

Grampian Community Care Charitable Trust



Business Plan 2013 – 2015

"Providing sustainable and adaptable homes for people with particular needs."

GCCT is a subsidiary of Castlehill Housing Association Limited



Approved by Trust Board 28.08.2013.

Grampian Community Care Charitable Trust

Business Plan 2013-15

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1. Introduction

This document sets out the intended business activities of Grampian Community Care Charitable Trust (hereafter referred to as “The Trust” or “GCCCT”) for the period 2013 to 2015. The Trust is a subsidiary of the Registered Social Landlord, Castlehill Housing Association.

GCCCT is a company limited by guarantee (company number SC168624) and recognised as a charity by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) (charity number SC025334).

The Trust helps Castlehill Housing Association to deliver on its Aims and Objectives as a charitable organisation but retains its distinct identity and specialism in the housing options it delivers. The Trust will be managed in a way that is “self sufficient” ensuring that it’s own income streams can cover all it’s outlays and obligations and will have no negative impact on the financial position of Castlehill Housing Association.



This document should be read in the context of the Trusts financial projections that are designed to underpin the delivery of its Business Plan.

2. About GCCCT

From its formation in 1996, the Trust’s remit was to develop housing in response to the increasing demand for adapted accommodation for people with particular needs. This has included people with physical disabilities, sensory disabilities, autistic spectrum disorder and challenging behaviour.

To develop this type of housing the Trust has worked in partnership with Local Authorities, Grampian NHS, banks and building societies, and secured government grants including special needs capital grant (SNCG), private sector housing grants and section 75 grants, as well as private loans.

This has resulted in the Trust housing over 160 people in properties that range from group homes (including Houses in Multiple Occupation) homes for families and homes for individuals.

The Trust rents its property to individual tenants through assured tenancies and leases directly to service providers (who hold occupancy agreements with their service users). The Trust also leases properties from local authorities.

The care service provided in the properties depends on the needs of the individual. In some cases, for example, in homes provided for families, the family members provide the primary care for a relative, while in other cases a service provider commissioned by the local authority will be the primary carer and will be registered with the Care Inspectorate. The Trust is not registered with the Care Inspectorate as it does not provide any care services.

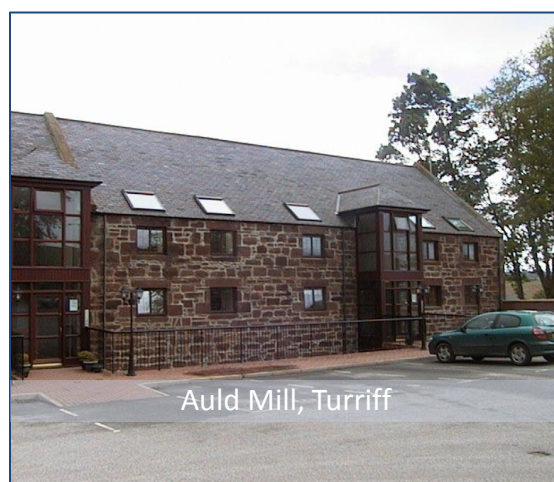
The Trust has management agreements for each property where a service provider provides the care but does not lease the property from the Trust. The management agreement sets out the responsibilities of the Trust, the service provider and the local authority.

Appendix 1 summarises the types of Trust properties, their locations, and where relevant which service provider is responsible for the care of the tenants or occupants and how the care is defined by the Care Inspectorate.

From 1996 to 2011 the Trust had agreements with Castlehill Housing Association, Grampian Housing Association and Langstane Housing Association to provide development, property management and housing management services for the Trust.

In 2008 the Trust's Board considered how it could secure a sustainable long-term future with the aim of maintaining a focus on housing for people with particular needs. This was because the Board recognised that opportunities to access funding for new developments had been severely curtailed due to changing government policy, in particular the withdrawal of SNCG.

After a comprehensive assessment process, the Trust's Board decided that Castlehill Housing Association had the expertise to help the Trust achieve its strategic objectives.



From 1st October 2011 the Trust became a wholly owned subsidiary of Castlehill Housing Association.

3. Strategic Objectives 2013 -2015

Objective	Target	Action to achieve targets
The Trust remains a financially viable organisation in order to meet its other strategic objectives as set out below.		<p>Appropriate rent and service charge setting. Priced and budgeted programmes for property maintenance. External audit of Trust finances.</p> <p>Compliance with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator's accounting regulations.</p>

<p>Work in partnership with local authorities and other organisations that share the same aims as the Trust to contribute to the housing of people with particular needs.</p> <p>Raise the profile of GCCCT in the wider community</p>	<p>The Trust maintains its profile as an organisation that ‘champions’ the provision of housing for people with particular needs.</p> <p>The Trust enhances its distinct identity and its link to Castlehill HA.</p>	<p>Attend strategic meetings that will allow the Trust to contribute to strategies such as local housing and community care strategies and identify client groups that would benefit from housing that meets their specific needs.</p> <p>Publicity around Trust events. Increase contact with residents and their relations.</p> <p>Consider possible name change to give more easily identified “brand”.</p>
<p>Identify funding to provide an on-going development programme to house people with particular needs.</p>	<p>By 2015 the Trust will have increased its housing stock by 5%.</p>	<p>Access funding through working in partnership with organisations with a similar vision as the Trust including local authorities.</p> <p>Review local housing strategies and community care plans and report to the Trust’s Board with recommendations to source funding.</p>
<p>Ensure the Trust’s properties comply with Health and Safety legislation.</p>	<p>All properties have fire safety measures that comply with all current relevant legislation.</p> <p>All Houses in Multiple Occupation maintain their licenses.</p>	<p>Continue to carry out fire risk assessments and review on an annual basis or when required.</p> <p>Liaise with the local authorities to ensure the Trust is up to date with the latest Houses in Multiple Occupation legislation.</p>

	All gas, oil and LPG inspections are carried out annually.	There is an annual programme of inspections and inspections also to be carried out on any voids or additional acquisitions to the Trust's stock.
	Each year 20% of the Trust's properties, on a rolling programme, pass the Electrical Installation Condition inspections.	There is an annual programme of inspections and inspections also to be carried out on any voids or additional acquisitions to the Trust's stock.
	All the Trust's properties are to be assessed for the presence of asbestos and if necessary for the safe removal of asbestos by 2014.	Inspection programme to be completed and any additional acquisitions to the Trust's stock to be assessed and action taken if necessary.
	All the Trust's stock to be assessed for the risk for legionella and if necessary action taken to remove the risk by 2014.	Inspection programme to be completed and any additional acquisitions to the Trust's stock to be assessed and action taken if necessary.
Ensure the Trust continues to adapt properties to ensure people can live in homes to meet their needs.	From 2013 to 2015 the Trust has completed 4 major adaptations each year.	Through liaison with local authorities, tenants and care providers, the Trust identifies necessary adaptations and sources the funding for them.

Ensure a quality management, maintenance and support service.	Targets as set out in the Service Level Agreement with Castlehill Housing Association are met.	Performance is reported to the Trust's Board on a quarterly basis.
Aspire to complying with the Scottish Housing Quality Standards both for 2015 and considering further SHQS standards for 2020.	<p>Life cycle costing of the stock is updated by 2013 and continues to be updated on an annual basis thereafter.</p> <p>Evidence by 2015 that the stock complies with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.</p>	<p>Complete stock condition surveys by 2013.</p> <p>Input data into QL with which to produce annual planned maintenance budgets starting from 2014/15 onwards.</p>

The table above outlines the Trust's Strategic Objectives and further commentary on issues to be considered by the Board during the period of this Plan is given below.

4. Structure

The Trust is governed by a Board of up to 11 members, who meet at least 4 times a year. A maximum of 6 Board members may be representatives of Castlehill Housing Association, the Trust's parent Company. The Trust aims to ensure that the structure and make up of its Board delivers a balanced approach with a range of experience and knowledge recognising that overall strategic control sits with Castlehill but that the Trust must operate and deliver its services in its own distinctive way meeting the particular needs of its clients. Given the close alignment of the aims and objectives of Castlehill and the Trust as Charitable organisations, it is not envisaged that any conflict of approach should arise.

During the period of this Plan, the Trust will keep Board membership under review to ensure it is fit for purpose and that we have the balance of skills and knowledge required to oversee operations and ensure the interests of Trust tenants are protected. In addition to Castlehill representation, we will aim to maintain input from local authority representatives and client support providers.

5. Housing Stock Maintenance.

Prior to the transfer of the Trust to Castlehill, records on stock maintenance were patchy and subject to the different systems operated by the three managing Housing Associations. During the 2013-15 period, further work will be undertaken to complete a full survey of all Trust stock to enable accurate Life Cycle Costing data to be integrated with Castlehill's own stock data, maintained on the



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Association's QL computer system. Future planned maintenance will be fully integrated with Castlehill's programme to ensure economies of scale and efficiency in planning are maximised.

A review of current equipment servicing contracts, including gas appliance servicing, will be undertaken to maximise joint procurement opportunities for the Trust and Castlehill for mutual benefit.

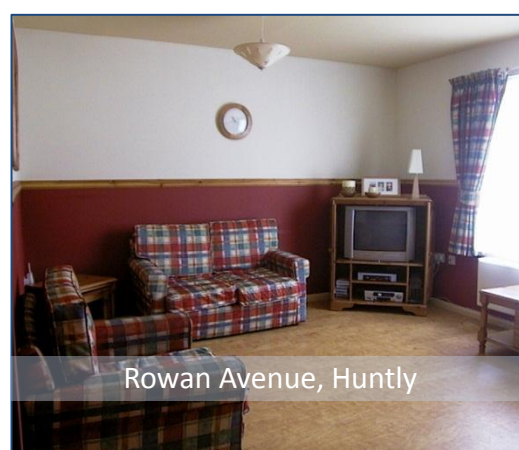
Within the Aberdeen area, the Trust will look at opportunities to make best use of

the Small Repairs Service offered by Aberdeen Care & Repair, where appropriate.

6. Rent and Service Charges

The Trust reviews its rent and service charges annually with implementation from 1st July. Rents will continue to be set at levels to ensure the Trust has sufficient income to meet all its obligations and maintains sufficient future reserves for planned maintenance. Benefits from efficiencies in procurement and programming of works delivered by integration with Castlehill's stock maintenance will be reflected in the level of rent charges required to ensure affordability and value for money for tenants.

Since the transfer of the Trust to Castlehill, measures have been put in place to address anomalies in how service charges were treated across the Trust stock. Service equalisation accounts are now in place for each development and will be closely monitored and reviewed annually to ensure service charges accurately reflect actual and estimated costs and are tailored to specific services at each scheme. Provision for replacement of fixtures, fittings and equipment are also now in place and will be kept under review.



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7. New Housing Opportunities.

GCCCT recognises the challenges in funding new housing development following the withdrawal of SNCG and the difficult general funding climate at present. The Trust will continue to maximise opportunities for growth providing this can be done within available resources and without a negative impact on existing tenants and the maintenance of existing property.

Castlehill Housing Association is looking at innovative ways of providing new affordable housing in the context of reduced grant levels and will consider developments that involve a mix of housing options including Mid Market Rent. There may be mutually beneficial opportunities for the Trust and Castlehill to combine resources to make particular development sites viable, for example where additional local authority funding could be brought in due to the Trusts involvement and the Board will consider such opportunities should they arise.

In 2013, the Trust completed the purchase of 9 properties, mostly occupied by clients with very similar needs to existing Trust tenants, on the former Ladysbridge Hospital site near Banff. The Trust worked closely with the Local Authority to complete the transaction ensuring continuity of housing support and continued security of tenure for residents. While the Trust had to invest a significant sum from its reserves and from loan finance, it successfully secured £300K of grant from the local Authority to make the project viable. The Trust will continue to seek out such opportunities in conjunction with local authorities and others but must ensure that any new purchase can be financially self sustaining.

In 2013, the Trust took on the lease of a group home in Alford from Aberdeenshire Council as the council had identified the Trust and its parent company Castlehill Housing Association as ideally suited to maintaining the property. The Trust will consider further development opportunities of this type where appropriate.

8. Staffing and Service.

Provision of staff time and “back office” services, such as invoice processing, human resources, etc. is governed by a Service Level Agreement with Castlehill. In addition to allocated time for Housing Management, Maintenance and Financial services, the Association employs a part-time Manager to oversee the work of the Trust and report to the Trust Board. The Board will continue to monitor these arrangements to ensure quality and value of services.

9. Policy and Procedure Development.

Since the transfer to Castlehill an on-going programme of new policies and procedures for the operation of the Trust has been progressed. This has ensured continuity of service and removed any differing approaches previously applied by the three different managing Associations. The Trust has benefited from Policy integration with Castlehill in areas such as Health & Safety with the Trust Manager being part of the Associations Health & Safety Management Group.

For example, Allocations & Voids, Debt Recovery & Income Maximisation, Planned Maintenance and Complaints Handling policies have been reviewed to date. Further policies will be identified produced and reviewed on a regular basis.

In addition to “internal” policy and procedure review, we will continue to monitor arrangements we have with the three local authorities in the Trusts area of operation, e.g. on Allocations and meeting void costs, to ensure these remain fit for purpose and reflect localised needs and demands.



10. Risks and Controls.

Given its status as a subsidiary of Castlehill Housing Association, many of the operational risks that the Trust needs to consider are covered under Castlehill's Risk Management Plan that is updated annually. Examples of this would be on risks controlled by appropriate Insurance or associated with staffing, as all staff providing services to the Trust are employed by Castlehill. The table below considers a number of the specific risks and control measures that the Trust Board wish to consider during the lifetime of this Business Plan, but should be read in parallel with Castlehill's risk management documents

Category 1 – External Factors.

Risk	Control in Place	Likely Impact as Modified by Control
Lack of available funding to undertake new development activity	Liaison with local authorities and loan providers. Links to Castlehill development activities.	High
Changes in commissioned services funded by Local Authority Housing Support and Social Care budgets	On-going dialogue with Local Authority partners and support providers	Medium
Failure of nomination arrangements with Local Authorities leading to voids.	Allocations and Void loss cover agreements in place and closely monitored	Low
Welfare Reform and Housing Benefit Changes	Castlehill wide mitigation work. Protection for specific vulnerable groups close fit with Trust clients	Medium
Changes in benefit system impacting in rental income/increased arrears	Close liaison with Local Authority HB departments. Tenant profiling. Ensure relevant policies in place	Medium
Changes to property to meet external regulatory requirements or new legislation. e.g. Care Inspectorate registration requirements	Liaison with care and support providers, HMO licence authorities and relevant Health & Safety policies in place	Medium

Decline in demand or changes in client aspirations	Close work with local authority strategic staff and knowledge of local needs and demands.	Low
Legislative changes requiring adoption of new technologies	Planned maintenance and improvement programme integrated with Castlehill. Access to funding for new technology such as renewable heat sources.	Low
Loss of Charitable Status	Completion of OSCR returns, legal advice	Low

Category 2 – Internal Factors

Risk	Control in Place	Likely Impact as Modified by Control
Becoming financially non-viable	Audit Process. Long term forecasts, budget setting and control. Regular Management account reporting to Board.	Medium
Breach of Loan Covenants	Budget setting and control.	Medium
Fraud, theft	External audit. Clear staff roles and counterbalance checking, bribery policy, insurance.	Low
Arrears, bad debts and void loss	Board reporting, debt management policy and access to specialist advice and support	Medium
Maintenance and Operation of Life Cycle Costing	Populating data input on Castlehill QL system	Medium

Major property related incident e.g. gas explosion, flood	Maintenance policy and procedures, emergency response procedures. Insurance	Medium
Maintenance Spend Exceeding Budget	Board reporting, policy and procedure, recovery of re-chargeable work	Medium
Accidental property damage by tenants	Liaison with support staff, maximise use of protective elements within buildings and upgrade works, insurance.	Medium
Failure to provide gas safety certificates	Contract with Heatcare and close monitoring	Low
Failure to comply with Legionella legislation	Appropriate policy in place	Low
Failure to comply with Asbestos legislation	Appropriate policy in place	Low
Changes to fire safety requirements	Fire safety audits and qualified advice. Compliant fire safety equipment	Medium
Changes to relevant Health & Safety legislation	Training, involvement in Castlehill H&S Management Group.	Medium