Working Together

building better lives
better homes
better communities
Chair’s Message | Mike Wood

We were grateful to Dee O’Neill, who took on the role of Chair for a year and held the reins so capably and energetically, allowing Dylan Phillips and me, as new Board members, time to settle into the Board before taking on the roles of Chair and Vice Chair at the AGM last September.

The Board’s role is to provide:

1. Governance – ensuring that BCHA’s service quality, finances and processes are fit for purpose and as good as they can be;
2. Strategy – ensuring that BCHA has clear plans for the next 5, 10 and 30 years, and the flexibility to cope with things we can’t predict;
3. Advocacy – getting out there and speaking to customers, staff and commissioners, promoting – regionally and nationally – the values and services that we stand for.

On behalf of BCHA, I thank the Board members for the wise counsel and careful scrutiny they bring to the organisation, freely offering their considerable expertise, whether financial, legal, medical, managerial or in change and property management.

Throughout this report, you will be able to see the Group’s achievements over the past year – in the regular homelessness services and the emergency winter provision; in developing a buddy programme in prisons to bring meaning and value to all those involved; in helping people to achieve qualifications; in providing volunteering opportunities for young people on the NCS programme; in supporting customers to move on to independent living and jobs; in working with asylum seekers; in building and acquiring homes for affordable rent or for those with additional care needs.

The new Growth Project at BCHA’s allotment in Throop provides one example of the imaginative services offered, with topics covered in the six-week course ranging from mindfulness to making the perfect compost, measuring stress with ‘Heart Math’ to building wildlife habitats. You can read about another example – the J-P Morgan-funded ‘New Directions’ programme - in this report.

We were delighted that during the year BCHA won the contract to deliver community front rooms and recovery beds in Dorset, as part of the NHS’ new mental health acute care pathway. The contract was awarded as a co-production model, involving partnerships and collaboration, look out for news about its implementation in next year’s report.

Board members regularly remark on the passion and commitment of staff wherever they visit BCHA’s various services. We are glad to know that BCHA has such dedicated people “working together: building better lives, better homes and better communities”, the vision of our Business Plan.

Looking Back | CEO, Martin Hancock

The year seemed to be dominated by much talk at national Government level about Homelessness and Housing and Social Housing Green papers. However, while there was more recognition for the Housing Association sector as an important partner, the struggle to agree on and deliver Brexit within an increasingly divided House of Commons has meant, inevitably, other policy areas suffered.

BCHA is still very committed to supported housing and homelessness services as it has done for over 50 years, along with meeting housing need by buying and building more homes at affordable rents. Reddeveloping some of our existing sites and getting planning permissions has been, and continues to be, more of a challenge during the year than we anticipated.

We were keen to support Crisis’ campaign: ‘Everybody In: How to End Homelessness in Great Britain’, launched in June 2018. We also hope to see real progress from the Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Reduction Task Force, with new responsibilities having been placed upon Local Authorities.

In the Dorset area, we have had the lead-in to the merging of local Councils, which we believe will be a much more effective and efficient way forward for us and the whole community. We look forward to working in partnership with both BCP and Dorset Councils over the coming months as well as continuing in our other areas of operation across the south-west.

Despite all these challenges and the continued third of the four years of the 1% rent reduction introduced by the government in 2016, BCHA delivered its budget for the year, with the Group achieving a £1 million bottom-line surplus. This financial stability allowed us to secure further capital funding following a previous year £10m facility from Triodos. A continued growth in our housing Development programme opportunities and delivery during the past year will be funded with new loan facilities from Santander (£10m) and Lloyds (£1.5m) signed during the year. In addition, a new £10m loan facility with NatWest received bank credit committee approval in June 2019, for future housing developments.

We have invested £3m acquiring 25 units of rented, move on and specialist NHS accommodation in Weymouth, Yeovil and Poole. We also invested £1.2m in our new build programme that was in progress during the year. This will lead to the handover of a mix of 19 supported, general needs and shared ownership units in Plymouth and Swanage during 2019/20 with more on the way. We are on target to meet our Business Plan objective of 500 homes into BCHA ownership over the five years to 2022.

Along with other similar organisations, we have faced recruitment and retention issues in a progressively difficult labour market. Attracting the right people with the right attitude, passion and commitment to our customers is vital for the business and what makes BCHA who and what it has been and still is. At our Bchangemakers celebration event, we asked staff what advice they would offer a new colleague. A repeated theme was: “Stick with it… Work hard and you will have opportunities to make a difference to people’s lives… Enjoy working with people who truly believe in supporting people… Keep going! We thank all those who have demonstrated this attitude to us and commitment and who have stuck with it for the benefit of our customers and communities. Well done, everyone.

Mike Wood, Chairman

Martin Hancock, Chief Executive
Bournemouth Churches Housing Association (BCHA) was founded in 1968 by local churches aiming to make a practical contribution to housing problems.

Now, over 50 years later, BCHA has helped thousands of people by providing housing, support and learning services. The Bchangemakers campaign was launched to mark BCHA’s 50th anniversary in 2018. Its aim is to highlight ‘changemakers’ in the community – people who make a difference by providing great service and opportunities for others, or have made positive changes in their own life. The hope is that focusing on this fantastic work will encourage and equip more people to become changemakers and a force for good in their own communities.

All the inspirational stories can be read on the Bchangemakers website, bchangemakers.org.uk.

For over 50 years, BCHA has been supporting vulnerable people with a range of needs to find stability, safety and independence, whether through housing, learning opportunities or advice. Today, we support around 10,000 people a year, manage around 1,800 homes for social rent and supported living across the South West and offer a range of learning services to members of the community. BCHA’s vision is: “Working together: Building better lives, better homes and better communities.”

This is what drives the work of BCHA, which is reflected in our business plan:

**Building Resilience | Promoting Inclusion | Inspiring Change**

Equipping our customers with the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to maximise their chances of finding and sustaining a home and work, and become fully included and accepted in society.

**Creating Opportunities | Developing Communities | Developing Enterprise**

Seeking to grow the range of services we provide across our geography to fulfil or support our mission.

**Homes of Choice | Building & Owning More Homes | Providing Quality Homes**

Expanding the number of homes we own and ensuring that all of the stock we manage is of a high quality.

**Achieving Value | Excellent People | Efficiency & Quality**

Ensuring we have the people and financial resources to deliver the Business Plan efficiently and effectively.

BCHA’s Building the Future Together event at Citygate Centre, Bournemouth, on May 16 2019 celebrated a successful year in the life of the association. Bchangemaker Awards were given to recognise outstanding contributions made by staff members and customers who have such a positive impact on the work of BCHA.
Our supported housing and health services work alongside the most marginalised in our society, including individuals and families who find themselves homeless. Services are available to offer tailored support to empower people to find a way forward, improve resilience and maintain recovery and to engage with their community in order to move to and maintain suitable and sustainable accommodation.

BCHA provided 676 units of specialist supported accommodation across the South West, available 365 days of the year between 2018-2019. In addition, we are able to offer emergency shelter over the winter months, preventing deaths due to cold of people who are sleeping rough. With the support of volunteers and partner agencies and often using temporary community buildings our teams are able to deliver support to people to access benefits and advice, to engage with health services and to access more settled accommodation.

### Impact of Supported Housing

Exeter City Council commissioned a new service for the winter months, running from 1st November 2018 to 1st April 2019. The contract was delivered jointly in partnership by BCHA and Julian House, delivering 150 nights of safe, supportive accommodation for those sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough. A key aim of SafeSleep was to prevent the loss of life, reducing rough sleeping to as near to zero as possible, whilst also having an impact on antisocial behaviour; 188 people accessed the nightly accommodation over the five months with an average of 26 people per night, peaking at 42 people staying on the 3rd January 2018. The other main focus was to provide longer-term solutions, offering tailored support to move people into more suitable, sustainable accommodation; 56 people moved into longer term accommodation over the project period.

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### Impact of RECOOP

With prison sentences getting longer, more people are growing old behind bars. People aged 60 and over are the fastest growing age group in the prison estate. There are now more than triple the number there were 16 years ago. (MOJ 2018)*

This year RECOOP has seen steady growth in the number of individuals arriving in our services resigned to the fact that they will die in prison. We continue to consult with our service users, adapt and develop our services and support offer to reflect this stark impact for those we’re working with.

In Devon RECOOP trained 49 prisoners to volunteer as Buddies with 29 receiving their newly developed bereavement and end of life care modules. At one point in the year RECOOP’s Buddies were helping 86 individuals with support plans.

Our new commercial services including the Buddy training are now available nationally on the new Prison Education Framework Dynamic Purchasing System.

Both the HMP Eastwood Park (female) and HMP Leyhill (male) contracts were won back for a further 3 years in 2018 (£100K annually).

During 2018, 675 prisoners over 50 years of age (males and female) used RECOOP services on 34,366 occasions. We introduced and brought in 166 specialist and supportive guest speakers and trained up 131 prisoner volunteers who provided 1313 hours of support.


**Working as a Buddy has helped me put everything back in perspective, it’s given me Life! I never knew that I could feel this good about myself just by helping others. Thank you. (Anon, RECOOP Buddy)**
Impact of New Directions

August 2019 marked a year since BCHA’s New Directions began, a programme with the aim of introducing new employment opportunities to adults over 25 years old. Funded by JP Morgan and run in partnership with Dorset Engineering and Manufacturing Cluster (Dorset EMC), New Directions focuses on growth employment sectors particularly engineering, manufacturing and production.

During its first year, between 2018-2019 New Directions has had 241 referrals, had 156 participants enrolled to its Skills Academy, delivered 98 accredited qualifications, resulting in 36 job outcomes and 5 participants taking on voluntary roles.

Impact of Hospital to Home

We’ve all heard of ‘bed blocking’ – the problem of hospital beds being taken up with people well enough to be discharged but with nowhere suitable to go. Plymouth’s Hospital Discharge Service was introduced in 2013 to help to address the problem, providing access to appropriate information, services and support to enable a safe, prompt discharge from hospital. Staff liaise with the hospital when patients with identified issues with their housing are admitted; as patients are nearing a discharge date the team will put measures in place to ensure there is appropriate accommodation and access to services to reduce the risk of readmission.

For the first six months of the service, 23 patients referred to the Hospital Discharge Service were readmitted within 28 days of exiting the service, requiring a further 66 bed days in hospital in total. For the last six months, only 11 were readmitted with a reduction in bed days to 28 days. In 2018-2019 the Hospital Discharge Service received 235 referrals, helping people to leave hospital more quickly with suitable accommodation and support.

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89% increase in their confidence

97% increase in their motivation following engagement with BCHA Employability and Skills Services.

A total of 883 qualifications/accreditations were delivered by BCHA’s Employability and Skills programmes in 2018/19.

Impact of our services

2018-2019

241 referrals made to New Directions since April 2018.

170 referrals were made for the Horticulture Level 1 course at the New Leaf Allotment; 49 people achieved their qualification.

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A key aspect of BCHA's business plan is to build 'Homes of Choice'. Throughout 2018-2019 BCHA has had several developments, each designed to provide a positive impact on our customers and UK housing. These include:

Move-On Scheme, Yeovil: With funding provided by Homes England and South Somerset District Council, BCHA acquired five two-bed houses and flats. These will provide much needed, affordable, shared accommodation for people moving on from our support services within the town. The Move-On Scheme allows customers to gain independence by managing their own home, and giving them the opportunity to make long term plans for their future.

Prospect Farm, Swanage: Prospect Farm is a redevelopment on former farmland. BCHA is working in partnership with Bayview Developments and Sovereign Housing Group to provide two shared-ownership two-bed family homes and five general needs flats (four two-bed flats and one one-bed). The site brings much-needed affordable-rent accommodation.

NHSE Bungalow Scheme, Poole: BCHA has worked with Poole (now BCP) Council's Adult Social Care team to acquire two two-bed bungalows (now called 'Suitable Homes'). The NHSE Capital Grant provided significant funding to support extra care scheme will deliver real quality of life improvements where individuals have better housing opportunities to develop independence skills and increased community connection. This development is due to complete in October 2019.

Tith Barn, Exeter: BCHA is working alongside Aster at Tith Barn, a redevelopment of 300 homes being built in Exeter. BCHA's 12 purpose-built flats, due to be completed by the end of November 2019, will expand the supported housing properties available in the area. The two ground-floor flats will be for general-needs customers, adapted for wheelchairs.

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BCHA has produced a full set of consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2019. An extract from these Group accounts is set out below. A copy of the full set of our financial statements is available upon written application to the Company Secretary at BCHA's Registered Office.

Achieving Value | The year in figures

BCHA has invested £2.1m in the overall maintenance and improvement of our customers' properties during 2018-19.

How Street, Plymouth: With Plymouth City Council, BCHA has been developing 31 one-bed flats specifically designed to meet the needs of people with medium-level learning disabilities. These include a communal reception area and overnight staff accommodation. The individual flats within the supported extra care scheme will deliver real quality of life improvements where individuals have better housing opportunities to develop independence skills and increased community connection. This development is due to complete in October 2019.

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Our board of management

Michael Wood, Chair | Dylan Phillips, Vice Chair | Gillian Downey
Paul Dyer | Melanie Earnshaw | Rodger Hawkyard | Julie Leigh
Gerry Moore | Dee O’Neill | Sally Reay | Jonathan Rickard
Ann Parramore (Appointed April 2019)

Retirees
Michael Butcher

Thank you to the Trustees of the BCHA group

Help with housing, learning and living
Call 01202 410 500 | Email enquiries@bcha.org.uk
St Swithun’s House, 21 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BH1 3NS

Find a way forward. bcha.org.uk