



This document is available in other languages or formats.
Please contact the office for details.



Policy:	Development Policy
Legal Requirements:	There are no legal requirements applicable to this policy.
Regulatory Standards:	<p>The Scottish Housing Regulator has set out Regulatory Standards for all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to ensure that RSLs deliver good outcomes and services for its tenants and service users through good governance and financial management.</p> <p>This policy evidences that the following Regulatory Standards are being met:</p> <p>Standard 1. The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.</p> <p>Standard 2. 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.</p> <p>Standard 3. The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.</p> <p>Standard 4. The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.</p> <p>Standard 5. The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.</p>
Equality and Diversity:	<p>The Association is committed to Equal Opportunities and will endeavour to ensure that all services are carried out in an undiscriminating manner in line with the Association's Equality and Diversity Policy.</p> <p>In particular, the Association will not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment or sexual orientation.</p>
Complaints:	<p>Although the Association is committed to providing high levels of service, we accept that there may be occasions where customers may not be satisfied with the service they have received. The Association values all complaints and uses this information to improve the services that it provides. The Association's Complaints Policy describes our complaints handling procedure and how to make a complaint.</p>
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):	<p>The Association will treat all customers' personal data in line with its obligations under the current data protection regulations and our Privacy Policy. Information regarding how data will be used and the basis for processing data is provided in the Association's Fair Processing Notice.</p>
Policy Author:	Lesley Bryce
Policy Review:	In order to ensure that any change in circumstances is accommodated this policy will be subject to review every year in the month of May.
Policy Approval:	This policy was last reviewed / approved by the Management Committee of Yoker Housing Association Limited at its meeting held on Thursday the 27th of May 2021.



Statement of Policy Aims and Principles

This policy sets out the strategic aims and objectives of Yoker Housing Association ("the Association") in respect of its development activities. It has been formulated to ensure that the housing provided by the Association meets both the long-term priority needs of the area in which it is to be developed and the longer-term needs of the Association's intended and existing client groups.

It should be reviewed annually to ensure that it is consistent with the Strategy and Development Funding Plan which is submitted to Glasgow City Council on an annual basis and which forms the Association's bid for development funding.

Policy Details

The Association's current aims and objectives may be functionally split into "Housing Development and Provision" and "Operational".

1. Housing Development and Provision

These are specific development objectives, which are consistent with the Association's general aim of providing the maximum number of high-quality affordable properties for rent and for sale to those in greatest housing need and are as follows:

- Provide a housing mix in terms of size, location, type and tenure which meets the demands of those in greatest housing need.
- Rehabilitate all those properties, which fall below tolerable standards in the Yoker area of Glasgow.
- Promote awareness and sensitivity in the development of housing within the community.
- Provide high quality sustainable housing which meets the health, educational and special needs of identified clients living in or wishing to return to the community.
- Improve the local environment by way of streetscaping and back court improvements.
- Set rent levels, which are affordable to those on the lowest incomes, minimising the effect of the housing benefit poverty trap.

Appropriate good quality housing, a balanced housing mix and a good quality environment are the key elements that will help to achieve the above aims and objectives.

It is recognised that the Association is operating in a dynamic environment and these objectives are therefore subject to annual review as part of the Association's business planning and development process.

2. Operational

These are specific operational objectives, which the Association wishes to achieve as part of its aim to provide a quality service to its tenants and other service users. They are as follows:

- Comply with current Procurement Legislation.
- Comply with recognised Performance Standards.
- Maintain financial viability through both efficiency measures and increasing the Association's property base.



POLICY STATEMENT

- Provide high quality service delivery in the procurement, maintenance and management of property within the Association's ownership.
- Incorporate appropriate maintenance procedures to new developments to protect and extend the life expectancy of this stock.
- Build to standards, which will minimise the longer-term maintenance costs to the Association and the cost-in-use to tenants and occupiers.
- Specify products which are from sustainable sources and free from any materials or substances which may have a detrimental effect on the health of occupants.
- Develop and enhance relationships with all agencies involved in the development process, promoting a partnership approach to problem solving.
- At all times ensure value-for-money through the economic, efficient and effective use of public funds.

Issues to be Considered in Development Planning

1. Housing Need

It is important that in considering its development plan, the Association takes account of the identification of priority housing needs by the local authority, by the lead agencies for Community Care and by an analysis of its own housing waiting list. Key points to be considered are detailed as follows:

Housing Mix

It is fundamental that in order to efficiently meet the housing need in the Association's area of operation that there is a full and responsive assessment of current and likely future housing numbers including unit size, type and quality. The latter criteria should be carefully assessed during the planning and procurement phases. In particular, the housing should, where possible, be designed with some degree of flexibility to meet any changing or future needs. Where designing or adapting to form new or refurbished housing reference should be made to the Scottish Office publications Housing for Varying Needs Parts 1 (General Needs) and Part 2 (Special Needs).

In addition, a Housing Needs Assessment should be carried out on a regular basis or before entering into a specific development so that specific requirements and existing provision can be adequately gauged.

Housing in the Community

The role and importance of housing within any society is often underestimated in comparison with other perceived needs including health and education. It is therefore essential that the Association understands the part it can play in a holistic approach involving the whole community. New developments can act as a catalyst for communities on many fronts. These include a range of benefits from local employment and training to wider economic benefits including the affordability of the housing itself. The improvements to the fabric and general environment have been proven to produce many other benefits not least a greater degree of pride and confidence within the community itself. In meeting specific housing needs, the Association can reinforce its role as a major contributor to the wellbeing of the Yoker area.

Special Needs Housing

It is important that the Association address the needs of those tenants and residents who are or have been disadvantaged by grounds of their disability or other such situation. The provision of facilities to meet Barrier Free or Secure by Design should be given appropriate support and encouragement by their inclusion into the design of new schemes.

Housing Needs Assessment

It is essential that a housing needs assessment be carried out at regular intervals to give some indication of current housing need. This should be carried out prior to submitting a funding bid for any new development not covered in an existing agreement with Glasgow City Council or other partner.



2. Housing Standards

Housing Design Guide

The Association shall prepare and maintain a Housing Design Guide, which shall set minimum standards for housing design. Although it will be necessary to adjust these standards from time to time to suit individual projects, its primary objective shall be to maintain the standards of any development undertaken by the Association. The standards set shall not necessarily be to a statutory minimum but to the standard which the Association considers to be the minimum acceptable to its residents. In many cases, this may conflict with the standards deemed acceptable by Glasgow City Council and other funding partners. In such cases it shall be for the Association to weigh the longer-term implications of this stance in terms of financial costs and the living circumstances of its residents. The Housing Design Guide should also include information on the Association's current list of approved Specifications for both the design and procurement of various elements including windows, doors, etc.

Below Tolerable Standard Housing

The Association has prioritised and will continue to strive for the eradication of housing which is below and fails to meet recognised tolerable standards. It is acknowledged that in view of the high costs required in meeting this objective there will have to be a careful assessment by the Association and other funding partners as to the balance of social and economic benefits which can be achieved through these developments. Despite significant levels of grant assistance, many of these developments put unacceptable financial pressures on owner-occupiers who have great difficulty in meeting the cost of this type of work. The Association should consider alternative approaches to meet certain circumstances.

3. Safety

There are specific health and safety considerations that are part of the building procurement process and these are covered in the Association's CDM Regulations Policy. Compliance with the requirements of the CDM Regulations is consistent with the Association's commitment to good practice in health and safety.

The key aims of the CDM Regulations are to:

- Encourage everyone to work together to make health and safety an integral part of the planning, design, construction and management of projects.
- Improve planning and management from day one to identify hazards so that they can be eliminated or properly managed.
- Target effort where it can be most effective in terms of health and safety.
- Encourage co-operation and co-ordination of the project.

In addition to our compliance with the CDM Regulations, the Association's staff will be expected to apply the Association's own Health & Safety Policy.

4. Affordability and Quality

The Association must ensure that its development proposals are financially viable in the short and long term and that they represent value for money. Key points to be considered can be listed as follows.

Financial Viability

Development activities are a significant area of risk for the Association in that they involve large sums of capital with long-term revenue implications.

It is recognised that in engaging in development activity, the Association must make a financial contribution towards each project, be it new build or refurbishment. The borrowing strategy for each development will be determined in accordance with the Association's Treasury Management Policy.

The Management Committee will receive reports at key stages of the development process – Project Proposal, Cost Plan and Tender – to ensure that development proposals are viable and that funding requirements can be met.



Rent Levels

The procedures to be followed in terms of setting rent levels are covered in the Association's Rent Setting Policy.

Revenue Funding

5 For new build supported housing, the Association must ensure at an early stage in the development process that revenue funding will be available. Consideration must also be given to the risks involved in developing specialised accommodation particularly in relation to the longer-term needs of the client group.

Sustainability

10 The Association will aim to develop homes that have high sustainability standards. These standards are defined in our Sustainability Policy and our Sustainable Housing Design Guide which are reviewed at regular intervals. Reference will be made to these documents in the consideration of all housing development projects.

Maintenance

15 Careful consideration will be given to the medium- and long-term maintenance of new developments. Both at briefing and tender approval stages this area of risk should be fully explored and options considered to avoid any long-term financial burdens. This should be reflected in any life cycle costing exercise carried out as part of the cost plan or tender submissions including acceptance of any offer of grant.

Partnerships

20 In certain circumstances it may be advantageous for the Association to enter into partnership with other organisations to advance or better the Association's development procurement process. This may involve assembling a team or partnership to achieve "best value" in a specific project. Risks and benefits must be fully assessed and reported to the Management Committee for approval prior to entering into any formal or informal agreement.