

**The Square Building Trust (SBT)** is a Registered Provider (housing association) of affordable homes.

It was established in North Shields in 1929 and owns 122 properties in North Tyneside. These comprise of 90 general needs homes for social rent and 32 homes for people with a range of support needs.

Our mission is still the same as it was in 1929...

“  
*Faith, mighty faith,  
the promise sees  
and looks to that alone,  
laughs at impossibilities  
and cries ‘it shall be done!’”*





## 1

### To continue to be a well-run organisation that provides measurable Value for Money

We want to be in the best possible position to achieve our social purpose which is to provide affordable homes for those in need.

Through regular reviews we aim to be efficient, risk-aware and accountable, in order to wisely plan ahead. By generating additional funding capacity this will provide choices to increase and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our services.

Short Term Objectives	
1 Strive to build on the good working relationship with Bernicia, appointed managing agent for our stock in November 2014	Ongoing
2. Ensure our partners and stakeholders** understand SBT's purpose and specific objectives through regular engagement, meetings, website and marketing	Ongoing
3. Strengthen our governance and Management Committee through training opportunities for team-building and to increase our skills-set and developing a succession strategy for Committee members	2016-17
4. Ensure a solid business foundation which is kept up-to-date and further develop our business and operational planning processes and review our frameworks and supporting strategies	2017
5. Deliver our Value For Money (VFM) strategy Produce and monitor an annual VFM self assessment	2016
6. Review annually our risk management strategy Provide an annual report to Committee	2016-20
7. Ensure that we maintain our financial capacity to achieve our strategic aims Receive reports on our finances at each Committee and develop a strategic approach for the future	Ongoing
8. Improve our management of service charges in order to maximise affordability and transparency Evaluate the current service charges to determine their efficiency and examine any future options	2016-20
9. Complete and consider annually the National Housing Federation Code of Governance Compliance table	2016-20

\*\* Our stakeholders and partners include customers, tenants, residents, local community groups, our managing agent – Bernicia, Stonham, other housing associations (now known as Registered Providers), North Tyneside Council, local services e.g. Police and Fire, the National Housing Federation and Homes and Communities Agency.

**2****To provide high quality homes and effective asset management**

SBT provides a range of attractive and affordable housing to meet individual needs and local demands.

We will provide the best standards possible for our existing and future tenants through a planned maintenance programme, responsive repairs service, listening to our tenants and regular estate checks.

We aim to deliver sustainable homes and communities.

SBT will consider our overall growth strategy and plan ahead for the future.

**In 2016 – 2020 we will:**

- 1 Ensure the delivery of the current planned maintenance programme through reports to each Committee**
- 2. Monitor the stock condition through reports to each Committee and regular estate checks, using working groups, as appropriate**
- 3. Manage our assets effectively and invest wisely**  
Review and update our asset management strategy to ensure sustainability
- 4. Agree our future growth strategy and ambitions**  
Review and evaluate any development programme and agree any growth priorities for the next period
- 5. Capture key information e.g. on our tenant profile and demographics and our resources to make informed decisions on current and future services**

**3****To deliver excellent customer service and resident engagement**

SBT aims to keep in touch with our tenants' concerns, needs and aspirations to ensure that our homes and services really do reflect what is required now and in the future.

We aim to adopt a customer insight approach which includes gathering, evaluating and reviewing our internal data and staying informed of external trends.

**In 2016 – 2020 we will:**

- 1 Develop our approach to market intelligence**  
Ensure that resident feedback is responded to  
Aim to better understand our current and future residents
- 2. Strive to ensure residents continue to receive a consistently good customer service**  
Receive regular reports to Committee and respond to concerns
- 3. Review our lettings policy regularly to ensure that voids are let effectively**  
Receive regular reports at Committee and respond to concerns, reviewing the policy as necessary
- 4. Ensure that any equality and diversity issues are addressed through policy development**  
Review our policies and performance regularly through Committee reports and revise our policies as necessary
- 5. Develop our engagement with residents**  
Review our approach to resident engagement, influence and scrutiny to ensure that it reflects best practice through regular reports to Committee

## OUR VISION

By remaining financially robust and being true to our roots we aim to provide people with a range of homes that they want, in neighbourhoods where they want to live.



## OUR VALUES

The Square Building Trust strives to work with its residents, partners, and stakeholders who share, or can buy into, our values. These are:

**Integrity:** To be the landlord of choice, gaining high levels of customer loyalty by being proactive in offering tenants choice on issues that matter to them i.e. maintenance, repairs, improvements and good quality advice.

**Openness:** We deliver what we promise. We value and support creativity and innovation, managing, but not always avoiding, risks. We listen to everyone who wants to offer their own views.

**Justice:** What is practised is fair to all and delivers equality of opportunity.

**Prudence:** We want to continually improve accountability and performance by demonstrating and achieving value for money. We will continue to invest in the stock, as well as increasing the number of properties we own in order to address community needs.

## OUR PRIORITIES

- Respecting and listening to our current and future tenants is our highest priority
- We have a good understanding of the condition of the stock and will keep it well maintained
- Health & Safety is of key importance to us in all we do
- Operating within our revised Rules and Standing Orders reassures our national Regulator – the Homes and Communities Agency – that SBT has the appropriate business skills to operate effectively in an ever-changing world
- Understanding our operating environment, our own strengths and challenges, other internal and external factors, threats and opportunities
- Our Management Committee seeks to keep up-to-date and develop their knowledge and skills
- Value for money and efficiency will be kept under continuous review to ensure best use of financial and other resources
- We plan to increase stock numbers and will continually examine options to achieve this including private finance, a range of procurement models and stock transfers

### In 2015

- A Stock Condition Survey was undertaken
- A Valuation of the stock was completed
- An Asset Register was completed
- Our Liabilities (including title of stock) were clarified
- Rules and Standing Orders were revised using national guidance
- More training and development opportunities were provided for our Committee
- Awareness of the effects of government policy has increased

---

For more information about the Square Building Trust, please visit our website

[www.squarebuildingtrust.co.uk](http://www.squarebuildingtrust.co.uk)

Managed by **BERNICA**  
HOMES