

2023-2027

**Bromford.**

# **Strategy**

**Who  
we  
are.**

We are a housing association – one that owns and provides 46,000 homes for people who can't access market housing; has individual relationships with more than 110,000 customers; has a strong balance sheet and plans to build 11,000 homes by 2030. All of this is only possible because of our 1,800 dedicated colleagues.

# Why we get up in the morning

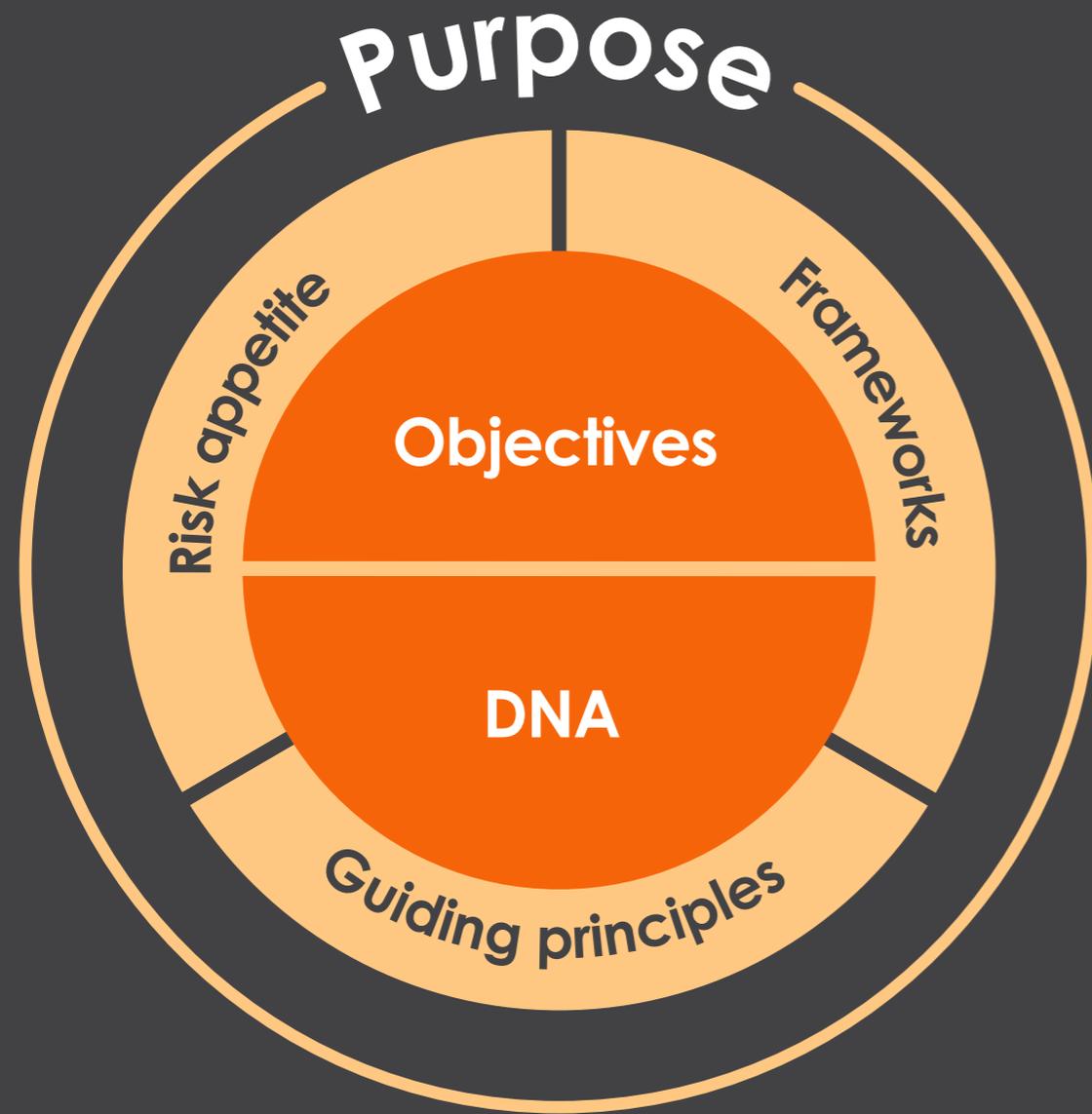
We believe that clarity of purpose is critical. Without it we will fall short of what is possible.

We take a simple view that nothing is more important to any individual or a family than their home. It's a matter of social justice that everyone should have a home that is safe, secure, and affordable. We exist to provide such homes. With the right home, people can achieve great things, not only for themselves but for wider society too.

We provide quality, affordable homes. But we care about the people who live in them too. We want each of them to be able to achieve their goals. This will be different for each customer. It could be by gaining a qualification, securing a new job, or buying a home. For some, just leaving their front door and meeting new people could be massive. Put simply, we want people to thrive.

**That's why our purpose is unchanged...**

**We invest in homes and relationships so people can thrive.**



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# Understanding the lead up to this strategy period

At Bromford we think it is important to understand the current operating environment and seek to understand the likely key themes of the future. But it is also important to understand the journey that we've been on over the past few years to inform future strategy.

We have invested considerable resources into creating a platform for the rest of the 2020s in line with a clear operating model.

We've integrated three businesses and created a sector leading technology platform while at the same time investing further in our neighbourhood coaching approach. It is important for our customers that we provide both a technological and face-to-face way of operating.

We're clear on what we aspire to be good at and what we also think others are better at. As a result of this, and to simplify the business, we have exited most of our non-core business streams including student accommodation and will complete the exit from market rent at the start of this strategy.

We're clear on our area of operation. We've exited from 11 local authorities where we had few homes and others were better placed to serve our customers. This enables us to create strong relationships across our more focused area of operation.



*Pictured: Jessica and Poppy Fleming*

# The key strategic shifts

This strategy sets our course not just for the next four years but for many years to come.

We make a number of strategic shifts in this strategy but the following two are key.

Firstly, this strategy sees us shift from just focusing on our homes to understanding the wider environment where our customers and future customers live. While we will not depart from our core business, we will seek to better understand the employment trends, educational performance, and health provision in the places where we invest. Why? Because if we want our customers to thrive, the environment where our homes are located really matters.

Likewise, when it comes to regeneration, we'll still be ensuring we improve the quality of the homes we provide, but we'll also consider wider physical and social regeneration. Put simply, we will focus on place, getting even more tailored towards the needs and aspirations of the communities in which we work, as we recognise that one size does not fit all, and indeed each place has its own personality.

Secondly, we will focus more on scale and impact, stepping into our size and bringing our significant influence and resources together to help current and future customers and colleagues to thrive, while creating or regenerating whole places. We will also use our technology platform and the increased agility of our ways of working to make a step change in the impact and speed of our delivery.

Both will only be possible by further developing our culture and DNA to ensure we remain an ambitious, modern business that attracts and retains the very best people to work with us.



# Our customers

Our customers are the people who live in our homes for rent or shared ownership. They are also those who rent our garages and our commercial buildings and those buying one of our homes.

We provide homes for people of all ages from 16 to 100. They all have different life experiences and want different things for themselves and their families. But all of them want a home where they feel safe and secure, can make friends, have a sense of purpose, and achieve their goals and aspirations.

Our customers live in 39 local authority areas. We have concentrations of customers in parts of a number of these, but over half our customers live in four areas – South Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury, Cotswold, and Lichfield. We consider these to be our big four.

*Pictured: Moe Hunter and Daniel Buckley*

# Our view of the world

The period of this strategy looks set to include significant economic, political and environmental challenges, at international, national and sector levels, all of which may impact our customers.

The relatively benign economic environment of the last half of the last decade is well behind us. Instead we are facing into very challenging economic headwinds and we know that rising prices, economic uncertainty, and periods of recession hit those on the lowest incomes the hardest.

As a housing association we are a long-term business. Certainty and confidence in the government's rental settlement, help us to plan our investment in new and existing homes. We shouldn't take either for granted.

The digital revolution is likely to speed up further. Our customers' expectations about the convenience, visibility, personalisation and responsiveness of services will continue to rise and they will expect the same from us.

Recruiting and retaining great people will continue to be a challenge. Brexit and the end of free movement, an ageing population, tighter immigration controls generally, and skills shortages will all play their part.

The aftermath of Grenfell, the social housing White Paper, and the spotlight on damp and disrepair in social housing, have all shone a light on how some in social housing are treated and voiceless. Residents are rightly demanding better and stronger regulation and the Tenant Satisfaction Measures and new standards will all play their part in ensuring they get it.

But there will be many opportunities too and our role is to provide clarity of purpose, set out our plan and anticipate and respond to the operating environment as we deliver it.



# Our DNA

Our DNA runs through everything that we do. It was developed by colleagues in 2018 to capture what they thought makes us special. In 2022 we held 20 workshops with colleagues from across the business to find out if the DNA still reflected the Bromford culture. Over 300 colleagues took part and they agreed overwhelmingly that it did. But they thought we could make it even better by emphasising some elements more strongly.

Colleagues wanted to see even more collaboration across teams, greater empowerment, and a continued focus on inclusivity. That's why as part of this strategy we'll be working to align our DNA

much more closely to our ways of working. We'll be introducing squads which will bring diverse talent together in small cross functional teams to bring new skills to Bromford and focus on delivering additional value to customers. As part of our place-based focus, we'll be putting greater emphasis on the skills and talents available in the communities where we work and bringing them together to enable us all to thrive.

This continued development of our unique culture will ensure our capabilities match our strategic ambition.



“  
Sometimes resolving even the smallest repair on the surface can have the biggest impact on our customers lives. This really motivates me to continue pushing for service improvements in the way we operate.

Luke Tomlinson, repairs manager



We are customer obsessive, it's in our DNA...

# Our core business

We describe core business as the primary activities that define Bromford and the main reason for which we exist. We will deliver our core business across all our operating geography. There are other value adding activities that we will only consider in places where we have a concentration of homes. If we deliver these activities, we are likely to do so in partnership and will only do so where they strengthen our core business.

Having this clarity throughout the organisation enables us to reach decisions more quickly about which opportunities or initiatives we want to pursue and from which ones we will walk away. We are clear that we will continue to deliver our core business activities everywhere, and even when times get tough.

Our core business remains unchanged for this strategy. We have made small changes to our value adding activities and non-core business but we remain committed to not entering into any new non-core business.

## Core business

- **Management of social and affordable housing**
- **Maintenance of social and affordable housing and associated facilities including garages**
- **Neighbourhood coaching**
- **Development of social and affordable rented homes**
- **Development of shared ownership homes**

## Value adding activities

- New supported or specialist housing for the elderly or disabled
- Investment in health, wellbeing, employability or education initiatives
- Properties for sale as part of a mixed income mixed tenure scheme – including retirement living
- Market sale simply for profit

## Non-core business

- Housing related support contracts
- Market rent
- Social care or care homes
- Commercial units

# Strategic map

To enable people to thrive and to deliver the Bromford strategy, building and maintaining great relationships is so important. That's why we have a focussed geographical area in which we work. Following a review, our current operating area will remain, the 39 local authority areas including those within the West Midlands and West of England Combined Authorities.

In our big four areas we are the main provider of social housing. Many of the citizens of these places who have low pay, reduced educational and health outcomes, and greater experience of the care and criminal justice systems are our customers too. Others rightly have expectations of us and the role we can play to support these citizens achieve their aspirations and thrive. We intend to live up to them.

Directly related to our shift to scale, place and influence, we have a goal to be the number one developer of affordable homes in Gloucestershire and throughout the wider M5 corridor. We will continue to be a major developer of new homes across a wider area too including in both the West Midlands and West of England Combined Authority regions.

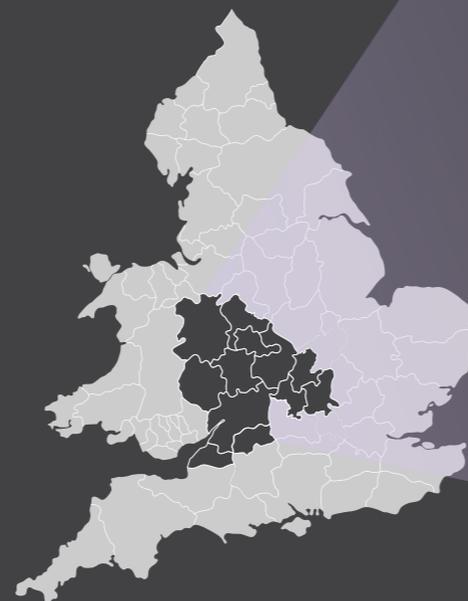
Any growth from merger or acquisition would not necessarily need to be in our current operating area. Instead, a wider assessment will be undertaken including most importantly the impact on delivering our purpose.



The big four  
(Lichfield, Tewkesbury,  
Cotswold, South Gloucestershire)



Main offices



# From purpose to action

## Investing for impact

The places in which we live and work are what build our relationships. A shared sense of place can unite us and make us stronger as a community.

Our strategic shift to a place-based approach seeks to make the most of these connections. By considering any investment we make within the context of the whole community and by collaborating with different partners, we aim to make a lasting difference to people's lives.

Whatever Bromford does today has an impact for years to come so it's important we get our investment decisions right. We'll use a range of data and evidence so that what we build now and, in the future, creates new opportunities, promotes social and economic wellbeing, and reduces inequality over the long term.

## Investing in homes

We want all our customers to live in homes that are safe, that are affordable to run and which they can be proud of.

We'll be clear about which of our existing homes can meet this benchmark and we'll continue to invest in them to bring them up to our home standard. For others, we'll have plans for disposal or regeneration and know how we'll keep them decent in the meantime.

During the life of this strategy, we'll work with customers to explore how we can better tailor the home standard, and our investment, around individual customer aspiration rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

We will also move to a far more proactive maintenance service that identifies emerging problems before a customer needs to contact us and puts them in control of their home.

## Investing in relationships

The most important relationships are the ones with our customers. We particularly value the relationship with our involved customers who give so much through our Customer and Communities Influence Network and Local Influence Networks.

We cannot deliver on our purpose without strong relationships between our colleagues, customers, and partners. So we are raising the bar on relationships that build strategic capability: being the organisation that people are excited to work with and for.

We'll be one of the go-to organisations people think about when housing, place and investing for impact comes up – be that central government, the investor community, or the wider social purpose sector. We'll be known for solving problems and spotting opportunities that others don't see, with Bromford as an influencer locally and regionally. We'll continue to look beyond housing and the UK for the best ideas. We will think big but act local.

We'll continue to grow in a sustainable way, but growth will be about where we can develop the very best relationships as that is the way we can best enable our customers to thrive.

## Investing so people can thrive

All our investment is ultimately about enabling people to thrive. This means different things to different people. Each customer is unique so we recognise that different customers will need a different relationship.

We won't do things to or for people, but we'll empower them to get what they want out of life. We'll focus on removing barriers or interventions that get in the way of customers doing things for themselves.

We'll take a more proactive approach to helping our customers live in the right home for them as their needs and aspirations change. We'll improve pathways through our different types of homes and tenures and ensure they reflect the current and future customers in each place.

We won't try and do everything. Our place-based approach means we are all about making connections - so we'll work with others who can add value for our customers.

Equally our people have different skills and capabilities, and we want to be an employer where colleagues can thrive and fulfil their ambitions.

# We have eight objectives for the end of 2027

These eight objectives will turn our purpose into action over the life of this strategy. They demonstrate how we will invest in homes and relationships so people can thrive.

- Place-based working
- Relationships that support customer aspiration
- Our move to scale
- Home standard - closing the gap
- Proactive maintenance and compliance
- Agile working to solve problems
- Place-based pipeline of talent
- Known as a leader and influencer



*Pictured: The Regan family*

# Place-based working

## We operate in a place-based way

Why this is important	Enablers	Measures
<p>Communities have different strengths and needs so the way we invest in homes and relationships will differ from place to place.</p> <p>For our customers to thrive the communities they are part of need to thrive socially and economically.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the customer thrive index (2023-24)</li> <li>• Place-based communities and workspaces model designed (2023-24)</li> <li>• Place-based model pilot (2023-24)</li> <li>• Place-based model implementation (2024-25)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer advocacy (85%)</li> <li>• Customer thrive index (74.2%)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">All measures to be met by 2027 unless otherwise stated</p>

# Relationships that support customer aspiration

We have a relationship with each of our customers that supports ambition and aspiration

Why this is important	Enablers	Measures
<p>Thriving means something different for each of our customers.</p> <p>We want customers to have agency and the relationship that best suits their circumstances and aspirations.</p> <p>We want a modern customer engagement approach that is best in sector and supports our unique relationship model.</p> <p>We want customers to feel they have the right home and the right relationship to give them the platform to thrive as their needs and aspirations change over time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personas and customer segmentation (2023-24)</li> <li>• Customer engagement approach</li> <li>• Dynamic coaching model developed to support place-based working (2023-24)</li> <li>• Develop proactive home pathway plans to enable customers to meet their changing needs and aspirations (2024-25)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer thrive index (74.2%)</li> <li>• We directly let 25% of our homes</li> <li>• A number of positive pathway moves each year [to be determined]</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">All measures to be met by 2027 unless otherwise stated</p>

# Our move to scale

The way we invest in new and existing homes, and consider regeneration opportunities, maximises social and economic impact on our places

Why this is important	Enablers	Measures
<p>We can make the biggest impact on place by investing at scale.</p> <p>Some communities need more, or different, investment than others to enable our current and future customers to thrive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the thrive index (2023-24)</li> <li>• Place-based strategic property investment and growth model and how we make decisions (2023-24)</li> <li>• In-house construction team established in a second region (2024-25)</li> <li>• Key supplier and other third parties' investment into places - social value and sustainability (2024-25)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We'll put a spade in the ground on our first new community (2026)</li> <li>• 25% of our new homes pipeline in large-scale new communities (2035)</li> <li>• £10m community investment generated from third party relationships</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">All measures to be met by 2027 unless otherwise stated</p>

# Closing the home standard gap

Any gap in the customer experience of living in our existing or new homes is always reducing

Why this is important	Enablers	Measures
<p>We want all our customers to live in homes that are safe, they are proud of and which they can afford to run.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continual evolution of the Bromford home standard (6 monthly)</li> <li>Understand the actual energy consumption in our customers' homes and use this to inform investment decisions (2023-24)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any gap in the customer satisfaction with our existing or new homes is reducing (and &lt;5%)</li> <li>All our homes will be EPC C (2028)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">All measures to be met by 2027 unless otherwise stated</p>

# Move to proactive maintenance

We provide a proactive home maintenance and compliance service to our customers that reduces unnecessary intervention

Why this is important	Enablers	Measures
<p>We want to reduce cost and create more value for our customers.</p> <p>We need to better understand our homes and predict what we need to do when something doesn't work, or the property isn't performing.</p> <p>We want fewer visits to our homes and a reduction in customers having to contact us.</p> <p>We want to support customers to do as much as they can for themselves and give them the data to better run their homes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical process re-engineering (2024-25)</li> <li>• Connected homes plan</li> <li>• Data-driven proactive maintenance pilot (2024-25)</li> <li>• Customer experience re-design (2024-25)</li> <li>• Digital contact and self-serve expansion supported by coaching (2024-25)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our ratio of reactive to planned spend is 35/65.</li> <li>• 50% of customer transactions are digital</li> <li>• Reduction in failure demand [to be determined]</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">All measures to be met by 2027 unless otherwise stated</p>

# Agile working to solve problems

Our ways of working are agile, ensuring we solve problems and realise opportunities in a joined-up way

Why this is important	Enablers	Measures
<p>We need to innovate and continuously improve how we operate, to ensure we are efficient and maximise value for our colleagues and customers.</p> <p>We want Bromford to be an organisation people point to when talking about organisational capability for collaboration and pace at scale.</p> <p>We want to have iterative and agile ways of working that mean we never need to do another large transformation programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of cross functional change methods (2023-24)</li> <li>• Community-based knowledge sharing and change delivery (2023-24)</li> <li>• Critical process re-design (2024-25)</li> <li>• Dynamic budgeting (2023-24) and real time reporting (2025-26)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced cost to serve [to be determined]</li> <li>• Colleague engagement (80%)</li> <li>• Our overhead costs have reduced to 10%</li> <li>• Customer advocacy (85%)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">All measures to be met by 2027 unless otherwise stated</p>

# Place-based pipeline of talent

## Our place-based operating model builds a pipeline of talent

Why this is important	Enablers	Measures
<p>Our communities are filled with talent, and we can support their transition into the workforce.</p> <p>We have an ageing workforce in some areas.</p> <p>The employment market is competitive, and traditional recruitment is slow and expensive.</p> <p>The skills we need are changing and employment patterns are changing.</p> <p>As a placeshaper we should build stronger links with the education and employment sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce plan to meet future needs (2023-24)</li> <li>• Inclusive attraction routes to reach local talent (2023-24)</li> <li>• Dynamic coaching model developed to support place-based working (2023-24)</li> <li>• Partnerships with skills providers and academies to provide pipeline of talent in our places (2024-25)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time to recruit our place-based roles (under 30 days)</li> <li>• 1,000 customers coached to secure work or training</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">All measures to be met by 2027 unless otherwise stated</p>

# Known as a leader and influencer

Our investment in homes and relationships ensures we are known as a leader and influencer inside and outside of sector, ensuring we are still thriving as a business in 2050 and beyond

Why this is important	Enablers	Measures
<p>Over time our investors and key stakeholders are likely to be working with fewer partners.</p> <p>To be around the top table, the impact of investing in Bromford must make a difference that others can't demonstrate.</p> <p>We want Bromford and our customers to thrive in a challenging environment and into the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic relationship mapping – national, regional and local (2023-24)</li> <li>• Strategic Relationship Management Plan (2023-24)</li> <li>• Embed the community wellbeing index as a measure of impact (2023-24)</li> <li>• Communications/Public Relations (PR) plan (2024-25)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to be a top 10 developer of new affordable homes</li> <li>• Colleague engagement (80%)</li> <li>• Sector leading dual credit rating</li> </ul> <p>All measures to be met by 2027 unless otherwise stated</p>

# Risk appetite and capacity

Effective risk management is at the heart of our business and has an important part to play in delivering our purpose. We have well-established risk management processes and control frameworks which guide and support how our colleagues work, behave and the decisions they make.

Put simply, our Board defines the type and amount of risk we are prepared to assume as we deliver our strategy, plans and run our day-to-day operations. We monitor and review this risk appetite, and on an annual basis set KPIs and KRIs that ensure we remain within the parameters set by our frameworks. This provides clarity to colleagues and key stakeholders on the way we do business, enabling informed individual decision making and empowerment, and a clear framework for considering risk and capacity when formulating strategic and tactical business decisions.

## Frameworks

We have three overarching frameworks at Bromford which guide all our strategic decisions over the life of our strategy. The three are Customer, Financial and Sustainability. The frameworks are then supplemented each year with our key performance indicators. The golden rule and the aspiration act as our tramlines for each metric for the life of this strategy with the golden rule being the level we will never drop below over the next four years.

### Financial framework

Rule	Description	Golden Rule	Target Range
1	Overall operating margin	>25%	28-40%
2	Social housing operating margin	>30%	33-45%
3	Interest cover (EBITDA – MRI / net interest paid)	>1.5	1.7-2.5
4	Asset gearing	<50%	35-45%
5	Liquidity ratio	>1.5	1.8-2.3
6	Secured funding headroom	>10%	15-30%
7	Level of market sale WIP (work in progress) (includes land, market development and shared ownership)	<£167m	£30-150m
8	Sales (land, market development and shared ownership)	<30%	10-27%

### Customer framework

Rule	Description	Golden Rule	Target Range
1	Landlord compliance	>99.97%	100%
2	Customer advocacy	>70%	80-90%
3	Percentage of live repair jobs less than 30 days old	>60%	80-90%
4	Complaints per 1000 homes	<68	58-35

### Sustainability framework

Rule	Description	Current	Golden Rule	Aspiration
1E	Carbon reduction: total scope 1,2,3 CO2 emissions (tonnes per home)	3.3	4.00	3.00
2S	Housing the homeless: proportion of our rented homes let to the homeless	29%	15%	30%
3G	Regulatory rating on governance	G1	G1	G1

# Guiding principles

Our principles are for everyone at Bromford. They help keep us all on the same page.



## Build relationships

We are an organisation obsessive about the relationship we have with our customers. But the relationships between colleagues and with partners and stakeholders are also really important. We build purposeful relationships that demonstrate impact.



## Think community

We think community first rather than services. We focus on what we do best – homes and relationships – and bring other partners on board to work with the community to solve other problems.



## Develop trust

A successful relationship requires us to trust our customers and our customers to trust us. We believe that our customers have the same strengths and aspirations as anybody else and we never hold them back, talk them down or stand in the way of their ambition. Our services are designed to enable them to have the relationship they choose.



## Seamless service

Our customers expect easy to access services and seamless experiences across both in person and digital services. We eliminate reactive or wasteful approaches through bold use of technology, process design and organisation. We ask all our colleagues, customers, and partners to work with us to identify smarter ways of running our business.



## Places, not projects

We deliver places not projects and think strategically about where we invest, what a community aspires to be, and how we can help. We believe that our resource should flex in different places. One size does not fit all.



## Invest for impact

Our approach to investment and procurement secures social and economic impact and delivers a better deal for people and the planet.



## Data driven

We will develop our data and insight to give us a better understanding of the way Bromford operates and the external environment in which we are working. We will use this insight to inform our decision making, to improve how efficiently we deliver our services, and to ensure we are providing services our customers want and need now and in the future.



## One Bromford

We are a business based on teamwork, collaboration, and agility: continually striving to improve our customer and colleague experience while demonstrating our impact with evidence of how people are thriving.

2023-2027

**Bromford.**