

Introduction – Unprecedented Times

As we introduce our new Corporate Plan we do so in the most uncertain times for a generation or more. Like all organisations, the Covid-19 pandemic has forced Great Places to think differently, to find new ways of working, new ways of engaging and new ways of connecting to customers and stakeholders. Despite all this, however, with the economic shocks and after-shocks of the pandemic more likely to impact on our customers than elsewhere in society, Great Places remains well placed to help our customers and communities navigate their way through these extremely challenging times.

In such an uncertain world, we recognise that now is not the time for a change of direction. For this reason we have produced a more short-term tactical Corporate Plan for the next two years. Following the transfer of engagements between Great Places and Equity on 1st April 2020, we remain focused on delivering the benefits of our merger for the new Great Places. However we also acknowledge that we need to respond to an ever-changing external environment. We need a period of stability and continuity, ensuring a 'one business' thread runs through everything we do. At the same time, we will maintain our longer-term ambitions and a flexible approach to opportunities which may come our way.

We have reviewed our 10-year ambitions and updated some of them based on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the merger to ensure that emerging themes and challenges are fully reflected. Equally, in our

planning, we have acknowledged that some working practices have had to change to minimise health and safety risks to colleagues and customers in a Covid-19 world. Investment in systems, our agile approach to the workplace and focus on colleague mental and physical wellbeing have all supported us throughout a turbulent twelve months and will continue to do so going forward.

In developing this Plan we have consulted extensively with customers and colleagues. Based on 400 customer responses, the three most important factors from their perspective are: **feeling safe in the home, being kept informed, and having a range of ways to access services.** All these feature as priority areas in the Plan. Alongside this strong customer voice, numerous colleagues have contributed, including 150+ managers at a recent conference. We are particularly keen that everyone sees the role that they play in the Plan's implementation and becomes emotionally engaged in successfully executing it.

This Plan represents Years 4 and 5 of the 10-year journey we set out on in 2018. The Plan strikes a balance between better outcomes for customers and moving the business through internal transformation with a best-of-both approach.

It's a two-year period which will be about **STABILITY, COLLABORATION AND AMBITION**



Vision and Values

Our vision is clear



Great Homes

Maximising our investment in safe, sustainable homes



Great Communities

Building successful vibrant communities



Great People

Providing outstanding customer service and support

Our values are strong



We are fair

We are fair, open and accountable.



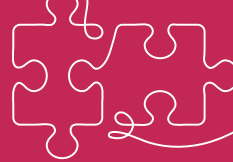
We care

We know, respect and care about our customers.



We appreciate

We appreciate the effort of everyone who works with us.



We partner

We promote partnerships, efficiency and value for money.



We innovate

We passionately embrace creativity, change and innovation.

Underpinning the vision and values are our operating principles:

We protect our financial strength

This makes us resilient, will allow us to remain independent and means we can realise our vision for the benefit of people who choose to call our properties their home. We spend and invest wisely to ensure value for money.

We exercise good governance

We meet the highest-possible standards when making and implementing decisions, always giving priority to the safety and security of customers and colleagues.

We respect equality, diversity and inclusion

We recognise and value differences amongst our customers and our colleagues, and act fairly in our dealings with all groups and individuals.



Great Homes: Our 10-year ambitions



From 2021-23 we will focus on:

Building safety and compliance

Customers are at the forefront of everything we do and their safety is paramount. This is a priority for Great Places and, post Grenfell, for Government, too. We will ensure that our customers know this and that they can be confident their homes are safe.

Sustainable assets

We will ensure that our housing meets the needs of our customers, both now and in the future. In addition, we will actively manage and invest in assets economically, sustainably and safely. We will have a clear sustainability plan for assets and will assist in supporting and improving neighbourhoods by enhancing the environmental performance of our homes.

Good quality data

Our housing stock is our largest and most valuable tangible asset underpinning the operation of the whole group. It is therefore essential that we have an accurate picture of condition to ensure that our investment maintains and protects our properties. We will ensure that we hold accurate data to allow us to better understand our properties, aid effective decision-making and get the most out of our new housing management system, Aareon.



Measure



100% of higher-risk buildings will have had a survey completed and all required works will have been undertaken by March 2023.



Over the next 2 years we will complete 2,000 new homes.

Great Communities: Our 10-year ambitions remain unchanged



Top 10 rating

To hold a top 10 rating from the UK Institute of Customer Service across all sectors.

Digital focus

To have developed digital services that promote independence by giving customers access to self-service options at any time, allowing us to focus time and resources on those who need support.

Social investment

To increase investment in our communities and achieve a position in the top quartile nationally, as measured through the Sector Scorecard.

Reduce poverty

To build on our commitment to reduce poverty, in order to help more customers improve their lives and circumstances.

Support & sustain

To ensure the sustainability of our anchor neighbourhoods by enhancing their appeal as great places to live.

Increase services

Ensure our more vulnerable customers are able to access the right levels of support, and grow our commissioned services.

From 2021-23 we will focus on:

Understanding our diverse communities and customers

It's essential that our customers are involved in shaping our services. We will take time to listen to them and better understand their wide-ranging circumstances and needs through our Customer Voice Strategy. Ongoing and accurate data gathering will provide further insight that will allow us to deliver more tailored services, address inequality, be clear on our offer and manage expectations through revised service standards.

Digital inclusion and exclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated recognition of the value of good digital services. The importance of being able to access live information about services digitally has never been clearer. The world is more digitally focused and we have seen an increase in digitally active customers. The gap between the digitally included and excluded is, nonetheless, getting wider so through delivery of our Customer Experience Strategy, we have developed an approach to tackle this imbalance. Our focus will be on guaranteeing a great experience whether customers contact us online, on the phone or through other means.

Keeping customers informed

Regular feedback from Insight, our customer scrutiny group, emphasises the need to constantly review and improve customer service. Through the development of a new Customer Voice Strategy, over the next two years we will provide training and awareness-raising to promote a culture where we are true to our promises; adapt processes to make it easier to get things right first time; and ensure timely responses which show that we have listened and responded to customers' needs.

Support and Sustain

Over the next two years we will continue our focus on tenancy sustainment. Through our role as the Accountable Body for Greater Manchester Housing First, we will ensure robust arrangements are in place for those customers who are receiving support when the programme comes to an end. As part of our safeguarding workplan there will be a focus on prevention, ensuring the independence and wellbeing of our more vulnerable customers. We will also focus on the quality of our new-home offer, through the scope and quality of void works and furnishings and our House To Home pilot.

Measure



We will improve our satisfaction score year on year across all customer groups using the Institute of Customer Service methodology.

We will make it easier to do business with us, which will be reflected in an improved customer effort score.



Great People

Our 10-year ambitions remain unchanged



Number 1

To be the Number 1 employer in our sector in the areas where we operate.

Talent

To create career pathways that enable everyone to fulfil their ambitions.

Reputation

To maintain a great reputation that we can all be proud of.

Can do

To nurture, protect and promote our positive, can-do attitude over the long term.

From 2021-23 we will focus on:

Engaged workforce

We will foster a person-centred colleague experience and encourage a positive culture that upholds the highest professional standards. We will equip our colleagues with the appropriate technology and tools to be effective in their roles. We will create an environment where engaged colleagues can thrive and enjoy exciting, interesting and rewarding careers. We will ensure that colleagues feel respected to be themselves and we will support them to reach their full potential. Our colleagues will be a well-trained and skilled workforce that is totally committed to our values and the work that we do.

Empowered colleagues

In delivering against our GREATER operating culture, all of our people will have a meaningful voice and we will empower and trust them to work collaboratively towards achieving our ambitions. We will innovate and be committed to delivering excellence for our customers and partners and we will promote fairness and respect in all that we do. We will become Greater Together.

Valuing Diversity

We want all our people to feel a sense of belonging to Great Places and to know that they are valued and respected for who they are. We value diversity and how it can make a real difference in helping us move our business forward and to understand and reflect the needs of the people we serve. Delivery of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will play a vital role in the ongoing success of our organisation and we will make it part of everything we do. We will ensure that our practices are inclusive and we will challenge discrimination.



Measures



100%

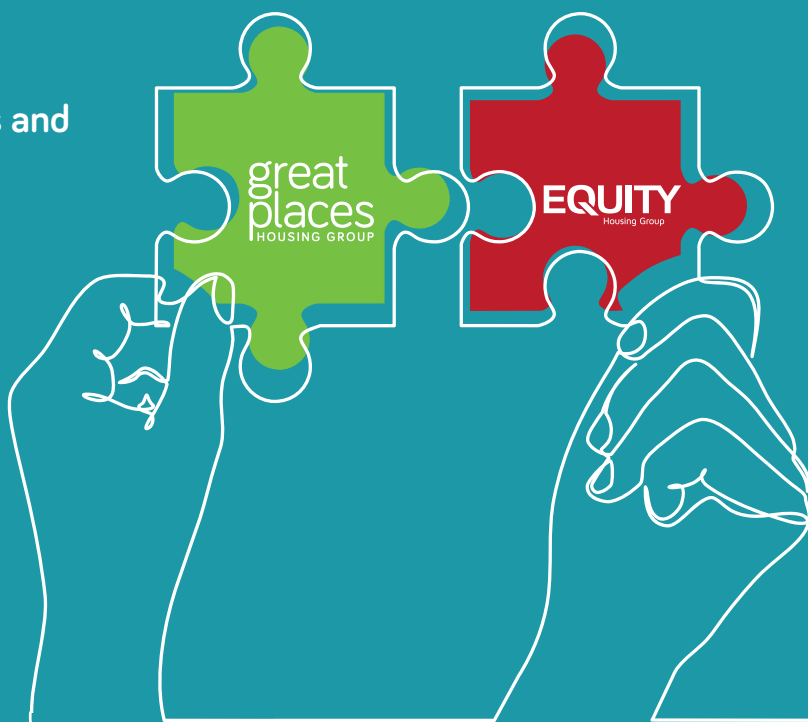
To be an organisation in which people feel valued and to sustain a colleague engagement score in excess of 75%.

100% of colleagues will have completed all mandatory, role-specific training.

One Business

Great Places will be an integrated business – to colleagues, customers and stakeholders – by March 2022.

Following the merger between Great Places and Equity Housing Groups on 1 April 2020, our goal is to create a new, ambitious organisation that combines the values and balance sheets of the two organisations. It will be an ethical, customer-focussed business that delivers efficient, fantastic services and that is geared up to play its role in meeting the housing supply crisis head-on.



Over the next two years, we will deliver outcomes across all of the workstreams which make up the detailed Integration Programme Plan and we will deliver on all specifics in the merger Business Case. We will introduce a mix of tactical and transformational change, and will be able to demonstrate the added value of the merger through a structured plan to get the most out of Aareon and data-driven decision-making.

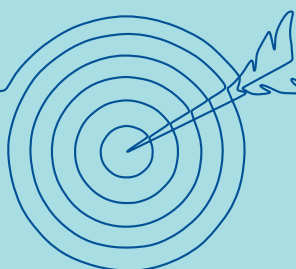
We are already looking at areas of key customer importance, such as repairs and anti-social behaviour, taking a best-of-both approach to build on our strengths and improve our services for customers and communities.

There will be a 'one organisation' thread running through everything that we do and we will be capable of evidencing our success by:

- a) having a good reputation internally and externally;
- b) improving services by delivering on our 'best of both' approach;
- c) being an organisation that people are proud to work for.



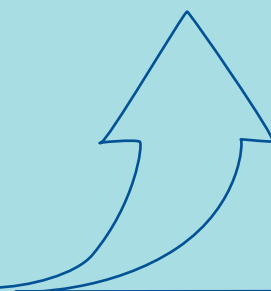
Measures



By March 2023 we will have delivered both the cashable and non-cashable elements of the approved partnership business case.



Over the course of this Plan, we will increase the already incredibly high percentage of colleagues who believe in the vision and work of Great Places.



Profit For Purpose

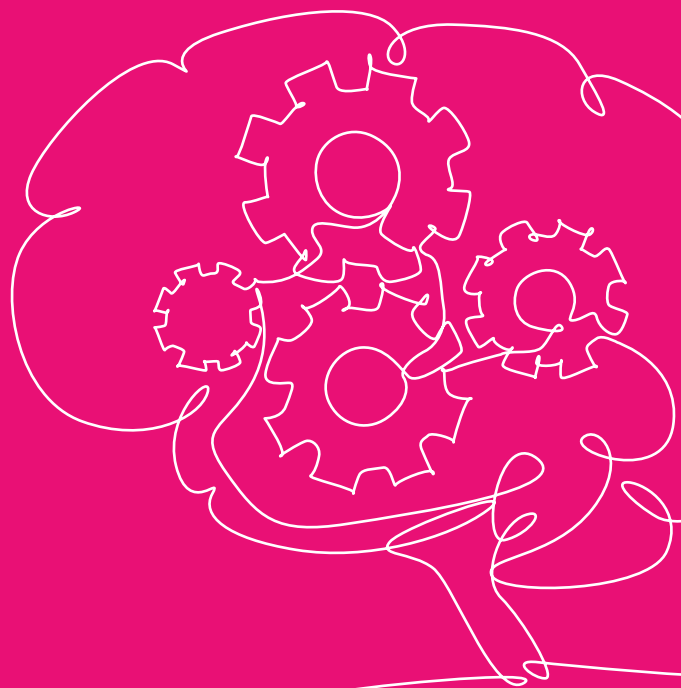
Great Places is part of a unique sector. We do not pay dividends to shareholders so through being commercially astute, financially strong and efficient, with a focus on value for money, we are able to use our surplus to be values-driven, to provide support to vulnerable customers and to use the balance to build new homes. Our philosophy of Profit For Purpose is straightforward:

Business Brain

The 'profit' bit: we will be financially strong, with Value For Money running through all our decision-making.

We aim to be efficient and remain a top performer in our sector, operating as a commercial, innovative business. We're forward-thinking and influential with a can-do approach, constantly adapting to an uncertain external environment to provide great services to customers and to tackle the housing crisis.

We do all this while maintaining a robust approach to value for money and a focus on doing things in the right way.



Social Heart

The 'purpose' bit: we will provide a range of ways to support the vulnerable, and help to minimise the impact of Covid-19 for our customers and neighbourhoods.

We will use a large proportion of our surplus to go far beyond our landlord obligations and realise our vision of Great homes, Great communities, Great people.

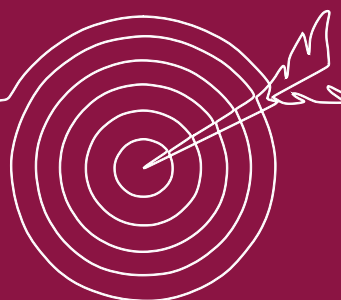
In the past 12 months we have created both a Hardship and a Resilience Fund; have provided debt advice and other support and guidance to assist with the financial resilience of customers; and have established ourselves as community leaders in our anchor neighbourhoods.

The simple principle is that the more efficient we are as an organisation and the greater our surplus, the more of the added value work we can carry out to transform our communities and improve the lives of our customers.



Measure

Over the next 2 years, we will assist 1,500 households into work, training or volunteering.



In summary: two years of stability, collaboration and ambition

Great Places remains committed to the delivery of the 10-year ambitions laid out in 2018.

While the focus of this Plan will be around ensuring stability and building a solid platform, we retain our ambition and will maintain a flexible approach to new opportunities. There is both an internal and external focus to our work over the next two years.

The expectation is that by March 2023, we will be back in a steady state and the external world will have returned to some sort of normality. By that point we will be midway through our 10-year ambitions and will undertake a more fundamental review of the remaining five years, as a fully-formed, larger, successful organisation.

Throughout, we will be **Building Greatness**.



STABILITY



COLLABORATION



AMBITION

