

# THE **BIG** PICTURE

Our Vision & Aims for you



Transforming Neighbourhoods, Homes and Services to improve the Quality of Life for our Customers

# 2020 Vision

“ Welcome to ‘The Big Picture’ which we hope you’ll have a read through! By paying your rent and/or service charges, we’re able to provide a range of key services to you. Whilst we recognise that you may not need to access all of these, they do represent our total service offer to you. This ‘Big Picture’ document outlines all of the key services, if you would like to talk to us about any of the key services please contact us using the information on the back page. ”



**Our 2020 vision gives us clear direction for our future and this vision was shaped by you, through the views you expressed in our 2012 STAR customer survey and other feedback opportunities. There may be changes ahead, but we are committed to being a Landlord of Choice, with a greater focus on affordable energy for our homes, helping customers into work, and creating confident communities that can help themselves.**

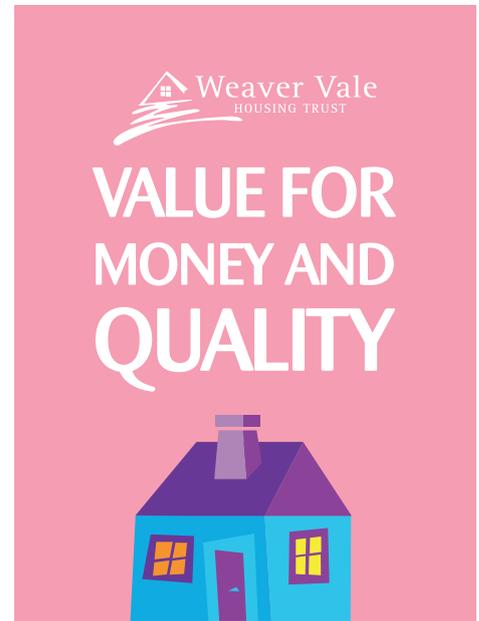
We have nine corporate strategies focussing on delivering our objectives. They have been developed to ensure that the Trust continues to be successful.

These are:

- Value For Money and Quality
- Affordable Warmth
- Self Reliance
- Transforming Homes
- Transforming Neighbourhoods

- Rent Collection
- Employer of Choice
- Customer Communication
- Customers Into Work





“To make the best use of our resources to provide the neighbourhoods, homes and services you want”

**We will concentrate on constantly making the most effective use of our resources so that we can deliver quality services to you**

Therefore we:

- have a 30 year business plan, allowing us to deliver effective services and to plan for the future
- only use our resources on activities that improve the quality of life of our customers
- use an independent stock condition survey to make sure your homes continue to be well maintained
- get the best prices when we buy materials and services
- look to continually improve the way we deliver our services
- take prompt appropriate action for the recovery of arrears for effective rent collection
- bid for external grant funding to help us maximise the delivery of our services



# AFFORDABLE WARMTH



“I am on a pre-payment meter in my two bedroom bungalow and usually put £10 a week on the meter but since having the solar panels, I have noticed my £10 is lasting a good two weeks now.”

**Greenbank customer**

## We will reduce the cost of living in our homes by making them more affordable to heat and run

Therefore we:

- provide energy saving advice to help reduce heating bills in your homes and increase their efficiency
- provide affordable warmth measures such as cladding or solar panels and provide energy efficient boilers to reduce running costs for you
- offer advice on damp, mould and condensation
- provide modern, energy efficient, central heating systems
- provide Annual Gas Safety inspections and service
- provide Oil Fired Safety inspections and service
- undertake a 6-monthly solid fuel safety inspection and service
- provide a programme to replace and upgrade gas and electric fires





“Workshops are really helpful at Weaver Vale. You learn a lot of stuff. Also support is great because you can talk about the problems you have and staff help to solve them.”

**Winsford resident**

**We will maximise the number of people and communities who look after themselves and support those who are unable to do so**

Therefore we:

- offer support to assist vulnerable customers to help them live independently in their homes
- provide a safe secure environment at all Independent Retirement Apartment schemes
- provide, where necessary, a flexible tailored support service to meet individual customer needs
- offer customer involvement opportunities to help us improve our services
- assist you by signposting and suggesting alternative services and agencies that can help you improve your quality of life
- offer adaptations and occupational therapy advice
- support and help resident and community groups to improve their neighbourhoods through community projects and partnership working
- provide customer advice and assistance to improve income and manage debts through our Money Matters team
- provide an independent mediation service to enable neighbours to resolve disagreements and disputes between themselves
- provide support for customers who wish to improve their abilities through volunteering opportunities, developing confidence and access to training
- provide ‘Young Persons Bursary’ grant payments for young people aged 11-24 living in one of our homes
- offer work placement opportunities for customers with the Trust and partners



# TRANSFORMING HOMES



**We will improve the desirability of our houses and ensure that you are safe and happy in your home**

Therefore we:

- provide a 24/7 Callout service for emergency repairs, every day of the year
- provide a fully appointed Responsive Repairs service
- maintain homes to a high standard, as recognised by the Government, and regularly survey the condition of all properties
- carry out value for money planned improvements including offering customer choices
- undertake works to ensure our empty homes are to our customer agreed standard
- under our 5 year pre-paint programme we externally paint and repair every home
- repair and paint internal communal areas every 5 years
- recognise that Health and Safety in our properties is key to providing quality homes
- conduct annual smoke and fire alarm tests
- conduct fire safety surveys and fire risk assessments as part of a 10 year programme
- provide emergency lighting tests
- service stair-lifts annually
- undertake specific electrical, fire alarm, water and lift tests in our Independent Retirement Apartment Schemes
- carry out internal fire safety repairs
- provide external groundwork repairs such as paving, fencing, walls and drainage in line with our maintenance policy
- provide adaptations, ramps and external works
- regularly inspect blocks of flats for health and safety issues
- safely manage asbestos if needed
- offer assistance in liaising with utility companies when moving in to your home
- provide mutual exchange inspections including gas/electric checks
- provide fly tipping removal throughout our neighbourhoods where we own the majority of open space
- undertake repairs to Trust owned street lighting
- continue to provide affordable housing by building a range of new homes across our neighbourhoods



# TRANSFORMING HOMES



“7pm on a Saturday night I rang the emergency repair number. After a very friendly conversation I was assured the boiler would be looked at asap, but realistically probably Monday morning. Less than 30 minutes later the repairman arrived, 30 minutes later boiler repaired and we had hot running water again. I am genuinely impressed by your service.” **Northwich customer**



## TRANSFORMING NEIGHBOURHOODS



“It feels like Weaver Vale are listening when we speak. The results of this project (dealing with dog fouling) show just how much difference local people can make in their neighbourhoods if they are prepared to get involved.”

**CLAW group member**

**We will improve the desirability of our neighbourhoods as we recognise that living in a good neighbourhood has a positive impact on your quality of life**

Therefore we:

- maintain all Trust open space and external communal areas by providing a grounds maintenance contract
- enhance the appearance of our neighbourhoods by undertaking small specific environmental improvements
- have a Community Caretaking Team to provide an enhanced environmental service
- undertake regular play area inspection and maintenance for those play facilities that we own to ensure health and safety
- undertake the safe management of Trust owned trees
- encourage and facilitate Community engagement and work with Neighbourhood Residents Groups
- work with partners to enable us to improve your neighbourhood and help us organise events and activities
- provide the opportunity to apply for a ‘Community Assistance Fund’ grant to support groups that benefit those living in our neighbourhoods



## TRANSFORMING NEIGHBOURHOODS



- provide venues for the use of local communities and residents in our neighbourhoods
- advertise our empty properties weekly and provide support and advice on finding a home
- offer opportunities to exchange homes both within our area and nationwide
- offer both starter tenancies and assured tenancies
- offer support to assist you in managing your tenancy successfully
- provide a designated Tenancy Management Officer as a point of contact for each neighbourhood
- work with partners to provide a multi-agency approach to reducing anti social behaviour
- use and offer a range of tools and techniques to help manage neighbour disputes and other tenancy breaches, including legal action where necessary
- provide a witness support service, including out of hours support, to victims of serious anti social behaviour, and security measures to their homes
- provide diversionary activities and events for young people to encourage them to participate, and so support the neighbourhoods where they live



# RENT COLLECTION



“I want to say a big thank you to Kelly for the numerous things that she has helped me with. She has provided a fantastic service from start to finish and I am now less anxious and happier. She has gained a lot more income for me and with this I have repaid all my arrears. I do not know where I would be without her support”

**Northwich customer**

**The vast majority of our income comes from rents and this pays for everything we do. This income is vital and we will ensure that it is collected.**

Therefore we expect you to pay your rent and to help you do this we:

- provide the means for you to make rent payments face to face or by telephone as well as on the internet
- provide access via our website for you to check your rent account using iHousing
- have Income Management Officers who work late nights/weekends so you can contact us by phone at a time convenient to you
- supply quarterly rent statements to keep you informed of the balance on your rent account
- offer help with budgeting and managing your money through the Money Matters team
- help you manage debts, speaking to creditors on your behalf, negotiating payments, establishing the most appropriate method to manage your debts
- assist with benefits queries, carrying out trial calculations and helping you to apply
- help to appeal benefit decisions
- support you at welfare benefit court tribunals and appeals
- work closely with the council to help you resolve housing benefit issues
- provide signposting to other support agencies, such as the Credit Union and Citizens Advice Bureau
- provide pre-tenancy money advice for new customers and face to face workshops
- offer one-to-one rent account support to help you pay your rent
- produce a quarterly newsletter ‘Money Matters’ to provide advice on managing your money
- offer appointments at local offices and undertake home visits to make it easier for you to talk to us
- provide information on Home Contents Insurance and offer a facility to add the cost to your rent



# EMPLOYER OF CHOICE



“Through working at the Trust I’ve had the opportunity to learn new skills and gain qualifications that will help me in my future career and I’ve seen at first hand their commitment to helping customers and local people into work and training”

**Winsford customer**

## We believe that employing quality staff leads to quality services for you, our customers

Therefore we:

- invest in training and support to staff to ensure they provide the highest level of customer service
- invest in health and safety training to maintain awareness of this when in customer homes
- encourage staff involvement within communities to promote strong staff/customer links
- provide information on new job opportunities across website/social media to ensure local people are aware of opportunities
- offer work experience placements to help customers and households develop opportunities and career choices



# CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS



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“Joining any group of people with a common interest as a newbie can be an extremely intimidating and anxious moment. Not so with the Review It Group...Being a tenant of Weaver Vale Housing Trust it was definitely a pleasant surprise to see that the Trust involves its tenants in many aspects of its day to day running”

**Winsford customer**

**We will ensure that our messages get through to you and are understood. We want to make sure that your voice is heard and acted upon**

Therefore we

- use a variety of communication options to help keep you informed
- offer various ways for you to get in touch and interact with us at your convenience
- are providing free Wi-Fi facilities at our Gadbrook Offices so you can access our services via the internet
- have a specific focus on social media, with a presence on Facebook and Twitter
- supply you with a range information about the services we provide
- provide you with a range of information that gives you details of our performance

- offer a variety of ways and locations through which you can access our services
- have staff available at local offices so you may gain information and discuss services face to face
- offer you the opportunity to complain about services that don't meet their objectives
- collect and analyse feedback from a wide range of surveys to help improve our services
- offer you the opportunity to get involved and help shape the services that we deliver
- co-ordinate resident involvement and support both informal and formal customer groups
- support a number of Customer Involvement Groups who focus on our delivery of key services
- assist Tenant Inspectors in supporting customers and managers to maintain and improve our services
- offer opportunities to become members of our Board, Tenant Consultative Committee and Performance Improvement and Enhancement Scrutiny Group and then train for formal qualifications to assist you in these roles



# CUSTOMERS INTO WORK



**We will increase the number of our customers in paid employment. We recognise that jobs help a neighbourhood to succeed and become or remain a place where customers want to live**

Therefore we:

- provide weekly drop in sessions offering support with Job Searching and Training
- provide assistance to help you to identify and address barriers to work
- provide one-to-one support to cover all aspects of finding work
- provide in-work support/career mentoring to assist those in employment
- support you, and provide training, in using job search tools
- offer opportunities to train for the future through our paid training programme
- encourage/support our contractors to employ local people wherever possible
- signpost you to appropriate support and learning services
- assist with financial cost associated with securing employment
- offer a 2 year apprenticeship support programme for apprentices working at the Trust
- work in partnership with Department of Work and Pensions/Job Centre Plus/Cheshire West & Chester Council to maximise employment opportunities for local people
- offer a 5 Stages, 15 steps Work Ready Programme
- support local recruitment/awareness raising events in high schools/local colleges
- identify in-house employment opportunities, supporting customers/residents to apply
- identify potential social enterprise opportunities
- deliver customer workshops to help customers reach their work potential
- work with other social landlords to create apprenticeship opportunities for people living in our neighbourhoods
- offer a 'Community Outreach' project for IT training
- offer apprenticeships, bringing employment opportunities to local people
- support local people into work
- employ customers into our workforce, who then help contribute to the local economy



“When you’ve been out of work or only had temporary jobs your self-confidence is very low. The team made me see I had skills applicable to jobs I hadn’t considered and gave me the confidence to try different things. A permanent job has given my life a huge boost and I’m so grateful to the Weaver Vale team for their support.”

**Winsford customer**

# CUSTOMERS INTO WORK





## TO TALK TO US ABOUT 'THE BIG PICTURE'

**Call us on:** 0300 303 9848

**Website:** [www.wvht.co.uk](http://www.wvht.co.uk)

Join in the #wvhtbigpicture conversation

at [www.facebook.com/weavervale](http://www.facebook.com/weavervale) and

 @weavervale

## THE LEGAL BIT

This list of key services is ancillary to and not a substitution for your tenancy, which remains the contractual basis of our relationship with you. No legal obligation upon us arises purely from this list, which should be considered a statement of aspirations, the achievement of which the Trust is committed, within the constraints the Trust faces, including financial, statutory, regulatory and time.



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