

Report of the Board of Management for the year ended 31 March 2023

Strategic Report

The Board presents its strategic report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 of Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Limited (the "Association").

Principal Activities

The Association is a registered non-profit making housing association providing housing accommodation for those in need.

Company Profile

Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd, founded in 1976, is a registered housing association in Northern Ireland. Habinteg plans, develops and manages 'integrated' housing schemes in both urban and rural areas throughout the region and works with a number of partner organisations in providing supported housing projects. The Association currently has over 2,400 properties at more than 100 locations and 16 partnership schemes.

Habinteg's Vision - 'Homes | Lives | Communities' encapsulates the Association's central aim of providing housing which combines a range of dwelling types - family houses, apartments and bungalows - in order to appropriately meet the needs of the widest range of users, including older persons and persons with a disability. Quality, sustainable developments include large and medium sized suburban housing developments, inner city apartments, individual rural cottages and specialised housing schemes. Partnership projects include sensitively designed housing with care schemes, temporary accommodation for people who are homeless, and housing initiatives for people with additional support needs.

The standard and quality of these developments has been recognised at local and national level with an impressive list of high-profile awards, including the UK Housing Award for Outstanding Achievement in Social Housing in Northern Ireland, the RICS Award for the Northern Ireland region and a succession of NIHE Housing Council Awards for Best Scheme in Northern Ireland.

Habinteg is a Customer Service Excellence organisation still retaining the Standard. We are an Investor In People Organisation achieving Gold Standard in March 2022. In July 2022 we achieved the following international Standards:

- ISO9001 Quality Management Systems.
- ISO14001 Environmental Management.
- ISO45001 Occupational Health and Safety.

Results and Performance

The surplus on ordinary activities for the year was £541,107 compared with a surplus of £683,526 for the previous year. The total Comprehensive income for the year is £4,925,107 against a figure from 2021/22 of £2,407,526.

The Association set KPIs across all areas of the organisation and the board reviews performance against these targets on a quarterly basis. We again have achieved significant success with these targets over the last 12 months.

Value for Money

The Association is a member of Housemark which provides benchmarking information to enable us to continue measure our performance against our peers in Northern Ireland and throughout the United Kingdom. We will continue to challenge ourselves to make best use of the resources we have available when meeting customer needs.

Risks

The Board have reviewed the strategic and key risk register on a quarterly basis throughout the year. This covers inherent and residual risks for the key strategic areas within the organisation as well as further actions that the Association has put in place to minimise any potential impact. This will continue to be reviewed and amended by the Association.

COVID-19 and Ukraine Crisis Impact

Although the risk associated with COVID-19 has reduced, the Association has continued to prioritise the safety of our staff as well as making sure that we deliver our core services to our customers.

The key areas of focus are support for our staff, customers and suppliers through this challenging time. The Association has reviewed its budgets and cash flows to provide financial assurance and will continue to do so.

Although not directly impacted by the crisis in Ukraine we have all been affected by the impact of high inflation. We will continue to focus on providing support to our staff, customers and suppliers through these challenging times.

Treasury Management Policy

The Association's aim is to keep cash balances to a minimum of £2,000,000 where possible and therefore keep loan interest charges to a minimum. This is achieved without compromising the Association's ability to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. During the period no new loans were drawn down. It is noted that the cash balances currently held will be utilised on new developments and to fund our planned maintenance programme.

All surpluses generated by the Association have been reinvested in order to maintain existing homes in good condition, develop new homes at rent levels as low as possible and to reduce borrowing requirements. The reserves that the Association has built up have largely been reinvested into its properties and are not, therefore, represented by cash balances.

Future Development

The Association's strategy is to increase the number of homes in management each year through a combination of house purchases and new developments on site. There are 210 new starts expected during 2023/24. We anticipate to hand over 177 new homes to new tenants throughout the year.

The Board

Mr N McIvor, Ms M Alcorn and Mr D McCavery retire by rotation and are seeking re-election.

Corporate Governance

In the opinion of the Board, the Association is in compliance with the Best Practice Code of Governance issued by the NHF and has complied with all DfC Regulatory Standards during the year.

The Board

The Board meets regularly throughout the year. There are various sub-committees who meet regularly throughout the year with specific responsibilities for development, housing management and maintenance, finance and corporate services, as well as audit and risk.

There were six Board meetings during the course of the year and the attendance was as follows:

Mr N McIvor	6	Ms E Creery	2
Mr G Gilpin	5	Mr G McCabe	6
Ms N Loughran	6	Mr B Johnston	2
Mr D McCavery	3	Mr M Stevenson	2
Mr G Davidson	6	Ms M Alcorn	1
Ms L Allen	2	Ms E Martin	2
Mr J Currie	0		

The Association's former Vice Chair (Edel Creery), Brendan Johnston and Jonnie Currie retired in August 2022.

Audit and Risk Committee

The Association has an Audit and Risk Committee with clearly defined terms of reference. The committee comprises 2 members and meets at least 4 times a year. Any member is entitled to attend a committee meeting. The Audit and Risk Committee monitors financial reporting and accounting policies along with the adequacy of the Association's internal financial controls and provides a forum through which the Association's external auditors report to the Board. The Board believes it has an objective and professional relationship with its auditors.

Going Concern

After making enquiries, the Board has a reasonable expectation that the Association had adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

Internal Financial Control

The Board is responsible for the Association's systems of internal financial control and along with senior management, is responsible for establishing and operating detailed control and report procedures. The systems of internal financial control can provide only reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material misstatement and loss.

The Board has reviewed the effectiveness of the Association's system of internal financial control. The review included consideration of the business risks facing the association and of the existing internal financial control procedures. The key elements of the control system in operation are:

- the Board has adopted a formal schedule of matters reserved for its approval ensuring it maintains responsibility for overall strategy, approval of all property transactions and other major capital expenditure projects;
- there is an organisation structure with clearly defined lines of responsibility and delegation of authority;
- detailed budgets are prepared covering the Association's businesses which are reviewed and approved by the Board. Actual results are compared against budget and appropriate action identified and initiated; and
- the Audit and Risk Committee reviews matters relating to internal control and receives reports on a regular basis from the external and internal auditors and from senior management.

Compliance with Code of Best Practice

The auditors have confirmed that in their opinion, with respect to the Board's statements on internal financial control and going concern above, the members have provided the disclosures required by the Code and such statements are not inconsistent with the information of which they are aware from their audit work on the financial statements, and that the Board's statement on pages 3 to 7 appropriately reflects the Association's compliance with the other paragraphs of the Code. They have carried out their review in accordance with the relevant Bulletin issued by the Auditing Practices Board, which does not require them to perform any additional work necessary to express a separate opinion on the effectiveness of either the Association's system of internal financial control or corporate governance procedures, or on the ability of the Association to continue in operational existence.

Statement of the Board

The Board is required to prepare accounts for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of the Association's affairs and of its surplus or deficit for that period. In preparing those accounts the Board is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Association will continue to operate.

The Board is responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Association. It is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Association and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities.

Name Change

At the AGM on the 4th July 2023, the Association agreed to change its name from Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd to Woven Housing Association Ltd.

Auditor

The Audit and Risk Committee recommended to the Board that ASM Chartered Accountants be re-appointed as the Association's external auditors and ASM Chartered Accountants have indicated a willingness to continue in office. A resolution concerning their reappointment will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

On behalf of the board



Neil McIvor
Chairman
4th July 2023