



Hillcrest



Hillcrest
Homes



Hillcrest
Futures



Hillcrest
Enterprises



Hillcrest
Maintenance

Helping people live better lives

Summary of Business Plans

2023-2026



Inclusion



Respect



Excellence



Innovation

This is a summary of all of the business plans from throughout Hillcrest, focussing on shared objectives and values.

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Hillcrest is a large, diverse and continually evolving social organisation.

The companies within Hillcrest provide housing, care, support, training, skills and employment opportunities.

Our structure allows us to work together to make a positive social impact by contributing to improving the quality of life of the people and communities we work with.

Hillcrest consists of:



Established in 1967, Hillcrest Homes is one of Scotland's largest housing associations, with over 7,000 good quality homes for social rent across Dundee, Edinburgh, Angus, Perthshire, Fife and Aberdeen.



Hillcrest Futures works to improve the lives of those we support, offering care and support services covering learning disabilities, autism, older people, mental health and wellbeing, homelessness, and drug, alcohol and recovery services.



Hillcrest Enterprises offers good quality mid-market rent homes, as well as being a platform for Hillcrest's commercial ventures.



Hillcrest Maintenance offers a comprehensive, professional trades service across Dundee, Angus, Perth and Kinross, Fife, Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

Key Strategic Objectives

Each of our companies have their own specific objectives, but the key strategic objectives that run through the entire organisation are:

- Provide good quality, well maintained housing at affordable rents
- Contribute to building sustainable communities
- Provide quality, creative, responsive care and support services
- Contribute to wider social, economic and environmental activities
- Ensure resources, skills and structure to meet objectives

Our Key Values



Inclusion



Respect



Excellence



Innovation



Helping People Live Better Lives

The four companies within Hillcrest are working towards shared strategic objectives for 2023 – 2026, which all centre round our shared values.

These objectives focus on five key areas:

- 1 Financial Planning and Resources
- 2 Staffing and Recruitment
- 3 Cost of Living
- 4 Stakeholder Engagement
- 5 Remodelling/Retrofit/New Build

1 Financial Planning and Resources

The turmoil in the financial markets alongside the uncertainty on interest rates will mean considerable focus on the financial out-turn and modelling for Hillcrest. There will be an ongoing need for us to generate efficiencies and savings. One area that we have identified for an in-depth review is the voids and letting process. Streamlining both of these processes will reduce income loss and increase our financial performance.

Hillcrest Homes secured a very competitively priced loan funding deal in July 2020. This deal alongside the Revolving Credit Facility already in place provides us with sufficient funding to fulfil the current development programme. There is further funding needed around June 2024 based on the current development programme and spend.

Hillcrest Futures continues to show a break-even position for the next three financial years, however the margins generated are extremely low. The intention is to undertake a detailed financial analysis, on a project by project basis and develop an action plan focussing on financial stability and management.

2 Staffing and Recruitment

The people that work for us remain our greatest asset and supporting and developing our teams is a key focus.

We are an accredited Investors in People Gold, Investors in People for Young People Silver employer and also received the Health and Wellbeing Award.

These re-accreditations reflect the value we put on supporting employees.

There is considerable emphasis put on reward and recognition, learning and development and work/life balance. We have introduced mental health first aiders and will continue to explore other areas to help with health and wellbeing.

There is ongoing work with all Staff Liaison Groups across the organisation to provide additional training and support to undertake this role effectively. Staff reps are also being included at an early stage on matters that affect employees, including areas like policy review.

The Leadership Exploration Acceleration and Development (LEAD) programme, which is being delivered to all staff who have line management responsibilities, will continue. We will develop a Succession and Workforce Planning Strategy to embed this within the organisation.

Recruitment remains a key area for the entire organisation but particularly Hillcrest Futures. Working closely with HR, Futures will look to streamline and speed up the recruitment process to get staff in post quicker. This will include exploring ways to carry out the induction process so once on site, the individual can immediately start to contribute to the service delivery. Alongside this, there will be a Hillcrest Futures Care Apprenticeship programme to provide opportunities for a career at Futures.

3 Cost of Living

There is no getting away from the cost of living crisis, which is why it continues to be a main priority for us and remains high up on the agenda. There has been a range of different ideas and suggestions brought forward about how we can support people – staff, tenants and people we support.

These include:

- Warm spaces
- Laundry facilities
- Tenancy Sustainment Teams doing roadshows
- Top tips for saving energy

We have produced a 'Tackling Poverty Together' strategy which coordinates internal expertise, alongside external agencies, to set out the approach we will take to supporting people during the current cost of living crisis.

Hillcrest Homes continues to provide considerable additional support, guidance and advice to tenants, out with our statutory responsibilities, in areas like energy efficiency, benefits and budgeting. We are going to look at widening those services to our staff as well as tenants.

4 Stakeholder Engagement

All of our companies work with a number of stakeholders and good engagement with them is essential for us to deliver our key outcomes. Hillcrest Homes and Enterprises have always engaged well with our tenants and will continue to review the best way to consult and make most efficient use of groups like our Interested Tenants' Register.

Involvement and input from the individuals Hillcrest Futures supports is fundamental to the improvement in the services delivered. The input is gathered in a variety of different ways, including through questionnaires on the services they receive, support plans, surveys, focus groups, good news stories and complaints.

We've experienced real collaboration across the housing sector recently when it came to lobbying the Scottish Government around rent freezes. It is a priority of ours to continue building relationships in this way and working sector wide to influence the Scottish Government in areas that will help deliver key outcomes and financial stability.

Similarly, with Hillcrest Futures, we will continue to work with the Scottish Government, through the Coalition of Care Providers in Scotland, to contribute towards the development of a National Care Service. We participate in regular meetings, are involved with discussions and debates to achieve positive outcomes for people who use our service and our workforce.

5 Remodelling/ Retrofit/ New Build

We will develop an action plan to map out our journey to Net Zero which will explore alternative environment and sustainability avenues and achieve accreditation for the selected standards.

The Scottish Government has announced continuing high levels of investment through their Infrastructure Investment Plan for the next five years, with a total £3.45bn on affordable housing. We plan to continue to develop, with a revised total of 1,385 homes completed over a three year period of 2023-2026.

The expansion of stock for mid-market rent will continue through the delivery of new homes in our traditional geographic areas. Continued expansion in Aberdeen has been carefully controlled to ensure any new MMR units are sustainable; as capacity of some property types (e.g. two bed flats) are reaching saturation. Geographic expansion will be carefully planned for, and controlled.

Hillcrest Maintenance will play a key role in helping shape and deliver our Sustainability Strategy. In addition to effectively managing waste, and working with suitably environmental accredited suppliers and contractors, we will continue to look at different ways in which we can improve our environmental impact. We will also carry out a feasibility study with regards to establishing a TradeTeam to carry-out retrofit works to meet our climate change targets as well as working with Hillcrest Enterprises to set up a "centre of excellence" around upskilling and carrying out retrofit work.



Get in touch



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