



**berneslai**  
homes

## Strategic Plan 2021-31

Roots in the past, eyes on the future.



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# Welcome to our Strategic Plan 2021-31

Berneslai Homes continue to deliver high-quality housing and responsive maintenance services, supporting tenants into work, and transforming our business to meet the needs of our tenants.

We move into year five of a 10-year contract with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, providing housing management and maintenance services across the council housing stock. The council is a crucial partner for Berneslai Homes and by building on this successful relationship we continue to drive improvements in the delivery of housing services. This partnership will ensure that we keep customers at the heart of everything we do.

The right home environment is critical to our tenants' physical and mental health and wellbeing. Good quality, energy efficient and safe housing helps people stay healthy and provides the base to help achieve a decent quality of life. Berneslai Homes works with Public Health and other health partners to ensure our tenants can access information and support, to stay fit and well all year round and to provide additional help to keep warm and well during colder weather.

We have implemented significant improvements to strengthen assurance around building and fire safety. This is a key area for us to ensure we meet the requirements of the Building Safety Act and keep our tenants safe.

As we move into this new regulatory era, we are getting back to basics, carrying out work so we know who our tenants are and who lives behind the front door of our properties.

April 2024 saw the Regulator of Social Housing introduce their proactive approach to regulation and the new consumer standards. Barnsley Council and Berneslai Homes as their delivery partner were inspected in 2024 receiving the highest regulatory grading (C1). This reflected the ongoing work to address areas of weakness and the continued commitment with tenants to improve services and outcomes. We will work together to strive for improvements in what remains a difficult economic environment.

In developing our Strategic Plan, we consulted extensively with customers, colleagues, and our shareholder Barnsley Council. We are pleased that our ambitions are supported by key stakeholders and will help us to provide thriving, vibrant and diverse communities for our residents. It is only with the commitment of our colleagues and partners and by working together that we can achieve our ambitions.



**Amanda Garrard**  
Chief Executive

**Ken Taylor**  
Chair

# About us

**Berneslai Homes is an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO), 100% owned by the council, delegated to provide services to council housing across the borough.**

Berneslai Homes is a company limited by guarantee and is overseen by a Board of Directors who attend Board and Committee meetings regularly throughout the year.

The implementation of policies and the day-to-day running of the organisation is delegated to the Chief Executive and the Executive Management Team. Our overall performance is reported to the council on a quarterly basis.

We employ over 500 staff, of which around 3% are apprentices. Many of our apprentices go on to secure permanent employment with us or partners.

We spend and invest wisely to achieve value for money.

Our tenants are at the heart of all we do.



## Robust governance

We have strong and robust governance, audited on a yearly basis. We work to the highest possible standards when making and implementing decisions, always giving priority to the safety and security of our customers and colleagues.



## Co-regulatory tenant involvement

Underpinning the Board and Committee structure is our co-regulatory tenant involvement and engagement model, including our Tenant Voice and Scrutiny panels and our local TARAs. Ensuring our customers are fully involved in developing, shaping and scrutinising our services. Following the launch of our new Customer Insight and Engagement Strategy and feedback received from the inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing we will focus on broadening the tenant voice in order to hear from a more diverse range of tenants as well as making improvements to feedback mechanisms.



## Equality, diversity and inclusion

We respect equality, diversity and inclusion, we recognise and value differences amongst our customers and our colleagues. We act fairly in our dealings with all groups and individuals. We are a Housing Diversity Network accredited organisation.



## Vibrant and cohesive communities

We have a flexible front-line service offer tailored to individual needs. We work together with tenants, partner organisations, the third sector and communities to make every contact count and be more than just a landlord.



# The external environment

Our Strategic Plan focuses on how we can build for the future, supporting our local communities, listening to our customers, and keeping our eye on the external environment.



**The Social Housing Regulation Act** is a regulatory change for housing. The Regulator of Social Housing and the consumer standards rightly highlight our responsibilities to listen to the voice of our tenants, make sure this influences our services and ensures that we provide excellent quality services alongside effective mechanisms for listening and influence. The Better Social Housing Review and Action Plan make further recommendations to drive improvements in the quality of social housing.



**The Building Safety Act** is an important part of our future, and is designed to ensure that housing providers help people feel safe in their homes. A key area for us is making sure that we are serving our customers and are compliant with all the elements of the Act.



We are underway on our **decarbonisation journey** to be carbon neutral by 2045. We have developed an approach to improving energy efficiency of the council housing stock and reducing our environmental impact. We are taking a 'fabric first' approach retrofitting homes. This will improve the environment performance of properties by helping keep customers homes warm, reducing energy costs and alleviating fuel poverty. We continue to focus on tackling our carbon footprint with our fleet of vans, through our operational activities and the introduction of new renewable technology.

Barnsley  
**2030**



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

# Barnsley - the place of possibilities

We embrace our role as an anchor organisation in Barnsley. We will work closely with the council to ensure we align our services and Strategic Plan to meet the challenges and opportunities of their new Corporate Plan and the Barnsley 2030 vision:

## Healthy Barnsley

Keeping ourselves and our families well is the key to living productive and happy lives.

## Learning Barnsley

Developing skills, talent and creativity within people of all ages will open up exciting prospects.

## Growing Barnsley

Open for business, with our great location, excellent links to road network, digital connectivity and attractive local offer.

## Sustainable Barnsley

We all have our part to play in protecting our borough for future generations.

# Barnsley

# 2030

# Our values

Everyone who works for Berneslai Homes will embrace these values and make them relevant to their role.

Our vision is clear:

**Creating great homes and communities with the people of Barnsley.**

## Customer first

You'll be at the heart of all we do

## Can do attitude

We'll make change happen, fix problems and adapt to achieve

## Curious

We'll look beyond face value to get things right



# Getting the basics right

We acknowledge the need get the foundations of the business right; to be a high performing and learning organisation that continues to transform, learn, and use innovation to improve our services to tenants whilst being as efficient as possible.

**Excellent customer services** – We listen to our customers and their views are at the heart of our decision making. We continue to learn, grow and change so we adapt to any given situation.

**Successful and well-managed company** – We invest and spend wisely in our homes and communities whilst also supporting the local economy and investing in our town, ensuring we provide value for money services.

**Partnership working** – We are proud to work closely with the Barnsley 2030 Board, our local communities and different businesses and organisations across all sectors to achieve their vision of Barnsley being a place of possibilities.

**Sustainable communities** – We embrace diversity and inclusion, provide work opportunities, support carers, and contribute to the zero-carbon agenda.

To ensure we continue to deliver, we have set out our ambitions over the next 10 years.



# Our ambition for the next 10 years will be...



## Hearing customers

We are a listening organisation: valuing and encouraging feedback from customers, working together to continuously improve services.

### We will ✓

Co-design our services with tenants.

Ensure all our service reviews and strategies have strong tenant input.

Have an accredited complaints process (Housemark) used to improve services.

Ensure customer feedback is used to continuously improve services.

Offer a broad range of engagement and feedback opportunities aiming to hear from 50% of tenants annually.

Have a Customer Services Committee that has strong, direct links to engaged tenants and access to customer feedback and insight to ensure the tenant's voice is heard.

Use digital tools to obtain instant feedback about the services we offer.



## How will we measure our success?



Peer group top quartile for customer satisfaction



High levels of engagement and feedback - **50%** of tenants annually.



Complaints responded to in peer group top quartile.





## Keeping tenants safe

Keeping tenants safe is our priority.

### Building safety

**We will** ✓

Complete all major compliance type works for example, sprinkler installs, fire compartmentation.

Increase tenants' confidence with the security and safety of their home.

Reduce fire incidents in and around the home, due to awareness raising, removal of risk areas and improved systems/designs.

Ensure we have carbon monoxide and smoke detectors in all our homes.

Fit all homes with smart monitoring devices to allow for proactive maintenance.

Provide electronic access to compliance certificates for all our tenants.

Significantly reduce damp, mould and condensation in our homes.

### Neighbourhood safety

**We will** ✓

Work with partners to address tensions that anti-social behaviour, crime and nuisance can cause so that tenants can live in their homes without stress and fear.



## How will we measure our success?



**100%** compliance across gas, fire safety, asbestos, legionella, electrical and lifts.



**100%** sprinkler installation project for high-risk buildings completed.



**100%** of properties have carbon monoxide detectors fitted.



**100%** in date Building Safety Cases and Building Assurance Certificate.



**90%** of tenants are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.



**90%** of tenants are satisfied with our actions to keep communal areas clean and well maintained.





## Improving opportunities for employment and training

*We will* ✓

Increase the number of apprenticeships to represent 10% of our workforce by 2030.

Maximise social value through our procurements ensuring our suppliers and contractors provide opportunities for the residents of our town.

Deliver to the council's relaunched Employer Promise.

Work with the council to ensure that our tenants increase their confidence in accessing online services, skills and finding work.

Achieve Programme supporting tenants to be ready for training and/or employment.



### How will we measure our success?



Year on year increase in apprentice placements within BH and our supply chain.



**10%** of BH workforce being apprentices by 2030.



**100%** of our apprentices achieving a relevant qualification.



All tenants using the internet by 2030.



## Technology and innovation

Developing the best use of technology for the business, our tenants, and communities.

### We will ✓

Work with the council to ensure every neighbourhood has affordable digital connections.

Develop and implement IoT (Internet of Things) and other technology to improve the quality of our homes and deliver efficiencies.

Increase the use of automated processes to allow staff to focus on our customers.

Increase our use of technology building on the NEC housing system to enable easy access by customers and promote digital by choice.

Have digital noticeboards in our Independent Living Schemes and high-rise flats.

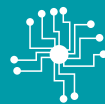
Explore and exploit the latest developments in technology to be at the forefront of the housing sector.



## How will we measure our success?



**90%** of customer contacts will be online by 2031.



**50%** of our tenants' homes will benefit from IoT (Internet of Things) technology by 2031.



**80%** of processes will have been reviewed streamlined and where possible automated by 2031.



**10%** increase in productivity through improved scheduling of work by 2025.



All tenants have access to affordable internet connections.



## Growth of homes and services

Working with BMBC we will establish a future of council housing strategy that develops new homes, services, and products, benefitting the neighbourhoods in which we work. Without growth we cannot sustain services for our customers and undertake broader work.

### New homes

#### We will ✓

Have a stable stock due to council build and acquisitions programme.

Develop further homes and services needed in the borough for example, provision for older people.

### New services

#### We will ✓

Reduce our sub-contractor usage and reduce the number of visits to customers' homes when major repairs are completed.

Seek to secure contracts to manage other non-HRA buildings in the borough.

Offer a trusted adaptations and repairs service to private owners.

Work with providers to review the possible rationalisation of social housing landlords in Barnsley and any opportunities this may bring.



How will we measure our success?



90% of non-specialist work will be delivered in house.



Turnover increased by 20% for Construction Services.





## Zero carbon

Meeting the targets locally and nationally by changing the way we work and investing in homes.

**We will ✓**

Construction Services will operate exclusively on a zero emissions fleet by 2030.

Increase staff expertise to deliver zero carbon measures throughout the borough.

Work closely with the council to maximise the success of the decarbonisation and future zero carbon initiatives.

Align with Barnsley 2019-2033 Transport Strategy and the targets within this.

Introduce an incentive scheme for staff to convert home heating to green alternatives and support to convert to electric vehicles.

Procure green energy for our operations.

Fit solar panels to our properties.

Have a modern and effective energy performance certificate process in place.

Introduce new heating systems with green alternatives for our customers.



### How will we measure our success?



Mileage claims reduced by **50%**.



Fleet **100%** zero emission.



**100%** success rate in obtaining Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding up to 2030.



**100%** EPC 'C' for all properties.



HRA business plan **100%** funded with additional income for zero carbon work.



**25%** tenant heating replaced with green alternatives – air/ground sourced or hydrogen.

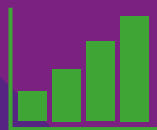


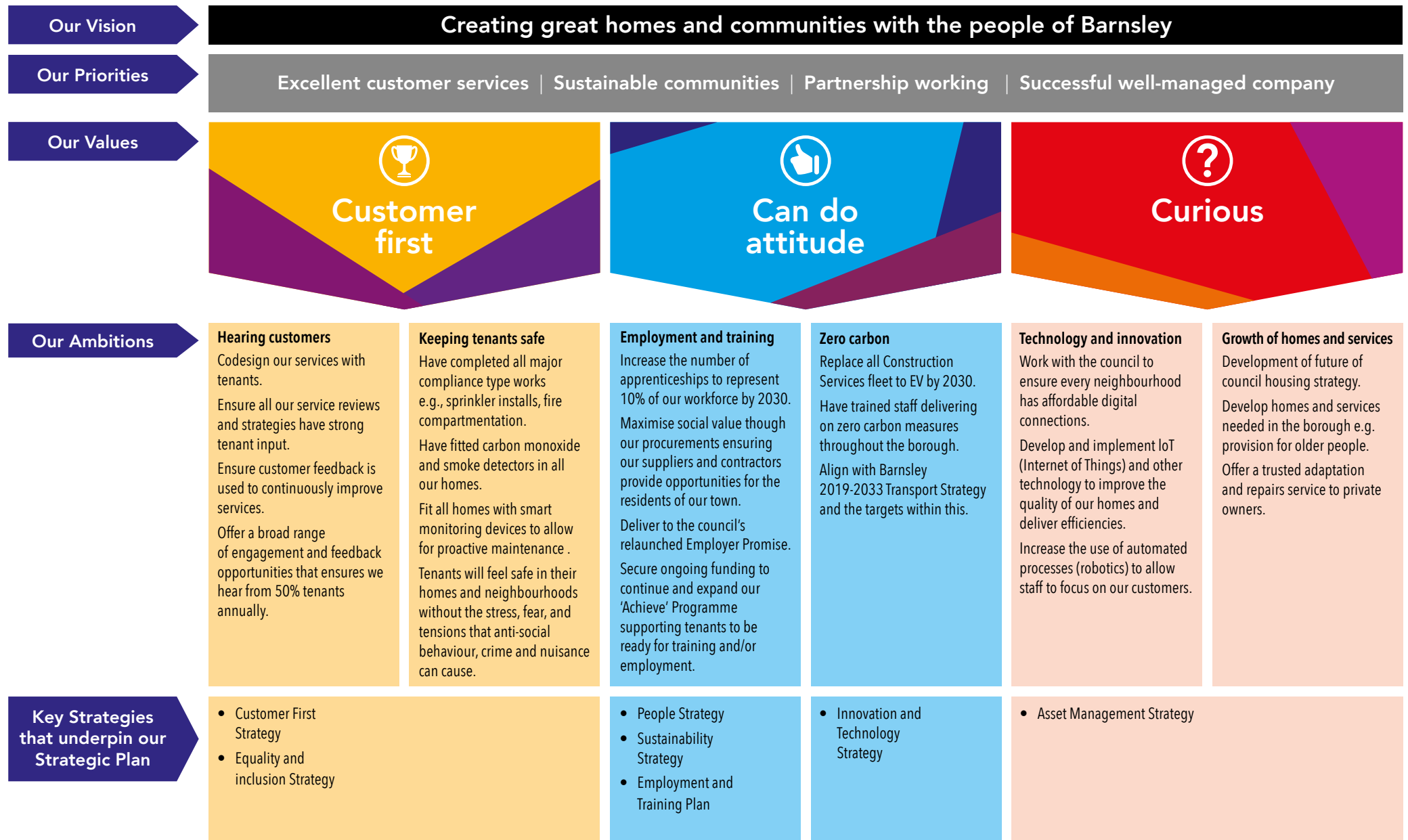
# How we will measure success

- Quarterly reviews at management team and Board - considering key performance indicators and success measures.
- Our Strategic Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by our Board and the council.
- Performance reported to Barnsley Council and to our customers through our website, easy to read at a glance for tenants and meetings twice each year with involved tenants to discuss our performance and performance measures through the Annual Report and our Tenant Voice Panel.

**Berneslai Homes is committed to the delivery of our 10 year ambitions.**

As a hearing organisation, we welcome feedback on our plan. Please share any comments or questions with us about our Strategic Plan by emailing [governance@berneslaihomes.co.uk](mailto:governance@berneslaihomes.co.uk).









[www.berneslaihomes.co.uk](http://www.berneslaihomes.co.uk)

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