

## ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT

The Management Committee of Reidvale Housing Association confirms that we have reviewed and assessed a comprehensive bank of evidence to support this statement covering each of the following areas –

- Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management
- Assurance & Notification
- Scottish Social Housing Charter Performance
- Tenant and service users redress
- Whistleblowing
- Equalities
- Statutory Guidance
- Organisational details and constitution.

The Association commissioned an independent Governance and Financial Compliance Review which reported in September 2019 and an independent Compliance Review in September/October 2020. These established that whilst there was partial compliance there were a number of areas of non-compliance and identified certain key areas of non-compliance –

- Business Plan
- Rent Affordability
- Risk Mitigation
- Tenant Health and Safety

These matters – along with all other areas of non-compliance - were included in our Governance Improvement Plan from 2019.

Throughout 2020 and 2021 the Association has been working through the Governance Improvement Plan to address the weaknesses identified with priority having been given to areas of material non-compliance. The progress being made with the Governance Improvement Plan has been assessed on a quarterly basis by the Management Committee and shared with the Scottish Housing Regulator regularly throughout the year. We have also worked closely with the Scottish Housing Regulator and updated them on our progress.

The progress which has been made in all areas identified for improvement has been captured in the Evidence Bank prepared to support this Annual Assurance Statement and the conclusion based on the review of the Evidence Bank is that whilst we are substantially compliant with the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Management there are still a number of areas which require further work before we are able to say we are fully compliant.

- Whilst feel we are able to give assurance that we are compliant with the majority of – All relevant requirements as set out in Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework
- The regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management
- The relevant standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Our statutory obligations in respect of tenant and resident safety, housing and homelessness and equalities and human rights.

The particular area which requires further work relates to Regulatory Standard 3 and in particular

**3.3** The RSL has a robust business planning and control framework and effective systems to monitor and accurately report delivery of its plans. Risks to the delivery of financial plans are identified and managed effectively. The RSL considers sufficiently the financial implications of risks to the delivery of plans.

**3.4** The governing body ensures financial forecasts are based on appropriate and reasonable assumptions and information, including information about what tenants can afford to pay and feedback from consultation with tenants on rent increases.

Whilst we do currently have a Business Plan covering 2019/21 to 2022/23 which was reviewed in February 2021 which takes account of the SHR Business Planning: supplementary advice for landlords in response to COVID-19 (August 2020) Reidvale are currently carrying out an Options Appraisal the outcome of which is likely to require the creation of a new business plan based on the preferred option. In addition, the Options Appraisal has highlighted some sensitivities within the current financial projections which whilst not acute do require to be addressed through a schedule of efficiencies, rent reviews and potential borrowing all of which are being considered at this time.

In assessing the evidence we have adopted an improvement focus and have identified a number of improvement actions. An updated Improvement Plan will now be prepared incorporating these areas and this will be progressed by the Association over the next 12 months. Progress against this plan will be reported to the Management Committee on a quarterly basis.

We are working towards having appropriate systems in place for the collection of equalities data and are assured that we are working towards using this data to take account of equality and human rights issues in our decisions, policy-making and day-to-day service delivery.

During this year we have continued to be impacted by the COVID 19 Pandemic and there has continued to be some consequential business, economic and social disruption. We have continued with a model of service delivery which reflects government guidance and legislation and have continued to follow national guidance and local policy requirements in respect of health and safety, physical distancing, travel, office opening, use of PPE and social gatherings. We would highlight that the Association has been unable to carry out gas safety inspections for all of its properties within the required anniversary date due to the impact of COVID-19. We are, however, satisfied that our monitoring procedures are fully compliant with all HSE guidelines.

We confirm that this Assurance Statement is being published on our website on the same date that it is being submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

As Chair, I was authorised by the Management Committee at a meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to sign and submit this Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Signed .....

29.10.2021

Date .....