



Together we enrich lives

Annual Report
2020/2021

choice-housing.org



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THE BELAMINE
FAMILY
Killynure Green
Carryduff

FOREWORD

from Chair and Group Chief Executive

This year marks the end of a successful strategic planning period and the commitment to new goals and priorities for the next 3 years. The Choice Group Mission to 2024 is 'to enrich lives through great homes, services and communities' and our ambition ultimately is 'to make a positive and sustainable difference' for our people, our tenants and society. The year to 31st March 2021 bears testimony to the range of benefits that the Choice Group delivers for our stakeholders.

Unfortunately, no-one could have foreseen the impact of a global pandemic over the last year and the fundamental challenges presented to public health and well-being. We have worked extremely hard across the Group to mitigate the risks posed by Covid-19 and we are immensely proud of the extent to which colleagues have maintained essential service delivery. You will hopefully get a real sense from this Annual Report of how 'Team Choice' has reflected our core values in the most difficult of times. Our thoughts are with those staff members, tenants and their families who have experienced illness and suffered the loss of a loved one through the pandemic and we will continue to do all that we can to support and assist you going forward.

Whilst Covid-19 has understandably dominated the reporting year, there are a range of other issues facing the social housing sector where we have been working hard to advocate on behalf of communities. The ongoing uncertainty around welfare mitigations, future public sector spending on new and supported housing, access to land for development and associated delays in planning, and the impact of climate change and how we as an organisation are contributing to a low carbon future are all issues that will persist when the pandemic has passed. Choice Group will continue to make the case for decent and affordable social housing and to promote the benefits of mixed tenure and shared housing projects.

Our performance in 2020/21 was good, despite the challenges presented. Our service continuity plans ensured that colleagues safely and effectively

reverted to homeworking as the norm without too much disruption to 'business as usual'. From a health and safety perspective, we maintained very high compliance metrics throughout the period, although access for servicing visits was not always straightforward. Whilst new build starts and completions fell behind target given the disruption to construction activities, with the help of DfC, NIHE and partners, we still delivered much needed new homes across the country, and the pipeline for future delivery looks strong. By contrast, we exceeded our planned spend on property maintenance with colleagues working hard to meet tenant expectations.

Whilst voids and arrears ended the year higher than originally budgeted, both could have been much, much worse but for the skills, expertise, and determination of our staff. We continue to invest significantly in the digital transformation of our business to reflect the demand from our customers for diverse communication channels and 'joined up' service delivery. From a value for money perspective, there is more to do to ensure that our rents remain affordable, but we have made further progress in simplifying the 'customer journey'. Ultimately, the relatively low level of complaints received and high tenant satisfaction levels, virtually unchanged from last year, suggest that our customers and partners see the benefits from our improvement initiatives.

As an environmentally responsible organisation, Choice is committed to playing our part in securing a low-carbon future through delivering sustainable homes across Northern Ireland. This commitment combines the need to deliver on tangible environmental targets year-on-year and delivering actual savings for tenants through best practice energy procurement and management. The handover of phase 2 of our flagship ultra-energy efficient housing scheme at Killynure Green was a particular highlight. With the support of government partners, we can continue to develop sustainable new homes and convert existing homes to reduce carbon consumption.



Michael McDonnell, Group Chief Executive and Ciaran McAreavey, Chairperson

More specifically, we delivered substantial energy savings for our tenants through a range of initiatives in the last year. Fuel poverty is a real and destructive issue in far too many households and the pandemic has only served to heighten the inequalities. To date, Choice has installed 380 Solar PV systems across our housing stock. In the last 12 months, these systems generated 456,000kWh of renewable electricity, equivalent to 147 'homes-worth' of annual electricity consumption. Overall, our solar PV systems account for an annual Carbon offset of 115,824 kgCO₂e. We need to do far, far more but sustainability is a clear priority in our Strategy to 2024.

The wider Choice Group has also seen further successful growth in 2020/21. Oaklee's participation in the Social Housing Public Private Partnership (PPP) Programme resulted in more than 500 homes in the Greater Dublin area, coming under management. Choice Services is a fundamental part of that project and has delivered high levels of customer satisfaction and better value for money across their response and planned maintenance contracts. Maple & May now has a significant private rented portfolio which provides a solid base to support mixed tenure developments and more integrated communities. We were delighted that the Maple & May initiative in conjunction with Belfast Health & Social Care Trust played a small part in freeing up bed spaces for Covid-19 patients. Well done to everyone involved in this and the other projects gaining recognition as 'exemplars' from the Chartered Institute of Housing.

In the last year, we also successfully completed the transfer of properties previously held by Victoria Housing Estates. We are grateful to government partners for their support and Choice asset colleagues will now embark on a 3-year programme of works to substantially improve these homes. We continue to invest in our community development resources including the Financial Inclusion Team and employability projects as we expand our previous tenant engagement aspirations into a broader vision of community empowerment. We have also invested significantly in community facilities and resources beyond the 'bricks and mortar'. This is essential if we are to create thriving, vibrant and successful neighbourhoods.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Group Board and Senior Management Team, we pay tribute to our colleagues, tenants and partners who have all worked tirelessly to make the lives of so many people better in 2020/21. Thank you for all your great work in such a difficult year and we look forward to brighter days ahead.

CIARAN MCAREAVEY,
Chairperson

MICHAEL MCDONNELL,
Group Chief Executive

FOREWORD

from Chair of Tenants' Forum



There has never been a more critical time to support the most vulnerable in our society and with the growing demand for affordable quality housing across Northern Ireland, I am proud to be working with an organisation that is putting their current and future tenants at the heart of what they do.

It has been a challenging year for the whole sector, and society as a whole and we've seen people's lives and livelihoods affected by the pandemic. Tenants across our schemes have also been impacted and as a forum we have worked hard to support them in adapting to what is the new normal.

Whilst we have been limited in our face-to-face engagement in the last twelve months, which has formed such a vital part of what the Tenants' Forum does, we too have adapted, providing alternative support mechanisms to ensure tenants have their voices heard.

Throughout the pandemic, Choice has continued to invest in their social housing provision, whether it's through the development of new schemes or upgrade and refurbishment of current developments. Recently we have seen the launch of the new Dungoyne Play Park in Ballybeen which formed part of a social housing scheme worth £1.8m. This project demonstrates the commitment of Choice to engage with tenants and the wider community, ensuring they understand the needs of specific communities.

Choice has continued to invest in new digital solutions, facilitating tenant engagement as well as providing ongoing support to build tenants' confidence. There has been some progress in areas of scheme life opening again, for example gardening and window cleaning has resumed alongside other outdoor activities, all of which come with their own risk assessment. While this isn't ideal it is helping tenants' transition back into normal life and we hope over the coming months this continues.

Providing support for those tenants shielding, many of them since March 2020 has been a challenge. Choice colleagues continue to support such tenants, many of whom are dealing with anxiety and fear around how they transition back into normal life.

Whilst it is difficult to see many positives from the pandemic, one which has been noticeable is the real community spirit that has come out across Northern Ireland. People who in the past may not have got involved in volunteering have lent a hand. This has been a major comfort to many tenants, particularly those shielding or without a family / support network. Knowing that there are people outside thinking about them has made a huge difference.

It is important to acknowledge the work of Choice staff, they have done everything they can in difficult circumstances to keep tenants safe and engaged. There is no doubt that this is one of the most challenging situations we are ever likely to face. Ongoing engagement between the regional tenants' forums and senior management of Choice has led to a more coordinated approach which has allowed tenants to share their concerns, ideas, and solutions.

RITA MURRAY,
Chair of the Tenants' Forum

How we're performing

Repairs

96.31%
Target
90%

% Repairs
Completed
within target

42,103

Number of
Works
Orders (NI)

14,232

Number of works
Orders Choice
Services (NI)

New Builds

225

Target
500

Starts (NI)

208

Target
342

Completions (NI)

77

Target
155

Starts (NI)
Maple and May

80

Target
50

Completions (NI)
Maple and May

132

Target
178

Starts (ROI)
Oaklee Housing

60

Target
161

Completions (ROI)
Oaklee Housing

Compliance

100%

Target
100%

Gas Certificates
in Period (NI)

100%

Target
100%

Fire Risk
Assessments
(NI)

100%

Target
100%

Legionella Risk
Assessments (NI)

100%

Target
100%

Asbestos Risk
Assessments (NI)

Customer Enquiries

72.8%

Target
80%

Calls Resolved
on First Contact
(NI)

84.6%

Target
85%

Call Satisfaction
Rating (NI)

97.4%

Target
95%

Call Advisor
Call Quality (NI)

87%

Target
88%

Choice Services Centre
Overall Satisfaction (NI)

Business Awards

CIH NI Awards

- **Winner:** Best Housing Story – Step Down Care at the Bank
- **Winner:** Excellence in Championing Equality and Diversity – Choice Equality & Diversity Programme
- **Winner:** Inspirational Young Housing Professional – Catriona McCann
- **Finalist:** Housing Team of the Year – Financial Inclusion Team
- **Finalist:** Excellence in Housing Innovation – Pilot Project to End Destitution and Homelessness
- **Finalist:** Excellence in Health and Wellbeing – Choice Employee Health and Wellbeing Programme
- **Finalist:** Working in Partnership – VHE and Choice investment project



01/GREAT HOMES

Choice is one of the largest independent housing associations in Northern Ireland. Our focus is on delivering high quality homes, better services, and stronger inclusive communities. Our core values commit us to shaping new standards of excellence that redefine our sector to provide more great housing and support at reasonable cost.

During the reporting year, despite frequent lockdowns and pressures associated with the Covid-19 Pandemic, Choice completed 208 new general needs homes.

Choice has continued to make a valuable, sustainable contribution to addressing urgent housing need in all areas of Northern Ireland, with the completion of General Need's Schemes on the Ormeau Road in Belfast, Devenish Drive in Monkstown and Killynure (Phase 2), Carryduff.

Killynure (Phase 2) in Carryduff, is a "flagship" energy efficient scheme completed in March 2021 providing 24 additional units bringing the total project to 63 homes, housing 251 people. Phase 1 of Killynure Green was the first development in Northern Ireland to achieve the highest grading possible for sustainable homes, meeting targets for CO2 emissions, water usage, ecology, and waste.

The Brickworks on the Ormeau Road in Belfast was completed in February 2021 delivering 42 new social housing units on the former H&J

Martin builders' yard on the Ormeau Road. The scheme provides 7 new townhouses, 32 new general needs apartments and 3 new wheelchair-accessible apartments arranged around a central courtyard with dedicated parking.

The Devenish Drive Development in Monkstown provided 20 much needed new homes, catering for families, mature residents, and those with complex needs. This diverse scheme is a successful mix of apartments and houses.

In August 2020, construction commenced on a new build scheme on the Moira Road in Lisburn consisting of 17 units. By October 2020, Choice was starting the second phase of the Cairn Martin Belfast Project which was an NIHE Transfer Site, providing 26 units and an apartment project on the bank of the Connswater river at C.S. Lewis Square which comprises a further 29 units.

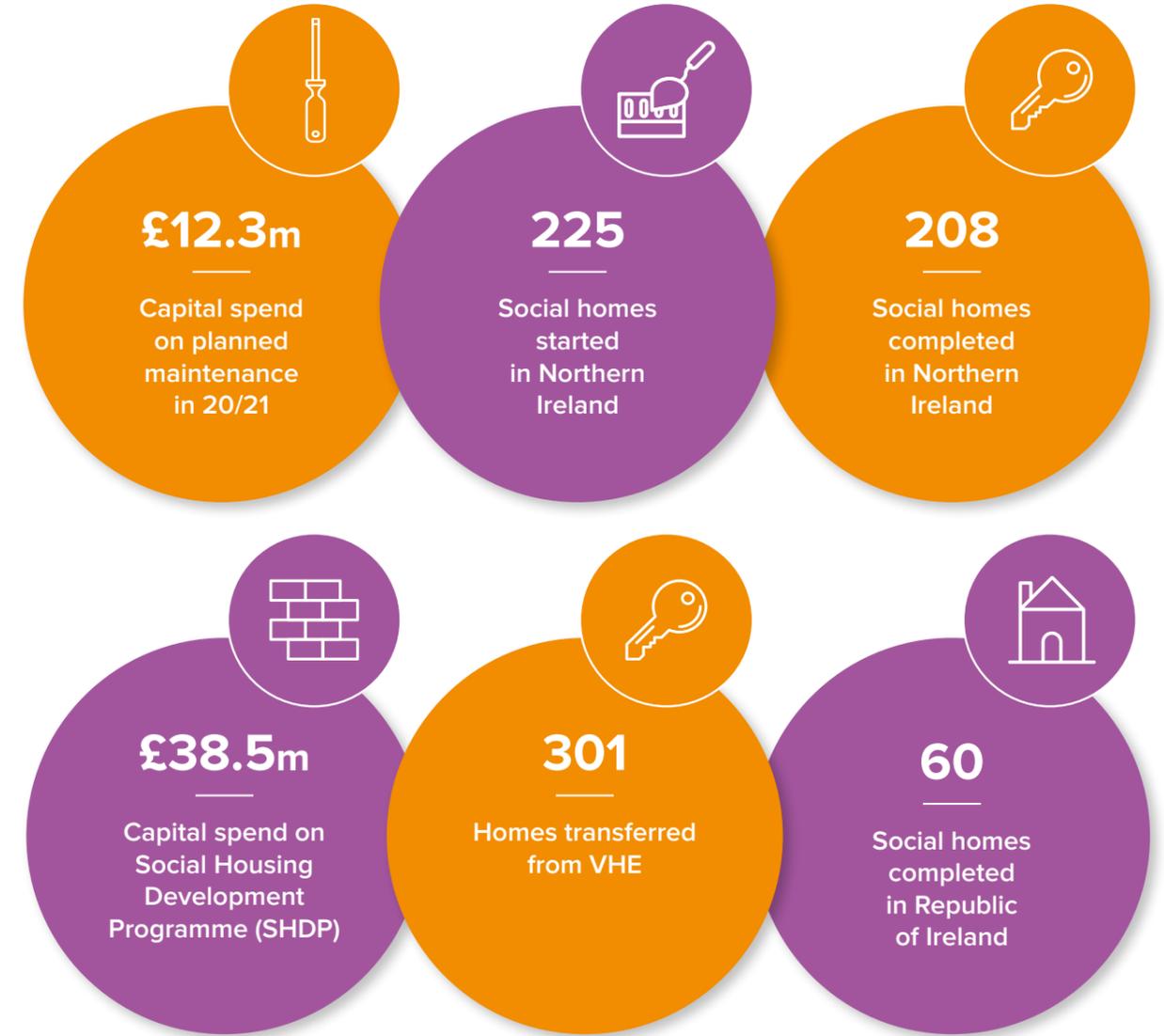
In February 2021 Choice started the Lisburn Road/ Ashley Avenue Project on the corner of Tate's Avenue providing a further 23 apartment units.

The association continues to provide services and housing solutions to meet the demand for complex needs by developing 27 units for wheelchair clients across Northern Ireland.



DEVONISH DRIVE
Monkstown

In 2020/2021 Choice had 225 social homes started and 208 social homes completed in Northern Ireland.



Victoria Housing Estates (VHE) Transfer

In November 2020, Choice and Victoria Housing Estates Limited (VHE) finalised the £20m stock transfer deal which saw a total of 301 previously managed VHE properties move to Choice.

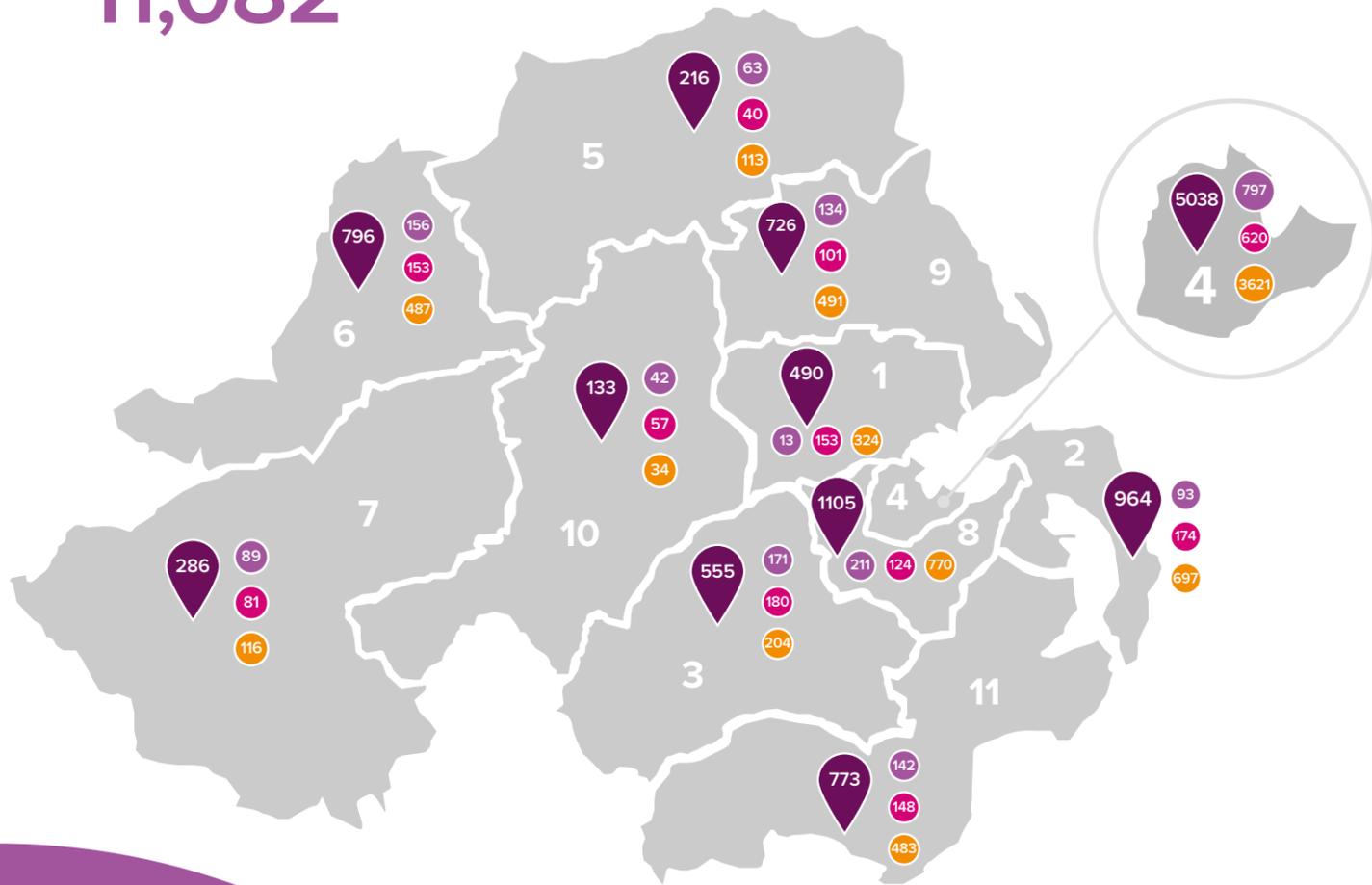
As part of the transfer agreement, the properties which moved to Choice ownership will undertake a £25m programme of renovation and refurbishment, ensuring they not only meet the Decent Homes Standard, but they align with the quality services currently provided to more than 11,000 Choice tenants across Northern Ireland. It is expected that this programme of maintenance will be completed over the next three years.

The investment programme, which was approved at the start of 2020 included a period of consultation between the two housing providers and all VHE tenants. As part of this process, tenants received independent advice and guidance informing them of all available options, which included the opportunity to apply to purchase their own home – with more than 130 tenants taking up this option.

Those properties that have successfully transferred to Choice include Riverdale (West Belfast), Worcester Avenue (Bangor), Cherryhill, Hollywood Road and Clonaver (East Belfast) and Harmin in Glengormley.

Our Homes

TOTAL
11,082



Local Councils

- 1 Antrim and Newtownabbey
- 2 Ards and North Down
- 3 Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon
- 4 Belfast City Council
- 5 Causeway Coast and Glens
- 6 Derry and Strabane
- 7 Fermanagh and Omagh
- 8 Lisburn and Castlereagh
- 9 Mid and East Antrim
- 10 Mid Ulster
- 11 Newry, Mourne and Down

HOUSING TYPES



KILLYNURE GREEN
Carryduff

Maple and May

Maple and May has continued to grow, creating quality, affordable homes for the private rental sector despite operating against a challenging backdrop. Over the last 12 months the portfolio has increased to almost 300 units.

Key highlights of the reporting period include the development of eight turn-key apartments at Kingsway, Dunmurry and a full refurbishment to deliver four apartments on Tildarg Street, East Belfast.

Maple and May also delivered 14 quality three-bedroom family homes, a mix of semi-detached and townhouses, at Ballyvarnet Lane, Bangor and

acquired 26 properties in Carrickfergus and 13 properties in Dundonald all for private rent.

Despite the initial set back of our contractor entering administration, Maple and May's first Affordable Housing project at Park Avenue in East Belfast is now complete with six newly constructed apartments fully let to private tenants.

As we look ahead, the Maple and May trajectory for 2021/2022 is an exciting one, with emphasis placed on expanding our private rented portfolio further and delivering on mixed tenure schemes.

“The pandemic has changed so many elements of society and the housing market is no different. With many companies taking on a hybrid model of working, the demand for affordable properties that suit this change in circumstances is growing rapidly. As a responsible landlord, we will continue to work with our partners to identify these opportunities to meet this growing demand throughout Northern Ireland.”

Group Director of Growth, Jon Anderson

**+Maple
May**



KINGSWAY
Dunmurry

Oaklee Housing

Despite the disruption caused by Covid-19, it has been a busy year for Oaklee Housing. Adapting to the restrictions introduced by the Irish Government, we moved quickly to ensure both staff and tenants remained safe and informed throughout.

The team ensured that any urgent or emergency response repair requests, or health and safety maintenance works were effectively and promptly carried out. Improvement plans were implemented at three schemes as well as comprehensive fire upgrades to two others, both streams of work were carried out after a consultation with residents.

In early 2020 Oaklee launched its three-year-plan committing to deliver an additional 480 homes. Oaklee aimed to deliver 160 new homes during each year of the plan, bringing a further 534 homes under Oaklee's management through participation in the Social Housing Public Private Partnership (PPP) Programme.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, delivery of the new homes was delayed as construction sites had to be closed. Despite this setback, we still managed to deliver 195 new homes and initiate 60 new

starts on site. By the end of March 2021 five of the six PPP sites were operational with 380 homes tenanted. This brings the total number of homes in Oaklee management, by March 21 to 1,868.

Engaging with tenants throughout a challenging year has been at the core of our work and we introduced remote communications during lockdown via Zoom and SMS texts. After an initial trial across three PPP schemes, clients adapted quickly and positively. As a result, we have introduced remote tenant engagement into the day-to-day management practices across all schemes with further enhancements planned.

oaklee
housing



SHARON
COSGROVE
CEO Oaklee
Housing

“This has been a tremendously difficult year, thanks to the hard work and dedication of the Oaklee team we have adapted and managed extremely well.

It is unusual to hear of a positive Covid impact, but because of the pandemic and emergency efforts from the various housing bodies, local authorities and other partners, the number of homeless people on our streets has reduced.”

CEO of Oaklee Housing, Sharon Cosgrove

CASE STUDY - Financial Inclusion

The changes to the welfare system in Northern Ireland have created uncertainty across the social housing sector, with many tenants unsure of how it affects them and what they need to do to ensure they get what they are entitled to. Add to that, the significant impact that Covid-19 has had on many tenants and their financial stability there has never been a more critical time for independent financial advice and support.

Whilst there are several programmes on offer for social housing tenants to access, the Choice 'Financial Inclusion' team have created a support mechanism that goes above and beyond simple advice and sign posting. Our team deliver tailored support to tenants that allows them to investigate a wide range of support solutions.

The Financial Inclusion Project is based on a two-prong approach, pre-intervention for prospective tenants and daily referrals for current tenants.

Aidan McCrea, Choice Financial Inclusion Manager discussed the scheme, **"The bulk of our support comes in the pre-intervention stage for prospective tenants with the aim of setting a tenant up for long-term success and stability. We do also offer significant support to current tenants who have, for whatever reason fallen into financial difficulty. Whilst the priority is to provide the foundations for tenants to manage their financial capabilities, a range of external factors can impact this, and we provide advice and support that is tailored to each specific circumstance."**

The financial inclusion team offers a range of vital services, including guiding tenants through their individual application and tenancy process, face to face (when appropriate) and telephone advice and reviewing their individual circumstance, particularly around whether they will be affected by specific welfare reforms and the implications of this. For example, if the benefit cap or bedroom tax will affect them and if they are entitled to mitigations.

A full financial assessment is provided for every tenant and includes checking eligibility for government grants to set up home for example. Liaising with a range of charities to assess what support can be provided to negate the financial burden of essential household items.

Aidan references the challenges around navigating people across from the old-style system to the new. **"We try to make this transition as seamless as possible, ensuring tenants are fully informed and understand the impact these changes are having to their financial situation."**

"Whilst the programme is aimed at providing practical support to tenants, the goal is giving them the capacity to manage this aspect of their lives long term. We believe in empowering tenants where appropriate whilst recognising that there will always be tenants, particularly those with complex needs, that will not be able to manage this aspect of their lives."

The pandemic, as expected, has had an impact on this support. However, thanks to most of the application processes being facilitated online and the Choice teams' ability to provide support both via telephone and virtually, this has enhanced the customer experience.

"During the pandemic, our team has adapted to providing a new way of supporting tenants but there have been occasions when face to face is simply the only option to ensuring a tenant gets the support they need. Through a comprehensive risk assessment and ongoing engagement with tenants

we have, when necessary continued to provide this service. The commitment and dedication of our team throughout Covid-19 cannot be overstated."

One element that the financial inclusion team will monitor over the next period will be the impact and associated after care of these support mechanisms. Evaluating how tenants have embraced the process, taken on the role of managing their own online portals for example will all play a part in allowing the team to further improve on their support.

The daily referrals for current tenants, whilst not as prominent as the pre-intervention support has provided many tenants with support when they really need it.

"What we want to do is avoid tenancy abandonment due to financial difficulty but there are occasions when tenants, for example, fall into difficulty and we are there to support them during this time, with the aim of getting them back to financial stability."

"A key element of why this support is less prevalent is our Rent Accounting System, which allows us to predict trends and themes regarding missed payments for example. This allows us to identify an issue before it becomes a real problem. We train our staff to identify these trends and engage with tenants before it gets to a crisis point."

The financial inclusion team works with a range of partner agencies which allows them, if required to refer tenants to organisations for further support and guidance which is a vital element of ensuring they get the support they need.



L-R
Tom Reilly, Financial Inclusion Officer
Aidan McCrea, Financial Inclusion Manager
Carleen Stevenson, Financial Inclusion Officer

"I cannot tell you how much I appreciate the effort for my family."
Choice Tenant

"We had struggled for some time and did not understand the benefit system, thank you for helping."
Choice Tenant



02/GREAT SERVICES

Choice Services

As the in-house Service provider, Choice Services has continued to grow as a Maintenance and Repairs provider to meet the challenge of maintaining over 4,700 dwellings across Northern Ireland and Ireland. The year has brought many challenges, and changes, to Choice Services both in the support offered to tenants and employees through the pandemic while maintaining high levels of service.

James Sterling was recently appointed as the new Managing Director for Choice Services, replacing Wilton Farrelly who is the new Choice Housing Group Director of Asset Services.

In the reporting period, a 24 hour, 7 days a week service continued to be provided and over 14,000

repairs were delivered by Choice Services. The year also seen further expansion to support Oaklee activities, the continued mobilisation of the first social housing Public Private Partnership (PPP) in Ireland, and development of several Planned Maintenance Schemes within Northern Ireland.

With a team of more than 60 staff, Choice Services is ensuring the highest of standards in their service provision, which serves to ensure greater efficiency throughout the organisation and high levels of customer satisfaction. Since its launch in May 2017, the organisation focuses on expanding and delivering services to more tenants in areas across Ireland.

“We’ve seen our team grow further over the last year, which given the challenging circumstances we have worked through is testament to our colleagues and their commitment to supporting tenants. The team continued to provide immediate responses to a range of repair and maintenance requirements for more than 4,700 tenants over the last year. This is a vital service provision, and we worked hard to adapt to the changing environment to ensure we continued to operate, whilst ensuring the safety and wellbeing of both tenants and Choice support teams.”

James Sterling, Managing Director for Choice Services



Allocations

Choice is committed to having one of the lowest average rents across the sector and delivering affordability and value for money for tenants. In 2021, the average rent paid by Choice tenants was £80.18.

Sum of Average Rent (£)



£80.18

Average rent paid by a Choice Tenant

Local area-based Housing and Property Services Officers work together to ensure properties are ready and tenanted as soon as possible. A specialist Allocations Team ensures new developments are let at time of handover.

The specialist team also have a dedicated focus on difficult to let voids, ensuring every effort is made to find tenants for properties which have been vacant for a longer period.

Total Allocations

925 total allocations completed in 2020/21
712 relets
213 new lettings

Total Allocations 2020/21 = **925**

Allocations Breakdown



616 General Needs
250 Sheltered
59 Supported

Care and Support Services

Choice has continued to work in partnership with more than 40 statutory and voluntary providers through 2020/21 to deliver supported housing solutions which meet a wide range of needs. Through what has undoubtedly been a difficult year for the sector, Choice has continued to support and advocate for our partners on several key issues and across multiple platforms.

Central to this work includes the Choice Partner Forums, established in 2018, which include Disability, Older People, Younger People Homelessness and Women's Aid. These forums provide an opportunity for shared learning and collaboration as well as a strong, cohesive voice to be used in advocating for change.

PARTNERSHIPS

In this reporting year, Choice gained two new partners through mergers. Extern became a Joint Management Partner following the successful merger with MUST who will oversee the essential work at our homeless hostel in Cookstown.

In addition to this the merger between existing partner Clarendon Shelter and new partner North West Methodist Mission has been finalised. North West Methodist Mission operate our shelter at Ashmore House, Derry~Londonderry.

KEY PROJECTS

The provision of quality supported living options is key in ensuring that the most vulnerable members of our society are enabled to live as independently as possible. As an organisation Choice seeks to provide creative new and remodelled supported housing services to meet the growing needs of our service users.

Kimberley House, Newtownards is a remodelled supported living service for adults with learning disabilities managed in partnership with Praxis Care with the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust as a key stakeholder. The site was formerly a registered care service and has since been deregistered and gone through a process of significant reconfiguration to provide seven bespoke and modern, self-contained apartments.

Altigarron Court, Belfast is an existing, well established service set in West Belfast which provides permanent accommodation with support for adults with mental health issues. The accommodation is managed by a long-standing partner of Choice, Inspire Wellbeing, alongside the Belfast Health & Social Care Trust.

Choice recognised that the service was no longer fit for purpose and following a full options appraisal progressed a full demolish and rebuild on the existing site. The bespoke new development provides a mixture of both shared and self-contained properties through 10 self-contained apartments and one 4-bedroom shared bungalow for those who require a higher degree of support.

Both Kimberley House and Altigarron Court demonstrate the commitment by Choice to ensure that our supported housing stock remains strategically relevant and fit for purpose. By continually evaluating and future proofing our services we can continue to be the sector leader in providing specialist accommodation for those with complex needs.



ALTIGARRON COURT
Belfast

Value for Money

At Choice we believe that a focus on Value for Money (“VFM”) leads to improved outcomes for our customers and our stakeholders, and that it generates savings on resources which can either be taken as short-term gains or recycled back into the organisation as additional longer-term investment. We have embedded this concept into the organisation through our Strategic Plan which states that as a result of our commitment to Value for Money, we will:

- Maintain the affordability of our housing provision;
- Increase the return on investment, economic and social;
- Improve the core efficiencies relative to others, particularly in relation to repairs and maintenance; and
- Reduce the differential between private and social housing new build development costs.

We endorse the Department for Communities' decision to include VFM within the new regulatory framework. Our 2020 regulatory report states: **“Choice has articulated and delivered a comprehensive and strategic approach to achieving value for money in meeting their organisation’s objectives.”**

Our VFM strategy has the following aims:

- Setting VFM targets which become the focus for enhancing delivery.
- Establishing management systems and structures aimed at promoting VFM; and
- Establishing a VFM culture at all levels of the organisation.

Our strategy set outs several VFM-related targets, encompassing:

- Improvements across our key performance indicators.
- Achieving upper quartile benchmarks over the life of the plan.
- Seeking to deliver cash savings; and
- Focusing on the benefits derived from our assets.

Our full Value for Money statement is available on our website www.choice-housing.org



ST. JAMES' FARM
Belfast

03/GREAT COMMUNITIES

Community Investment

As a social purpose organisation, Choice has a key role to play not only in providing homes, but also in creating vibrant and resilient communities and supporting individuals and families through the provision of great services.

We have a history of providing a variety of services for our tenants that can broadly be understood as 'Community Investment'. This is central to how we, as a housing association, differentiate ourselves from other landlords, and plays a key role in how we demonstrate our social purpose.

To bring greater focus to our work in this area we have aligned our community investment actions with our strategic objectives in providing:

- Great Homes
- Great Services
- Great Communities; and
- Great Delivery

We are on a journey in establishing robust process and measurement tools, utilising the UK Social Value Bank (UKSVB), developed by HACT and Simetrica to measure the impact of our community investment activity.

In 2020/21 there were seven initiatives for which we could clearly identify the costs of delivery, the impacted tenants, and the appropriate impact measures. In the reporting year Choice spent **£831,240** on the seven initiatives generating **£17,305,615** of additional Social value.

The estimate Gross Value Added (GVA) to the Northern Ireland economy through Choice's business activity is GVA **£65,490,998** sustaining an estimated 829 jobs throughout the supply chain. Examples of the initiatives include our investment in 'Building Futures' and 'Promoting Integration'.

BUILDING FUTURES

Choice continues its partnership with Bryson Future Skills to deliver WorkChoice, a programme aimed at upskilling people to help them secure long-term employment. WorkChoice equips participants with practical training alongside OCN

accreditations whilst enabling participants to earn a salary. The latest programme will commence in September 2021 (having been paused in 2020 due to the pandemic) offering participants work experience in a range of disciplines across the organisation.

During the year, Choice also continued to work with Queens University and Ulster University to provide financial support to students facing financial, social, or logistical barriers to furthering their education through its scholarship programme. The scheme, now in its third year, will run for 5 years with each awardee receiving £1,000 which helps to reduce the stress of financial pressures while studying, improve their self-confidence and give them an emotional boost.

PROMOTING INTEGRATION

Throughout 2020/21 Choice continued to deliver on its commitment to bring communities together through projects such as the 'Housing Associations' Integration Project' Peace IV and Together: Building United Communities (Housing for All) projects. These unique partnerships consisting of Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA), social housing providers, NIHE, and Department for Communities (DfC) aim to improve good relations, promote community integration and shared housing.

In May 2021, Choice launched a new £15K year Student Placement Programme aimed at offering five students the opportunity for paid work experience in a range of disciplines. The Brian McKenna Student Placement Programme will also give students the chance to compete for their final year's tuition fee by taking part in a business innovation project.

Choice Pride Week also helped to raise awareness of the challenges faced by LGBT staff members and tenants. The feedback from Rainbow training was also very positive with staff expressing a far better understanding of how to relate to customers and colleagues from the LGBTQ+ communities.

CASE STUDY - Shared Housing



Shared Housing is an NI Executive commitment through their Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) Strategy and Choice has committed to providing this type of housing provision to communities across Northern Ireland.

"The Strategy reflects the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society, and it represents a major change in the way that good relations will be delivered across government." (Department for Communities).

Richard Mealey, Community Development Manager for Choice recognises the importance of the commitment to shared housing and the positive impact it is having on local communities.

With three operational shared housing schemes in NI, Choice is leading the way, with the aim to creating diverse, shared communities across the region. The operational schemes in Ballynahinch, Saintfield and Ballymena have all had their challenges but the key to their success has been the understanding and buy-in from tenants and the local community.

Discussing the progress of the 'shared housing' initiative, Richard said:

"Towards the end of the year, two new schemes have been brought on board to make it five schemes in total with Choice. These include Lisburn and Dungannon which have been fantastic additions to the Choice Shared Housing initiative. Hulls Hill, Lisburn was the first 'Housing for All' scheme in Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area which was an important achievement for both the area and for Choice.

We are making progress with every new scheme we invest in; we are not only creating a community within each scheme but bringing with it a range of positive benefits for the surrounding area."

Part of the work of the Community Development Team within Choice is informing and educating the wider public about the benefits such a scheme can bring and identifying how they maximise these opportunities to build good relations in a particular area.

"There have been a number of successful initiatives delivered in the initial three schemes of Ballynahinch, Saintfield and Ballymena. Whilst these are relatively small schemes the success of each provides confidence and belief that further developments can be delivered and in time will be on a much bigger scale."

Programmes known as ‘Bridging Initiatives’ with the wider communities of these shared housing schemes have been substantive. Examples include health and wellbeing projects, youth initiatives, flags and emblems, good relations workshops and a range of OCN training all aimed at bringing residents across the community together.

These schemes cannot be delivered in a silo and the importance of partnership is highlighted by Richard who believes all organisations can play their part in making these schemes the future of social housing in NI.

“In delivering each of the operational schemes, significant collaboration and partnership took place across the statutory and community and voluntary sector as well as engagement with a wide range of relevant stakeholders. Organisations such as Youth Services, PRONI, Action Cancer and Playboard NI all contributed to elements of the ‘bridging initiatives’ which has been vital to the success of these schemes. Nurturing these partnerships is a vital element of delivering shared housing.”

“A key element is creating opportunities for people from across the community ‘divide’ to take part in activities together, learning together, socialising together. Creating opportunities that best meets the evidence based localised needs – a tailored approach.”

Tenants are showing a real commitment to being involved in these types of schemes which is a positive for the future of shared housing in Northern Ireland.

Engagement across relevant stakeholders further enhances the buy-in to this new way of thinking but always with the ‘tailored’ mindset – understanding the uniqueness of each area and the specific issues and concerns that will impact the success of a shared housing development. The further positives of having young people growing up in these shared housing developments cannot be underestimated.

Housing associations across NI are working together through the ‘T:Buc Housing for All’ operational group to push this priority forward.

“We are making progress with every new scheme we invest in; we are not only creating a brand-new community with each new scheme but bringing with it a range of positive benefits for the surrounding area.”

Richard Mealey, Community Development Manager



HULLS HILL
Lisburn

Digital Transformation

A key strategic goal for Choice is to develop a comprehensive, accessible digital platform for tenants and staff using innovative technology. The pandemic, in many ways, has progressed this as the demand for this type of solution has grown over the last twelve months.

Updates for the reporting period include:

- A period of great change caused by the impact of Covid. Significant levels of transformation were required in a very short period with core systems redeveloped and new technology deployed to staff in a difficult context of remote working.
- A new Digital Strategy, with associated objectives has been developed and approved for the period 2021 to 2024.



Promoting Channel Shift - The new Tenants Portal went live in May 2020, allowing subscribed users to manage their tenancy and register requests on a 24x7 basis. Following a modest uptake in 2020, a subscription drive is planned for 2021/22 to ensure improved usage.



Agile Working - This provides customer facing staff with the tools available to help tenants in their own home in real time. Following on from a successful trial with Property Services Officers and Maintenance Assistants, new mobile devices have been deployed to staff for the purpose of remote working. In 2021/22 we plan to extend further for compliance surveys and planned maintenance inspections.



Business Transformation - Covid-19 has acted as a catalyst for the digital transformation of our organisation. All staff are now digitally enabled with the capability to work remotely as required. Several core systems have undertaken major upgrades to ensure remote access and security in a remote / hybrid working environment. As part of our technology roadmap all core systems have been reviewed and those which are no longer compliant with our aspirations are planned for upgrade or replacement.



Strengthen Cyber Security - Work on improving security has continued to ensure that all steps necessary are taken to protect the data of both our tenants and the organisation. We have taken steps to improve our capability regarding penetration testing and recently implemented phishing tests to assess the success of our cyber security training.

04/GREAT DELIVERY

Great People

Our teams across the Choice group have demonstrated real commitment in identifying ways to enhance service delivery across the organisation. Work continued on the digital transformation journey with the introduction of new IT systems in Finance and the continuing development of our mobile platforms to better serve our tenants.

Whilst the pandemic has prevented face to face practical learning & development courses that form part of our annual support, Choice has delivered a range of virtual professional development opportunities for our staff throughout the reporting year. Much of this training aided our teams in supporting tenants and better service provision for the organisation as a whole.

As a responsible employer and housing association, Choice invests continually in its team so that clients can continue to receive quality services and support whilst providing ongoing opportunities for growth and development.

Employees completed 107 different virtually led courses during the reporting period. The courses included:

- Building Resilience
- Dementia Awareness
- Display Screen Equipment
- Domestic Violence Awareness
- Fatigue in the NI Workplace
- First Aid for Parents
- Good Mood Foods
- Loss & Bereavement Awareness
- Managing Mental Health & Wellbeing at Work
- Managing Stress in the NI Workplace
- Menopause in the NI Workplace
- Mental Health Awareness & Communication
- Mental Health First Aid
- Musculoskeletal Health in the NI workplace
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Protecting Yourself When Homeworking
- Webinars on eating for Immune Health, Weight Loss & Stress Busting Foods

Choice is committed to recruiting and retaining talent across the organisation and has been successful in developing the skills of our team to develop their capacity and ultimately their long-term commitment to the organisation.

In the summer of 2020, a Leadership Programme was facilitated for the Choice Leadership Group to help support them in managing their teams remotely, engaging with and supporting their staff teams.

Lone Worker training is provided to all Choice frontline employees. To date over 100 Housing Officers, Property Services Officers, Scheme Coordinators & other frontline employees have completed this course. Course content includes Risks faced when Working Alone, Preventative Measures to assist in managing lone working more effectively, Abuse, Threats & Assaults, Personal Safety Methods for Working Alone.

Overall, Choice invested significantly in learning and development activities between the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. A total of 6 staff members were provided with financial support to undertake external qualifications.

Each quarter the senior management team recognise those staff who epitomise the organisations core values. As has been a general theme throughout this report, the pandemic has impacted on a range of internal activities and initiatives, but we were committed to continuing this as much as possible.

The annual staff recognition awards for 2020/21, which took place virtually, were presented to the following:

- **Trustworthy Staff Member of the Year** – Denis Nagle, Plumber
- **Dynamic Staff Member of the Year** – Ross Fisher, ICT Support Officer
- **Customer Centred Staff Member of the Year** – Majella Boyd, ICT Support Officer and Sean McLery, HR Admin Officer (joint winners)
- **Overall Staff Member of the Year** – Paul Mallon, Senior Services Centre Advisor
- **Team of the Year** – Financial Inclusion Team



LONE WORKER TRAINING
Julie McConnell , Housing Officer and Ann Murphy, Scheme Co-Ordinator at Millmount House

Covid-19

It is important to pay tribute to both our staff and tenants during the pandemic which took its toll in so many areas of our lives – work, health, and family. Firstly, the Choice family would like to offer our sincere condolences to those tenants who sadly passed away during the pandemic. An incredibly difficult situation made more challenging with ongoing restrictions on visitation from friends and family.

Support for staff was vital to ensuring our team felt safe and secure as they continued to work in difficult circumstances. As well as a range of training and support programmes, Choice also committed to supporting their teams practically, including providing several colleagues with access to iPads aimed at helping to facilitate home-schooling during the pandemic. This formed part of a wider initiative developed by Choice aimed at supporting the health and well-being of colleagues throughout Covid-19.

As part of an organisation wide ICT upgrade, several iPads, which would have otherwise been decommissioned were set aside for colleagues who needed them while working remotely. Access to or the need to share IT equipment in homes made remote learning particularly challenging.

Lawrence Jackson Choice Group Director of Corporate Services:
“Following ongoing engagement with our staff it was clear that many of our team who were working from home were struggling to balance remote working with the demands of home-schooling and a big part of that was the availability of technology.”

Choice Scheme Coordinator for Carn Court in Fermanagh, Deirdre Boylan was one of many Choice colleagues who took up the offer of an iPad and said that the uninterrupted access to technology ensured her daughters home-schooling did not fall behind at a crucial time in her educational development.

Our housing teams worked hard to support and engage with tenants throughout the pandemic, supporting on a range of issues that were

a direct impact of Covid-19, working hard to maintain service delivery.

Risk assessments for urgent repairs and maintenance became part of our daily routine as did virtual events and meetings that replaced the usual face to face personal engagement that we are all so use to.

During the reporting period, the Choice Gas Servicing team worked tirelessly to return gas compliance to Pre-Covid standards despite legitimate customer concerns and ongoing restrictions. Working within the changing environment, the Choice team engaged with tenants to ensure important checks to their properties were completed and access was provided for their protection. The team continue to advise tenants about the risks associated with gas heating.

The Choice Financial Inclusion team worked with tenants to support on rent payments, acknowledging the unprecedented circumstances we were dealing with. This allowed for tenants to be confident that they would be supported during this difficult time to protect their financial stability.

Many Choice schemes have partnered with other organisations in a bid to support tenants during the pandemic. Westbridge House, one of our sheltered living schemes based in Enniskillen partnered with local Fermanagh charity Lakeland Community Care to provide tenants with activity packs filled with activities, games, and quizzes to keep tenants occupied during the Covid-19 lockdowns.

Our scheme co-ordinator Lynda Henning at Rothesay Court in Coleraine, developed a creative way to keep everyone connected during the pandemic. Lynda held several virtual coffee mornings via zoom, which many other schemes developed for their own tenants. The weekly coffee mornings included tenants and Choice staff and were delivered across schemes, involving a range of activities, including Qigong movements for relaxation, language lessons, sing-a-longs and quizzes.



Clachan Court, Derrylin, Macmillan coffee morning



Elmgrove Manor, Belfast Pancake Tuesday Fundraising



Activity packs kindly donated by Lakeland Community Care to tenants at Westbridge House, Enniskillen

Although limited in what they could do due to ongoing Covid restrictions, tenants across several Choice schemes continued to raise funds for both chosen charities and for continued improvements to their own environments.

Tenants at Clachan Court in Derrylin, led by their scheme co-ordinator Catherine McManus got creative with their Macmillan coffee morning. Decking a table out in Macmillan colours at the entrance to the scheme and alerting the local

community via the Church newsletter, tenants encouraged local people to drop by with a donation and a ‘socially distanced’ hello in the absence of a coffee. The team raised an amazing £1,500!

Tenants at Elmgrove Manor in Belfast recognised the need to improve their own garden, identifying the need for more outdoor space during the pandemic. During Pancake Tuesday, the tenants, working with the Choice team made 200 pancakes and raised £400 selling them. The local Community Centre kindly asked Belfast City Council and the Greenway team to assist with the project.

Health and wellbeing has always been a priority for the association and a range of programmes were delivered throughout the reporting period to support staff, including:

- Protecting Yourself When Homeworking
- Vital Nutrition and Sleep Well Workshops
- Building Resilience and Mental Strength
- Suicide Awareness
- Mental Health Awareness and Communication
- Mental Health First Aid
- Financial Wellbeing

Choice also signed up to the Mental Health Charter and appointed Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) to support employees.



Fundraising Committee

Choice continues to support a range of good causes that are both close to local communities that we are part of, and, close to the hearts of our own team. This plays a vital part in our core values which shapes everything we do as an organisation.

What we do and say is underpinned by three core values:

- We will be Caring - through listening, being helpful and always acting professionally
- We will be Committed - through determination, being reliable and always acting with integrity
- We will be Creative - through innovating, being responsive and always seeking to improve

Though our dedicated Fundraising Committee, we have raised **£10,000** in the reporting period through a range of activities and initiatives, all lead by Choice employees and raising much needed funds for our charity partners - Alzheimer's Society and Action Cancer.

Our fundraising activities included:

- Bonus Ball fundraiser
- 100 Mile Challenge (our largest fundraiser of the period with 30 employees taking part)
- Easter Hamper

A big thank you to all Choice staff and volunteers who helped raise funds for these charities, particularly given the difficult circumstances we were faced with over the last twelve months.

Congratulations to Julie Dineen, Housing Officer who was appointed as Chair of the Committee for the upcoming year.

Total raised
2020/21 **£10,000**



Group Board

The Group Board is responsible for overseeing the activity of the Group, ensuring it is managed efficiently, delivering tangible benefits for all. Responsibilities of the Board include setting the strategic direction of the Choice Group as well as, managing any associated risks and ensuring that there are effective systems of governance and internal control to maximise our performance.

Hazel Bell stood down this year as Chair of the Choice Housing Group Board. During her time as Chair, Hazel led the Board and Senior Management Team in expanding the operations of Choice Housing. We want to thank Hazel for her many years of service and wish her well in her future.

Ciaran McAreavey took up the role of Chair and Joe Higgins, the role of Vice Chair of the Group Board in September 2020.

During the year 10 Board meetings were held. Details of attendance at Board meetings and length of service of Board Members who served during 2020/21 are provided below:

Name	Board Meetings Held	Board Meetings Attended
Mrs H Bell	10	6/6
Mr L Dempsey	10	7/9
Mrs M Donnelly	10	9/10
Mrs C Gibson	10	6/10
Mrs H Harrison	10	7/10
Mr J Higgins	10	9/10
Ms J Hunter	10	8/10
Mr P Leonard	10	10/10
Mr C McAreavey	10	10/10
Mrs C Scales	10	6/9
Mr K Slattery	10	10/10
Ms N Taggart	10	10/10
Mr D Toner	10	9/9
Mrs V Watt	10	2/10

Leavers:

Mrs H Bell (September AGM)

New Members:

Mr L Dempsey (Appointed April 20)

Mrs C Scales (Appointed April 20)

Mr D Toner (Appointed April 20)

Group Committees

AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

The Audit & Risk Committee is responsible for independently contributing to the Board's overall process for ensuring that effective control systems and good governance maintained. During 2020/21, several key issues were significantly progressed, including:

- Introduction of a new risk management policy
- Linking of Strategic risks to KPIs
- Deep dives into key strategic risks
- External Audit Strategy
- Timeliness of internal audit reviews
- Internal Audit assurance reports
- Implementing internal audit recommendations

DEVELOPMENT & ASSETS COMMITTEE

The Development & Assets Committee oversees the delivery of the Social Housing Programme (SHP), strategic asset management and energy management. It monitors value for money in all its property development and reconstruction activities and the achievement of the financial targets set by the Board. During 2020/21, several key issues were significantly progressed, including:

- Delivery of Social Housing Programme 2020/21
- Choice Policy on strategic site acquisitions
- Approved scheme design reports and site/property purchases
- Re-organisation of the Asset Services Directorate
- Agreement of a new Asset Management Strategy for the next 3 years
- Approval of circa £10m Planned Maintenance spend in the year 2021/22
- Monitoring of the performance of property compliance matters

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee oversees the financial management and treasury matters of the organisation.

In addition to the recurring business needs, several key issues were significantly progressed during 2020/21 including:

- Approved policy changes on financial viability
- Financial planning and budgeting
- Accruals, treasury management
- Review of VFM Strategy
- Review of financial projections
- Review of Treasury Management
- External Audit

TENANT & CLIENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Tenant & Client Services Committee is the major interface between the association and its tenants. The Committee oversee the formulation and implementation of strategies and policies, the delivery of Business Plans and monitoring output against targets. During 2020/21, several key issues were significantly progressed, including:

- Coronavirus & Service Provision
- VHE Stock Transfer
- Allocations, Voids and Arrears
- Estate Management, Housing KPI's, Anti-Social Behaviour, Fraud
- Care & Support / JMP Compliance
- Property Services
- Service Centre
- Tenant Participation

Senior Management Team

At Choice we pride ourselves in our ability to retain top talent across our organisation. We have had a strong and diverse team working together to make a difference in people's lives since the establishment of the association. There does come a time when people move on and over this reporting year, we have said goodbye to several colleagues with some new faces to welcome into the fold.

Niall Sheridan, Group Director of Development and Assets retired this year. Having worked in social housing with Choice for more than 30 years we wish Niall well in his future. Jon Anderson became the new Group Director of Development (Previously Director of Growth).

Wilton Farrelly is now Group Director of Asset Services (formally Managing Director of Choice Services).

We would also like to wish John Cochrane, Choice Director of Development, well in his retirement, having worked with Choice for 17 years.



Back row L-R

Lawrence Jackson
Group Director
of Corporate Services

Michael Rafferty
Group Director
of Finance &
Resources

Michael McDonnell
Group Chief Executive

Jon Anderson
Group Director
of Development

Front row L-R

Carol Ervine
Group Director
of Tenant & Client
Services

Sharon Cosgrove
Chief Executive
Officer of Oaklee
Housing

Wilton Farrelly
Group Director
of Asset Services

Voluntary Membership

None of the members of the Board are remunerated and all give their time voluntarily. Total aggregate expenses (in single pounds) reimbursed to the Board Members and not chargeable to income tax was £114.

REGISTERED OFFICE

Leslie Morrell House 37-41 May Street Belfast BT1 4DN

Company Number IP000408

Charity Number 100095

Housing Number R56

BANKERS

First Trust Bank	31-35 High Street, Belfast BT1 2AL
Barclays Bank	Donegall Square North, Belfast BT1 5LU
Ulster Bank	Donegall Square East, Belfast BT1 5UB
Bank of Ireland	Donegall Square South, Belfast BT1 5LR
Housing Finance Corp	107 Cannon Street, London EC4N 5AF
Danske Bank	Donegall Square West, Belfast BT1 6JS
Santander Bank	Donegall Square East, Belfast BT1 5HL

EXTERNAL AUDITORS

KPMG 17-25 College Square East, Belfast BT1 6DH

INTERNAL AUDITORS

TIAA 53-55 Gosport Business Centre, Aerodrome Road, Hampshire PO13 0FQ

SOLICITORS

Elliott Duffy Garrett 34 Upper Queen's Street, Belfast BT1 6FD

Group Financial Performance

The financial statements reflect the financial performance and financial position of the Choice Group for the year ended 31 March 2021 and has been prepared in accordance with FRS102 and Housing SORP 2018. The figures for 'Group' include the Parent and our subsidiaries: Oaklee Housing, Acorn Housing, Maple & May Limited, Maple & May (Homes) Limited and Choice Services (Ireland) Limited.

The Group reported a strong financial performance for the 2020/21 financial year with a surplus of £12.8m (2020: £11.7m). These surpluses will be set aside to cover our debt repayments and invested into projects such as our planned and cyclical maintenance programme in later years.

Our annual turnover was £81.6m in 2020/21 compared to £75.2m last year. Rental income increased in Choice by £2.0m, in Oaklee/Acorn by £3.8m, and in Maple & May/ Maple & May (Homes) by £0.6m.

The Group invested an additional £99m in housing assets, bringing their total gross value to £1,237m. The number of units in management at the balance sheet date within the Group was 13,110 (2020: 12,123). This increase reflects our development activity in Choice, Oaklee/Acorn and Maple & May.

Long-term borrowing is an essential element in financing our projects. During the year our borrowings increased by £35m to £415m. In addition, before the year end, we completed the negotiation of a £42m Revolving Credit Facility which together with the European Investment Bank (EIB) funding will provide us with the private finance we need for our social housing development programme in Northern Ireland into the medium term. Oaklee and its subsidiary continued to fund its development programme in the Republic of Ireland through borrowings from Nord, HFA, Bank of Ireland and local authorities.

The Group continues to grow from strength to strength each year and this is clearly reflected in our consolidated balance sheet, where we now have total reserves of £138m.

During the year events outside our control continue to pose financial challenges and opportunities. These include:

- Impact of the global pandemic;
- Political uncertainty;
- Constraints on public sector funding;
- Changes in the local property market; and
- Economic uncertainty.

We believe we are well placed to meet these challenges. We have set out our financial plans for 2021/22 and beyond and are already looking forward to another successful year ahead.

Group Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2021

Choice Housing Ireland

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Turnover	81,676	75,288
Operating costs	(58,994)	(55,142)
Operating surplus	22,682	20,146
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	1,007	1,310
Interest receivable and similar income	108	365
Interest payable and similar charges	(10,833)	(9,025)
Net finance charges relating to pension scheme	(61)	(161)
Fair value uplift in investment properties	682	437
Reversal of impairment of financial assets	-	98
Transfer to disposal proceeds fund	(812)	(1,226)
Movement in fair value of financial instruments	67	(205)
Surplus before tax	12,840	11,739
Taxation	(285)	(217)
Surplus for the year	12,555	11,522

Group Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021

Choice Housing Ireland

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Fixed assets		
Tangible fixed assets- Housing Properties	1,044,191	972,555
Other tangible fixed assets	5,006	4,583
Investment properties	28,947	18,584
Financial assets	-	-
	1,078,144	995,722
Current assets		
Stock	272	935
Trade and other debtors	14,463	13,761
Cash investments	2,980	17,131
Cash and cash equivalents	24,463	37,843
	42,178	69,670
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(58,495)	(55,284)
Net current assets/(liabilities)	(16,317)	14,386
Total assets less current liabilities	1,061,827	1,010,108
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(922,075)	(884,816)
Provisions for liabilities		
Defined benefit pension liability	(1,646)	(2,751)
Net assets	138,106	122,541
Capital and reserves		
Share capital	-	-
Foreign exchange translation reserve	209	423
Cash-flow hedge reserve	(9,986)	(12,543)
Revenue reserve	147,883	134,661
Total reserves	138,106	122,541

Parent Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2021

Choice Housing Ireland

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Turnover	64,492	62,736
Operating costs	(48,867)	(47,465)
Operating surplus	15,625	15,271
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	1,007	1,310
Interest receivable and similar income	542	721
Interest payable and similar charges	(6,806)	(6,441)
Net finance charges relating to pension scheme	(61)	(161)
Fair value uplift in investment properties	(28)	-
Reversal of impairment of financial assets	-	98
Transfer to disposal proceeds fund	(812)	(1,226)
Movement in fair value of financial instruments	(89)	(86)
Surplus before tax	9,378	9,486
Taxation	-	-
Surplus for the year	9,378	9,486

Parent Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021

Choice Housing Ireland

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Fixed Assets		
Tangible fixed assets- Housing Properties	825,810	790,465
Other tangible fixed assets	5,003	4,574
Investment properties	324	352
Financial assets	13,200	2,700
	844,337	798,091
Current assets		
Stock	15	15
Trade and other debtors	23,155	27,166
Cash investments	2,980	17,131
Cash and cash equivalents	16,530	32,526
	42,680	76,838
	(45,933)	(45,698)
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		
Net current assets/(liabilities)	(3,253)	31,140
Total assets less current liabilities	841,084	829,231
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(709,497)	(708,446)
Provisions for liabilities		
Defined benefit pension liability	(1,646)	(2,751)
Net assets	129,941	118,034
Capital and reserves		
Share capital	-	-
Foreign exchange translation reserve	-	-
Cash-flow hedge reserve	(7,729)	(9,591)
Revenue reserve	137,670	127,625
Total reserves	129,941	118,034



Choice

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