagement                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase opportunities for tenants and the community to engage with us as an Association.</li> <li>• Monitor and improve customer satisfaction through surveys and feedback mechanisms.</li> <li>• Provide accessible, inclusive services tailored to diverse tenant needs.</li> </ul>   |
| Regulatory Compliance and Performance Monitoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter.</li> <li>• Submit accurate Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) to the Scottish Housing Regulator.</li> <li>• Use performance data to drive continuous improvement and transparency.</li> </ul>  |
| Value for Money and Efficiency                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procure services cost-effectively while maintaining quality.</li> <li>• Benchmark performance against peers to identify areas for improvement</li> </ul>   |

These operational priorities will be factored into our service delivery and action plans and reported upon as outlined in this strategy.

We will ensure our goals and objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound.

## **9.0 Performance and Benchmarking**

Paisley Housing Association is committed to delivering high-quality services that improve the well-being and living conditions of our tenants and the wider community.

We will assess the progress of the strategy through a number of means:

- Progress towards our annual service delivery and action plans
- When the ARC figures are issued by the Regulator, we compare our performance against the Scottish Average as well as another local RSL (Williamsburgh HA) and our Local Authority, Renfrewshire Council. In particular, the performance measures for:
  - Overall satisfaction
  - Opportunities to participate
  - Satisfaction with communications
- Reports on progress will be provided to the Board, Performance and Operations sub-committee and to tenants and the wider community through our Annual Performance Report and through our newsletter.

## **10.0 Business Growth and Sustainability**

Paisley Housing Association is undergoing an exciting period of growth and transformation. A key aspect of this is our investment in a community hub within our offices, which will serve as a central resource for residents, owners, and local groups and partners.

We are actively collaborating with the local authority to align our services with broader community support initiatives. We are also engaging with local partners and social enterprises to offer valuable services that meet the needs of our diverse community. We will collaborate with local schools and businesses to promote economic growth and encourage community engagement.

Through these efforts, we aim to strengthen community ties, provide essential support services, and ensure that our residents and owners benefit from a well-integrated and sustainable housing association model.

While Community Engagement and Investment is the responsibility of all staff, there will be some key staff involved in the organisation and delivery of this resource. These are outlined below.



To expand what is currently delivered by the Association for Community Engagement and Investment, the Association will require to make a commitment in terms of financial resources.

This will allow Paisley Housing Association to assume a leadership role in this field amongst the Housing Associations in Renfrewshire.

### **11.0 Engaging Our Tenants, Residents & Owners**

At the core of our services are our tenants and the local community we serve. Their needs and priorities shape our services, and we are committed to maintaining open, transparent, and participatory decision-making. We will continue to engage through surveys, consultations, surgeries, and forums to gather insights and feedback.

We will maximise opportunities to participate and attend external community events to increase opportunities to engage with our tenants and the wider community.

### **12.0 Partnering with Local Authorities & Government Bodies**

We recognise the role of continuing collaboration, particularly with our Local Authority, Renfrewshire Council. We also recognise the role of governing bodies including The Scottish Housing Regulator in providing regulatory oversight and organisations such as Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum (GWSF) who are the leading membership body for community-controlled housing associations and co-operatives in West Central Scotland. Its main purpose is to promote, represent, and campaign on behalf of RSLs and to share information and best practice.

Maintaining and maximising opportunities to engage with these bodies allows us to maximise outcomes for our tenants and influence, where possible, the policy agenda. There is also the opportunity for us to publicise our services, to share learning, and develop relationships with potential funders and partners.

This increases opportunities of sourcing funding and additional services which may benefit our tenants, factored owners and communities, and the opportunity to become a partner of choice.

### **13.0 Collaborating with Contractors**

We are committed to utilising our collaboration with contractors to provide Community Benefits clauses which will be utilised to create a Community Benefit Fund to support local grassroots and community groups.

## 14.0 Equality & Diversity

At PHA, we are dedicated to promoting Equality and Diversity for all individuals and groups. We are committed to ensuring that no one experiences discrimination on any grounds, including but not limited to gender, marital status, family circumstances, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, religion or belief, political opinion, or sexual orientation.

Our goal is to provide equal opportunities that empower all our tenants, owners, and local communities to engage fully in our services and activities. Our policies are designed to promote inclusion, social justice, and respect for diversity in all our areas of business.

As an equality-focused organisation, PHA will:

- **Promote Equal Opportunity** - Ensure fair treatment for all in the delivery of both housing and non-housing services.
- **Uphold Equality in Employment** - Maintain equality in the recruitment, employment, and development of our staff.
- **Prevent Discrimination** - Ensure that no individual is discriminated against based on race, ethnicity, colour, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, or physical or mental disability.
- **Support Underrepresented Groups** - Actively engage with disadvantaged and underrepresented groups in our community, helping them access our housing and support services.
- **Embed Equality Principles** - Integrate our equality commitments into all operational aspects, including contractor procurement and Board governance.
- **Raise Awareness** - Inform tenants, owners, and service users about our obligations under equality legislation and our commitment to equal opportunities.
- **Regular Review** - Continually review and update our Equality and Diversity Strategy to ensure alignment with the Equality Act 2010, and to reflect best practices and the evolving needs of our community.

## 15.0 Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring the delivery of this strategy is essential to the effective delivery and will develop further during its life span. As such we will:

- **Regularly monitor progress on our Connected Communities Action Plan** through our Board and Performance and Operations sub-committee
- **Work closely with staff involved in our Customer Insight and Involvement Strategy** to ensure that tenants have a voice in delivering and reviewing this strategy

- **Communicate with tenants and the wider community** by publishing a performance update in our Annual Performance Report and in our Newsletter

## **16.0 Conclusion**

**The Connected Communities Strategy** sets out a clear and ambitious roadmap for **Community Engagement and Investment** at Paisley Housing Association. It demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement, tenant satisfaction, and strategic alignment with broader organisational goals **and will drive to improve satisfaction and meet our requirements to the Scottish Housing Regulator, funders and the wider community.**

## **17.0 Related Strategies**

- Business Plan 2025-2028
- Asset Management Strategy
- Customer Involvement Strategy
- Value for Money Strategy
- 5 Year Financial Plan
- 30 Year Financial Model
- Strategic Risk Register
- Customer Care Standards
- PSPS service delivery plan
- Advice Team delivery plan
- Housing Management delivery plan



