

CRHA ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

HOMES TO MAKE LIFE BETTER

making a difference to rural communities across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.



#makingadifference #peoplebusiness

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OUR VISION



Homes to make life better

To support and sustain rural communities in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly by providing quality affordable homes.



OUR VALUES



Customer First

Our customers are at the heart of what we do.



Inspire

to be a great example to everyone that we engage with.



Commitment

to provide safe, affordable, quality homes.



Integrity

having strong principles in what we do, being respectful.



People Focus

investing in our people so that they can be the best that they can be.

CHAIR'S REPORT This year has presented fresh challenges, with the rising cost of living impacting many of our customers on a day-to-day basis.



Our own operational costs to deliver services have increased throughout the last year but despite that we've maintained a surplus and continue to ensure that our planned, responsive and housing related services deliver great value for our customers. Our stock condition survey programme undertaken throughout the year coupled with our annual programmes of investment and cyclical maintenance helps confirm that our homes are of a good quality and condition. However, we need to maintain a close eye on spend into the next year as a result of the rent cap and inflationary pressures on goods, services and materials.

Business Strategy and set out a new vision for the association, Homes to make life better. How we operate is equally important and I was pleased that we also agreed a new set of values Customer First, Inspire, Commitment, Integrity and People Focus we have also retained our embedded straplines #peoplebusiness #makingadifference.

During the year we also agreed a new longer term

Despite the cost of living and inflationary pressures the year has been successful, and this report now turns to focus on the business of CRHA during 2022/23.

New Homes Development

Despite the continued operating challenges, and the national economic inflationary position our work to deliver new affordable homes has continued with work started to build 13 social rented homes in the rural village of Wainhouse Corner, North Cornwall.

This is fantastic news and is our first new homes development for over 5 years.

During the year nine properties were re-let on social rents, and the Board approved the acquisition of 2 family homes for affordable rent in Boscastle.

Finance

CRHA has always placed a high priority on prudent financial management and so we are pleased to report another successful year financially. The accounts show an operating surplus of £561,997 with revenue reserves of £3.832.135.

Every year we have independent, external auditors examining our accounts and different aspects of our financial arrangements to provide us with independent assurance on the business. CRHA takes these reviews very seriously and it is reassuring for the Board that this independent scrutiny has confirmed yet again the sound operation of the organisation.



Delivery of high performing housing management and repairs and maintenance services in dispersed rural communities across Cornwall and on the Isles of Scilly is challenging. However, CRHA keeps a close eye on its performance relative to the South West benchmarking group of smaller housing associations and aims to reach or exceed the average level. Some notable areas of progress include a push to engage with our customers using digital media and on-line channels with 54% of customers now signed up to our digital portal MYCRHA where they can access information, pay their rent and report repairs etc; and rent arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debt was 1.59%.

Governance

The Board welcomed four new members. Paul Heminsley who brings financial and treasury expertise and Keith Meredith, who brings asset management and property expertise were appointed in September 2022.

Ella McLachlan and Trudy Polkinghorn, both who live in our homes and bring a passion for affordable homes and a wealth of rural community lived housing experience, became co-opted members during the year. Ella is also our very first Board member from the Isles of Scilly.

We also said goodbye to our Board members Roger Orchard and Maurice Vella who completed their term of office and have been active ambassadors for CRHA during their tenure on the Board. We all wish Roger and Maurice well for the future.

Conclusion

2022/23 has continued to present some national challenges for organisations and for Cornwall Rural Housing Association and I'm proud of how colleagues and the Board have responded positively to these.

I'd like to thank our Chief Executive, the new Leadership team and our wider workforce for the energy and passion they all give, helping drive forward an amazing and resilient rural housing association. I'd also like to thank my fellow Board members for giving up their time on a voluntary basis to ensure we provide good quality and well-maintained homes across rural communities in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Adam Hackett - Chair

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STRATEGIC REPORT

Welcome to our annual report and what for me marks my second year at CRHA. Typically we have had another busy and exciting year as the business continues to evolve, thrive and grow. It is a real pleasure and privilege to lead such an amazing organisation working with some great people including colleagues, our Board, customers and key partners – all of this to continue to deliver high levels of customer service and to ensure that our customers homes are well maintained, receive the investment that they need, are as economical to live in as possible and that they are safe.

This year saw the Board approve a new vision for CRHA along with a new set of values and a brand new Business Strategy setting the direction for us going forwards under the strategic themes of Our Homes, Our Customers and Our Business.

During the year a new Business Plan was also approved which will underpin our work and focus into the future as we deliver a number of actions set out under our strategic themes.

A big thank you to all colleagues and Board members who contributed to our new vision, values, strategy and plan.

We also continued our investment in the business during the year with the introduction of a new leadership team and new roles including: Head of Finance, Head of Homes and Customers and Property Services Manager. Other new roles have also been introduced to strengthen our operations and Governance.



Culture also plays a big part in what we do as a people business and over the year we continued to create a great work experience and environment for our team.

We do all this of course so that we can continue to provide great services and great homes for our customers...

The year continued to see CRHA invest in our customers homes, provide a responsive and customer focused repairs service, complete our annual programme of compliance and safety checks as well as launching our new 'Digital and Doorstep, concept building on the great progress already made speaking with our customers regularly using social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp along with our already established website customer portal MYCRHA.

Running alongside this is a continuation of the already successful annual programme of customer and home visits which colleagues and customers alike really value and enjoy.

This year also marked a significant milestone for CRHA as we embarked on our first new homes development project for five years at Wainhouse Corner, North Cornwall where work has now commenced on building 13 homes all of which will be for social rent. Even better these new homes have been designed with future living in mind, will be digitally enabled, energy efficient and will be sensitive to the surrounding natural environment and wildlife.

During the year we were also pleased to acquire and let two new family homes for local people in Boscastle making a huge difference to the local families that took up the tenancies.

Last but not least is policy development, during the year a number of policies were reviewed, refreshed and approved including all of our people policies and our equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

The year also saw the approval of a new IT Strategy, along with our Board and all colleagues adopting the National Housing Federations most recent Code of Conduct.

Looking ahead, we have another action packed year planned as we start to move forward with our strategic priorities and continue to evolve and develop the business.

A huge amount of thanks to all my CRHA colleagues and Board members who work so hard and care so much about what we do so that we can continue to make a difference.

GREAT SERVICE & GREAT HOMES

OUR HOMES
OUR CUSTOMERS
OUR BUSINESS

CRHA is building
13 NEW HOMES
for social rent



OUR BUSINESS AT A GLANCE



ABOUT US

Cornwall Rural Housing Association Limited (CRHA) is a not-for-profit organisation registered with the Financial Conduct Authority as a Registered Society and with the Regulator of Social Housing as a Registered Provider. CRHA provides affordable homes across Cornwall and on the Isles of Scilly to rent for single people, couples and families as well as homes for sale to shared owners.

We seek to help sustain rural communities throughout Cornwall and on the Isles of Scilly by providing good quality homes to meet local housing needs and to manage and maintain those homes to a high standard.





Homes to make life better

To support and sustain rural communities in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly by providing quality affordable homes.

#makingadifference #peoplebusiness



PERFORMANCE CRHA aims to deliver the best quality homes and services we can through the resources available.



Financial Returns

CRHA's assets are its stock of 338 homes for rent and the shares retained in the 19 shared ownership homes. All of our homes (with the exception of two homes begueathed to us) have been constructed since 1988.

The financial return on these assets is generated primarily from rental income less the cost of managing and maintaining the property and the interest costs from the loans used to develop the homes.

Any surplus generated by CRHA is re-invested to maintain existing stock and to generate new returns through providing new homes.

CRHA has been seeking to increase its financial returns in the following ways:

- Increasing the number of homes in management The development or acquisition of new homes can make better use of existing fixed cost overheads. This year two properties have been purchased under s106 arrangements from a private developer.
- Improving the quality of our homes CRHA aims to provide value for its customers by investing in their homes to make them more comfortable and affordable,
 - Work carried out this year at a cost of £286,704 includes;

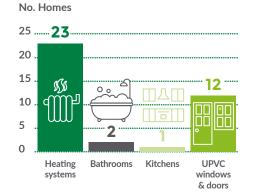
Replacement of heating systems

Replacement bathrooms

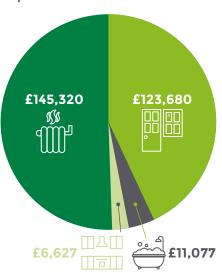
Replacement kitchens

Replacement of UPVC windows & doors

Improvements to homes



Amount spent on improvements



o Providing services to others - We continue to provide management services to the five homes owned by St Goran Community Land Trust.



Social Returns

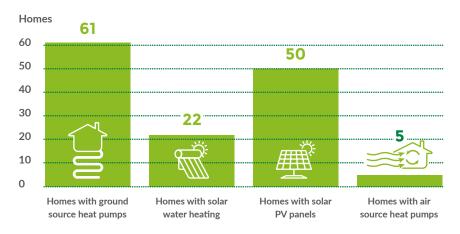
Our activities not only generate financial returns, but also generate social and environmental returns.

- Social value from providing housing for the year ended 31 March 2023 we were
 providing homes to nearly one thousand local people, made up of affordable and social
 rent, shared ownership and discounted sale.
 - o These homes provide a stable, safe, comfortable and affordable environment for families, couples and individuals which in turn, contributes positively towards educational attainment, employment, health outcomes and financial stability, particularly at the time of a housing crisis and cost of living pressures.
 - The provision of homes also provides work for those involved in the property maintenance and construction.
 - New homes can help sustain or revitalise an area, local businesses benefit from increased custom and local schools can benefit from an increase in pupil numbers.

CRHA provides affordable homes for nearly a 1,000 local people in our rural communities

• Environmental Returns – CRHA has installed renewable technologies in its homes in order to reduce its impact on the environment, tackle fuel poverty and reduce home running costs for its customers.

Number of homes with environmental installations



• During the year CRHA received income of £29,534 from the photovoltaic panels installed. The export tariff of £2,453 was passed onto the residents of those properties who also benefited from reduced energy costs.

Our Performance

CRHA collects performance data which is reported quarterly to the Board and on an annual basis to our customers.

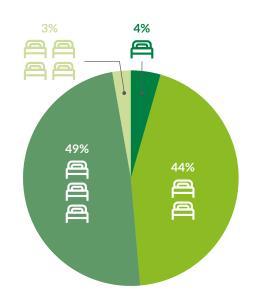
CRHA also benchmarks the cost of providing our services with 15 other housing associations in the South West of England – The South West Benchmarking Group (SWBM). We also benchmark our performance with smaller associations across England (ABM) and House Mark, a national performance benchmarking service for larger housing providers across England.



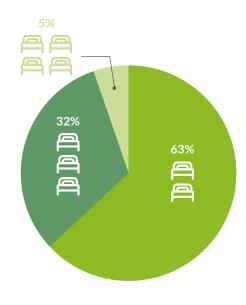
Our homes

Number of homes in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

Homes for rent	2023
1 bedroom 🚝	15
2 bedrooms 🖰 🦰	149
3 bedrooms AAA	164
4 bedrooms AAAA	10
Total	338



Shared ownership homes	2023
2 bedrooms A	12
3 bedrooms ₽₽₽	6
4 bedrooms AAAA	1
Total	19



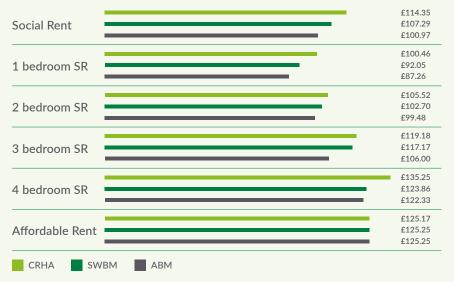
The rents we charge on these properties pays for all the services that CRHA provides and are set at a level to provide affordable local housing to our current and future customers.

Our average rents by property size are as follows:

Rents (all properties):

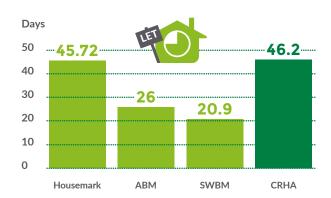
Average weekly rents on assured tenancies	20 No.	22/2023 Average Weekly Rent	202 No.	1/2022 Average Weekly Rent
1 bedroom 🚝	15	£100.46	15	£96.30
2 bedroom 🚝	149	£105.52	147	£101.38
3 bedroom □□□	164	£119.18	164	£114.48
4 bedroom AAAA	10	£135.49	10	£130.16
Average change in assured rents		4.07%		1.67%

Comparison of average weekly rents

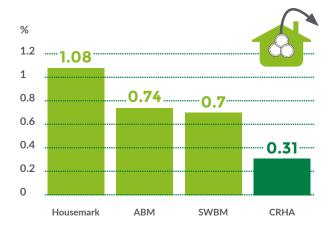


Average re-let time

The percentage of rent lost through homes being vacant was £6,059, this equated to 0.31% of rental income.

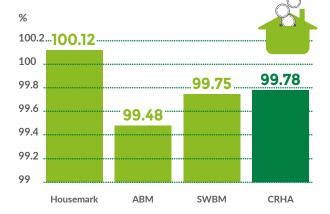


Percentage of rent lost through dwellings being vacant



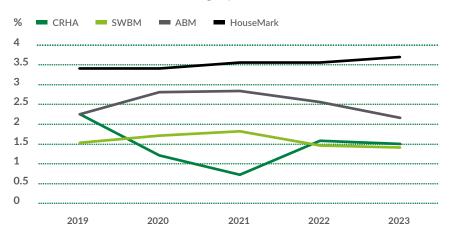
Percentage of rent collected

Our rent collection increased slightly last year from 99.26% to 99.78%, however CRHA always aims to continue to reduce the overall level of rent arrears owed.



Current tenant rent arrears as % of annual debit (incl. HB & UC owed)

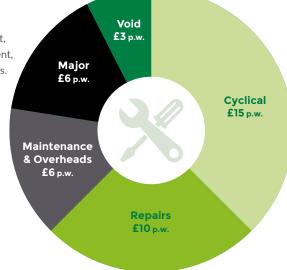
Current customers arrears as a percentage of annual debit have decreased slightly on last year and remain in line with others in SWBM group.



Weekly repairs and maintenance spend per property

Rental income finances loan repayment, general overheads, housing management, repairs and improvements to properties. Last year we spent the following on each of our properties per week.









customers are satisfied with the services provided by CRHA



of our customers are satisfied with the quality of their homes



of our customers are satisfied with the repairs service







Achieving value for money is integral to what we do at CRHA, even more so given our size and scale to make the CRHA pound go as far as possible. This can be difficult particularly when we work across dispersed rural communities in Cornwall and off shore on the Isles of Scilly.

Our Value for Money Strategy can be summarised as follows:

- Being clear about what we do our vision, strategic priorities and the value we deliver.
- Recognising how the needs and aspirations of our stakeholders influences what we do.
- Recognising how the local and national context influences what we do.
- Doing the right things, with a business plan which focuses resources on the right activities by making informed choices to achieve the aims of our business.
- Doing things right, to ensure efficient and effective delivery.
- Ensuring that we have the right balance of assets at the right cost.
- Checking that we have delivered the right outcomes.
- Making a surplus for reinvestment back into homes and services for our customers.

The need to maximise value for money has long been central to CRHA's operations and remaining a key part of our organisational culture.

CRHA is able to benchmark and compare our performance with similar organisations across the South West of England, and identify ways we can improve the way we deliver our services.

The table, which was published in CRHA's Financial Statement 2022/2023, allows stakeholders to assess how CRHA is achieving value for money, in accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Value for Money Standard.

VFM Metric	Description of Metric	CRHA 2023	CRHA 2022	SS 2022*
Reinvestment	Sets out the investment in properties (existing stock as well as new supply) as a percentage of the value of total properties held.	2.33%	2.42%	5.70%
New supply delivered - social housing	Sets out the number of new social housing units that have been acquired or developed in the year as a proportion of total social housing units owned at period end.	0.56%	0.56%	1.20%
Gearing	How much of the adjusted assets are made up of debt and the degree of dependence on debt finance.	29.20%	32.30%	35.80%
EBITDA MRI (Interest Cover)	A key indicator for liquidity and investment capacity. Measures level of surplus generated against interest payments.	140%	183%	182%
Headline social housing cost per unit	The unit cost metric assesses the headline social housing cost per unit as defined by the regulators.	£4,796	£3,817	£4,230
Operating margin social housing lettings	The Operating Margin demonstrates the profitability of operating assets before exceptional expenses are taken into account,	30.10%	34.30%	22.20%
Operating margin Overall	split into operating margin for social housing lettings only and operating margin overall.	22.00%	23.80%	20.20%
Return on Capital Employed (ROCE)	Compares operating surplus to total assets less current liabilities and is a common measure in the commercial sector to assess the efficient investment of capital resources.	1.84%	1.76%	2.80%

The following table compares CRHA's performance with the South West Benchmarking Group and smaller housing associations operating throughout England.

	SWBM Median	ABM Median	CRHA
Operating margin (overall)	22.4	13.2	22.0
Operating margin (social housing lettings)	24.3	13	30.11
EBITDA MRI (as a percentage of interest)	182	168	140
Gearing (RSH & Scorecard measure)	30.8	14.5	29.2
New supply delivered (Social housing units)	0.37	0	0.56
Reinvestment %	3.75	3.98	2.33
Return on Capital Employed (ROCE) %	2.00	1.85	1.84
Headline social housing cost per unit	4,528	5,178	4,796

^{*}SWBM - South West Benchmarking Group

Financial Information 2022/2023

Income & Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2023	2023 £	2022 £
Income: Less repairs & operating costs:	2,560,296 (2,036,714)	2,245,532 (1,711,203)
Less repairs & operating costs.	(2,030,714)	(1,711,200)
Add Surplus on shared-owner staircasing	38,415	
Gives an operating surplus of:	561,997	534,329
Plus interest we received:	6,821	1,091
Less interest & similar charges payable:	(404,037)	(330,919)
Gives a surplus (deficit) on ordinary activities of:	164,781	204,501
Actuarial gain/(loss) in respect of pension schemes	(37,000)	(39,000)
Total comprehensive income for the year	127,781	165,501
Statement of Changes in Reser for the year ended 31 March 20	Revenue reserve £	
At 1 April 2022		3,704,354
Surplus for the year	164,781	
Actuarial gain/(loss) in respect of po	(37,000)	
As at 31 March 2023		3,832,135
At 1 April 2021		3,538,853
Surplus for the year	204,501	
Actuarial gain/(loss) in respect of po	(39,000)	

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2023	2023 £	2022 £
What we own		
Cost of our investment in houses Investment in other property & equipment	30,130,774 243,278	30,126,751 229,002
	30,374,052	30,355,753
Cash we have and money we are owed less bills not paid	123,320	74,579
Total assets less current liabilities	30,497,372	30,430,332
How we fund it		
Long term borrowing & other liabilities	(26,408,200)	(26,449,943)
Defined pension liability	(257,000)	(276,000)
Net assets	3,832,172	3,704,389
Called up share capital	37	35
Revenue reserve	3,832,135	3,704,354
Total reserves	3,832,172	3,704,389

The above financial information represents an extract from the audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. Copies of the full Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 are available on written request to the Secretary at the Registered Office of the Association.



^{*} ABM - Smaller housing associations throughout England

^{*} Regulator of Social Housing Sector Score Card

The success of our business is dependent on effective risk management and as with any business risks and uncertainties are inherent in our activities.

These risks may have financial, legal, operational or reputational impact.

The Board is accountable for effective risk management, agreeing the principal risks facing our business and ensuring that these are managed effectively. The Board also has responsibility for defining our risk appetite (i.e. the amount of risk we are willing to take in pursuit of achieving our strategic priorities).



Internal controls assurance

The Board has agreed a system of internal controls appropriate to the size of CRHA and the scale of its operations. The system of internal control encompasses a number of elements that together facilitate an effective and efficient operation, enabling CRHA to respond to a variety of operational, financial, and commercial risks in an appropriate manner. These elements include:

Policies & procedures

A series of policies that underpin how we operate and enshrine the internal control process by recognising and managing related risks. The policies are set by the Board and implemented by the CE and Leadership Team. The report reads The policies are set by the Leadership Team and implemented by the CE and team.

The formal policies and procedures include the documentation of key systems and rules relating to the delegation of authorities which allow the monitoring of controls and restrict the unauthorised use of the Association's assets.

Experienced and suitably qualified colleagues take responsibility for important functions.

Reporting

Comprehensive reporting is designed to monitor key risks and a newly introduced reporting format includes a specific risk section. Decisions to rectify problems are made at regular meetings between relevant colleagues and the Board as appropriate.

Regular management accounts are prepared promptly, providing relevant and up to date financial and other information. Any significant variances from budgets are investigated as appropriate.

Risk Management Strategy

CRHA manages risk in a manner that is appropriate to its size, the scale of its operation and available resources. The risk management framework helps to facilitate the identification, assessment and ongoing monitoring of risks significant to the Association. CRHA has broadly aligned its risk register with the Sector Risk Profile published annually by the Regulator of Social Housing. The risk strategy and risk register are reviewed annually by the Risk Committee and the Board with any emerging risks being added as required, and any improvement actions monitored regularly by management and the Board.

Financial risk management objectives & policies

CRHA's activities expose it to a number of financial risks including credit risk, cash flow risk and liquidity risk. CRHA does not use derivative financial instruments for speculative purposes.

Cash flow risk

CRHA's activities expose it primarily to the financial risks of changes in interest rates. Interest bearing liabilities are a mix of variable and fixed rates to ensure some certainty of cash flows while minimising interest costs.

Credit risk

CRHA's principal financial assets are bank balances and cash, rent arrears and other receivables, and investments. CRHA's credit risk is primarily attributable to its rent arrears. The amounts presented in the Statement of Financial Position are net of allowances for bad debts.

Liquidity risk

CRHA uses a mixture of long-term and short-term debt finance in order to maintain liquidity to ensure that sufficient funds are available for ongoing operations and future developments. Further details regarding liquidity risk can be found in the statement of accounting policies in the financial statements.

Audit Committee

CRHA's size means that the Board has considered that a separately established Audit Committee is not appropriate. The requirement for a separate Audit Committee is reviewed each year. The Board takes full responsibility for internal controls and oversees internal audit, external audit and management. A Risk Committee meets to review the risk strategy, risk register and any associated risks.



Internal audit

The Board views internal audit as an important element of the internal control process, our internal auditors tiaa examine and report on the effectiveness of the internal control systems operating within CRHA.

tiaa

In addition, the Board has considered the following points in so far as they are appropriate for an organisation of the Association's size:

- Key internal controls have been identified
- Management reports providing information on the Association's performance of its key functions are considered at quarterly meetings of the Board.

External audit

External audit provides feedback to the Board on the operation of the internal financial controls reviewed as part of the annual audit. The Annual Management letter stated that there were no significant recommendations arising from the 2022/23 audit.



Regulation

The Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) is responsible for regulating the sector. The RSH has continued the practice of previous regulators in adopting a risk-based approach to regulation which means that it has a "lighter touch" for organisations owning less than 1.000 homes.

CRHA recognises the importance of complying with the formal requirements of the Regulator and always submits any documentation or information in time and as requested. In addition, work got underway during the year on the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) in line with the TSM Standard.

CRHA is registered as an Investment Partner with Homes England.



Third party reports

From time to time, the use of external specialist consultants will be necessary in areas such as health and safety, asset management, governance, and finance. The use of other specialist third parties for consulting and reporting can also increase the reliability of the internal control system. During the year Savills were commissioned to review some compliance (safety) activities and Intermedium Ltd provided business planning and treasury advice.



Fraud

CRHA complies with the regulatory requirements on fraud. In particular, we have a clear policy that has been approved by the Board and distributed to all colleagues. The policy requires a register to be maintained of all actual and attempted fraud. All such cases are reported to the Board. All cases in excess of £1,000 must be reported to the Regulator of Social Housing.

There have been no reported cases of fraud during the year.

The Board has used the management information at its disposal to review the effectiveness of the system of internal control, including the sources of assurance agreed by the Board as being appropriate for that purpose.

The Board takes the view that there is sufficient evidence to confirm that adequate systems of internal control existed and operated throughout the year ended 31 March 2023 and that those systems were aligned to an ongoing process for the management of the significant risks facing the Association. No weaknesses were identified which would have resulted in material misstatement or loss and which would have required disclosure in the financial statements.



GOVERNANCE BOARD MEMBERS AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The present Board members and Chief Executive of the Association are set out below:

Board of Management

The Board members are drawn from a wide background bringing together professional, commercial, specialist and local lived experience. Two members of the Board are also customers.

Chief Executive & Company Secretary

David W Bolton

(from 1st August 2021)

The Chief Executive served throughout the year. The Chief Executive holds no interest in CRHA's shares, is not a member of the Board of Management and acts as an executive within the authority delegated by the Board.

Risk Committee

Gary Lucas Chair
Keith Meredith
Alex Deller

Remuneration and People Committee

Disclosure of information to the auditor

Each of the Board members at the date of approval of this report has confirmed that:

- As far as the Board members are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which CRHA's auditor is unaware: and
- The Board members have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as Board members in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that CRHA's auditor is aware of that information.

Annual General Meeting

The annual general meeting will be held on 19th September 2023.

Auditor

A resolution proposing the appointment of Bishop Fleming as auditor will be put to the members at the annual general meeting.

The Report of the Board was approved on 18th July 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

David W Bolton - Chief Executive & Company Secretary

During the year the Board received reports on CRHA's compliance with the National Housing Federations Code of Governance 2020 as well as starting to receive specific reports on CRHA's compliance with the Regulator of Social Housings economic and consumer standards.

