

The Caledonia Housing Group – Annual Assurance Statement 2021

The governing bodies within Caledonia Group have considered compliance with regulatory and legislative requirements and have taken account of the impact that COVID-19 has had over the last year in preparing the Annual Assurance Statement for 2021. The comprehensive bank of evidence that supports this statement includes: reports, policies, performance information, financial reporting and stress testing, internal and external audit reports, which have been reviewed by the governing bodies and the Audit and Risk Management Committee throughout the year.

The governing bodies confirm that the Group and each of the individual associations (Caledonia and Cordale) are compliant with:

- All regulatory requirements as set out in Section Three of the Regulatory Framework
- The Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management
- The relevant standards and outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Statutory obligations in respect of tenant and resident safety, housing and homelessness and equalities and human rights

Impact of COVID-19

Business continuity arrangements implemented in response to COVID-19 have been reviewed regularly by the governing bodies to ensure that services to tenants and service users have been maintained in line with COVID-19 guidelines. Regular communication to tenants and services users has been provided where services have been interrupted. Government guidance has been followed to ensure the safety and welfare of tenants, staff and contractors. The governing bodies are assured that there are no material areas of non-compliance but have considered the impact on the following aspects of service delivery:

- Annual Gas Safety Checks – there were a small number of properties where the annual safety check was not able to be carried out. All gas safety checks have now been completed.
- Reactive Maintenance Services – restrictions on carrying out non-emergency repairs resulted in a backlog of repairs, which have now been completed.
- Planned Investment Programme – a revised 2 year programme of planned investment has been prepared to catch up on works not able to be carried out in the previous year. It is proving challenging to deliver the planned investment programme, with contractors highlighting interruptions to supply chains and difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff.

Equalities and Human Rights

Caledonia Group acknowledge the requirement to consider equality, diversity and human rights issues when making decisions, reviewing policies and delivering services. A revised Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter and Policy has been developed which is supported by an improvement plan to work towards meeting these responsibilities. This includes reviewing data collection systems to implement an effective approach to collect equalities information.

Compliance Status and Continuous Improvement

There are no significant areas of non-compliance identified with the Regulatory Framework, but some improvement actions have been agreed which will be implemented to strengthen governance, tenant engagement and information management.

We recognise that we are required to notify the SHR of any changes in our compliance during the course of the year and are assured that we have effective arrangements in place to do so.

This statement is provided for and on behalf of the Caledonia Housing Association Group. The statement has been considered by a Short Life Working Group and each of the governing bodies in the Group have approved the statement. I have been authorised by the respective governing bodies to sign this Annual Assurance Statement on behalf of the Group.

Signed: Date:

Alan Nairn
Chair of Caledonia Housing Association