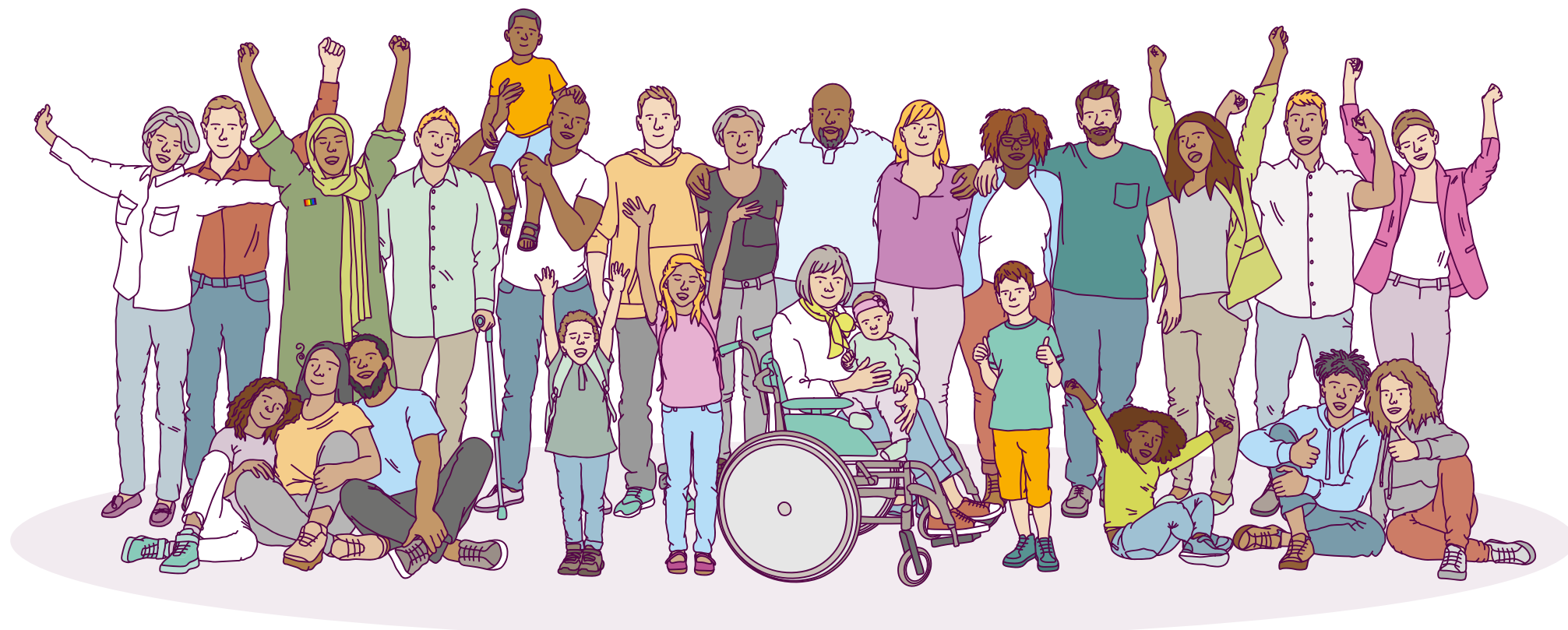


SUCCESSING TOGETHER



Our Mutual Way

The RBH Strategy 2022 - 2025



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WELCOME TO OUR 2022-2025 STRATEGY.

This document sets out our priorities for the next three years.

It sets out what we want to achieve, why these outcomes are important to us, and how we are going to reach those goals. It is also a chance to reflect on what we have already achieved, four years into the 10-year vision we shared in 2018.

As we finalise our plans in early 2022, the world remains a deeply uncertain place as we continue to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. So, how do you plan for the future in a time of great uncertainty? We use the strong and solid foundations we have as a mutual society, jointly owned by our tenants and employees.



This document is the result of the biggest and most comprehensive conversation with our members that we've had since RBH became a fully independent mutual society in 2013. Over the past nine months, guided by our Representative Body and our Board, we've looked at every aspect of what we do and how we do it.

We started at the heart of our mutual society - with our values. Before we became an independent organisation, a group of our early tenant and employee members worked together to create a set of values that reflected our vision as a new and pioneering mutual society. Over the past eight years, we have had the opportunity to see those values develop in practice. We've used that experience, and all the great conversations we've had over the past nine months, to restate and build upon those values. Our core underlying beliefs have not changed - but we've used what we have learned since 2013 to update and better express those beliefs through our values.

These values are at the root of the priorities we have set out in this strategy. They provide our compass to make sure that we are not only doing the right thing, but in the right way and for the right reasons. Our values have also underpinned our strategy development - shaped and written through conversation and consultation with



Gareth Swarbrick,
RBH Chief Executive



Alison Tumilty,
Chair of the Board



Phillip Worthington,
Chair of the Representative Body

our members. In many ways, our strategy is the ultimate expression of our democracy - approved and agreed by our elected Representative Body on behalf of our tenant and employee members.

The two years of pandemic restrictions have shown the very best of our mutual in the most challenging of circumstances. We have worked together as tenant and employee members to protect those in our communities who needed our support the most. We have continued to deliver our fundamental core services even under trying restrictions. We have maintained our ambition, delivering new homes and improved services. This strategy sets out how we can build on the spirit we have shown over the past two years. We are all custodians of our mutual society, and by achieving the priorities we have set out in this document and working together, we will make sure that both RBH and the communities we serve are left in a stronger and better place for our children and grandchildren.



OUR STRATEGY AT A GLANCE

It all starts with our vision and values...

Our Vision is:

People succeeding together to offer great services and great places to live and work.

Our Values are:



Collaboration



Democracy



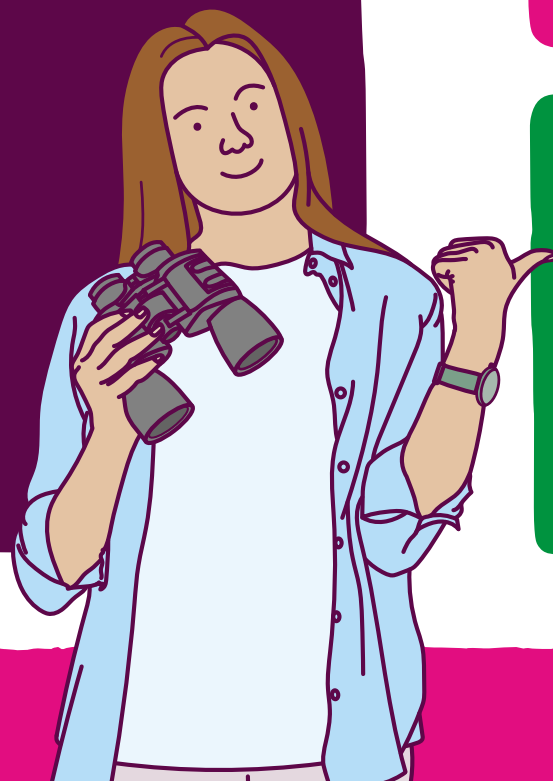
Equity



Pioneering



Responsibility



...which have guided our priorities for action and the outcomes we want to achieve.

Core Priority: Pride in Quality Homes and Good Services

- Ensuring that tenants receive a good service, and have opportunities to work together with employees to improve service delivery.
- Rising to the climate emergency through greener, low carbon and climate resilient communities.
- Using our increased investment so all homes meet the needs of current tenants and future generations, are safe, of good quality, and easily maintained.
- Work towards the medium-term aim of maintaining the number of our homes.

Supporting Priority: Pride in our People and Communities

Healthy and resilient communities in successful places where people choose to live and work.

Enabling Priority: Pride in our Society

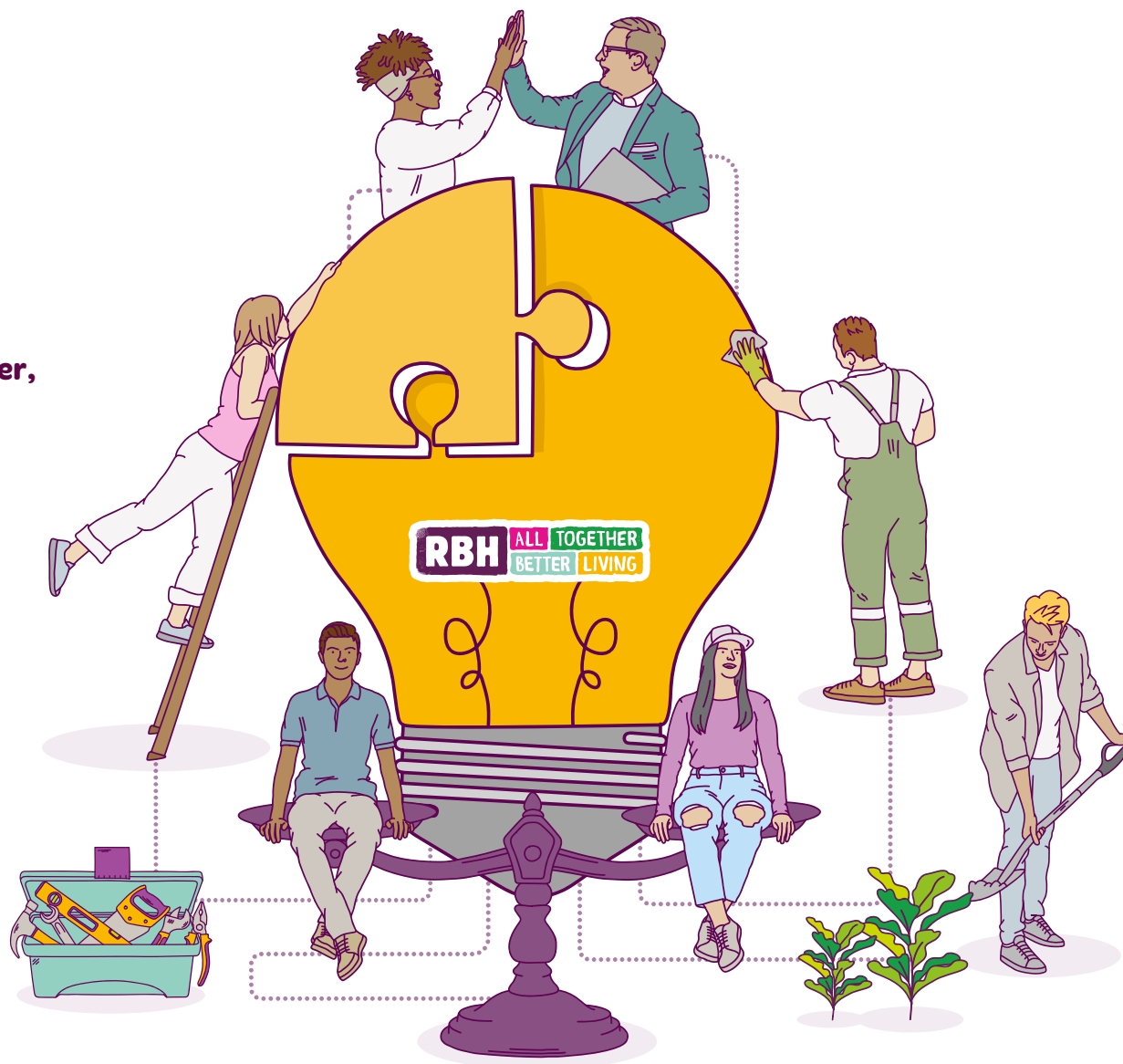
- A diverse and engaged membership helping deliver service improvement and good governance.
- Happy, enthusiastic, and resilient employees who are supported to develop and grow and work with our tenants to shape services.
- Increased wealth directed into the local economy.

OUR VALUES

We are proud to be owned and run by our tenant and employee members. We live and work together, and we are stronger together.

If this strategy is our map to chart the uncertain waters that lie between now and 2025, our values are our compass. They provide direction to everything we do; they encompass who we want to be, and they get to the root of who we really are. They are to be lived and breathed – not mere aspirations but our bedrock from where all else follows.

Our values link back to Rochdale's history, and the pioneers who kickstarted the cooperative movement back in 1844, and we've worked with tenant and employee members to review and build upon the values we agreed in 2018. These refreshed values show us how we need to act in the here and now. And they provide the leaping off point for us all, both tenants and employees, to collectively work together to address the challenges we face and realise a better, fairer, greener future.





Collaboration

We are stronger together. We must be active listeners and partners, who respect diversity and tackle stigma. This empathy and deep collaborative ethos is the source of our strength and power.



Democracy

We are democratic. Our democracy is rooted in our mutual status and evidenced in our governance through our Representative Body and Board. Our tenants, employees and communities have voice and power over what we do, and how we operate.



Equity

We seek fairness and equality. This is how we think and operate as a mutual Society, and why we strive for greater inclusion and equality within RBH, in our communities, and in the wider economy and society of Rochdale borough and elsewhere.



Pioneering

We innovate. We have pioneered mutuality and cooperation within the housing sector and wider. We will continue to strive to champion new innovations in creating excellent homes, a sustainable environment, and a just economy for our communities.



Responsibility

We build mutual respect. We have a responsibility to create great homes, communities and be a good employer, and we are rightly held accountable on that. We also care about and are responsible for each other and act with individual and collective integrity building mutual respect.



Because we are mutual, **we are proud to stand together** to ensure that the values we hold dear, the values that get to the root of who we really are and what we stand for, stand firm in a changing uncertain world.

THE CONTEXT WE ARE WORKING IN

We are not alone in facing the great challenges of inequality, climate change and economic uncertainty, and we will not shy away from playing our part in addressing them.

Our model of mutuality – one which gives tenants and employees a real voice and real power – means we are uniquely positioned to both understand and respond to these great challenges through our role as a good landlord.



Covid-19 has exacerbated the pre-existing inequalities that our tenants face. These inequalities are simply not fair.

The recent Independent Inequalities Commission report 'The Next Level: Good Lives for All in Greater Manchester' states that housing, whether the standard of housing, or the availability of suitable housing, is one of the key intersecting drivers of increasing inequality. Poor housing also impacts on health, with Rochdale experiencing some of the most significant health inequalities both within the city-region, and across the UK. The Grenfell disaster also highlighted the importance of housing safety, quality and stability, and the importance of removing the stigma associated with Social Housing. We should not and will not create short term fixes that will cause problems for future generations. Both the wellbeing of current and future tenants needs to be at the forefront of our plans. Covid-19 has challenged us to do things differently and shown the power of our mutuality in working together creatively to meet the needs of our tenants and employees. We have an opportunity to step up our mutuality, to step up how we work collaboratively, and to step up to meet the needs of our tenants and employees.



Climate change is impacting on everything we do and the way our communities live their lives. It

is expected that we will face more extreme weather events causing heatwaves, flooding and droughts. We all need to play our part in reducing carbon emissions, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural environment. And with this comes the added benefits of more comfortable healthier homes that need less heating - and healthier, happier lives through the provision of green spaces. Greater Manchester and Rochdale have a target to become carbon-neutral by 2038 – that is why we cannot wait and must work now to do our bit.



These are not other people's problems – and we as a mutual housing society must continue to face up to our unique role in addressing these challenges, whether that is through improved core landlord services, provision of more affordable places to call home, or by working in partnership to improve the health and wealth of our tenants and communities.

We must do this whilst also celebrating the huge amount of success our communities achieve and proactively help each other to do more. We need to use our pioneering mutual model to listen more carefully, and to involve tenant and employee members in the design and delivery of improved services. And lastly, we need to celebrate the pioneering and vibrant culture of the towns and villages across Rochdale. With all our shoulders to the wheel we can work together to make a difference.



INTRODUCTION TO OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES



Our long-term vision is:

People succeeding together to offer great services and places to live and work.

Our long-term ambitions are to:

- **Deliver quality housing and associated services** to customers across the towns and villages of Rochdale, maximising the collective resources and expertise of our employees and tenants through strong mutual trust and confidence.
- **Be a trusted and innovative local organisation** known for our tenants and employees working together.
- Use our role to **help build the wider local economy**, working together with partners to make Rochdale a great place to grow up, grow a career, and grow older.

This remains our vision and our long term ambitions. Over the last four years we have been working hard to deliver on our promises. However now we must go further to meet the aspirations of tenants, employees, and members and to meet the demands of a rapidly changing social and economic context whilst always seeking value for money and financial sustainability.

This means being clear in terms of our strategic priorities.

We have collectively identified three priorities for action between 2022-2025.

These three priorities are linked, mutually dependent, and are underpinned by a range of supportive themes and strategic outcomes – outcomes which will drive operational activity for the next 3 years. They are unified by the principle of pride, whether that's pride in our homes, pride in people, pride in our communities, or pride in our mutual model.



PRIDE IN QUALITY HOMES AND GOOD SERVICES.

This is the foundation of our work, and the key measure of our success. It is about doing the basics brilliantly – whether that is repairs or creating safe and vibrant neighbourhoods. It is also about how we invest in our existing homes whilst building new homes, ensuring they meet the needs of our tenants – now and in the future.

PRIDE IN PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES.

Whilst we must ensure we maintain a focus on our bricks and mortar, we also have a responsibility to support our people and communities to thrive. We not only want good, safe homes, but also happy and healthy communities.

PRIDE IN OUR SOCIETY.

Our mutuality means we provide genuine voice, power and participation to our employee and tenant members. We will enable our employees to be the best they can be in order to provide great services. Lastly, we will also ensure that the wider community, economy, and environment of Rochdale benefit from any investments we make.

CORE PRIORITY:

PRIDE IN QUALITY HOMES AND GOOD SERVICES

We recognise that providing great places to live for people and communities to succeed is at the core of what we do.

Introduction

We want all our homes to provide a safe, secure, and long-term foundation for our communities to thrive – both now, and for future generations.

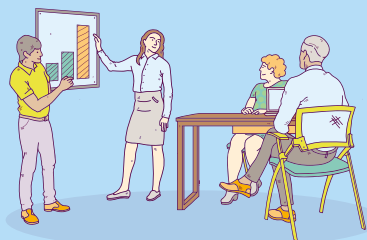
Affordable places to call home will have positive impacts on our tenants' quality of life, health, and wellbeing. This is true for all local residents – whether that is our older tenants through the provision of inclusive homes that are adaptable to changing needs, or for our children and families, where good quality housing has been shown to be critical to improving life chances for our youngest.

We promise to improve our core services to tenants, from day-to-day repairs, managing lettings, and neighbourhood services, to investing in our existing homes, and improving energy efficiency to help tenants live more sustainably and reduce fuel poverty. We need to listen to our tenants and customers when they raise concerns and collectively work together to improve service delivery, ensuring all of us go further than our contractual obligations. And we promise to invest in new homes and to continue our work to help renew and regenerate areas that for too long have not had the investment they deserve. This will be driven by addressing the need for the right mix of quality homes that are safe, sustainable and that ultimately help people live happy, healthy, and successful lives.

We need to be the best landlord we can possibly be on our own terms. We must continue to be a sustainable and viable housing provider to enable us to deliver the services our customers need and expect. We have achieved a lot, but we know we can do better – we have listened when tenants and employees have said that this is where our focus should be – and we will continue to work more closely with tenants and employees to collectively achieve the best outcomes for local people.



2025 Outcomes



Tenants receive a **good service**, and have **opportunities to work together with employees** to improve service delivery

Rising to the climate emergency through **greener, low carbon and climate resilient communities**



Using our increased investment so **all homes** meet the needs of current tenants and future generations, are **safe**, of **good quality**, and **easily maintained**

Work towards our medium-term priority of **maintaining our overall number of homes**



How we aim to achieve these outcomes

Services (providing quality homes):

A focus on housing ensuring that our homes are kept in good repair and tenants have good, safe, quality homes.

Investing:

Adapting and investing in existing homes to ensure long term quality, sustainability, energy efficiency and safety.

Services (being a good landlord):

A focus on core landlord services, ensuring both RBH and customers exceed our contractual obligations.

Building:

New affordable, high quality, safe, inclusive, and green homes that meet current and future needs.

Regenerating:

People and place focussed regeneration of Rochdale town centre.

Digitisation:

Invest in digital tools and systems to deliver better quality homes and improved services, whilst reducing digital isolation.

Sustainability:

Work to collectively reduce the environmental impact of our homes and business, ensure we have the skills for a green transition, build climate resilience to extreme weather, and provide support to our supply chain to become more carbon efficient.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY:

PRIDE IN OUR
PEOPLE AND
COMMUNITIES

We have a significant role in developing Rochdale Borough as a great place to grow up, grow a career, and grow older.

Introduction

Whilst it is through our core landlord services that we make the greatest impact; we also have a responsibility to support our people and our communities to succeed in life where we can.

This could be through working in partnership with others, taking the lead where appropriate, but also recognising that some areas of support are best led by our partners.

If we have healthy and financially secure communities, it is more likely that tenancies will succeed, providing further income that we can re-invest back into our communities. This is called a 'virtuous cycle' where each success provides more resources which, in turn, allow us to collectively achieve greater and greater outcomes.

We promise to build productive, focused partnerships that address the things our tenants are most concerned about. To address some of the long-term impacts from Covid-19 we want to help people into secure employment, and to improve the health and wellbeing of our tenants and employees. We want to create a culture of prevention where issues are resolved before they turn into a crisis. We will continue to listen to the great ideas that our tenants and employees have, and we will work hard to help transform them into initiatives that improve lives. We promise we will do all we can to help our people and communities' flourish.



2025 Outcome

Healthy and resilient communities in successful places where people choose to live and work.

How we aim to achieve this

Partnerships:

Nurture the relationship between ourselves and our key partners while also building our independent identity as a mutual housing society.

Independence:

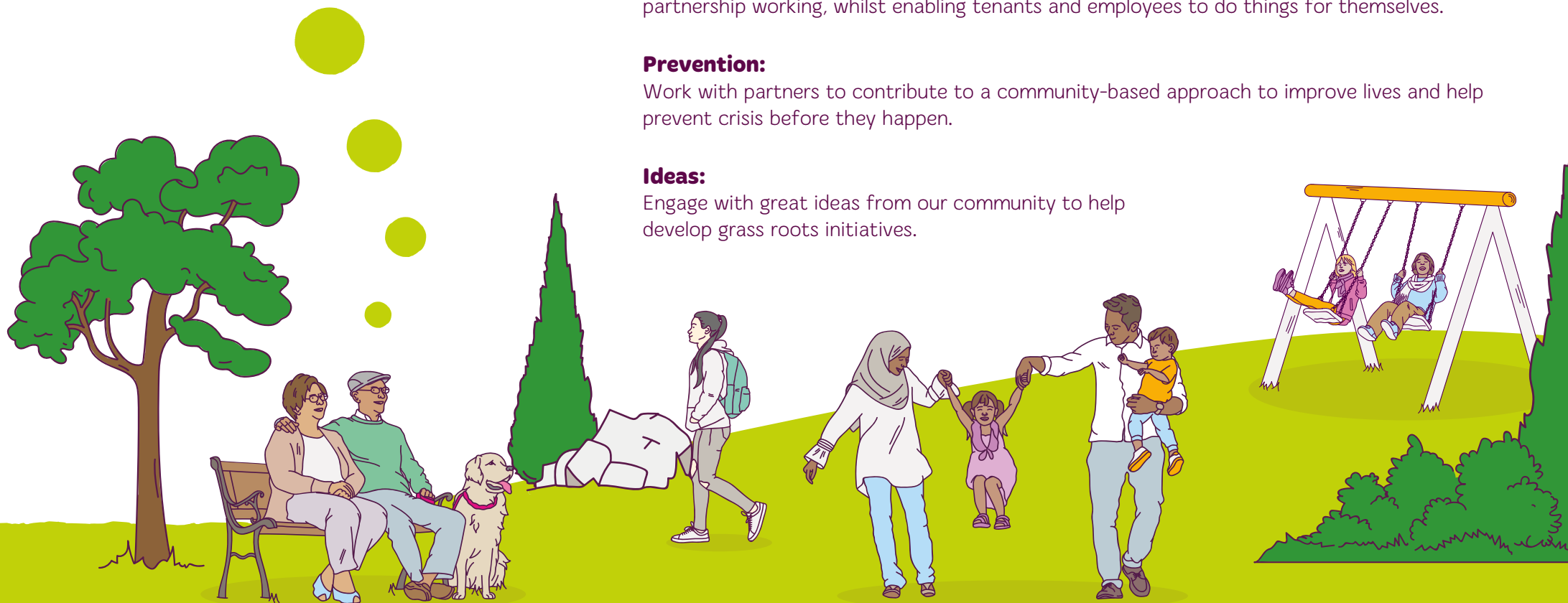
Work to ensure tenants and employees have access to a wide range of services to improve health, wealth and wellbeing through directly delivered services as well as effective partnership working, whilst enabling tenants and employees to do things for themselves.

Prevention:

Work with partners to contribute to a community-based approach to improve lives and help prevent crisis before they happen.

Ideas:

Engage with great ideas from our community to help develop grass roots initiatives.



ENABLING PRIORITY:

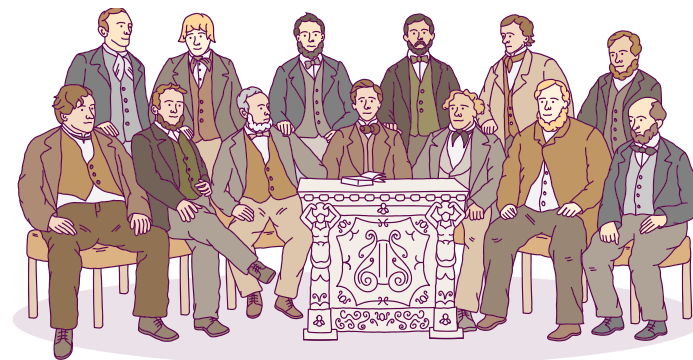
PRIDE IN OUR SOCIETY

We want to write a new chapter in Rochdale's co-operative story - and write it together with our members.



Introduction

In 1844, the Rochdale Pioneers created their new co-operative store to help improve the lives of their communities in early Victorian Britain.



We will harness that spirit and use the collective strength of our tenants and employees to work together with our partners to tackle the challenges of 2022 and beyond. We want to build a modern mutual legacy for Rochdale Borough.

Our strength comes from our employees and tenants. We will work to bring genuine power, voice and participation to all employees and tenants who want their voice heard through open membership of our Society. As one of the first signatories to the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter we will continue to attract the best talent, whilst also supporting and developing our existing employees to be the best they can be. We will continue to ensure that we are a strong and viable organisation, striving for value for money, whilst being able to meet our strategic ambitions. Lastly, we will continually look to how we can broker the most social value from any investments we make – helping to support the wider economy of Rochdale and Greater Manchester.

2025 Outcomes



A diverse and engaged membership, helping deliver service improvement and good governance

Happy, enthusiastic, and resilient employees who are supported to develop and grow and **work with our tenants** to shape services



Increased wealth directed into the **local economy**

How we intend to achieve these outcomes:

Finances:

Ensure that RBH remains a strong, viable and well managed organisation with the capacity to deliver its immediate strategic priorities and build strong foundations for future delivery.

Champion:

Appreciate and develop our tenants and employees. Continue to embed our commitments under the Together with Tenants and GM Good Employments charters.

Mutuality:

Promote our democratic heritage and empower our members to make decisions and shape our services, making membership of the Society meaningful.

Together:

Increase the opportunities with tenants and employees to work together to help improve the services and support we deliver. Connect grass roots initiatives we are involved with to promote collectivism, mutuality, and cooperation.

Community-wealth:

Build on existing contributions to the local economy through community wealth building, whilst ensuring environmental impact and Social Value is a key factor in procurement decisions.

Cultural Transformation:

Create a working culture of agility and flexibility enabling RBH to work at pace with a clear focus on our strategic outcomes.

OUR STRATEGY WAS FORMED TOGETHER

The strategy was developed by having big, bold and honest conversations with tenants, members and employees, who provided valuable insight, feedback and information.

August 2021

- We asked our tenant and employee members what they think the focus of our strategy should be via surveys and conversations.
- We conducted a review of key data and information, including member and tenant surveys and performance data.

September 2021

- We held lots of workshops with our Board, Representative Body, employee and tenant members and our Leadership team.
- We interviewed a range of key stakeholders to understand how they perceived RBH and where we should be heading.

November 2021

- We shared our priorities and themes with tenants and employees to make sure we were heading in the right direction.
- This all helped our Board and Representative Body to refine and agree on 3 final strategic priorities and key themes.

December 2021

- We worked to turn our priorities and themes into a set of strategic outcomes that we can use to measure progress.
- These outcomes were then used to develop our Strategic Delivery Plan - outlining tangible projects and initiatives that will deliver against the outcomes we want to see in 2025.

February 2022

Our strategy is approved by our Representative Body.

March 2022

The strategy is launched and shared - the hard work to deliver against our shared outcomes now begins.



MAKING SURE WE'RE ON TRACK

Our Strategic Delivery Plan outlines concrete actions that we will undertake to realise our vision.

The Strategic Delivery Plan is not just a document which sits on the shelf – it is a live plan which is monitored each quarter (three months) to check we are making progress on the important activity across RBH in a timely way. The Strategic Delivery Plan will be supported by a suite of metrics and a reporting framework to help keep us on track and indicate how we are performing.

The Strategic Delivery Plan prioritises our focus on activities which:

- Support the delivery of priorities, themes, and outcomes in the RBH strategy 2022-25
- Are business critical
- Are high risk, high value, or complex

It includes significant activities such as:

- Asset investment in homes (e.g., new homes, major home investment works)
- Asset investment in infrastructure (e.g., ICT systems)
- Significant service activity (e.g., repairs service, customer engagement, income)
- Partnership delivery (e.g., health, education, employment)
- Strategy and policy development (e.g., new strategies, responding to changes in national policy and lobbying)





The role of Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

The responsibility for successfully delivering strategic activities sits with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). They ensure the right resources and capacity are in place to support timely delivery. ELT also consider activities that involve significant organisational change, so they can consider the impact and opportunities for RBH.

The role of the Board

The Board have responsibility for the business planning framework for RBH. Board members determine the right activities to deliver against our ambitions in the strategy. They have oversight of progress towards achieving our strategic outcomes, monitored through a dashboard which includes relevant high level targets.



Our tenants and employees

This strategy cannot be delivered without the hard work and contribution of both employees and tenants. More opportunities will be provided for tenants and employees to work effectively together, and we will work to embed a culture of agility and focus across our Society enabling RBH to work at pace with a clear focus on our strategic objectives.



The role of the Representative Body

The Representative Body play a key role in considering overall progress towards our strategic outcomes through the governance and decision-making arrangements for RBH. This supports Representative Body members in their role of monitoring the effectiveness of service delivery and the appropriateness of policy across RBH, for the benefit of RBH's tenants and employees.



SUMMARY -

This strategy has set out our priorities for the next three years - what we plan to achieve and why, how this fits in with our values, and how we are going to get there.



In 2025, our homes and our services will continue to **meet the needs of both current tenants and future generations**, and our plans to **reduce our carbon footprint** and our impact on the environment will be well underway. We will have delivered more **new homes**, helping to meet the needs of local residents as well as our medium-term aim of replacing every home we lose under the “right-to-buy”. We will have built back better, leading by example and working with our partner organisations to create **more resilient communities** and **improved health, wealth, and wellbeing**.



Most importantly, we will have done all this by working together - members, tenants and employees creating better services, healthier and safer homes, and stronger communities. We will have written the next chapter in Rochdale’s co-operative story and laid the groundwork to enable many more chapters to be written by our children and our grandchildren.

Over the next three years, our elected tenant and employee Representatives will closely monitor our progress against the priorities set out in this strategy.

They will make sure that we deliver on the promises that we have made, and they will help us to set our direction when unexpected new challenges occur. Our Representatives will also report back regularly to tenant and employee members about our progress, including regular online updates as well as in their annual report, presented to the Annual Members' Meeting each September.



We're proud to live and work in Rochdale. We're proud to be a pioneering mutual society. We're determined to deliver on the promises we have made for the benefit of our communities, and we're looking forward to sharing our progress with you.





THANKS FOR READING

If you are a RBH tenant or employee, and you would like a greater say in how our Society is run, please remember you can become a member. There is no cost involved, and no time commitment required – you can be as involved as your interest allows. Please **visit our website** to find out more and sign up to have your voice heard!

