

# West of Scotland Housing Association Group Value For Money Strategy Progress update 2023/24



# Introduction

As a social landlord, our main aims are always to provide quality homes and excellent customer service to all our customers. Constantly working to achieve best value for money helps us to realise these aims by ensuring we make the most efficient use of our income and keep our business processes as streamlined as possible.

## What is Value for Money?

VFM is generally defined as the relationship between economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

- Economy – the price paid for what goes into providing a service. It is also about minimising the cost of resources of an activity
- Efficiency – a measure of productivity i.e. how much you get out in relation to what is put in
- Effectiveness – a measure of the impact achieved, both quantitative and qualitative or a measure of outcomes

The Scottish Housing Regulator identifies value for money as “obtaining the maximum benefit with resources available”.

The following report identifies the efficiencies WSHA have made in the last financial year (2023/24) and details the impact of these efficiencies on the organisation, our customers and our communities.

You can read the full 2023-26 Value For Money Strategy here:

([https://westscot.co.uk/upload/download\\_document/b4080534-e993-11ed-b9f9-005056a3/file.pdf](https://westscot.co.uk/upload/download_document/b4080534-e993-11ed-b9f9-005056a3/file.pdf))

# Value For Money - Progress made in 2023/24

WSHA's Value for Money Strategy contains seven major objectives. Below you can find a brief summary of our progress made against these in the year 2023/24.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Progress made</b>
Ensure customer needs and views are central to our VFM Approach	The Value for Money Strategy was launched in Summer '23 Westworld, we've included questions around this in our quarterly customer satisfaction surveys and reporting, and provide regular updates to the Tenant Advisory Group in respect of VFM.
Review and improve operational efficiency and internal processes to achieve value for money	We have implemented a new allocations system and more efficient housing options process for customers. We have set up an AI Working Group to develop projects that improve operational efficiency and are working hard to ensure that we procure goods, services and works in the most sustainable and economic way possible.
Optimise the use of assets including new build to achieve VFM for our customers and the Association	We are using Power BI to help analyse our stock data and reactive maintenance data to improve efficiency in these areas. Our stock condition survey is underway, with a target of 850 per annum (1/5 of our stock). We had completed 20% (168) to the end of May '24. A review of our Asset Management strategy was completed and approved by the Board in March 2024.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Progress made</b>
<p>Ensure that we procure goods, services and works in the most sustainable economic way possible</p>	<p>Scotland Excel carried out our Procurement Capacity Assessment in June 2024 and we scored 90%, presenting our Annual Procurement Report to the Board in April '24.</p>
<p>Maximise the value and capacity of our staff</p>	<p>We have implemented the first year of our People &amp; Culture Strategy and have developed an action plan for next year. To help increase staff efficiency we have developed some automated workflow processes and will continue to develop these using AI.</p>
<p>Deliver social and environmental value</p>	<p>Our Sustainability Strategy was approved by the Board in June 2023. This includes Sustainable Transport and Office Energy plans which are leading to a reduction in costs across the organisation. Our new build energy efficient homes include 144 Passivhaus standard homes and all other developments are built to a minimum of Silver standard. We will continue monitoring the cost/benefit of these homes to determine the most costeffective energy standards affordable for tenants.</p>
<p>Create a framework to measure, assess the impact and communicate our approach to VFM</p>	<p>We have developed a VFM Impact Assessment have been using this for key system and process changes. (You can find our recent impact assessments in Appendix 1). We have a plan to implement Power BI and develop a Data Management Strategy to improve our data and data analysis. We have a temporary Data Management intern to assist with this.</p>

# Value For Money - Impact Assessments

As mentioned above, we have developed a Value For Money impact assessment to assess the impact of any significant changes in processes or new systems that will achieve value for money and/or make efficiencies.

You can find the Impact Assessments carried out in 2023/24 in Appendix 1 at the end of this report.

## Value for Money – Focus for 2024/25

Following on from our successes and our learnings from year one, there are some key areas that we will focus on over the next year to further obtain value for money and achieve efficiencies:

- Work with WSHA Leadership to proactively identify further areas where work practices are manual and inefficient.
- Development of framework to measure the impact of the strategy – how will we measure each objective
- Improve our data, data analysis and reporting
- Finance Review looking at all current processes with a view to significantly improving efficiencies.
- Review of Community Services Team organisational structure and processes
- Assess the energy efficiency baseline of our stock
- Further development of CX CRM system
- Further development of Civica Financials to streamline financial processing
- Development of AI and Automated processes through our AI Working Group
- Implementation of IT Projects as per Digital & IT Strategy

A report on our performance against our strategic aims and action plan will be made available to all tenants and stakeholders annually and published on our website.



If you have any questions about WSHA's value for money strategy and the objectives detailed above, please contact Jennifer Cairns, Director of Corporate Services on 0141 550 5625 or at [Jennifer.cairns@westscot.co.uk](mailto:Jennifer.cairns@westscot.co.uk)

# Appendix 1:

## Value For Money – Impact Assessments

As mentioned above, we have developed a Value for Money impact assessment to assess the impact of any significant changes in processes or new systems that will achieve value for money and/or make efficiencies.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Implementation of automated housing options process	<p>The housing options process has been fully automated since the 7th December 2023. Using the automated process, customers receive an immediate response with bespoke housing options information based on their individual circumstances. Since implementation, we have received an average of 170 completed forms each week.</p> <p>Using the previous manual approach this would have taken around 23 staff hours to complete each week. The only time now required is the periodic change of automatic responses.</p> <p>It is a dramatic improvement to service delivery that also allows the Customer Service team more capacity to spend on the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Customer Satisfaction Surveys</li><li>• Collection of customer email addresses (will lead to postage savings)</li><li>• Customer App Sign Ups (will improve efficiency of comms)</li><li>• Collection of Equalities Data (will improve efficiency of comms and service delivery)</li><li>• Assisting Asset Team with Survey Calls</li></ul>



<b>Activity</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Implementation of online application form	<p>The resources allocated to application processing have significantly reduced. If all relevant details have been submitted it now requires no more than 5 minutes to process the form and send out the standard banding email or letter. We currently receive around 40 applications a week, generating time saving of 7.5 hours a week. As a result of this we have been able to reduce our Customer Service Assistant resource by one day per week, a reduction of £6.5k per annum in staff costs.</p> <p>Services delivered to applicants have improved immeasurably with the introduction of the online form.</p> <p>Applicants can complete the form in their own time with the details being automatically uploaded to CX. Generally, the application will then be assessed, processed and placed on our waiting list in less than 5 working days. Applicants also receive an email setting out their banding, the property types and areas queued for, and bedrooms required. They are also provided with information about indicative waiting times, and other opportunities for housing.</p> <p>Processing applications has reduced from around 15 minutes to around 5 minutes.</p> <p>This time is now spent in improving conversations with applicants about their housing options, and in undertaking tasks identified above.</p> <p>Before the launch of the online application form it took around 4 months for applications to be processed due to the times involved to load, and the backlog. As outlined above, applications are now processed in 5 days when all information is provided.</p>



# Value for Money – Upcoming Impact Assessments

We also have a number of activities underway where we have not yet been able to assess the outcome yet but have considered what the potential impact will be. These are detailed below:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Potential Impact</b>
Collection of tenants' email addresses – we currently have email addresses for 60% of our tenants (will assess impact in January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Will reduce costs – postage, print etc</li><li>• Will improve service delivery and communication with our tenants - quicker responses</li><li>• Will improve performance in relation to our Customer Care Charter – meeting KPIs</li><li>• Improve customer satisfaction</li></ul>
Electronic sign-up packs for new tenants (will assess impact in Apr 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Will reduce costs (print and paper costs)</li><li>• Will reduce staff time spent on task</li><li>• Will improve customer service</li></ul>
Implementation of Audit Pro to improve Development snagging processes (will assess impact in Jan 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Until now, snagging was done manually and required a member of staff to travel into the office to print off all the standard snagging templates, handwrite all snagging issues, drive back to the office to scan and email to the Contractor. Making this electronic will save on printing costs, paper and travel expenses, and staff time.</li><li>• Using the Audit Pro app allows staff to record all snagging works electronically by photograph, highlighting the area of concern and making notes. It clearly illustrates poor quality issues and avoids unnecessary followup visits.</li><li>• Once complete, staff can immediately email the report to the Contractor and file it for WSHA records. The same report can be used for backchecking rectification works. This reduces travel time and time spent scanning and printing documents.</li></ul>

Activity	Potential Impact
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use will help improve quality, which in turn will improve overall customer satisfaction levels, allowing us to reduce the number of snagging at handover below the current KPI of less than 10 minor snags per property to 5.</li></ul>
Implementation of Inventory Hive for Estate Inspections (will assess impact in September 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have 320 blocks to inspect four times a year. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the inspection and follow up takes anywhere between 1-4 hours depending on the condition of the block.</li><li>• A conservative estimate is that the Inventory Hive app will save around 1280 hours each year (i.e. 320 blocks x 4 inspections x 1 hour).</li><li>• Use of Inventory Hive will help us in meet estate inspection targets in line with Estate Management policy</li></ul>



# Contact us

Camlachie House  
40 Barrowfield Drive, Camlachie  
Glasgow, G40 3QH

t: 0141 550 5600

e: [customer.service@westscot.co.uk](mailto:customer.service@westscot.co.uk)

w: [westscot.co.uk](http://westscot.co.uk)

 WSHAScotland

 WSHAScotland

 WSHAScotland

Please let us know if you need this information in Large Print, audio or any other language



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE



West of  
Scotland  
Housing  
Association