

Plus Dane Housing



*Quality homes,
great services,
vibrant communities*



Corporate plan 2024 | 27



Contents

Welcome	3
Where we work	4
What influences us	6
Then	5
Now	5
Our future	10
Pillars of all our services	13

Welcome...

to our new corporate plan

This plan builds on over 45 years' experience of providing homes for rent and shared ownership across Merseyside and Cheshire as well as housing support for those residents that are older or who have vulnerabilities.

Plus Dane Housing started life as CDS Housing in 1976, using a grant to buy 400 terraced houses from a London Housing Association. From the 1970's through to the 1990's, Plus Dane grew through a range of acquisitions and partnerships. In 2008, it merged with Dane Housing, based in Congleton, forming the Plus Dane that we know today.

We have a strong history of development, building a range of general needs, sheltered and extra care homes which have helped meet local need. We have also grown into an organisation with a track record in shared ownership, helping our customers to get on the property ladder in ways they may not otherwise be able to. As a trusted social landlord, we also offer some market rent homes giving customers the peace of mind of working with a responsible landlord in the private rented sector.

However, our roots firmly remain in social housing. Supporting customers to access homes in our core neighbourhoods at an affordable price is essential. We also offer much needed support, advice and services to help customers live comfortably in their homes or to enrich their lives. Fulfilling our social purpose is something that has remained firm throughout our history.



We own over
13,500 homes



We house around
30,000 customers



We employ almost
600 colleagues



Our annual
income is over
£100m



Our asset
base is over
£650m



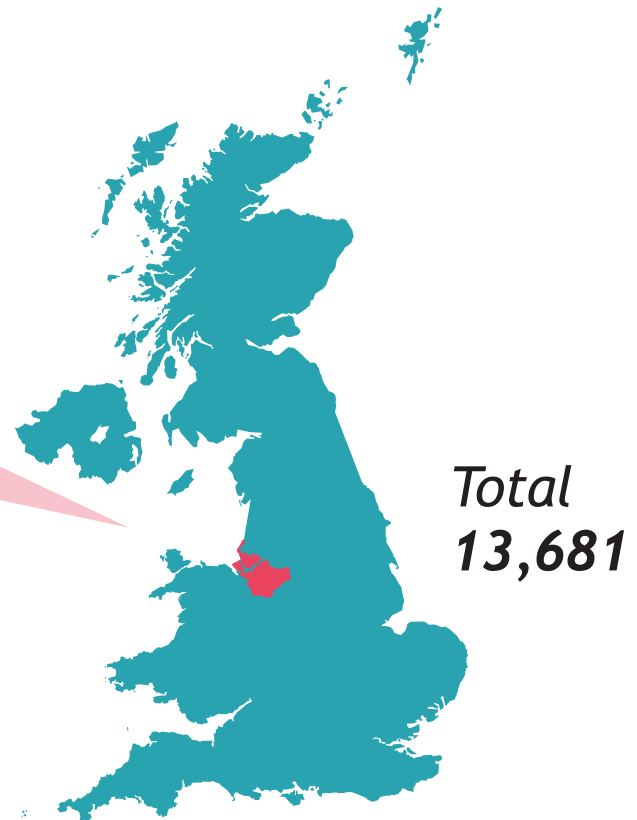
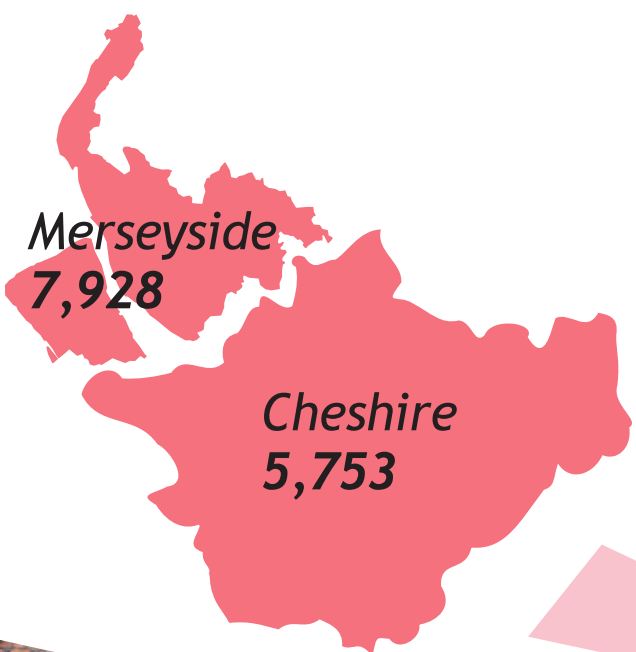
We have over
60 supported or
older persons
schemes

Where we work

Our homes are predominately based in **Merseyside** and **Cheshire**, covering **11 local authority** areas. We work alongside our local authority partners and lead, contribute or influence where required. We are acutely aware of the pressures on all statutory agencies and are committed to working with partners to address need whilst reducing duplication of delivery.

Our **Growth Strategy** addresses our **future development, acquisition, and regeneration aspirations.**

Our priority will always be existing neighbourhoods however we have an open approach to considering opportunities that are complementary to our existing homes and neighbourhoods and meet housing need.



Plus Dane Communities team



What influences us

Whilst this plan details our vision and ambition for the next three years, like most organisations, we have a number of external influences that prescribe what we do and how we do it outside of general economic pressures:

- Government is responsible for setting much of the policy frameworks we work within. This includes rent setting. Whilst we welcomed a five-year deal, this was impacted in 2023 by a rent cap due to the inflation rate and potential for rents to increase exponentially. We will continue to work with national and regional forums to campaign for a longer-term plan for housing which allows us to meet current and future housing need. This is a key priority for us as a longer-term deal will help us meet our vision by delivering greater financial certainty.
- Regulator of Social Housing - in the spirit of co-regulation, we maintain a positive relationship with the Regulator. In 2024 Consumer Standards will change, influenced by a number of high profile failures within the sector. The new Consumer Standards released in 2024 will be critical to raising standards within social housing and Plus Dane is committed to ensuring compliance through this plan and beyond.
- Rising costs for both investment in new and existing homes is not matched by rental incomes being at affordable levels therefore long-term funding streams are required to support the sector to meet housing need and net zero carbon requirements. Without this, it makes it difficult to fund such initiatives through the life of our business plan particularly as rental valuations do not take account of investment works and are linked to locational value only.



Crosby Development

The biggest influence on our business is housing need. Populations are predicted to rise across the UK by 2028, 4% in the North-West over this period driven by people living longer and migration increasing. This will compound the current housing crisis which already demonstrates a shortage of affordable housing. Economic challenges have slowed down development for us and we have experienced lower than expected empty homes numbers, which means waiting lists continue to swell. Whilst we continue to build, it is not currently at a rate to support demand. Homelessness continues to be a challenge with Liverpool City Council naming it as an emergency in late 2023.

Additionally, we know that access to good quality housing supports the economic prosperity of a region but more importantly impacts on the health and wellbeing of those living in a good quality home.

Social housing has a strong role to play regionally and nationally in tackling the current housing challenges; Plus Dane will, through this plan, play its part by building quality new homes whilst also balancing the need for investment in existing homes and meeting the challenges of net zero carbon.

then...

We launch our plan on the back of some challenging times both for us as an organisation and the wider housing sector. Our previous plan was launched in 2021 when we were still in the midst of the pandemic before further global crises and economic turmoil.

We are still feeling the impact both from a customer and financial perspective of the challenges that the past four years have presented. Our focus has been on delivering financial stability so that we have increased control over our thirty-year business plan. Long term financial decisions have been taken which have included exiting local government pension schemes and paying off the termination debt in full, with no ongoing liabilities. We also completed a deal for a private placement to strengthen our position with a £150m deal to support the continuation of investment in new and current homes.

Alongside this, we renegotiated existing debt to remove restrictive covenants which now enable us to focus on investment in existing homes.

Our financial position came into sharp focus when in 2023 the sector was subject to a rent cap due to rising inflation and the cost-of-living crisis was hitting our customers extremely hard. Difficult economic times brought about challenges in construction and repairs & maintenance. Throughout the pandemic we placed limits on our repairs service and changed working practices to make sure we were working as safely as possible. This has meant delays to our non-emergency repair times as well as creating challenges delivering our investment programme. This is not a position unique to Plus Dane but one which was replicated throughout the country.

With all of the above challenges, we have inevitably seen an impact on customer satisfaction; as with the majority of public sector organisations, satisfaction has dropped whilst demand for service and complexity of need amongst customers has increased. This has been coupled with feedback from colleagues committed to our shared purpose and keen to find ways to work together effectively to deliver for our customers.

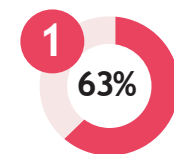
now...

Over the **past 12 months** we have been preparing for our new plan and reshaping for the future. This has included bringing a **new energy** and **direction** to our customer facing teams with a restructure of our Leadership Team. This has been supported by a period of accelerated change in key services with a particular focus on complaint handling and repairs delivery. As part of this, we began a task force in late 2023 to help us return our non-emergency repair timescales performance back to pre-pandemic levels. This has been complimented by a focus on delivery of our investment programme with the aim of moving to a better balance of repairs and investment works as well as overhauling our approach to dealing with damp and mould.

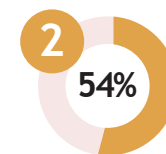
The acceleration of change has been brought about by listening to our customers, colleagues, Board and other stakeholders in developing the plan. As we move forward, working in partnership with key stakeholders will continue to be front and centre to who we are, what we do and how we do it.

Having tested with over **1600 customers** what our spending priorities should be, they told us the following:

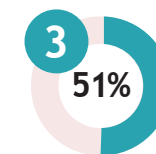
Top 3 spending priorities



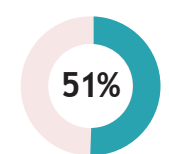
Investment in homes
planned kitchens,
bathrooms etc



Repairs fixing things
when they go wrong
but not replacing



Support services
to help people
stay in their home



Making your home warm and energy efficient

Customers were also clear with their views on the **biggest challenges** we face:



We have considered this in full as we move forward and have developed future plans around the strengthening of core landlord services which was a very clear message from our customers.

Our future

In keeping with our last plan, we have kept the timeframe short to reflect the ever-changing nature of the external environment. This will allow us to build on the platform we have developed over the past 12 months and focus on our core business.

We are a purpose led, performance driven organisation which is important to our continued strength and sustainability and ensuring our long-term ability to deliver our vision.

Quality homes, great services, vibrant communities

Our vision is supported by four key objectives brought to life through strategies which describe how we will successfully deliver the corporate objectives and ultimately our vision:



Customer Experience

Customers are listened to, empowered and feel they are treated fairly through good quality communication. We know who lives in our homes and tailor our services in a person-centred way. Providing support services which meet customer need and improve health and wealth.



Vibrant Communities

Safe, well maintained and warm homes in communities where people choose to live. We take our role in communities seriously and adapt depending on need. We continue to prioritise investment in communities for the benefit of our customers, working with partners to maximise our resources and achieve more than we could alone.



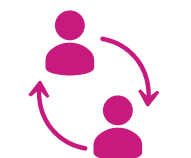
Sustainable Organisation

Delivering a long-term sustainable future achieved through financial resilience, high performance, robust governance and assurance around how we are delivering our vision. We will become a leaner, more efficient organisation through technology, process and data as part of our Innovation Framework.



Colleague Experience

Engaged colleagues demonstrating our values through the effective delivery of their roles every day. Colleagues feel valued and accountable for their contribution. A shared sense of achievement in making a positive difference.



Each of our objectives is supported by strategies that contain a golden thread from the corporate plan and detail the specific actions that will enable us to successfully deliver. They are supported by our 30-year business plan which aligns our finances to our purpose and values to ensure the ultimate delivery of our vision. We will continue to navigate the challenges of delivering our purpose and balancing needs such as long-term rent certainty, investment in existing homes and building much needed new homes through this plan.

Our key deliverables over the next three years are to:

Customer Experience



- Deliver our first Customer Experience strategy
- Ensuring customer engagement and insight is enshrined in all we do
- Improve customer satisfaction by delivering tailored services and doing what we say we will do

Vibrant Communities



- Agree our position and input in each neighbourhood we work in
- Build 730 new homes
- Invest £62m into our existing homes
- Improve the overall energy efficiency of our homes

Sustainable Organisation



- Renew our Value for Money Strategy to increase capacity within our business plan to deliver more for customers
- Ensure services and processes are innovative, ahead of the game and deliver improvements

Colleague Experience



- Invest in our people, ensuring that colleagues are professional, knowledgeable, highly skilled and supported in doing their jobs effectively now and in the future
- Attract and retain colleagues who live Plus Dane's values and share our priorities



Pillars of all our services

Over the last few years, we have developed a number of pillars which form the basis of all our services and will act as golden threads through the delivery of this plan:

Resilience

Increasing our financial resilience to create capacity to do more for our customers, homes and communities



Inclusivity

Fairness, transparency and equity, ensuring customers and colleagues views are heard and they influence what we do



Risk and assurance

Acting in line with our agreed risk appetite and providing assurance that we are doing what we say we will to all of our stakeholders





Want to know more?

If you want to know more, please get in touch

online



www.plusdane.co.uk

portal



My Account

live chat



customer
@plusdane.co.uk

face to face



phone



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