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Apex Housing Association

Business Plan

2011/12

Supporting You, Building Communities

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Business Plan 2011/12

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Introduction

The Business Plan sets out the key tasks to be undertaken by the Association in the year 2011/12 to achieve the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan 2011/2014. The Plan addresses the main issues facing Apex. The key tasks indicated are measurable and time bound to allow for the reporting of performance which will be included in the Annual Report, and in regular reports to the Board of Management.

The Financial Plan incorporates the development programme, the methods of financing, together with administrative and management budgets, and indicates that the Association expects to achieve its objectives and maintain its present financial position.

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1.0 Managing & Maintaining The Stock

Objectives and Key Tasks

1.1. Continue to deliver effective housing management, ensuring quality, compliance, continuous improvement, value for money and effective community involvement.

1.1.1 Develop key performance indicators and implement monitoring systems to quality assure service delivery in regard to allocations, anti-social behaviour and estate management by 31 March 2012.

1.1.2 Implement Year 1 of the Community Involvement Plan by 31 March 2012.

1.2. Further develop responses to ensure stable communities.

1.2.1 Implement a Neighbourhood Charter on all new developments allocated during 2011/12 in consultation with residents and extend to two existing estates by 31 March 2012.

1.2.2 Promote and encourage implementation of the 'Shared Futures' concept on all new estates allocated during 2011-2012.

1.2.3 Continue to implement the Financial Inclusion Strategy.

1.3. Maintain the stock condition database and roll out responding maintenance programmes.

1.3.1 Continue to undertake stock condition surveys and update five year maintenance programme with detailed estimated costs by 31 March 2012.

1.3.2 Ensure full compliance with the current property management section of the DSD Housing Guide.

1.4. Raise the energy efficiency of Apex's housing stock.

1.4.1 Secure funding to improve energy efficiency in the Association's general needs apartment developments by 31 December 2011.

Objective ■ Key Task ■

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1.5. Ensure the efficiency of the maintenance service.

1.5.1 Review performance of schedule of rates for response maintenance against projected expenditure on a monthly basis.

1.6. Improve performance through achievement of key performance indicators.

1.6.1 Reduce rent arrears by 0.1% by 31 March 2012.

1.6.2 Reduce void loss by 0.1% by 31 March 2012.

1.6.3 Review service delivery standards relating to housing management in consultation with relevant parties and publish revised standards by 31 March 2012.

1.7. Ensure services reflect tenant and resident needs and expectations.

1.7.1 Implement the Customer Satisfaction Strategy Action Plan for 2011-2012.

1.7.2 Publish performance information for the year 2010-2011 by 31 December 2011.

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2.0 Developing & Delivering Care and Support

Objectives and Key Tasks

2.1. Maintain and develop the Association's existing care and support portfolio in sustainable and affordable ways.

2.1.1 Implement Supporting People's Quality Assessment Framework (QAF 2) and agree improvement plans by 31 December 2011.

2.1.2 Develop action plans to address any gaps identified in relation to the 2011/2012 DHSS&PS Inspection Standards by 30 June 2011.

2.1.3 Review the efficiency and effectiveness of the utilisation of staff within the Supported Living schemes by 31 March 2012.

2.2. Examine peripatetic care and support delivery models from elsewhere.

2.2.1 Pilot the delivery of a specialist floating support service for those with an alcohol addiction in association with Supporting People and the Western Health and Social Care Trust by 31 December 2011.

2.3. Continue to enhance the quality of life of service users.

2.3.1 Develop and implement a programme of activities for residents in Supported Living schemes, in compliance with DHSS&PS and Supporting People standards by 31 March 2012.

2.3.2 Conduct a skills audit among Supported Living staff to assist in the delivery of the activities programme by 30 December 2011.

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3.0 The Development Agenda

Objectives and Key Tasks

3.1. Deliver the Association's Development Programme, with an increased focus on improving sustainability.

3.1.1 Achieve the total number of site starts allocated to Apex Housing in the published Social Housing Development Programme by 31 March 2012, subject to the availability of public finance.

3.1.2 Achieve at least 100 completions before 31 March 2012.

3.2. Building energy conservation, energy efficiency and thermal comfort into all Apex projects.

3.2.1 Achieve a Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 rating for new build capital projects started in 2011/12.

3.2.2 Place six energy efficient houses for sale on the open market by 31 March 2012.

3.3. Look at innovative and effective ways of delivering good quality, value for money, social and affordable housing.

3.3.1 Implement the ISO Quality & Environmental Management policies during the course of the year.

3.3.2 Continue to work in partnership with the Procurement Strategy Programme Board to implement good practice in the delivery of social housing.

3.4. Develop Apex Homes into a going concern.

3.4.1 Have the Association's shared equity scheme available to potential purchasers by 31 December 2012.

3.5. Continue to manage the Apex Procurement Group to the best advantage of the Group's member associations.

3.5.1 Continue to implement the Group's five year Business Plan in partnership with the members of Apex Procurement (NI) Ltd.

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4.0 Governance

Objectives and Key Tasks

4.1. Continue to seek sustainable, long-term funding support.

4.1.1 Continue to source and appraise alternative sources of corporate finance by 31 March 2012.

4.2. Manage the Association's financial and other resources to best effect, using performance measures which help Apex manage its business.

4.2.1 Achieve a 4% improvement in financial KPI's by 31 March 2012.

4.2.2 Achieve a 4% increase in internal efficiencies by 31 March 2012.

4.2.3 Incorporate the financial ratios forecast into quarterly reporting by 30 June 2011.

4.2.4 Review pension provision within the Association to ensure that a competitive cost-effective scheme remains available to all staff beyond 2012 by 31 December 2011.

4.2.5 Continue to closely monitor revenue deficits in Supported Living Schemes and achieve a 2% reduction in the costs identified as a budget priority by 31 March 2012.

4.2.6 Review Treasury Management Policies and Strategy to ensure on-going compliance with best practice by 31 March 2012.

4.2.7 Implement e-purchase ordering procedures and document storage and retrieval by 31 March 2012.

4.3. Ensure the on-going effectiveness of the Board of Management.

4.3.1 Introduce an appraisal system for Board members by 31 December 2011.

4.4 Continue to develop the workforce to meet the Association's business objectives.

4.4.1 Introduce the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) to Apex staff as a replacement to the NVQ Framework by 31 March 2012.

4.4.2 Deliver a skills based management development programme focusing on employee relations issues by 31 March 2012.

4.4.3 Review the implications of the introduction of the following legislation:

- Agency Workers Regulations 2010
- Additional Paternity Leave Regulations (N. Ireland) 2010
- Bribery Act 2010

4.5. Look at the issue of 'people succession' at all levels and in all areas within Apex.

4.5.1 Identify and define the key capabilities (knowledge, skills and behaviours) expected at senior and middle management levels by 31 March 2012.

4.5.2 Launch and communicate the new Reward & Recognition strategy by 31 December 2011.

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4.6 Ensure diversity is valued.

4.6.1 Produce an Audit of Inequalities in preparation for the development of a new Equality Scheme as stipulated by the Equality Commission by 31 March 2012.

4.7 Further improve the Association's IT/ICT capacity.

4.7.1 Research the feasibility of introducing e-learning to the organisation by 31 March 2012.

4.7.2 Implement the IBS Anti-Social Behaviour/Customer Contact module by 31 March 2012.

4.8 Continue to improve communication within and beyond Apex, in particular using IT/ICT-based methods.

4.8.1 Implement Storage Area Network permitting the amalgamation of data storage into one central unit by 31 December 2011.

4.9 Ensure Apex has a sustainable management presence which reflects the geographical spread of its operations.

4.9.1 Review the outcomes of the 2010 Customer Satisfaction Survey in regard to service delivery and implement recommendations arising within the agreed timescales.

4.10 Assess the risks and different scenarios which face Apex and put appropriate responses in place.

4.10.1 Review Contingency Plans and ensure appropriate arrangements are in place in regard to communication, emergency responses and ongoing review and updating by 31 December 2011.

4.11 Continue to develop partnerships to deliver effective services.

4.11.1 Review the Service Review process for Joint Management Partners by 31 December 2011.

4.11.2 Continue to work in partnership with Cresco Trust in the delivery of a further Apex led workshop within the Strive 2 Work programme by 31 March 2012.

4.12 Continue to develop Apex's corporate social responsibility in meaningful and sustainable ways.

4.12.1 Review the Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy and agree the Strategy for 2011-2014 by 30 September 2011.

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Revenue Budget For Year 2011/12

	£m
Income	
Rents	23.1
Other Income	2.4
	25.5
Expenditure	
Direct Property Management	16.5
Administration	3.4
	19.9
Operating Surplus	5.6
Net Interest Payable	4.0
Transfers to/from Reserves	0.6
	4.6
Retained Surplus	1.0

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Financial Statement 2011/12

The Association's Revenue Budget for the next financial year indicates a steady growth in income from rents and other activities to £25.5m, an increase of 6.7% on 2010/11. Revenue expenditure is budgeted at £19.9m (an increase of 3.8% on 2010/11) resulting in an overall operating surplus of £5.6m. This represents an increase of 16.7% on the current year and would be a good result for the Association in a difficult operating environment. After deducting net interest payable and transfers to reserves totalling £4.6m, the budgeted retained surplus for the year is set at £1.0m.

The Association continues to develop much needed social housing despite public sector cuts affecting both its capital and revenue streams. Inflationary pressures and higher borrowing costs are all contributing to a more challenging financial environment. However, the Association continues to weather the storm through continued growth and sound budgetary control at all levels. Over the coming year, the Association will spend £52.4m on developing new schemes and capital alterations and improvements to existing properties. To fund the capital programme, Apex Housing Association expects to receive £26.4m of Housing Association Grant, release £1m from the Disposal Proceeds Fund and draw down a further £25m of private finance. These additional borrowings will bring total loans to £94m by the end of March 2012. Based on historic costs, the projected total assets of the Association after deduction of capital grants at 31 March 2012 is forecast to be £98m.

April 2011 will see a major construction programme begin with the building of over 600 dwellings at 20 different locations throughout Northern Ireland. The largest of these schemes include 67 dwellings on the Ravenhill Road in Belfast, 130 dwellings in Newcastle, 67 dwellings on the Buncrana Road, Derry and 180 dwellings in three phases in Creggan, Derry. All these homes will be of the highest quality incorporating Lifetime Homes, Code for Sustainability and Secured by Design standards.

While Apex's architect and Clerk of Works will be ensuring quality workmanship on our sites, the development team will be seeking other opportunities to ensure that a further substantial programme of site starts will be in place by the end of the financial year. Although the overall social housing budget for 2011/12 will be greatly reduced from the previous year allowing for only 1200 site starts, Apex is confident that it will be able to deliver over 25% of the total programme.

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The Apex Voluntary Housing Group comprises:
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Apex Homes (NI) Limited
Apex Charitable Trust (NI) Limited

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