

Link Group Business Plan 2025



Introduction from our chief executive

Thank you for taking the time to read the Link Group business plan for 2025/26. This document provides an opportunity to reflect on the fantastic work delivered by the group over the past twelve months as well as to look ahead to our future.

Link works across the length and breadth of Scotland. We live in, and with, our communities and have a clear picture of the challenges they face and the impact we can have by working with them.

All our energy is tenant focused. That is why it was so heartening this year to see our tenant engagement team winning the 'Tenant Voice' award at the TPAS Scotland National Good Practice Awards, as well as our Link Housing and LinkLiving colleagues being recognised at the annual CIH awards winning the Excellence in Health and Wellbeing award, showcasing our 'Tenants Wellbeing Service' model.

Our ongoing community activities, such as supporting the Bathgate community football club and rebuilding the Bathgate Arch for the summer Procession, demonstrate our ongoing commitment to community engagement.



Our group partners have led across the sector in their specialist areas, with Horizon Housing Association leading the first Scottish 'Accessible Housing and Care Summit' in Dundee, and West Highland Housing Association designing a range of net zero innovations in our island communities on Tiree.

Of course, none of this would be possible without our dedicated teams of colleagues, board members, and volunteers. We have continued to invest heavily in supporting our teams, and this has been demonstrated through the roll out of our accredited trauma training programmes and receiving recognition for our SQA accredited housing leadership programmes at the CIH 2024 awards. Despite the challenges of the past few years, including the cost of living crisis and wider commercial cost inflation, we have continued to prioritise the services our customers need and invested heavily in the homes we provide.

As we move forward, our key strategic goals for the upcoming year include expanding our customer service offering, enhancing our digital services to improve tenant engagement, and fostering new partnerships with local organisations to address community needs. We are also committed to sustainability and will continue to explore innovative solutions to reduce our environmental impact. By working together with our partners and stakeholders, we can be confident that we will continue to provide lasting, positive change in the communities we serve.

During 2024, we started the development of a new Strategic Framework. Developed through group-wide consultation, this framework will provide a platform to transform the way we deliver services in the future, focusing on our tenant and service user led model. I look forward to being able to share this with you over the course of the coming year.

I hope you find this business plan interesting, and it gives you a sense of the passion and impact our work has in our local communities.

Jon Turner
Link Group CEO

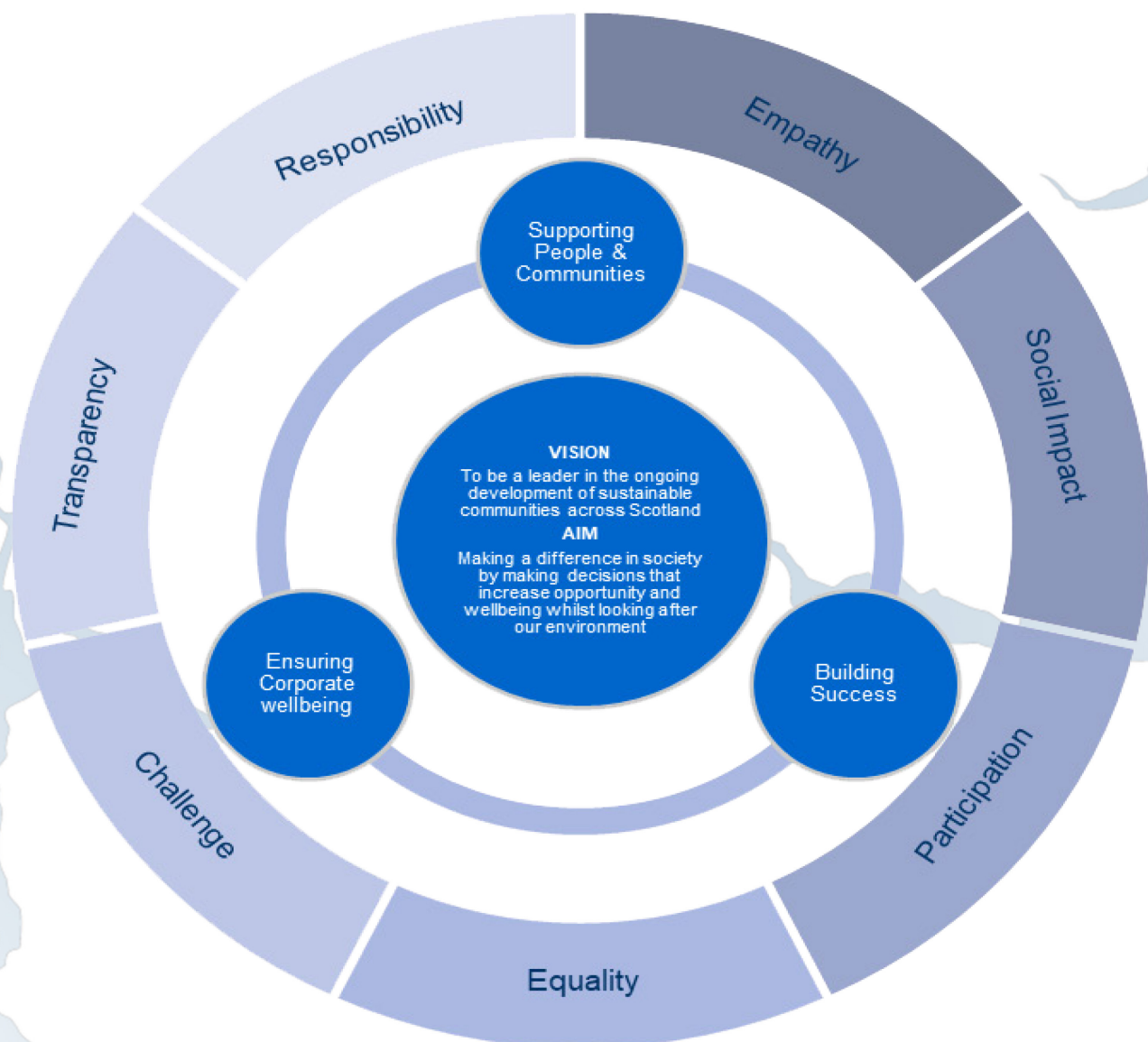
Vision/mission [what are we here for]

The Link Group Vision, Aim, and Mission statement reflect a continued focus on supporting and developing sustainable communities across Scotland¹.

The central Vision and Aim for the Group is supported by three Mission statement pillars and link directly into the Group's operating structure.

During 2025/26, a cross group piece of work is being undertaken which will develop a group wide 'Strategic Framework'. This framework will provide an overarching vision for the group anchored on the central principle of "Providing Homes, Improving Lives". It will be published during 2025/26, replacing the current framework set out in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Vision, Aim, Mission statement and Values



¹ The Vision, Aim, and Mission statement was developed in 2020 by a cross group staff sustainability group with input from the Link Group Convenors Group and Link Group Board.

Delivering the vision [how will we do it]

Sustainability driven

The Link Group operating structure has been designed to map from international recognised standards for sustainability through to individual directorates. This approach has been endorsed by the Link Group Board and will continue to evolve as the group wide sustainability strategy is delivered.

Our Sustainability Committee has established a clear pathway from United Nations 'Sustainable Development Goals' through the Scottish Government 'National Performance Framework'.

The development of the Link 'Wellbeing Goals' of 'Environment', 'Resilient Communities' and 'Corporate Wellbeing' flow through into our operating structure. This ensures that we can track all our service activity through to the impact that each one has at the highest level.

On the next page - Figures 1 & 2: UN Sustainable Development Goals mapping to Link Group directorates

Figure 1:

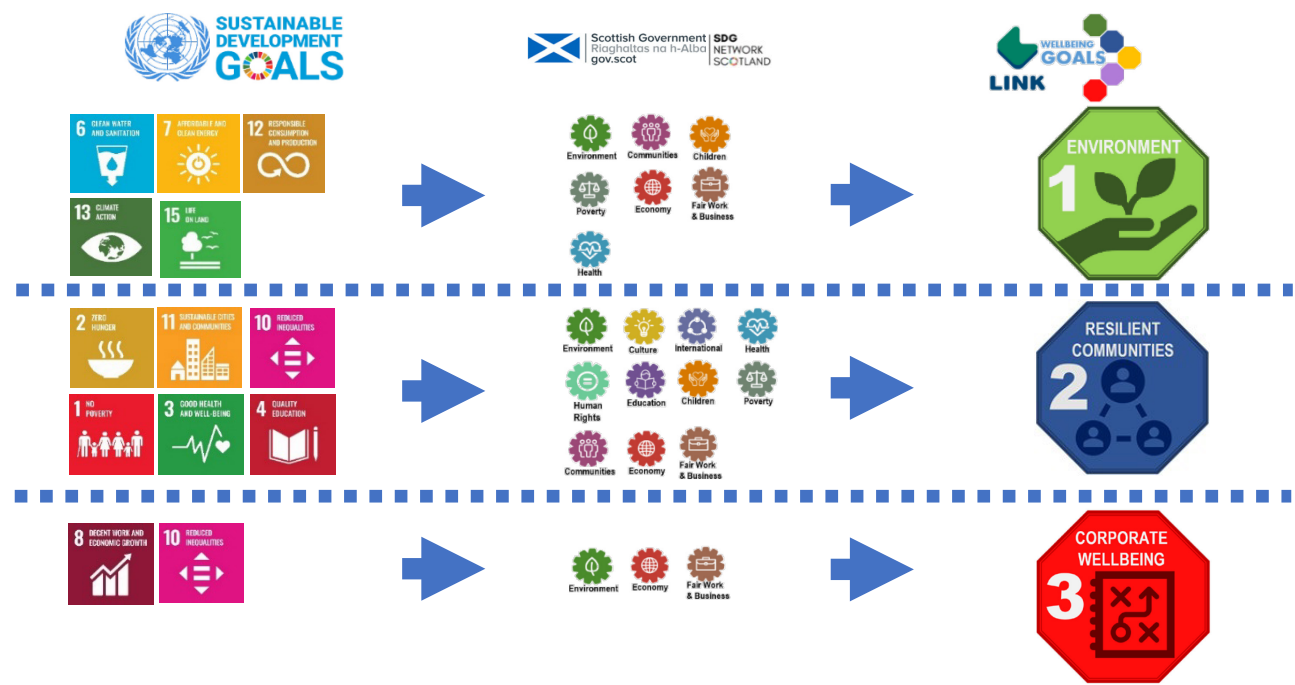


Figure 2:



In 2022 the Link Sustainability strategy was formally established and this forms one of the primary strategic objectives under the Building Success theme.

Our Sustainability Journey

Sustainability by design

Our specialist Sustainability Team ensure that we track our performance against definable and measurable metrics. There are clear objectives within each directorate and these feed into the overall sustainability strategy.

In October 2024, we published our third Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) report and we were also fully re-accredited with the Certified Sustainable Housing Label. In doing so Link maintained 'Frontrunner' status, the best possible ranking, in the Social and Governance dimensions; and achieved 'Ambassador' status in the Environmental dimension.

A Board level Sustainability Committee (previously the Sustainability Group) comprising Board members from across the Partner organisations is in place. This Committee provides oversight and support to the executive team as the business develops.

Our Sustainability Strategy sits alongside this Business Plan and outlines our commitments to performing as a sustainable organisation across all aspects of our operations.

We have maintained our focus on three key themes which run throughout the organisation:



Within our Environmental theme we have committed to developing and monitoring clear net zero targets and decarbonising our existing homes, whilst also delivering a new net zero new build homes strategy.

We also recognise the impact that our business has on the environment from a wider perspective and commit to managing our resources efficiently with a focus on delivering within a circular economy.



Many of our teams contribute to our Resilient Communities focus, from housing and care services through to our front-line repairs and asset management colleagues.

We make commitments to being absolutely accountable to our customers and focus on reducing poverty and exclusion.

We also acknowledge that our organisation is one which must stand the test of time and we commit to investing for the long term in our homes and communities and strive to create opportunities for those who live and work within them.



Our Corporate Wellbeing commitments set out how the organisation will ensure ongoing resilience into the future.

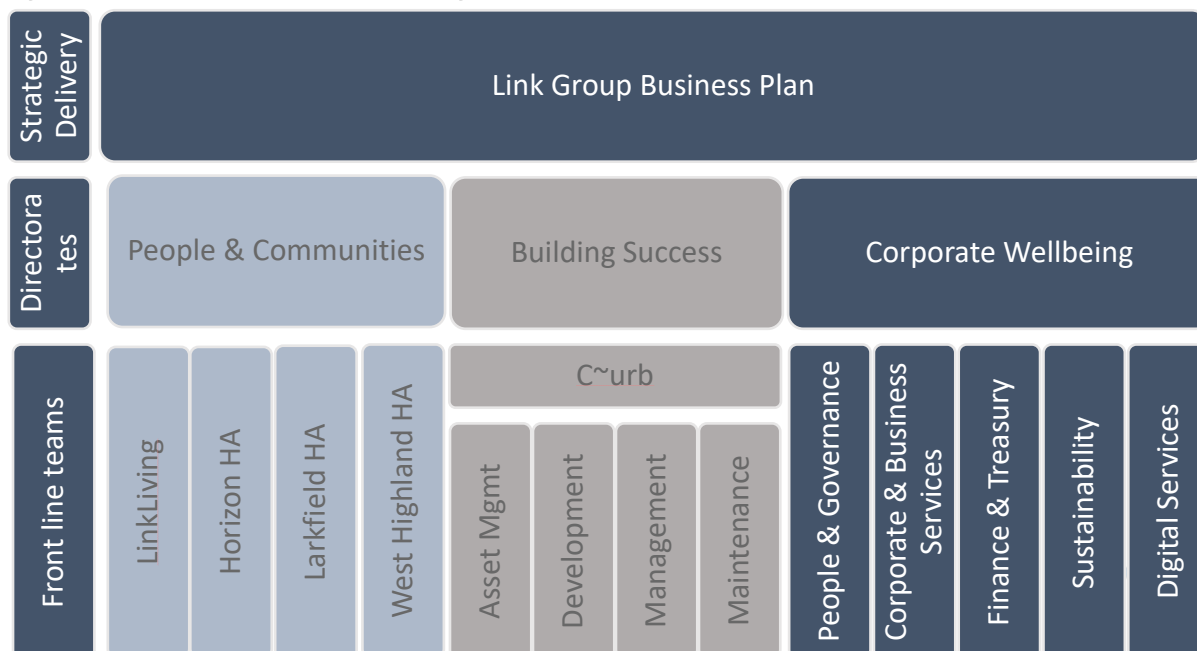
Integration of sustainability principles into corporate decision making is key as we look to invest in our people and have this supported by a first-class governance and assurance environment.

We also acknowledge that the wider housing sustainability agenda continues to evolve and we commit to playing a leading role in how the sector delivers on its wider commitments as part of a net zero Scotland.

Directorate structure

The Link Group directorates provide the platform for all tenant and customer services.

Figure 3: Directorate structure and alignment into the Business Plan



The Link Group Business Plan sets the overarching strategic objectives for the group at the Directorate level.

Within the wider group there are supporting business plans which take the strategic objectives and cascade these into operational plans – in some instances these plans are stand-alone business plans in their own right (for example the RSL partners, LinkLiving Limited and C-urb 6 Ltd) and in other cases they are embedded within the core Link Group plans (for example the Corporate Wellbeing directorate).

The Link Group Board approves the stand-alone plans on an annual basis and these plans are held locally and can be found on the respective websites. This approach ensures every team can clearly see how their performance contributes to the overarching objective of providing first class services to tenants and service users.

Strategic objectives

The strategic objectives presented here have been refined and rolled forward from the previous annual business plan. These follow the directorate structure and outline the primary objectives within each key team.

Primary 2025/26 objective – implementation of a Group wide Strategic Framework

Over the course of 2025/26 a new group-wide strategic framework is being put in place. The consultation on this framework started in 2024/25 and included discussions with Boards across the group, senior leadership teams, and wider stakeholders. The shape of the framework is now in place and it will be anchored around a refreshed group-wide ‘Mission Statement’ of **“Providing Homes, Improving Lives”**.

This framework will provide a focus point for organisations across the group. The following Strategic Ambitions will form the basis of our customer commitments which will be finalised over the course of 2025/26 with a view to full implementation at the start of 2026/27:

- **Delivering a high quality customer service** – our customers express a high level of satisfaction with our services and the value for money they receive
- **Providing homes which are accessible and affordable** – we will invest in delivering high quality homes whilst keeping our rents affordable
- **Providing services that are tailored to our customers’ needs** – our services adapt to meet the changing needs of those we support
- **Mitigating our impact on climate change** – we will reduce our environmental impact and contribute towards tackling climate change
- **Diversifying our customer base** – creating a commercial return that can be used for investment in our homes and services

Moving forward business plans across the group will align with this new framework.

People & Communities – Group Director of Communities & Chief Executive of LinkLiving

Objective	Purpose	Targeted outputs
NEW OBJECTIVE 2025/26 Scoping and design of a ‘customer experience’ business transformation programme.	Resetting the basis of our customer interactions to harness technology and enable our customers an enhanced self-service model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full project scoping and costing of system requirements• Establishing a new customer ‘hub’ and management structure
Deliver the Link group wide communities strategy	Operation of a customer led proposition clearly articulating the value that Link seeks to bring to our communities and those who live in them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress and impact report on the implementation of the Communities Strategy due July 2025• Refine performance indicators, focusing on impact measurement

Redefining housing services of the future	<p>Establish what customers want from their 'housing service'.</p> <p>Develop an evidence base for longer term service provision and asset management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress review report of Link Together housing strategy due July 2025 • Continue with CX Feedback, locality plans and annual tenancy visits • Align tenant engagement activities with data gathered at each tenancy visit • Develop Customer Personae to support greater targeting of frontline resources
Maximising collaboration across housing, support and employability services	To encourage innovation and shared learning, demonstrating the social value that Link brings to the communities in which it operates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build "Link as a Social Enterprise" into the service provision model • Increased collaboration of intra group partners through Communities Leadership Forum, Link Together, Communities Strategy and LENS programme
Communities' performance reporting – review and refresh Link Group performance reporting and value for money indicators	Develop a longer-term view of how to monitor and assess the successful delivery of our front-line services – from outputs to outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align overall KPIs and output indicators into wider performance strategy • Enhanced business insight and deployment of tools such as Power BI to provide greater 'in time' performance reporting

Building Success – Group Commercial Director & Managing Director of C~urb

Objective	Purpose	Targeted outputs
Enabling asset investment decisions based on robust business intelligence that meet Link's strategic objectives	Develop a new Strategic Asset Management and Investment Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a platform for dynamic asset management data reporting • Ensure future investment is optimised and provides a route map to net zero
Perform as we transform	To deliver a range of customer focussed services that can be commercially applied, whilst remaining within Link's core values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of C~urb's business plan objectives • Develop an alternative growth strategy generated from external markets • Increase profit from core activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property Development • Property Management • Property Maintenance

Delivery of new affordable homes for Scotland's communities	Continue Link Group support for Scottish Government ambitions for 'Housing to 2040' through increased affordable housing provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75 new homes to be built in 2025/26 • c1500 new homes to be delivered over next 5-year period • 10% target of new rented homes to be wheelchair accessible • Achieve net zero by 2026 for all new homes constructed
Provide first class, customer focussed services via C-urb Property Maintenance and Property Management	Deliver value for money and service excellence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver increased profit as a result of existing service review and optimising group company maintenance expenditure • Develop new growth strategy reflecting current operating environment • Continue to improve customer satisfaction metrics • Undertaking a value for money audit across our maintenance service
Publication of the new asset management strategy including the strategic energy assessment	To define Link's future investment priorities and make informed decisions based on property attributes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group properties by archetype and energy rating and work up cost effective solutions
Scope parallel net zero projects which can be replicated and maximum impact achieved within available resources	Establish how to achieve net zero with low medium and marginal low energy rated properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine feasibility of investing in marginal and low energy rated properties • Inform strategy of disposal versus retention

Corporate Wellbeing – Link Group Directors: Finance and Business Services, People and Governance, and Digital Services

Objective	Purpose	Targeted outputs
Development of a clear Corporate Services strategy	Continue to establish a clear customer focused culture across all corporate service teams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and professional articulation of service provision • High level customer KPI metrics in place to monitor performance • Create a tailored and adaptive performance reporting system

Deliver first class business resilience	Embedded organisation safety and long-term viability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External review to be undertaken looking at the business efficiency of finance processes and systems. • Continue to streamline group wide financial planning • Implement group wide treasury management • Review financial performance reporting across the group
Continue to develop a first-class governance and assurance environment	First-class governance will provide a high confidence level and ensure the group's corporate wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of clear 'Governance Hub' of expertise and performance • Implement fully all the requirements of the Intra Group Agreements • Implement changes to group structure where identified • Identify, assess and where appropriate implement efficiency saving as part of the Group's approach for continual service improvements
Support and develop the Digital Strategy for customer engagement	Supporting front line teams with market leading innovation to ensure high quality customer engagement channels are in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the six themes of the Digital Strategy to directly and/or indirectly support front line teams • Continue the development of innovation challenge to support the development of market leading customer services, drive efficiency and sustainability • Develop Digital Facilitation models to ensure Link's customers are not disadvantaged by their financial situation or other constraints • Clearly defined and implemented customer engagement channels that treat customer interactions in multiple channels as part of one unified customer journey

Support and develop the Digital Strategy for customer engagement	Supporting front line teams with market leading innovation to ensure high quality customer engagement channels are in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the six themes of the Digital Strategy to directly and/or indirectly support front line teams • Continue the development of innovation challenge to support the development of market leading customer services, drive efficiency and sustainability • Develop Digital Facilitation models to ensure Link's customers are not disadvantaged by their financial situation or other constraints • Clearly defined and implemented customer engagement channels that treat customer interactions in multiple channels as part of one unified customer journey
Refreshed 'people strategy' including training, development, and personal welfare support	A review as part of Link's continued commitment as an employer of choice will enable us to maintain our current position and improve on this where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refreshed 'people strategy' to be activated • Development of revised staff deployment model • Cross group staff engagement channels reviewed and refreshed • Support, training and development offering to be reviewed and refreshed • Supporting organisational and additional structural changes
Ongoing Regulatory and Legal compliance	Safety and security of customers, staff and the organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust management and Board level scrutiny of compliance indicators
Reduce our negative environmental impacts	Contribute towards reducing the impacts of climate change and mitigating biodiversity loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise carbon emissions from offices, and corporate activities through energy efficiency and sustainable practices • Reduce waste generation and increase reuse and recycling

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve green spaces and biodiversity around homes and offices
Establish principles of sustainable procurement in our supply chain	Use our buying power to influence sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish sustainability as a determining factor in our purchasing activities

These overarching strategic objectives for the Group disaggregate into the individual directorates which manage their own strategic action plans. These can be found in the associated business plans for the individual front line teams.

Protecting the organisation for the future [how will we do it safely]

Link Group governance arrangements

Within Link there is a strong governance culture and this is embedded across the group companies.

Link Group Ltd is the parent company within the group. As a charitable Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and a Community Benefit Society, it is subject to a rigorous regulatory framework which includes the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) scrutiny as well as wider regulators such as the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

As the parent company, Link Group Ltd carries the ultimate accountability for group wide operations and compliance with all associated regulations. Link Group Ltd controls the

parameters and authority of all the group members through Intra-Group Agreements which set out the powers delegated to group members and the controls which rest in the parent company. All RSLs in the group have adopted the most recent Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) Model Rules.

Within the group there are companies which carry additional regulatory obligations – LinkLiving is Care Inspectorate regulated for a number of its services, and C~urb administers shared equity schemes on behalf of the Scottish Government.

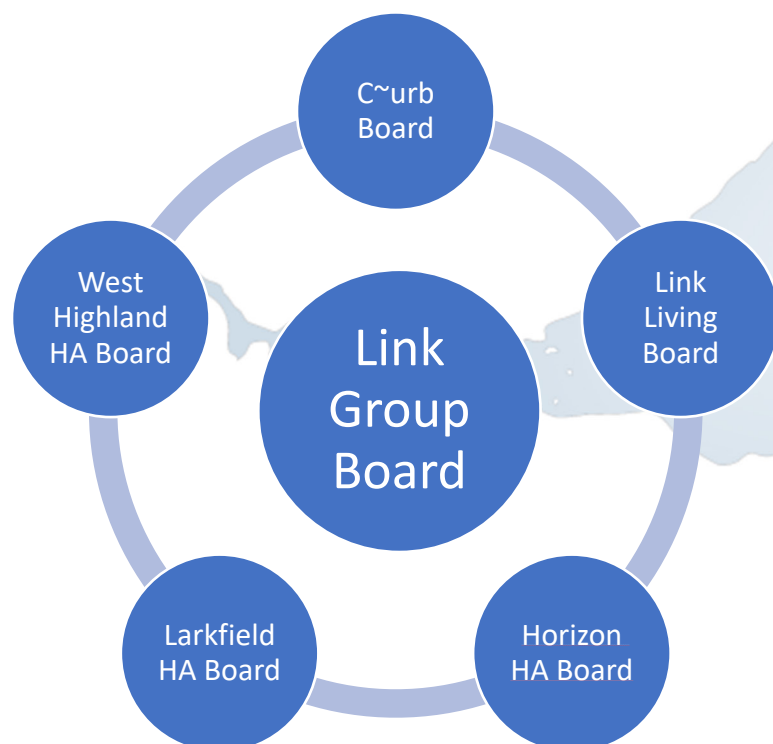
Governance structure

The Link Group Board forms the heart of the group governance structure. This Board is responsible for the completion of the Annual Assurance Statement sign off on behalf of all the group companies.

The Group Board is responsible for direct oversight of all the Link Group properties and is accountable for wider group activities undertaken in separate partner organisations.

There are three partners in the group which are also standalone RSLs and have their own Boards and associated committees.

On 1 April 2025 Link Housing Association Limited (previously a non-asset owning RSL) transferred engagements to Link Group, simplifying the governance arrangements.



Link Group Board composition

Independent members 10	RSL partner nominees 3	Link Group Chair
		Link Group Vice Chair

The Link Group Board comprises of up to 15 individuals, including three nominated individuals from the RSL partner organisations. Full details of the Board Members and their backgrounds is documented on the Link Group website.

All Board members have an annual performance review undertaken by the Chair of the Board. The Chair also has an annual performance review. The outcomes of these reviews are reported annually to the full Board.

The Link Group Board operates six standing committees:

- Audit & Risk Committee
- Performance Committee
- Finance and Treasury Committee
- Sustainability Committee (group partner wide)
- LGB Nominations Committee (ad hoc)
- Remuneration Committee

These committees operate under delegated approval authorities, as set out in Link Group's Standing Orders, and carry out other duties which may be delegated to them from time to time by the Link Group Board in relation to specific pieces of work. The committees report back to the Group Board at the next Board meeting. This approach ensures that additional scrutiny can be carried out by Board members on specific matters whilst ensuring clear accountability is retained at Group Board level.

The membership of the Sustainability Committee is also drawn from group member boards and monitors the implementation and delivery of the Sustainability strategy and its objectives.

The Finance & Treasury Committee was established during 2023-24 and its remit includes the review of financial plans, treasury management strategy and policy of Link Group Ltd. and the review and monitoring of performance through management accounts across all group companies during each year. It will also make recommendations to the Link Group Ltd. Board regarding new funding or funding restructure proposals.

The Performance & Compliance Committee was also introduced during 2023-24 and its remit includes reviewing the Annual Assurance Statement and Annual Return on the Charter, reviewing operational performance and compliance targets (including external benchmarking) and supporting business improvement and efficiency initiatives across the group. In recognition of the transfer of engagements from Link Housing Association to Link Group, the Committee will be performance related to service delivery with key tenant safety compliance elements moved to the Audit and Risk Committee. To reflect this the Committee has been renamed the Performance Committee.

Link Group Ltd leadership structure

Group Leadership Team

A leadership team is in place with responsibility for all aspects of strategic leadership and performance across the group. The team have clear lines of responsibility for the delivery against the group's strategic objectives:

- Link Group CEO – Jon Turner [Responsible for group wide performance]
- Group Commercial Director & Managing Director of Curb – Colin Culross [Building Success directorate]
- Group Director of Communities & Chief Executive of LinkLiving – Sarah Smith [People and Communities directorate]

In addition to the GLT there are a number of other key strategic Directors in the group;

- Link Group Finance and Business Services Director – Nick Pollard [Corporate Wellbeing]
- Link Group People and Governance Director – Helen Bayne [Corporate Wellbeing]
- Link Group Director of Digital Services, Ken Fox [Corporate Wellbeing]

The leadership team meets formally once a month and operates in line with the Standing Order delegations from the Link Group Board.

Annual assurance statement & annual return on charter

The Link Group Board is responsible for oversight and submission of the Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) to the SHR for the four RSLs as the parent RSL. The Link Group Board also reviews and approves Link Group's Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) prior to submission, with the three asset owning partner RSL governing bodies reviewing and approving their ARCs prior to individual submission. The coordination of the AAS, on behalf of the four RSLs, and the Link Group ARC is undertaken within the Corporate Wellbeing Directorate.

All parts of the group are engaged in the collation and validation work undertaken, with specific reporting to the group board where activities are conducted in separate regulated entities. Key reporting includes:

- Link Group Board confirmation of regulatory and legislative compliance in relation to Link Group homes;
- Group Leadership Team review of the Link Group ARC prior to the Link Group Board approval; and
- Board confirmations from the RSL partner boards of regulatory and legislative compliance in relation to the homes owned and managed within the individual RSLs.

This structure ensures local validation activity is supported by overarching scrutiny at the Link Group level.

For ease of reference, Appendix 2 provides a mapping of the Regulatory Standards which the group complies with, to the sections within this Business Plan, where these are materially covered.

In addition to the responsibilities the group holds to the SHR, it also operates in a broader legislative framework. Key areas of legislation are set out in Appendix 3.

Group wide oversight

Intra-Group Agreements are in place and were reviewed towards the end of 2023. These agreements are specifically designed to allow for local specialism and focus whilst ensuring that Link Group has not only control, as the parent company in the group, but also clear visibility and oversight in relation to the performance across the group of companies. This is also in line with regulatory requirements in a group structure. The timing of Board meetings ensures that all partner Boards meet prior to the Link Group Board so that any pertinent matters can be escalated accordingly.

Every organisation has its own business plan and performance objectives. These are aligned to the Link Group strategic objectives set out within this Business Plan.

There is a strong Link Group Board oversight mechanism in place and this includes:

- Setting of clear strategic objectives at the start of each year through the business planning process [Annual]
- 6 month review against business plan objectives
- Link Group Board strategy day [Annual]
- Cross group reporting on KPIs across all parts of the Group [Quarterly]
- Annual ARC benchmarking [Annual]
- Quarterly review by the Group Leadership Team of strategic risks and a four monthly review by the Audit and Risk Committee. An ongoing review of all operational risks is also undertaken by the individual risk owners as well as an annual review of all groupwide risks by the Audit and Risk Committee

In addition, the Group Leadership Team will review progress against the Business Plan on a quarterly basis.

The strategic objectives set by the Group are developed with cross-group engagement at a Board level and the presence of the partners nominated positions on the Board. The Group strategic objectives are cascaded from the Group board by the board members who chair the partner organisations.

At an executive level, the Group Leadership Team is responsible for delivering the Board objectives.

Stakeholder insight [keeping ourselves informed]

High quality tenant engagement

Link's Tenant Engagement Strategy was reviewed in 2024/25. The strategy was co-created with Link tenants and housing staff. The draft strategy document was consulted on with registered tenant organisations and members of the consultation register in March 2025, with final Link Group Board approval planned for Q1 of 2025/26.

As part of the review approximately 2,000 tenants completed a survey, providing feedback on their tenant engagement preferences. This equates to nearly 20% of current tenants. In-person and online discussion sessions were also held with tenants in Falkirk, Glasgow and Bathgate.

The draft tenant engagement strategy has 6 strategic outcomes and these will be finalised at the start of the year:

- OUTCOME 1 – Customer experience
- OUTCOME 2 – Tenants influencing the decision-making process
- OUTCOME 3 – Tenant scrutiny
- OUTCOME 4 – Communication and information
- OUTCOME 5 – Tenants Voice
- OUTCOME 6 – Local neighbourhood engagement and RTOs

Link commits considerable financial and intellectual resource to supporting tenant engagement through a specialist tenant engagement team and this will be continued given the success of the approach to date.

In June 2024 Link Housing won the 'Best Practice in Tenant Voice' award at the TPAS Scotland National Good Practice Awards. In partnership with the Tenant Scrutiny Panel, Link was also shortlisted for the Best Practice in Tenant Scrutiny at the CIH Scottish Housing Awards.

The award-winning Link Housing Scrutiny Panel (TSP) continued to assess Link's performance across key business areas in 2024. A scrutiny of the repairs service was reported to the Link Group Board in March 2024. The Panel was also supported to complete an audit of Link's Advice Services team. This will be provided as independent validation of Link's accreditation with the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice.

A large-scale customer satisfaction survey will take place in October 2025 and the results will be submitted to the Scottish Housing regulator with the annual return on the Charter.

Link RSL partners also use a range of engagement channels with specific structures in place to recognise the different type of organisations – Horizon for example have an active Residents' Improvement Panel in place with Larkfield being community activity led.

Local authority engagement

We have numerous contact points with the key local authorities in whose regions we operate. These contacts operate within the housing teams and also within the development teams to ensure an alignment of our strategic housing delivery programmes with local initiatives and priorities. Our approach ensures that local authorities can be confident that they can access our services and management teams easily and efficiently.

Scottish government engagement

Link is well known to the Scottish Government and they support activities across the group. In July 2022 the Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government, Shona Robison, said in the foreword to Link's Sustainable Communities Strategy:

"Housing Associations have a valuable role in supporting all people in their communities to live well locally. By placing the needs of their communities at the heart of everything they do I welcome this strategy and its ambition that all Link's communities are attractive, successful and connected places for people to live and work."

Our engagement is on numerous levels including:

- Presenting to Parliamentary committees;
- Active involvement on Scottish Government finance and net zero taskforces;
- Operation of all remaining Scottish Government equity schemes in an agency capacity (e.g. Open Market Shared Equity

schemes and some residual administration for legacy schemes such as Help to Buy and First Homes);

- Active in responding to government consultations;
- Active in areas of housing specialism – e.g. decarbonisation agenda work; and
- Link's contribution to Scottish Government objectives through a significant development programme.

In addition to the direct engagement, Link is an active supporter of SFHA and contributes to both conference events as well as chairing a number of panels (e.g. East of Scotland Finance Forum) which provide feedback into central government. This approach will continue into 2025.

Wider communities

Everyone at Link invests in our communities, whether through building and managing homes or delivering services to the people who live in them.

This last year saw Link continuing to meet the ambitions laid out in its **Sustainable Communities Strategy** – Streets into Communities: reduce poverty, exclusion and homelessness; improve the health and wellbeing of tenants; create training and employment opportunities and strengthen local economies.

The objectives focus on providing and enabling opportunities that will support individuals to

meet the main challenges experienced by those living in our communities. The focus of activity continues to be informed by the needs identified by many tenants as a result of the increase in the cost of living.

In response, Link continues to work closely with a number of partner organisations from the public and third sectors with the aim of providing targeted information, advice and practical assistance on the main cost of living

matters of concern to tenants. These include energy costs, financial concerns, specifically benefit and debt issues and food insecurity. A series of local events were successfully delivered in some of the more deprived communities with the format then being recalibrated for use in a variety of settings including our retirement housing complexes. Given the current economic forecast, it is intended that work to ameliorate the cost of living impacts will continue throughout the year with a particular focus on providing support for those on low incomes and actively seeking employment.

Working with our contractors and suppliers, as part of our community benefit programme, we have established the **Link in the Community Fund**. This has been designed to provide funding in the form of small grants of up to £500 for small groups and organisations who are looking to make a difference in their local community. Having already made more than 100 awards across the country, we intend to widen the eligibility criteria to encourage future applications from organisations providing support to children and young people.

We aim for all our communities to be attractive successful and connected places for people to live and work. By strengthening our community engagement and insight we will place the needs of our customers at the heart of everything we do and aim to eradicate inequalities by enabling opportunities for everyone in our communities.

We know simply providing housing is not enough to enable many people to sustain their tenancies and live well in their communities. Through our Housing Strategy we aim to ensure our tenants receive quality, efficient, supportive services that represent value for money and meet their needs.

This bold, exciting and forward-thinking strategy is supported through staff working groups across Link and aims to focus on key themes, which support Link's overall strategic aims. **Link Together's** key focus is for staff

teams to work together across Link to improve services to our tenants.

The strategy has been adapted since its launch with new emerging challenges caused by the cost-of-living crisis. Its four key themes are Tenant led engagement, Local Value led services, Sustainability and Accountability. Significant progress has been made since the Strategy launch with successful outcomes developed within each theme.

Staff continue to implement and agree new approaches to the strategy, through regular meetings led by the four Senior Officers within each Housing partner across Link. Given the ever-changing landscape within housing a full review of the strategy will take place in 2025 ahead of an updated strategy being launched in 2026.

Link's health and wellbeing charity, LinkLiving, is a trauma-informed health and wellbeing charity that supports people of all ages to overcome the negative impacts of trauma, mental health, inequality, and isolation.

The support is offered through a range of models: care at home and housing support; supported accommodation; befriending; social cafes; self-help coaching; and personal development and employability programmes.

LinkLiving works closely with colleagues across Link and its partners to ensure that its expertise and support are available to tenants and the communities in which Link operates.

The **Help on Managing Everything** project - HoME - continued to support Link tenants who struggle to maintain their tenancies due to a range of challenges including those related to mental health, hoarding and drug and alcohol dependencies. Funded through Link, the demand for LinkLiving's HoME project continues to increase, reflecting the complex challenges faced by so many Link tenants. This last year saw 197 Link Housing association tenants supported. A further 39 tenants were supported through LinkLiving's contract with Paragon Housing Association.

The need for this type of service is further demonstrated by the service growing to include Link's partner, Larkfield Housing Association, and another West Coast association, Oaktree Housing Association. In addition to the support provided to tenants through HoME, LinkLiving's **Building Resilience for a Better Home** service supports social housing tenants with mild to moderate mental health issues by providing up to nine self-help sessions.

In Edinburgh, our PSL service worked with LinkLiving to ensure that 241 tenants received additional advice and support over and above the support provided through the housing officers.

Link Academy has continued to increase the range of personal and professional development opportunities to Link tenants, LinkLiving service users and other customers living within the areas that Link operates in. Run by LinkLiving, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) training centre has once again held its High Confidence rating – the highest standard achievable with only 15% of centres achieving this in Scotland. Using LinkLiving's expertise and further supported by research and people with lived experiences, the Academy is skilled in designing bespoke training; understanding its clients' issues and challenges and producing exceptional training to meet specific learning needs and outcomes.

The Academy has also developed its skills and reputation for supporting the Scottish Government's ambition for Scotland to be a trauma informed nation. To meet this ambition, LinkLiving continues to train all Link colleagues in trauma informed approaches and in addition to this, has launched the first Personal Development Award SCQF Level 7 Trauma qualification which has generated significant external interest.

This approach is evident in Link's continued commitment to supporting young people to be

able to live well and be ambitious for their futures. As well as their extensive homelessness prevention support provision, LinkLiving has developed a range of projects to support the mental health and wellbeing of young people who struggle to engage with education or employment.

These projects and courses have been designed with young people with an emphasis on supporting them to sustain / re-engage with education. They were initially developed in response to feedback from young people (16+) who had left school with few or no SCQF qualifications prior to leaving education and who identified mental health as the most significant barrier to their engagement with educational opportunities. Over time feedback from young people identified that if they had had this kind of support whilst still at school they would probably have remained in education. So, our programmes evolved to provide courses and 1:1 support for children from P7 upwards to help sustain their engagement with education and to support them to manage key transitions in their lives.

Link is committed to the development of sustainable communities where our tenants can live and thrive in a safe, healthy and vibrant environment. As well as building houses, we also work with our partners to ensure maximum community investment is achieved during the housing development process and beyond. All of Link's construction tenders include a commitment from contractors to deliver employment and training opportunities for unemployed or otherwise disadvantaged people into the delivery of construction contracts issued by Link. During the last year, this resulted in 66 work placements, the creation of 33 new jobs, the establishment of 4 graduate trainee positions and the deployment of 46 apprentices. This illustrates Link's commitment as a key community partner to creating economic growth wherever we build houses.

Where are we now and how do we see the future [Managing external influences]

Performance levels

Our annual performance is presented in detail in our annual accounts and CEO report to the AGM.

The Strategic Objectives set out in Section 3 (pages 11-16) are designed to allow a longer-term vision to be delivered whilst also ensuring ongoing progress against the plans.

Operational targets are delivered by LHA (now inhouse within Link Group) and C~urb with performance targets and reporting contained in the associated business plans.

Each year the Link Group set Key ARC Performance Indicators for Link Group and the wider group companies. The 2025/2026 targets are set out in Appendix 6 alongside the performance against these targets for 2023/24, and performance up to Q3 in 2024/25.

A summary of performance against the Strategic Objectives is presented below:

People and Communities

Redefining Housing Services of the Future

- Housing Services Strategy launched 2023– ‘Link Together’
- Thematic reviews underway by lead officers in RSL partners
- CX-Feedback in place and implemented for Link Group rent consultation
- Locality plans developed
- Annual tenancy visits formally restarted in 2023
- Transfer of engagement completed 2025
- Older person service structure reviewed and implemented

Maximising collaboration

- Communities Directorate leadership forum implemented
- Expansion of cross group working including Evictions Panel and Valuing Complaints Group
- Trauma skills training delivery
- Expansion of HoMe (Help on Managing everything) and Building Resilience for Better Homes projects
- Continued delivery of welfare benefits and money advice

Communities Performance reporting

- Exploring data requirements to build reporting structure that captures ‘impact’
- Continued embedding and application of social value bank impact measurement framework and associated Social Value Insight tool

Development of a Link wide Communities Strategy

- Streets into Communities strategy launched November 2022, with review due July 2025
- Community Wellbeing Team established. Highlights include:
 - Ease cost of living events
 - Winter warmer goods and vouchers

- Link in the Community Fund
- Funding for emergency fuel and food support for customers through the LinkGiving Trust
- Overarching impact outcomes included in the Communities Strategy

Building Success

Formally launch C~urb

- C~urb launched with new business plan
- Continued external profit delivered despite inflation pressures and Scottish Government programme changes

Delivery of new affordable homes for Scotland's communities

- Programme in place to deliver c. 1500 new homes with 252 new homes developed in 2024/25
- 21 or 8% wheelchair accessible homes achieved of the 10% target achieved
- Net zero new homes policy implemented along with revised Design Guide and Technical Brief

First class customer services

- Significant compliance progress and delivery within tight timescales
- £16m investment in existing homes
- 257 properties now acquired for C~urb PSL
- CX Feedback pilot ongoing for repairs service
- Customer Experience programme initiated following discovery phase

Asset Management

- New integrated asset management system completed
- Additional funding sourced from Scottish Government to develop initial "timber frame" properties net zero toolkit

Corporate Wellbeing

Corporate Wellbeing strategy

- The anticipated Corporate Wellbeing strategy has not yet progressed given changes in the wider front line services. This piece of work will be scoped during 2025/26.

First class business resilience

- Standardised Budget Variance reporting implemented
- Overarching treasury funding programme in place
- Horizon and Larkfield have been refinanced and external lender risk removed
- Establishment of Finance and Treasury Committee
- New BoS facility and Allia facilities in place

First-class governance and assurance environment

- Governance team established
- Link Housing Association transfer of engagements to Link Group

Digital Strategy for customer engagement

- Delivery of Digital Services strategy underway with Sustainable Technology strategy developed
- Close engagement with housing teams regards tenant digital communication and engagement

Refreshed 'people strategy'

- Colleague Engagement Forum launched
- Link wide consultation prepared on people development
- 'Belonging with Us', our equity strategy, launched 2023
- Accredited leadership training courses rolled out group wide through LinkLiving's Link Academy

Ongoing regulatory and legal compliance

- Close alignment maintained with SHR
- Ongoing Board level reporting and focus

Sustainability

- Implementation of Sustainability strategy
- Publication of third ESG report. Certified Sustainable Housing Label (awarded by Ritterwald Consulting) renewed with frontrunner and ambassador status

Assessing and delivering value for money (“vfm”)

Link previously consulted with tenants on how to describe ‘value for money’ and now uses the definition:

“Doing the right thing, in the right place, at the right time, at the right price”.

The Link Group Customer Satisfaction Survey undertaken in 2022, reported that 82.5% of tenants felt that their rent represented VFM. This is a significant improvement from our 2017 (65%) and 2020 (76.4%) surveys. Our performance now sits above the Scottish average (81.6%).

The Link Together Housing Strategy includes local value led services as a strategic theme. VFM work has included:

- Use of the LinkGiving Trust to provide emergency food and fuel support;
- Expansion of Social Value Insight within Link;
- Membership of Housemark, allowing for wider cost and efficiency benchmarking alongside SHN (Scotland’s Housing Network) benchmarking; and
- 2024 launch of Local Insight which brings together area data with stock visualisation.

It is recognised that there is also a key aspect of tenant communication and engagement involved in VFM, as there is an important ‘perception of value’ aspect which needs to be captured. VFM was discussed in detail at Linkfest – our first digital tenant conference in 2021. The subject of a separate breakout group, the question posed was “What do you understand by the expression value for money?”. Tenants were polled online with the results being:

- Affordable rents (13%)
- Services being delivered right first time (5%)
- Getting the right balance between the cost and performance of services (82%)

The voting pattern was supported by the discussions and the consensus among group members was that they were happy to pay for services providing the service standards are good and they fully understand what they are paying for.

Affordability across Link

Maintaining the affordability of the homes across the group remains a key focus.

Any household’s financial position is, by its nature, unique and also variable with changes over time according to personal circumstances. Link recognises this challenge and considers affordability on an annual basis at both portfolio wide, and personal levels, using the following tools:

- SFHA Affordability Tool – to gauge portfolio affordability on a recognised sector wide basis [portfolio view];
- Review of rent levels against average social housing sector rent levels [portfolio view];
- Consideration of rent increases over previous years [portfolio view];
- Annual tenant feedback through the rent consultation process [personal view]; and
- Affordability questions in customer satisfaction surveys [personal view].

Current indicators suggest that the Link rent levels are affordable for those on moderate incomes. The Scottish Government's Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) Guidance provides a framework for considering rents affordable if a household pays not more than 25% to 35% of its income on rent². The most recent in-house Link Group affordability assessment completed in December 2024 (using the SFHA affordability tool) found that no Link Group property types have average rents more than 27% of modelled moderate (30th percentile ASHE (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings)) income for the six household types identified in the analysis. There has, however, been a significant reduction since 2021 in modelled residual income (after rent) which meets the MIS (Minimum Income Standard) developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF). This reflects the impact of rising food, fuel and energy costs as well as a recent review of the MIS by the JRF.

The reduction in modelled incomes meeting the MIS is also reflected in a reduction in Link tenant perceptions of affordability. In 2020 40.1% of Link tenants found their rent very or fairly easy to afford compared to 21.6% in 2024.

In 2023/24, Link Group's overall average rent (including service charges) for all property sizes (£98.56) was lower than the RSL average (£99.71) and above the Scottish average (£91.81).

Rent consultation results have shown the percentage of Link tenants finding their rent affordable or just about affordable has reduced from 79% in 2022 to 70% in 2024.

Link has invested further in measures to support tenants who are struggling financially; in particular, the delivery of projects to aid tenants experiencing fuel poverty, with funding totalling £243,000 from the Scottish Government's Fuel Insecurity Fund. Other measures have included emergency support through the LinkGiving Trust and piloting a financial support portal (Lightning Reach). In our 2025/26 budget, we have also included a tenant hardship fund.

Through these mechanisms Link will continue to have a clear insight into tenant affordability as well as developing further support infrastructure to assist those who need it most.

Internal & external considerations

The Group uses SWOT and PESTLE appraisal tools to support the overall strategic direction of the organisation. The 2025 assessments are attached at Appendix 4.

The key strengths and opportunities for the group lie in the strength of the operating framework and breadth of staff teams and experience.

The diversity of the group in terms of its spread of RSL network, LinkLiving specialist services, and the development of the commercial areas of operation contribute to a strong, resilient organisation. The challenges are clear and lie in the wider economic and social challenges which are evident across Scotland.

The continued success of the group is important not only to the existing tenants and service users within the group but also to the wider communities in which the organisation works. Recognising the core resilience of the group is key to the long-term strategic positioning of the organisation.

² Page 27, HNDA, A Practitioner's Guide, Scottish Government, November 2020

Business resilience [financial stability]

Background

Link is a robust business with strong financial metrics over the medium and long term whether this is measured on an entity basis or as the consolidated Link Group of companies. Link Group Limited has retained a Standard and Poor's rating of "A" with a stable outlook now for several years, but the external economic environment has created significant challenges in relation to the effects of inflation and interest rates on the business. The global geopolitical and macro-economic environment has created unprecedented volatility in markets and Link Group and its partner organisations are not immune to the effects on the UK and their business models.

The Link group business has emerged from a period of significant financial stress following the covid period and subsequently the energy and cost of living crisis. This has been followed by significant increases in both base interest rates and inflation in a very short period. There is no doubt that whilst Link group has sought and managed to navigate these challenges the resolution of the financial impact will not be complete within a similar time frame and the next few years will be about ensuring that the recovery remains on track whilst managing the effects on Link Group's clients.

The current financial forecasts have been further challenged by the UK government's decision to impose increases on the

National Insurance rates as well as the thresholds from 1st April 2025-26.

Link Group spent considerable time and resource during 2024-25 in successfully obtaining a wholesale change to its loan covenant structure across all its lenders to deliver additional financial capacity for the Group. That change enables it to invest in its existing stock by way of major component replacements and to commit materially to the sustainability strategy that Link Group has established.

Regrettably, Link Group's financial plans have had no option but to revert, due to economic necessity, to an inflation plus rent envelope for the foreseeable future. Whilst Link Group knows that is a challenge for our tenants and customers it is essential to ensure the financial strength Link previously had is reconstituted over time.

Link Group's financial capacity is governed by its ability to meet its lender loan covenants.

Link Group's loan covenants are;

- EBITDA Interest cover not less than 135%
- Gearing not more than 60%
- Asset cover on all loans of at least 110%

In addition, there are self-imposed golden rules established by the Link Group Board which are applied. Those Golden Rules operate as triggers ensuring that Link Group does not fall foul of the loan covenants inadvertently.

The Golden Rules applied by Link Group are;

- That EBITDA interest cover must not fall below 145%

- The EBITDA-MRI Interest cover must not fall below 120%
- That Gearing must not go above 50%
- That the financial forecast must deliver positive net operating cashflow

Link Group currently has in excess of 1,416 homes that are unencumbered which, when valued at £72.5k per unit MV-ST, equates to over £92 million in potential future borrowing capacity at 110% asset cover. Those unencumbered stock numbers do not include the future projected development completions or our shared ownership properties which may be utilised if required.

As a result, whilst Link remains robust financially in the medium and long term, it must consider the risks to its operating model and its financial performance measures of further constraints on its income through housing policy of the Scottish Government, along with sustained high inflation and high interest rates and their effects.

The development programme, which is a core purpose of Link to meet social housing delivery, will need to deliver completed homes before embarking on a new period of expansion. The next two years require cautious pragmatism and prudence to navigate the potential financial risks.

Key assumptions

The key business planning assumptions are as follows:

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30 Onwards
Rent Increase	5.50%	3.10%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Inflation (CPI)	2.68%	2.10%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Voids & Bad Debts	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	0.75%
Variable Loan Interest Rates (Base rate)	4.75%	4.75%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%
Employment	4.80%	2.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Repairs and maintenance	3.68%	3.10%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%

The rental assumptions reflect the need for the business to recover its revenue position following the imposition of a limit on rents in 2023-24 and also the effects and impact of extreme inflationary cost growth, energy cost price rises and rapid rises in interest rates during the 2024-25 cost of living crisis. In addition, the 2025-26 rental increase assumptions reflect the need to absorb the UK Government imposition of increased employment costs through the changes to National Insurance.

In the long-term inflation is assumed to be at the Bank of England and Government target for the Consumer Prices Index being 2% from 2027-28 onwards.

Loan interest rates, which are a significant cost to Link, are assumed at the actual weighted average cost of borrowing taking account of Link's currently agreed terms, margins, and rates. Any new borrowing is assumed at the rates applicable on undrawn facilities and over and above that at the base rate plus margin of 1.2%. Link Group is taking the view that the yield curve has significantly flattened and that there will be little discernible benefit between short- and long-term rates.

The voids and bad debts assumptions are predicated on Link's current operating performance at 1.5%, which is a combination of 0.75% for voids and bad debts each.

Employment costs are forecast to remain robust at effectively CPI+1% in the longer term reflecting the expectations of employees and their unions, EVH and other employment bodies. Link Group does not forecast efficiency gains in staffing costs however it is important to note that Link Group does not forecast any growth in staffing costs other than inflationary cost growth whilst at the same time the business is expected to grow significantly because of new home development. This is in effect an in-built efficiency through the business where Link Group is "doing more with the same staffing resources".

The other key assumption in the business planning model is the development programme profile for Link Group moving forward. Link has a contractually and politically committed development programme for new homes which includes both social housing and mid-market

rent homes. There are also some New Supply Shared Equity (NSSE) homes included in the plans along with development of homes for other social landlords under agency agreements.

Link Group's development programme is as follows;

Development Programme	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Future	Total
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Years	
Social and MMR Unit Completions	73	312	465	398	398	1,646

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Future	Total
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Years	
	£ million	£ million	£ million	£ million	£ million	£ million
Grants	£41.28	£74.90	£27.02	£18.66	£34.30	£196.16
Sales Income	£0.52	£1.04	£5.55	-	£6.31	£13.42
Private Finance	£19.06	£27.60	£41.46	£27.84	£53.51	£169.47
Total	£60.86	£103.54	£74.03	£46.50	£94.11	£379.05

The total programme of homes across 2024-25 to 2028-29 is 1,646 homes at a total cost of £379.05 million of which grant accounts for £196.16 million, sales of £13.4 million and private finance of £169.47 million.

The majority of development is affordable housing development which is supported by Scottish Government grant.

In addition, it is important to note that the development programme has a contractually committed element and an element which is not yet contractually committed.

The contractually committed element, which accounts for almost 15% of the overall programme in spend terms, is principally in the early years of the programme. This means that the remaining 85% of the development programme which is not committed may be "flexed" if needs be to manage short term financial commitments.

Financial projections

Link Group has produced 30-year financial projections for Link Group as a standalone entity.

The financial statements are presented at

- Appendix 7.1a Statement of Comprehensive Income Core (30 Year)
- Appendix 7.1b Statement of Cash Flows Core (30 Year)
- Appendix 7.1c Statement of Financial Position Core (30 Year)

- Appendix 7.2a Statement of Comprehensive Income Core (5 Year)
- Appendix 7.2b Statement of Cash Flows Core (5 Year)
- Appendix 7.2c Statement of Financial Position (5 Year)

The financial projections demonstrate a viable and sustainable business which is meeting its loan covenant forecasts. Its golden rules are under revision following the comprehensive change to its covenant package from EBITDA-MRI to EBITDA only with its lenders and investors but nevertheless the financial metrics demonstrate compliance.

Asset management

The asset management programme for Link Group takes account of the current stock knowledge and the profiled component replacement for the next five years, with commitments beyond that based on an average total unit spend. The strategic high level profile of expenditure for 2025-26 is as follows and includes additional commitments of £2.5m by way of Planned Maintenance to reflect future financial planning resource for Net Zero projects:

2025-26		
Capital	£	13,870,495
Revenue	£	4,084,683
Total	£	17,955,177

Our Service and Compliance programme is designed to ensure that we deliver both statutory compliance and good practice for our tenants. It also ensures that our serviceable assets are maintained to maximise the asset life.

Our investment programmes set out to replace major components at the end of their notional life enabling us to maintain high quality modern homes for our customers. It will also see us develop and implement our net zero strategy for the decarbonisation of our homes.

Funding

The plans of Link incorporate the operating cashflows as well as the capital expenditure cashflows.

During 2024-25 Link Group undertook a wholesale renegotiation of its covenant package across all of its lenders and investors. That process saw Link group part company with M&G after almost 10 years of being a strategic partner as Link Group replaced that borrowing with additional funds from Royal Bank of Scotland.

The change to the financial covenants from EBITDA-MRI to EBITDA was delivered with consistent terms across the loan portfolio. The arrangements with one funder are on a temporary “carve out” which will expire or be renegotiated for 2028-29. As a result the EBITDA-MRI metric remains important as a constraint in the event that that renegotiation is unsuccessful. It is important to note however that Link Group’s financial projections remain viable and sustainable, and the Link Group brand is highly regarded by lenders and investors.

Link Group has loan facilities of £474 million available to it and has drawn balances of £401 million. This means that Link Group can draw upon £73 million of available facilities at this time. That £73 million is made up of £63 million in revolving credit facilities with Bank of Scotland and Royal Bank of Scotland which are already secured and therefore highly liquid. The remaining £10 million in undrawn facilities is with Allia CC and would be subject to agreed terms and availability of funding.

In addition, however Link Group has a “shelf facility” with its lender Met Life which amounts to £160 million of available funding subject to pricing and security placement being made.

The forecast business plan requirements for 2025-26 are that Link group requires £16.5 million in new borrowing during 2025-26 and this will be met from its existing liquid resources, primarily revolving credit facilities. Beyond 2025-26 a total gross funding requirement in the next five years requires almost £154 million of new funding although £29 million of that will be loan refinancing in 2028-29. Link Group will need to embark on a new funding exercise to support the development of new homes in the 2027-28 financial year.

It is important to note that there is also a significant loan repayment event forecast in 2030-31 with almost £71 million of debt falling due for renegotiation or repayment with one lender. Link Group aims to refinance that debt and therefore has a strategy of placing properties with its security trustees as and when they complete in preparation for those future borrowing events. Link Group is also seeking with its Local Authority partners the removal of S75 restrictions on security where it can maximise the effective use of loan security.

The Link Group strategy has been to maintain its existing fixed rate debt profile with any new borrowing being variable rated debt until such time as market rates of interest fall from their 16-year peak. This strategy has involved high costs of borrowing in the short term until such time as Link Group can fix longer dated debt at more appropriate levels to support growth.

Link Group’s current fixed to variable debt ratio is 78% fixed and 22% variable and the weighted average cost of borrowing of all drawn funds is 4.13%. Link Group will continue to seek to fix debt where it can obtain that below its current planning rates of 4.75% plus margin.

External environment

The wider economic context has been extremely challenging in the last few years following the re-opening of the economy in 2021-22 after the Covid-19 pandemic. The 2022-23 year saw rapid inflation cost growth which has affected materials supply costs, energy costs, overheads and labour costs as the cost-of-living crisis impacts staff as well. This became very apparent with retail inflation CPI peaking at 11.1% in October 2022, a 41-year high.

The introduction of the Scottish Government Tenant Protection and Cost of Living (Scotland) Act in 2023-24 has had an impact on the social rent increases applied for revenues to remain above costs. This has also had a significant impact on rents charged for Mid-Market Rent properties as they were considered to be private rented tenancies and caught by the new legislation.

Link Group's cost base is made up of four key elements, employment costs, overheads, repairs and maintenance costs and interest costs. Whilst general retail-based inflation continues to fall it has seen a small uptick since the low of September 2024 and as at January 2025 is at 3.0% (ONS) It remains the case that Link Group's forecast inflation or cost growth for the 2025-26 will be unlikely to remain consistent with retail inflation. Link Group faces increased costs from the National Insurance change which will affect not only its internal labour costs but is also expected to affect a significant majority of its suppliers who will seek to pass on that cost. The current global geopolitical uncertainties are unhelpful in that they may impact supply chains for goods and services as well as costs. In addition, the rapidity of interest rate rises and their relative "stickiness" in not coming back down has an impact on Link Group's financial forecasts. Link Group has taken what is a conservative approach to interest rate forecasting in its financial plans assuming that base rate reduction will only go down to 4.5% and that long term funding rates will remain similar. This reflects the fact that Link Group's business model with a £400 million debt book is susceptible to adverse interest rate movements on its new debt.

Outcomes

The outcomes of the financial plans are that the base case outturn shows a viable and sustainable business for Link Group.

The short-term position however remains the area of key risk given the weakest interest cover position on EBITDA and EBITDA-MRI although the EBITDA outturn remains well above thresholds and with significant headroom. The financial plans show that Link Group's debt would be serviceable throughout the 30 years and although there is a modest sum of debt remaining at year 30 this is not sufficient to raise serious concerns at less than £40 million.

Sensitivity analysis

Link Group carries out sensitivity analysis on some key variables in its business plan, these are:

- Interest rates being 1% higher than the core assumptions for the duration of the plan
- Cost growth rising at an additional 0.5% per annum throughout the plan, except in labour costs and insurance costs
- Contractually uncommitted development withdrawn from plans
- Shadow Programme of an additional 500 homes development in year 5

Outcomes are assessed based on the peak debt position and the amount of debt outstanding at year 30.

The outcomes are as follows:

- The core plan position is a peak debt of £570.6 million with a balance of debt at year 30 of £39.4 million
- Interest rates being 1% higher leads to a peak debt of £580.5 million with a balance of debt at year 30 of £268.6 million

- Committed development only leads to a peak debt of £438 million and a balance of debt of £1.1 million at year 30
- The shadow programme leads to a peak debt of £614 million with a debt balance at year 30 of £16.8 million.

The implications of this are that interest rates are a key sensitivity metric for Link Group and therefore a strong fixed and variable debt ratio is important to avoid unplanned interest costs.

It is also interesting that although the shadow programme raises peak debt substantially by £43 million that the net debt at the end of 30 years is lower than the core plan owing to the positive effect of the rental income streams and their rental growth contribution.

Link Group considered changes to voids and bad debts as a sensitivity however the material impact is not significant unless substantial changes in void and bad debt rates occur.

Link Group also considered adjusting for labour cost growth. However, given that Link Group is not forecasting any change in staffing numbers at all throughout the life of the plan yet will grow by almost 15% in unit numbers, then the management of those additional homes is considered an operating efficiency if it is not leading to any change in staffing costs.

The outcomes of that sensitivity analysis are that Link Group is subject to risks of rising interest rates, impacting on its financial metrics by virtue of the EBITDA requirement that for each £1 increase in interest costs it will need to attain £1.35 in adjusted surplus.

In addition, extremely high inflation impacts Link Group's financial plans as it cannot fully pass on those inflationary costs to its end customers, our tenants. Whereas general inflation is favourable to the financial plans as it increases rent when linked to a CPI + regime and rent is by far the biggest constituent of the plan.

Risk registers

Link maintains a strategic risk register and an operational risk register. The strategic risk register distils the high-level key strategic risks that Link's Board and Group Leadership Team focus on during the year. The strategic risks are those that would have the highest group impact if they crystallised.

The strategic risks are reviewed and updated where necessary three times per year by the Audit and Risk Committee. The strategic risks are also reviewed quarterly by the Group Leadership Team. Each strategic risk is assessed for probability of occurrence and impact. Controls are then considered and assessed and depending on the strength of the controls (often this is dictated by what is and is not in Link's direct control) then a residual risk score is determined. Each risk is then analysed and aligned to monitoring measures including linkages to key performance indicators which are reported quarterly to the GLT and Group Board.

The operational risk registers sit below the strategic risk registers and are produced by each department/group member. These are used to assess what adverse operational situations would have on the group and how these would be mitigated against and dealt with.

The Audit and Risk Committee approved the strategic risk registers which feature at **Appendix 7.3** to this plan at its March 2025 meeting.

The main risk areas as set out in the recent analysis are:

- Failure to meet SHR requirements
- Loan covenant breaches
- Procurement non-compliance
- Significant business interruption (cyber and non-cyber related)
- Information governance failure
- Service user, vulnerable tenant, member of staff or member of the public is harmed
- Property management non-compliance
- Failure to recruit and retain talent
- Net zero aspirations not being progressed

Appendices

1. GLOSSARY OF LINK ORGANISATIONS
2. SHR REGULATORY STANDARDS MAPPING
3. SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION
4. SWOT AND PESTLE ANALYSIS
5. GLOSSARY OF COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS
6. ARC KPI DOCUMENT
7. 7.1A STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME CORE (30 YEAR)
7.1B STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS CORE (30 YEAR)
7.1C STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION CORE (30 YEAR)
7.2A STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME CORE (5 YEAR)
7.2B STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS CORE (5 YEAR)
7.2C STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (5 YEAR)
7.3 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Appendix 1

Glossary of Link organisations

Company	Role	Representation in Business Plan
Link Group Ltd ("Link Group")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered Social Landlord Parent company in the group Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 Charitable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Company responsible for overarching strategic direction of the group Company responsibility for overall governance and compliance across the group Central to the delivery of social housing tenant facing activities Delivers the core regulatory performance data and metrics Owner of the Business Plan
LinkLiving ("LL")	<p>A Care Inspectorate Scotland registered support provider focusing on care, support and employability services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Company Ltd by Guarantee Charitable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key part of the Communities division alongside Link Group Limited
C-urb 6 Ltd ("C~urb")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial services company which provides repairs services to a number of group companies Development agency services Property management services for PRS / Factoring Company Ltd by Shares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central to the delivery of the Building Success division objectives
Horizon HA ("Horizon")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c.800 property RSL based in Livingston with a specialism in Accessible Living Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 Charitable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key partner organisation in the delivery of the Communities strategic objectives
Larkfield HA ("Larkfield")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RSL which owns, or manages on behalf of Link Group, a portfolio of c.1,000 properties based in Greenock Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 Charitable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key partner organisation in the delivery of the Communities strategic objectives
West Highland HA ("WHHA")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RSL which owns or manages c. 800 properties based in Oban. Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 Charitable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key partner organisation in the delivery of the Communities strategic objectives

Appendix 2

Regulatory standards mapping

This appendix provides a reference point identifying the areas in the Business Plan that most directly link to the individual Regulatory Standards.

Regulatory Standard	Business Plan Areas	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 2 – Vision and Mission Section 3 – Delivering the Vision Section 4 – Protecting the organisation 	The governing body establishes the overarching vision, mission, and values (S2) that it expects to be delivered for tenants and service users. The leadership team are tasked to deliver against this vision (S3) and a strong governance and reporting framework ensures active scrutiny (S4).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 3 – Delivering the Vision Section 5 – Stakeholder Insight 	The voice of the customer leads the Link service provision. The strategic goals (S3) are built on wide stakeholder engagement and well developed participation channels (S5).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 6 – How do we see the future Section 7 – Financial planning 	Financial and economic effectiveness is directly linked to the quality of services provided (S6). Link has significant systems and management experience in financial planning and reporting with external scrutiny on an annual basis by multiple stakeholders (S7).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 4 – Protecting the organisation Section 7 – Financial planning 	Scrutiny is encouraged at Board and senior leadership levels (S4). Technical activities are acknowledged and considered at multiple levels through appropriate committee structures and wider group wide information sharing forums are in place. Financial and risk assessment and oversight is undertaken at Group Board level (S4 & S7).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4 – Protecting the organisation 	Link adopts the SFHA model rules as the central basis for its operations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4 – Protecting the organisation 	The Board is supported in its activities through a robust training cycle including induction activities and specific technical areas (for example finance).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RSL ensures that any organisational changes or disposals it makes safeguard the interests of, and benefit, current and future tenants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 3 – Delivering the vision • Section 4 – Protecting the organisation 	Link's governance framework ensures that organisational changes and disposals are reserved to the Group Board to ensure protection of tenants' interests.

Appendix 3

Summary of key legislation and strategies

As a group of regulated companies, the group complies with a range of legislative instruments. These ensure that customers and staff are kept safe and the organisations operate in clear compliance with their obligations. Whilst not a definitive list of all legislation, the strategic framework and some of the key regulations which govern the operations are set out below:

General

The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (including where applicable as it forms part of the law of England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland by virtue of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018)

Safeguards in relation to data holding and transmission.

Climate change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019

Scottish Government commitments to carbon reduction which will impact most areas of business operations over time.

The Scotland Act 2016 (part 3) and Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018

Key act making provision for social security in Scotland to deliver the devolved powers introduced in the Scotland Act 2016 (Part 3).

Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 & Public contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015

General procurement requirements governing the purchasing of goods and services.

Heat in Buildings Strategy

Published in October 2021 this strategy includes a commitment to a just transition to net zero emissions housing and provides a framework for legislation.

Housing focused

Housing (Scotland) Bill

In November 2024, this passed stage 1. Its focus is improving tenant rights and a system of rent controls for the private rented sector. The Bill also includes a stronger emphasis on homelessness prevention.

Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) (Scotland) Act 2022

Introduced a temporary freeze on in-tenancy rent increases until at least 31 March 2023. The Scottish Government confirmed on 21 December 2022 that there would be no rent cap or freeze in place for social tenancies from 1 April 2023. The rent cap was, however, applied to private tenancies (including mid market rent). On 1 October 2023 the remaining provisions of the Act were extended for a final six month period to 31 March 2024.

Homeless Persons (Suspension of Referrals between Local Authorities) (Scotland) Order 2022

Where a client makes a homeless application on or after 29 November 2022, a local authority can no longer refer them to another Scottish local authority under section 33(1) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

Housing (Scotland) Act 2014

Overarching act governing housing in Scotland supported by a number of pieces of ancillary secondary legislative provisions.

Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, Part 5

Applicable to the Sheltered Housing services in the group which are registered and monitored by the Care Inspectorate.

Duty of Candour Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2018

Applicable to the Sheltered Housing services in the group which are registered and monitored by the Care Inspectorate.

Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing [Regulatory standard]

Energy efficiency standards and future targets have been established for the social housing sector. Targets are based on EPC ratings and form part of the group approach to overall sustainability objectives. A Scottish Government consultation on a new Social Housing Net Zero Standard was launched in November 2023. This new SHNZS will replace EESSH2.

Fire Safety Regulations - Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (Tolerable Standard) (Extension of Criteria) Order 2019

Sets out the safety standards with regards to fire and smoke alarm systems as well as details on Carbon Monoxide protection. Compliance was required by 1 February 2022.

Planning (Scotland) Act 2019

Key legislation governing an overall planning framework for Scotland including aspects such as the right to appeal planning decisions and compulsory purchase provisions.

Scottish Social Housing Charter

The revised Scottish Social Housing Charter has had effect from 1 November 2022. It now includes the right to adequate housing under the Equalities outcome.

Housing to 2040

Published in March 2021, it sets out an ambition for everyone to have a safe, good quality and affordable home that meets their needs in the place they want to be. It includes plans to deliver 100,000 affordable homes by 2031/32.

A New Deal for Tenants – draft rented sector strategy consultation

Launched in December 2021, this consultation focuses on the delivery of the Housing to 2040 ambition. It covers both the private and social rented sectors. New housing legislation is proposed in 2024 which is expected to include a national system of rent controls for the private rented sector; a requirement for all social landlords to have a domestic abuse policy; greater rights for tenants to personalise their homes and keep pets; and a homelessness prevention duty.

Care service focused

The majority of LinkLiving's service provision is registered with the Care Inspectorate and as such is subject to external monitoring and inspection at both local and organisational levels. Because these services account for a large proportion of the organisation, LinkLiving also applies most of the required policies, procedures and practices to its non-registered services. This is for reasons of good practice and governance rather than due to regulatory requirement.

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is the regulator for the social service workforce in Scotland. Its aim is to ensure that social services are provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce. It protects the public by registering social service workers, setting standards for their practice, conduct, training and education and by supporting their professional development. Where people fall below the standards of practice and conduct the SSSC can investigate and take action.

In addition to meeting the expectations and standards set through the above regulatory bodies, LinkLiving ensures that the organisation and its activities comply with a suite of safeguarding legislation and attendant policies, including:

- Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2001
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013
- Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

Commercial focused

The Private Housing (*Tenancies*) (*Scotland*) Act 2016

Commenced on 1 December 2017 and introduced the new 'private residential tenancy'. Its purpose is to improve security, stability and predictability for tenants and to provide safeguards for landlords, lenders and investors.

The Property Factors (*Scotland*) Act 2011

The Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011 came into force on 1st October 2012. The Act's main aim is to create a statutory framework that will give protection for homeowners in Scotland who receive services from factors.

Appendix 4

SWOT and PESTLE analysis

Strengths to build on		Weaknesses to overcome	
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivering an ambitious housing development programmeLink’s size ensures that it can achieve economies of scaleA trusted partner and enabler for community groupsA certified company for ESG - tried and trusted for investmentOperates a range of advice and tenancy sustainment services which maximise household incomeLink generates additional income through the delivery of a range of public sector contractsIn-house property maintenance resource reduces reliance on external contractorsStreets into Communities and Link Together StrategiesFocus on compliance and DMCCustomer satisfaction survey results 2022Streamlining of group structure by the transfer of Link Housing Association (non-asset owning RSL) into Link Group (asset owning RSL)Retention of A with stable outlook rating by Standard and Poor Global Ratings		<ul style="list-style-type: none">A complex group structure results in a lack of clarity amongst stakeholdersHousing stock is spread across 22 LAs making it more challenging to manage4 distinct HAs within the group can lead to a lack of consistencyLink’s size can lead to challenges when implementing organisational changeLink is experiencing difficulties in recruiting staff into specific roles i.e. accountancy, IT and social careFinancial performance remains under scrutiny given external cost pressuresRent consultation survey in 2023 and 2024 indicated customer concern with proposed rents and servicesStaff capacity with resources focused on compliance and DMC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The emergence ESG models creates opportunities for investment in Link and allows us to contribute to the national conversation about ESG FinanceTechnology such as mobile apps and Customer CX can allow us to communicate more effectively with tenantsProvision of affordable housing is a political priorityTechnology continues to enable improvements to servicesFunding opportunities for environmental initiativesIncreased stock investment capacity through covenant package changes		<ul style="list-style-type: none">We are in a period of economic uncertainty due to high inflation rising interest rates and world events influencing high energy pricesRepairs, planned maintenance and cyclical maintenance costs have increased above inflationImpact of UK Budget changes to Employers’ NI contributions on supplier costsThere are a range of environmental regulatory requirements being introduced i.e. EESSH 2 and gas boiler banGovernment funding in areas relevant to Link delivery is likely to reduceImpact of cost of living increases on our tenantsPlanning regulations vary depending on local authority areaCyber-attacks are increasing in complexity and number in the sector

<p>P</p> <p>POLITICAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern with the performance of social landlords – particularly elsewhere in UK • The current economic position has resulted in a reduction of Government funding for its affordable housing building programme • The application of government policy at local level can be inconsistent – requires Link to respond differently in different areas • An international focus on reducing environmental impact requiring innovative solutions • Local authority declaration of housing emergencies • Scottish Parliament inquiry (launched February 2024) into the Housing to 2040 strategy • PRS rent cap (in-tenancy) ended March 2024 – proposals for PRS rent control system
<p>E</p> <p>ECONOMIC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are currently in a continued period of economic uncertainty including the turbulence caused by Brexit, war in the Ukraine, conflict in the Middle East and wider US policy changes • 2025 economic outlook uncertain with potential higher pace of inflation and trade frictions alongside short-term growth • Interest costs have remained higher than anticipated with the Bank of England balancing inflation against low economic growth • Continuing cost of living pressures (food, fuel and energy) on tenants • Continued above CPI cost inflation for repair, planned maintenance and cyclical maintenance works • The emergence of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) investment models may create opportunities for investment in Link services • Higher economic inactivity may lead to greater support requirements for tenants • Increased employer NI contributions are increasing employer and supplier costs
<p>S</p> <p>SOCIAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for social housing continues to outweigh supply. This is particularly acute for those who require accessible housing • Homelessness applications have increased and the number of households in temporary accommodation is the highest recorded • Community empowerment mechanisms offer opportunities for more sustainable communities • Increased needs among tenants, applicants and factored owners linked to cost of living pressures • An ageing population will have an impact on the nature of services required • Fuel poverty is expected to place an acute burden on many families
<p>T</p> <p>TECHNOLOGICAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology is changing at expedient rate requiring a flexible approach when introducing it into new homes to avoid obsolescence and unnecessary expenditure. • The technology now exists to allow us to communicate far more effectively with customers • Increasing customer access to Smart phones supporting response to text/email notifications such as rent consultation • There is a need to find alternatives for existing heating systems that are affordable as we progress on our ‘net zero’ journey
<p>L</p> <p>LEGAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation can result in conflict between meeting requirements and developing innovative approaches i.e. increased sustainability measures • Housing Associations must comply with public procurement legislation - goods and services (over £50k) and works (over £2M) • The emergence of legislation for GDPR and FOI has led to increased costs • The Sustainable Procurement Duty requires a focus on sustainability within the procurement process i.e. community benefit • Compliance requirements – gas safety, EICR and smoke heat detectors • Revised Regulatory Framework with new ARC guidance and compliance indicators (including DMC) • Housing (Scotland) Bill Stage 2 2025
<p>E</p> <p>ENVIRONMENTAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Government plans for Scotland to achieve net zero by 2045 • Review of EESSH2 and EPC framework. • Range of environmental regulatory requirements being introduced including no gas boilers in newbuild from April 2024 • Circular Economy (Scotland) Bill – new legislation to encourage waste reduction, reuse and recycling • Focus on damp, mould and condensation following death of Awaab Ishak • Action on RAAC

Appendix 5

Glossary of commonly used abbreviations

Abbreviation	Long form terminology
AAS	Annual Assurance Statement
ARC	Annual Return on Charter
CIH	Chartered Institute of Housing
DMC	Damp, mould and condensation
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions
ESG	Environment, Social and Governance
FCA	Financial Conduct Authority
HACT	Housing Association Charitable Trust
HoME	Help on Managing Everything
JRF	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
MIS	Minimum Income Standard
OSCR	Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator
RAAC	Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
SFHA	Scottish Federation of Housing Associations
SHR	Scottish Housing Regulator
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
TSP	Tenant Scrutiny Panel
VFM	Value for money

Appendix 6

Key ARC performance indicators

Service quality

Indicator	Why included	Reporting Frequency	Source	2023/24 Annual Outturn	2024/25 Q1-Q3 cumulative	2025/26 Target	Scottish Average 2023/24
Average re-let time calendar days (30)	a) ARC indicator	Quarterly	Link Group	35.4	32.8	30 days	56.7 days
	b) Direct service impact		Horizon	15.11	18	15 days	
	c) Financial impact		Larkfield	47.9	46	35 days	
			WHHA	13.2	15.7	8 days	
Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs hours(8)	a) ARC indicator	Quarterly	C~urb	3.0	3.1	4 hours	4 hours
	b) Direct service impact		Horizon	3.64	2.95	4 hours	
	c) Safety and wellbeing		Larkfield	2.87	3.1	4 hours	
			WHHA	3.58	3.4	12	
Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs. (9)	a) ARC indicator	Quarterly	C~urb	11	12.9	6 days	9 days
	b) Direct service impact		Horizon	9.02	6.58	7 days	
	c) Safety and wellbeing		Larkfield	10.66	10.04	6 days	
			WHHA	3.58	3.04	6.5 days	
Percentage tenants satisfied with repairs service (12)	a) ARC indicator	Quarterly	C~urb	84.6%	84.6%	96%	87.3%
	b) Direct service impact and impact on overall satisfaction		Horizon	91%	93.1%	92%	
			Larkfield	92.06%	93.06%	95%	
			WHHA	80.85%	80.85%	90%	
% of tenants who feel the rent for their property represents good value for money (25)	a) ARC indicator	Annual	Link Group	82.5	NA	80%	81.6%
	b) Direct service impact		Horizon	81.8	NA	82%	
			Larkfield	76.6	NA	80%	
			WHHA	83.8	NA	80%	

Homelessness

Indicator	Why this is being included	Reporting Frequency	Source	2023/24 Annual Outturn	2024/25 Q1-Q3 cumulative	2025/26 Target	Scottish average 2023/24
Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year, by source of let. (16)	a) ARC indicator b) Direct service impact c) Safety and wellbeing	Annual	Link Group	91.77	NA	93%	91.2%
			Horizon	97.96	NA	92%	
			Larkfield	96.0	NA	90%	
			WHHA	86.76.3	NA	90%	
Number of evictions and abandonments	a) ARC indicator b) Direct service impact	Quarterly	Link Group	12evict. 64 aban.	12 evict. 27 aban.	<15evict. <50aban.	NA
			Horizon	0 evict. 1 aban.	0 evict. 2 aban.	<3 evict. <3 aban.	
			Larkfield	0 evict. 0 aban.	0 evict. 2 aban.	<2 evict. <3 aban.	
			WHHA	0 evict. 0 aban.	0 evict. 3 aban.	<3 evict. <3 aban.	

Stock quality

Indicator	Why this is being included	Reporting Frequency	Source	2023/24 Annual Outturn	2024/25 Q1-Q3 cumulative	2025/26 Target	Scottish average 2023/24
How many times did you not meet your statutory obligation to complete a gas safety check within 12 months of a gas appliance being fitted or last checked. (11)	a) ARC indicator b) Direct service impact c) Safety and wellbeing	Quarterly	Link Group	3	0	0	NA
			Horizon	0	0	0	
			Larkfield	0	1	0	
			WHHA	0	0	0	
Number of water management (Legionella) checks completed by scheduled date (%)	a) Safety and wellbeing	Quarterly	Link Group	97.%	98.65%	100%	NA
			Horizon	100%	100%	100%	
			WHHA	100%	100%	100%	

Percentage of properties brought fully up to SHQS standard	ARC indicator	Quarterly	Link Group	91.87%	91.83%	95%	84.4%
			Horizon	99.75%	100%	100%	
			Larkfield	94.12.6%	95%	95%	
			WHHA	95.48%	96.3%	99%	
% of properties meeting EICR compliance			Link Group	98.9	98.8%	100%	NA
			Horizon	99.75%	100%	100%	
			Larkfield	98.7%	99.2%	100%	
			WHHA	99.27%	90.5%	100%	
Achieve 100% smoke and heat compliance by February 2022	ARC indicator legislative requirement	Quarterly	LHA	100%	100%	100%	NA
			Horizon	100%	100%	100%	
			Larkfield	100%	100%	100%	
			WHHA	100%	100%	100%	

Financial health

Indicator	Why this is being included	Reporting Frequency	Source	2023/24 Annual Outturn	2024/25 Q1-Q3 cumulative	2025/26 Target	Scottish average 2023/24
% rent due lost through homes being empty over the last year	Financial impact	Quarterly	Link Group	0.7%	0.39%	0.48%	1.4%
			Horizon	0.58%	0.45%	0.4%	
			Larkfield	0.58%	0.53%	0.4%	
			WHHA	0.1%	0.3%	0.4%	
Gross rent arrears	Financial impact	Quarterly	Link Group	4.14%	3.56%	4.5%	6.7%
			Horizon	1.33%	1.22%	4%	
			Larkfield	4.72%	4.4%	4.2%	
			WHHA	1.84%	1.56%	4%	