

**successful people,**  
**successful places**

Corporate Plan 2020-24





# Distinctively whg

## Inside

- 4 Distinctively whg
- 6 Our strategy 2014-24
- 8 What success looks like to 2024
- 19 Beyond 2024

# Distinctively whg

Our mission statement is “**dedicated to the success of our people and places**”.

Fundamental to this is providing safe and secure homes that are well managed and maintained.

We are a growing social business building homes, communities and successful lives throughout the Midlands region. We remain proud of our roots in Walsall – a place that anchors our identity and work.

We pride ourselves on being a community-based organisation. We invest in homes and services to help people and neighbourhoods overcome challenges giving them opportunities to thrive.

We excel at regenerating places – working in genuine partnership with local people and leveraging in the funds that enable us to deliver where others cannot.

We are a well-run, financially-resilient organisation and are committed to our social purpose.

Proud to be more than a landlord, we build, improve and manage homes. Our talented colleagues will always go the extra mile for customers who need support. We meet a range of local housing needs in the Midlands, working with customers and partners to tackle poverty, inequality and poor health.

We are committed to playing our part in tackling the UK’s housing crisis and helping to alleviate homelessness, unemployment and the effects of climate change.

Inclusion and fairness drive the ways we think and behave, with colleagues that reflect the diversity of our customers.

We know we cannot achieve our ambitions alone, so we create partnerships and work with the best to help us deliver our ambitions. Together, we make a positive, lasting difference to the diverse range of people and communities we serve.



Scan for  
more  
information



Photo taken at the whg customer open day

## Our values

Our values were chosen by our colleagues and we live them every day by being:

**accountable**  
taking responsibility

**courageous**  
trying new things

**trustworthy**  
being honest in everything we do

**one team**  
achieving great things by working together

**excellent**  
striving to be the best

# Our strategy 2014-24

## Finish what we started

In 2014, we launched our ambitious ten-year plan – it drives everything we do.

We reviewed it in 2017 and set ourselves even more challenging success measures to achieve.

In early 2020, we looked back at the great things we have achieved over the last three years. These include:

- **Becoming a volume builder of new, mixed-tenure homes across the Midlands**
- **Being selected as a strategic partner of Homes England**
- **Supporting thousands of customers to improve their employment prospects through our employment and training programmes**

- **Contributing homes to the Housing First programme in Walsall, helping alleviate street homelessness**
- **Having a more diverse workforce to reflect the communities we serve**
- **Reducing energy use in our homes and offices**
- **Receiving recognition for our achievements by winning awards and securing external accreditations**

This is the third evolution of our Corporate Plan, which set out our ten-year vision for our business back in 2014. This update sets out how we will finish what we started in 2014.



The Paddocks, Telford



Gary Fulford, Group Chief Executive and Danielle Oum, whg Chair

## Our five strategic aims

We have updated what success looks like to us by 2024 for each of our five strategic aims so that they remain ambitious, relevant and targeted.

They remain to:

- 1 Deliver high quality homes and services for our customers**
- 2 Be an exceptional place to work that attracts, develops and retains talent**
- 3 Grow and extend our services, our reach and our range**
- 4 Promote health and prosperity where we can make a difference**
- 5 Deliver a strong business, fit for today and prepared for tomorrow**

# What success looks like to 2024



Photo taken at whg's The Workplace

## Aim 1: Deliver high quality homes and services for our customers

Everyone deserves the chance to lead a happy and fulfilled life. We are privileged to have the opportunity to provide one of the fundamentals to that – a safe and secure home that is well managed and maintained.

Through relationships based on mutual trust and respect, we will continue to provide high quality homes and services. This is underpinned by an absolute commitment to safety and the effective use of information and technology.

We will put customers at the heart of our business by quickly responding to their feedback and acting on it. We will strengthen the impact of the customer voice and provide our Board with unfiltered feedback on what customers are telling us. Customers will play an even greater role in holding us to account, while co-designing and shaping every customer facing service.

We will invest in modernising our existing homes and regenerating our neighbourhoods in Walsall.

We will keep our homes in great condition and by tackling fuel poverty we will make them warmer and cheaper to heat. By taking a strategic approach to managing our assets, we will direct this investment to the homes and neighbourhoods that need it most.

Through responsible use of information about our customers and their needs, we will target support to people who can benefit most – helping people to be resilient and confident so they can take responsibility for their homes and play a positive role in their communities.

### By March 2024:

At least **90%** of customers will recommend us to their family or friends

Provide a **great housing** and service offer that is consistent regardless of where customers live

**Reduce fuel poverty** by making sure all whg homes have a minimum energy rating of D

Avoidable contact will be less than **5%** for all customer facing processes

We will achieve **70% First Point of Contact Resolution** for enquiries received by our Customer Service Centre

The **Customer Voice** will feature at the heart of every service review

Every year we will run an **innovative campaign** to influence customer behaviour

Be recognised as **sector-leaders** on building safety

All homes will have a **property health check** every five years

## Aim 2: Be an exceptional place to work that attracts, develops and retains talent

We want the best people to work for us – talented, committed people who share our values and ambition. This means having a representative workforce at all levels of the business, who want to make a real difference to customers and the communities we serve.

We will offer excellent leadership, not only from managers but by everyone taking responsibility for their part in our business success. We will celebrate great work while holding colleagues to account for their personal performance.

In return, we will be a great employer that recognises and rewards excellence, where colleagues benefit from working in a diverse, vibrant and forward-thinking environment. We will continue to develop a modern and competitive employment offer with flexible working practices backed

by a commitment to growing talent from within and creating more employment and training opportunities for our customers.

As a people-focused organisation with a strong social purpose, we will encourage every colleague to be fully engaged with the business. We will do everything we can to help colleagues stay safe and we will regularly review the resources and structures needed to deliver our plans.

We will empower all colleagues to reach their full potential, by promoting healthy lifestyles and a positive work/life balance. We will continue to invest in apprenticeships alongside learning and development for all colleagues to future-proof people's skills and prospects.



*Temi Olasunkanmi, whg colleague*

*Stacey Foster and Lisa Lawrence, whg colleagues*

### By March 2024:

At least **90%** of colleagues will recommend whg as a great place to work

Create an employer brand that has inclusion at its heart and promotes our flexible approach and working environment

At least **25 trainees**, apprentice and graduate posts will work in our business each year

Boost all colleagues' physical and mental wellbeing through the "**Be A Better You**" programme of health and wellbeing initiatives

Deliver a range of programmes to promote **positive behaviour** and respect

**Strengthen our culture** of health and safety through improved systems, training and external accreditation

Half of our **managers will be homegrown** and promoted from within our business

### Aim 3: Grow and extend our services, our reach and our range

As a strategic partner of Homes England, we will build exceptionally high quality homes of different tenures across the Midlands that customers feel really proud of and in the places they want to live.

We will use advanced methods of construction where appropriate to increase the quality and speed of building new homes. We will try new ways of building homes.

We will develop a range of housing products to meet local needs, including homes for shared ownership. Our homes for outright sale will be developed by Anthem Homes to help customers get a foot on the property ladder and we will do this to generate profit for purpose – we will re-invest this in developing services and building more homes for rent.

We will tailor our services to meet customer needs as well as helping them to sustain their homes, gain skills and find employment. We recognise this is ambitious but place making is in our DNA. We will build local partnerships wherever we operate to ensure we deliver on our commitment to be a community anchor organisation that provides much more than landlord services. We can shape places, but our customers make places.

We believe that growing our business and expanding our services is the right thing to do. We will therefore proactively seek opportunities to collaborate with other suitably sized and like-minded Registered Providers. We will co-create a strong new business that is focused on delivering high quality homes and services to even more customers in more places.



Sarbjit Singh, whg colleague



The Old School House, Tetterhall Wood

#### By March 2024:

Develop **500 new homes** each year across the Midlands, with at least 50 of these built using advanced methods of construction

Establish the brand of Anthem Homes as a trusted, high quality house builder of 200 homes for outright sale

Become a **“go to”** strategic partner of Homes England and a first choice development partner for other Registered Providers

Have a **range of solutions** for our portfolio of small sites

Become a leading place shaper, known for a **focus on safety, sustainability, innovation, mixed tenure and quality homes** which promote improved health outcomes

Develop **strong partnerships** with key regional influencers

Identify and plan for investment and renewal of existing homes and communities

Broaden our social impact through the community investment work we carry out, securing at least **£5million** of external funding

Increase our capacity to deliver more homes and services in collaboration with other housing providers

## Aim 4: Promote health and prosperity where we can make a difference

We are proud to be more than a landlord and to make a positive impact on people's lives. As an active member of the PlaceShapers alliance of community-based housing associations, we will provide great housing, promote good health and help customers and communities prosper.

We will play an influential role in building healthier, more resilient and connected communities with a range of key partners – making a greater impact by working together.

Our work contributes to alleviating homelessness in the communities we serve. We have signed-up to the West Midlands Voluntary Commitment to Collaborate to Prevent and Relieve Homelessness and house vulnerable street homeless people through the Walsall Housing First programme.

We will support older customers to live safely and independently, with our wellbeing schemes acting as local hubs for people to meet and avoid loneliness and isolation. We will also provide vulnerable young people with housing and support to ensure they sustain their tenancies and make a successful transition into adulthood.

To help customers be resilient in these challenging times, we will provide training to increase their skills and work opportunities, support customers to manage their money through our Money Advice Team and improve digital and financial inclusion through the award-winning Click Start programme.

We are a community anchor organisation - rooted in the communities we serve and playing a leading role in addressing the challenges people face through our significant long term investment in homes and services. This ethos will not change as we grow.



Emily King, whg colleague with a local family



whg walking football session

### By March 2024:

Support **10,000 people** to increase their confidence, skills, and health and wellbeing by moving them into new opportunities, including training, education, volunteering or work

Generate social value each year equivalent to a third of our annual turnover

Develop a place-based approach with strong collaborative partnerships to tackle issues at a neighbourhood level and create economic opportunities

Improve the education and employment prospects of at least **1,500 customers** each year, with over 20% of those getting into work

Our ambition is not to evict anyone into homelessness

**Transform** the lives of at least 100 homeless people by providing them with a home through the Walsall Housing First programme and similar initiatives

Work with partners to reduce the impact and unfairness of poverty

**Train at least 2,000** people through our Click Start Programme

Launch a **Housing Academy** to create employment and training opportunities for our customers with us or through our supply chain

Contribute strategically and operationally to **"Walsall Together"**, specifically the Resilient Communities priority, ensuring our service is aligned and supports this work

Develop an innovative **Social Prescribing programme** to improve people's health and wellbeing and support the Resilient Communities priority

## Aim 5: Deliver a strong business, fit for today and prepared for tomorrow

We will remain financially strong and well-led by Board and Committee Members who are representative of the diverse communities we serve.

To keep us prepared for the future, we will continuously monitor our operating environment to mitigate risks and be able to quickly respond to opportunities and challenges.

We will keep exploring ways to drive down costs and achieve greater value for money, using stronger insight and data to guide investment decisions. Through our culture of managing performance and pursuing excellence, we will strengthen our approach to change management and deliver key projects on time, on budget and with all objectives met.

Our investment in digital technology and innovation will improve the customer experience through the "mywhg" self-service portal and increase the efficiency of colleagues using agile working techniques.

We will be recognised amongst the 'best in sector' at reducing our environmental impact and this will drive our thinking in everything we do. In addition to improving the environmental sustainability of our existing homes, we will work with colleagues and customers to reduce their impact on the environment.

By telling the whg story and showing the difference we make, we will raise our profile with key influencers and attract the best partners to work with us.



Sam Groves, whg customer



Beth Dawson, whg customer

### By March 2024:

Our normal operating margin will **exceed 30%**

Working towards achieving upper quartile performance for headline social housing cost per home

Deliver **70%** of routine customer contact through self-service channels

Develop **mywhg** into an **award winning** digital self-service system available to all customers

Technology will be used across the business to drive down cost, eliminate waste and improve the customer experience

Develop a road map to **achieve Carbon Neutral** status

Be a strong and influential voice across the Midlands by proactively talking about the topics that matter most to us



# Beyond 2024

We always have an eye to the future and how whg will need to adapt to meet changing customer expectations and needs. But what might be our challenges beyond 2024?

There will continue to be pressure on welfare spending so our approach to tackling poverty among our customers will remain an important commitment – it means our social purpose remains relevant.

Climate change will inevitably become an even more pressing issue as the world heats up so the commitment to significantly reduce our impact is vital as homes have a major impact on the environment - this is particularly pertinent to our older homes.

We can be certain that the staggering rate of change in technology will continue - what we think is new and cutting edge quickly becomes obsolete. The key question is not what will happen but how we will respond to it? whg will continue to be an early adopter where it adds value and improves the homes and services we provide to our customers.

Disruptors will become increasingly influential in bringing about change in the housing sector. When that transformational moment comes in the housing sector, whg will be part of it.

This is where the excitement and ambition takes over and will be the hook that attracts and retains talented colleagues. In developing this plan, we asked whg colleagues and customers for their thoughts about the future and how we can make the most of new opportunities.

The challenge for our colleagues is to make the most of each opportunity as it arises and take whg forward into the future by remaining relevant to our customers and meeting their changing needs. It is the best way for whg to continue to play a significant part in the future success of our people and the places we serve.

We remain ambitious and are already thinking about our next Corporate Plan...

Photo taken at the whg customer open day



100 Hatherton Street

Walsall

WS1 1AB

[whg.uk.com](http://whg.uk.com)

