



Charitable subsidiary of  
West of Scotland Housing Association

# Willowacre Trust

## Business Plan Summary 2024-2026



# Welcome

Willowacre Trust is the charitable subsidiary of West of Scotland Housing Association (WSHA), providing core services to help WSHA tenants keep their homes and improve their wellbeing. Services include tenancy sustainment, starter packs, a handyman service, food parcels, Access to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, money and energy advice and assistance to get digital. Willowacre Trust also operates the Barrowfield Community Hub and gives support to older tenants in WSHA's sheltered homes.

The Business Plan of Willowacre Trust is the key strategic document which communicates our vision and objectives to all our stakeholders, and how we will achieve those objectives. You can find the full Business Plan including Action Plan on our website at [www.willowacretrust.co.uk](http://www.willowacretrust.co.uk).



# Welcome from Willowacre Trust chairperson, Elaine Davidson



**This business plan describes the aims and ambitions for Willowacre Trust over the next two years.**

The general theme of our plan is supporting and empowering our communities. I hope you will find the plan helpful in understanding what our Key Business Objectives and our priorities are for the years ahead.

We consulted with our stakeholders in advance of setting these Objectives to ensure that they reflected the wishes of our communities and staff. We will continue to engage with all our stakeholders in the implementation of our plans.

There remain significant challenges for Willowacre Trust in the coming years, not least the continuing cost of living pressures for those living in our communities and we will be focused on how we can support and empower our more vulnerable tenants with the challenges they face in their daily life, particularly around poverty.

At the time of writing our parent, West of Scotland Housing Association (WSHA), is continuing to do what it can to support our communities with the cost of living and helping to meet the Scottish Government's new Net Zero Standard for Social Housing, which will make it easier for households to manage their energy costs. WSHA have also built their first Mid-Market Rent homes, providing an affordable housing solution to those who have been unable to access social housing and cannot afford to privately rent or buy their home.

As always, as a small charity, we are very dependent on working in partnership with others and continue to rely heavily on external funding to support the work of Willowacre Trust. It's our aim to continue building on existing relationships, as well as exploring additional partnership opportunities for the benefit of the communities we support.

The last few years have been extremely challenging for our customers and for our staff, but Willowacre Trust remains resilient. Our Vision, Values, Mission Statement, Strategic Aims and Key Business Objectives (inspired by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals) contained in this Plan will ensure we continue to thrive and empower the communities we serve.

# 2. Our Vision | Mission | Values | Strategic Aims

## Our Vision

To develop and support strong, vibrant communities and individuals in the areas in which West of Scotland Housing Association operates.

## Our Mission

Empowering people to live better lives in West of Scotland Housing Association communities.

## Our Values

The following words represent our key values. A framework has been developed to explain how we achieve these values through our actions:

**Respect Integrity Inclusive Improvement Support**



## Our Strategic Aims

<b>Sustainable Communities</b>	champion and support safe, resilient communities
<b>Reduced inequalities</b>	empower and promote the social and economic inclusion of our communities
<b>Good health and wellbeing</b>	promote and support healthy lives and well-being for all ages within our communities.
<b>Partnerships</b>	empower and strengthen partnerships with communities
<b>Be well-managed and financially strong</b>	sustain the financial viability of Willowacre Trust to enable continuity of services and support to our communities in the long term.

### 3. How we involve our communities and stakeholders

We have important relationships with many stakeholders including our tenants, our other service users, volunteers, community members, community organisations, funders, partners, regulators, local authorities and the Scottish Government.

#### Our tenants and communities

Our tenants and communities are involved every step of the way in Willowacre Trust’s service development, helping us make sure our services reflect their needs and priorities.

During spring 2023, we consulted with all of our tenants, asking specifically what they needed support with most in relation to the rising costs of living.

**A summary of priorities for support (item/percentage of respondents who identified they were ‘very worried’ about the affordability of):**

<b>Energy Costs:</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>Food Costs:</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Council tax:</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Debt repayments:</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Socialising:</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Rental costs:</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Travel costs:</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Child-related costs:</b>	<b>28%</b>

We undertake annual customer satisfaction surveys to be sure that this kind of tenant and community engagement has positive outcomes. Our most recent survey (Feb/Mar 2023) showed that, of those who had used Willowacre Trust services, between 87% and 100% (dependent on the service used) were either very satisfied or satisfied.

## Our Funders

External funding is vital to ensure Willowacre Trust continues to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

Our sincere thanks go out to our partners that have committed funding to allow us to deliver much needed services, to enable capacity building in the WT team and to provide support over the next two years.

Co-production with funders is key to ensuring that our tenants and communities are receiving the best possible outcomes, and that our funding partners are able to see the tangible, positive impacts that their funding has delivered.

### Our main funders include:

- Glasgow City Council Communities Fund
- Glasgow City Council - Community Planning
- Clyde Gateway
- Santander
- Hubbub Foundation UK
- SFHA
- Advice UK
- GCVS
- Energy Action Scotland



## 4. Key Business Objectives

1

Deliver a wide range of services to mitigate the impact of increased living costs for WSHA tenants.

2

Maintain, as a minimum, current funding sources.

3

Explore extending our range of services and partnerships to reduce homelessness and increase successful tenancies.

4

Explore the opportunities to utilise local buildings, facilities and spaces to provide a base for activities and services across our communities.

5

Review resources within Willowacre Trust.

6

Increase Willowacre Trust's visibility to key stakeholders.

## 5. Willowacre Trust Services

Willowacre Trust's primary aim is to support and enhance, in partnership with WSHA, tenancy sustainment and capacity building. It does this in the widest sense to ensure that not only tenants are supported to live and remain in their homes, but that the communities in which they stay remain a desirable place to live and that wider support issues are understood and managed.

Willowacre Trust provides services covering the following areas:

### **Starter Packs**

Packed with essential items to help tenants make their new house a home.

### **Emergency Food Aid**

Delivered in partnership with local foodbanks and food waste reduction services.

### **Dolly Parton Imagination Library**

Supporting literacy skills by offering a free book every month to all tenants with a child under 5 years old.

### **Money Advice Service**

1-2-1 interventions, workshops and information sessions which help tenants tackle the issues associated with financial exclusion and severe hardship.

### **Energy Advice Service**

Tackling the issues associated with fuel poverty and self-disconnection including fuel debt, high tariffs and energy efficiency.

### **Tenancy Sustainment**

Tailored, individual support to reduce the risk of tenancy breakdown, including the promotion of physical, emotional, mental, financial, environmental and social wellbeing, and onward referrals to specialist agencies.

## **Community Hubs – Barrowfield Community Centre & Charing Cross Hub**

Working with local partners to provide a bustling year-round programme of groups, events and activities.

## **Student Work Placements**

Placements for young people aged 14+, supporting the development of social and employment skills.

## **Community Work Placements**

Working with WSHA to offer training and employment opportunities to tenants across our communities.

## **Community Park/Gardens**

Developed with the support of community volunteers, creating communal space that impact positively on tenants' health and wellbeing,

## **Older People's Services**

Providing a wide range of activities and services for older people residing within both sheltered and mainstream housing.

## **Digital Participation**

A range of services designed to help people of all ages become more digitally included, skilled and safety aware.

## **Handyperson Services**

Assisting tenants who struggle to complete small DIY type jobs around their house, helping them to live more comfortably.

## **Thriving Places**

Management of the Parkhead, Dalrnarnock and Camlachie Thriving Places Project, engaging local people to help them access services and activities within their communities.



For more information:



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