



**OUR 2023 -2026
BUSINESS STRATEGY**

WELCOME

When we launched our last strategy the COVID-19 pandemic was just taking hold and although we knew that it would be tough, we didn't know the full extent, or how it would transform the way we live in the long term.

The pandemic has changed the world of work; not only how and where people work but also why. People asked themselves 'what is important to me and what am I here for?' And we have taken the opportunity to do the same thing as an organisation.

Our purpose has not changed. In this current cost of living crisis, where energy and household costs are at the highest they've been in years, we believe that providing Homes are a Foundation for Life is vital. But we need to make sure that we are focussing on the right things to achieve this in this new social and economic climate.

This strategy is about our people, our staff and customers, where their voices shape what we do for the next three years. We asked staff and customers to tell us what is important to them, what is and isn't working, and what our priorities should be.

We've taken three years of customer perception and transaction surveys giving us over 150,000 responses, and insights from staff workshops, surveys and roadshows to set the priorities of this strategy.

The feedback we've received tells us there is a lot to be proud of, but there is still more to do.

This strategy focusses on the three areas we know we need to invest in to meet our objectives and achieve our vision.

We will invest in:

- PEOPLE
- HOMES
- PARTNERSHIPS

PEOPLE

Our customers will be front and centre.

We will build relationships with our customers based on transparency, fairness and respect, where they can rely on us to deliver the services they need. A key part of this will be the Putting our Citizen's First Programme, which will focus on improving systems, process and procedure and crucially break down barriers to improve how we work across departments.



We will improve how we communicate, making sure it is a two-way street between us and customers, and between teams to ensure we deliver brilliant services. We know we can't achieve this without investing in our staff so we will be looking at what we can do to make sure staff are motivated, trained and rewarded for the work they do.

HOMES

Investing in our homes is not just about building new, but about improving what we already have and taking those tough decisions to remove properties that are no longer fit for purpose. At Citizen we're more than just about putting a roof over someone's head, we're a part of the community. Sometimes this means huge investment in regeneration or development, or it could mean ensuring homes are comfortable to live in. This investment benefits the current household, future households, and the community by helping to reduce carbon emissions, improve the look and feel of the area, and most importantly make sure our homes are safe and warm.

PARTNERSHIPS

We know that we can deliver more if we do it in partnership. We have seen some real successes with grant funding and partnership work over the last strategy and we want to do even more. We also want to use our partnerships to push regional and national decision making to benefit our customers..

A handwritten signature of Kevin Rodgers, Chief Executive.

Kevin Rodgers,
Chief Executive

A handwritten signature of Colin Dennis, Chair.

Colin Dennis,
Chair



HOMES

We will make sure our homes are safe, comfortable and sustainable for our customers.



We will build homes to meet the needs of our region.



PEOPLE

We will listen to our customers and focus on the things that matter the most.



We will be an employer of choice and invest in our people.



PARTNERS

We will work with our partners to make a positive difference to our customers and communities.





OBJECTIVE

We will make sure our homes are safe, comfortable and sustainable for our customers

We will make investment decisions for our existing homes to improve the quality for our customers and create long-term financial stability for Citizen as an organisation.

Homes are more than just bricks and mortar, we will also continue to invest in our homes and neighbourhoods to make sure customers feel safe and secure.

Projects

- The building safety plan
- The asset management strategy
- The sustainability strategy

Our strategy outcomes

- We will carry out an annual safety check in all tenants' homes to assure them that their safety is our priority and improve the safety, comfort and energy performance of our homes through our investment programme.
- Communal spaces will be safe and well-maintained, all of them will be regularly inspected and we'll make it easier for customers to report concerns.
- We will develop a Building Safety Residents Engagement Plan, so customers are involved in the decisions made about building safety. We will use My Account and electronic notice boards to give customers up to date and accurate information about building safety.
- We will reduce Citizen's carbon footprint by making changes to our homes, offices and vehicles that will support the government's target to reduce carbon emissions by 57% by 2030.



- We will make the information about our homes and properties and how we will be investing in them more transparent and accessible for staff and customers. This will help us make better decisions about resources and giving customers accurate information about their home.
- We will establish an environmental performance baseline against which we can measure our progress against our own targets and benchmark nationally.
- We will complete a programme to install SMART meters in communal areas.



A person should feel safe in their own home. We want to create places where someone can relax with family and friends.

OBJECTIVE

We will build homes to meet the needs of our region

Our ambitious development programme commits us to helping meet the ever-increasing need for the right homes in the right areas. We don't just focus on the number of new homes we build but the quality and affordability of the homes we provide.

We will make sure all of our existing homes are safe, secure and places that people want to continue to live in by enhancing and redeveloping the homes and places that need it most.

Projects

- The development strategy
- The regeneration programme

Outcomes

- We will build 1,650 new affordable homes and 300 homes for outright sale over the next three years. The funds from our home ownership sales are put back into the business to support the aims of this strategy.
- We will demolish blocks that are no longer fit for purpose, including three at Ferrers Close and begin the process of building new homes in Wyken and Spon End that will be warmer, more comfortable and better meet our customers needs.
- We will improve customer satisfaction with new builds by effectively managing defects, bringing quality management services back in-house and implementing Key Stage Inspections.



- We will develop the Citizen Future Homes Standard. This design specification will allow us to build homes that improve living standards to ensure the best product for our customers and wherever possible we will deliver homes that are Zero Carbon ready. These homes can reduce carbon emissions by up to 75-80% when compared to a standard new build home.



**We are as committed to building
new homes for those that need
them as we are to improving the
places our customers already live.**





OBJECTIVE

We will listen to our customers and focus on the things that matter the most

We want a great relationship with our customers, so we will build trust with them by being clear and honest. Our customers can rely on us - we will communicate and deliver clear standards of service to them, in a way that is simple and accessible so they can hold us to account.

Serving our customers is the most important part of our job. Where customers are telling us we are getting it wrong we will listen and improve. We will engage with our customers to understand what they need from us and use that knowledge to shape our services.

Projects

- Customer communications strategy
- Putting our Citizen's First
- Customer experience strategy

Outcomes

- We will deliver our customer communications strategy by developing an improved website and new customer magazine as well as improving our current communication channels to make finding information or getting in touch with us easier, faster and more accessible for customers.
- The Putting our Citizen's First programme will help us to be 'Brilliant at the Basics'. We will make better use of IT systems and use data and insight to make informed decisions about how we deliver services.
- We will simplify processes, improve communication across teams and put customers at the heart of collaborative decision making.
- We will review our repairs and neighbourhood's services processes, so customers speak to the right person first time and we'll increase opportunities for customers to self-serve. This will make us quicker, more efficient and give customers greater choice and flexibility about how they choose to access our services.



- We will provide customers with accurate and timely information about the services they receive and how much these will cost, improving the quality and accuracy of information about services charges for 27,000 households.
- We will undertake annual wellbeing checks for all tenants to make sure they are accessing all the services and support they need to maintain a successful tenancy.
- Customer requests will be dealt with quicker and we will put in place improved complaints handling for when things don't go right.
- We will review the accessibility of our services checking that translation services are accurate and add value for customers.



Our strategy goes back to basics to focus on getting our services for customers delivered brilliantly.

OBJECTIVE

We will be an employer of choice and invest in our people

To deliver the best services for our customers we need employees who are passionate, committed and engaged. We will create a culture where every individual feels comfortable and confident to be themselves and the wellbeing of our employees is a priority. We will work together as one team and embrace our Citizen values.

We will attract and retain the best and brightest professionals, support them to achieve their potential, and reward and recognise them for the fantastic work they do.

Projects

- Staff engagement plan
- People strategy
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy

Outcomes

- We will communicate regularly, clearly and consistently to all staff and relaunch an intranet that's up-to-date and informative to support a culture of collaboration across the business.
- We will develop a regular and consistent way to update all teams on messages and information from across the business that meets the needs of operational and office-based teams.
- We will review the job evaluation methodology and develop and implement a revised pay and reward framework across Citizen that also addresses the current pay gaps.
- We will use our Talent Management Programme to retain high performing individuals and identify our future leaders.
- We will create training and development opportunities to support employees to meet their aspirations as well as meeting the needs of the business.



We want all staff to feel valued, to work together as one team, knowing that they are making a difference to our customers.





OBJECTIVE

- We will work with our partners to make a positive difference to our customers and communities.

We know that we can deliver more if we collaborate and work in partnerships.

We will work with all of our partners to provide services to our customers and tackle homelessness so they thrive in a place they can call home.

We will help customers to access the services they need to sustain and maintain their tenancy. This will include providing housing with support for those that need it and enabling customers to move when their current home no longer meets their needs.

We will use our influence to help create better outcomes for our customers and communities, by taking part in conversations on issues that affect them the most.

Projects

- Stakeholder engagement plan
- Proving support services in partnership

Our strategy outcomes

- We will get the maximum amount of added social benefit from our contracts for our customers and communities.
- We will look for opportunities to build partnerships and influence across the region to allow us to develop new homes based on what is needed locally.
- Citizen will be represented at a local, regional and national level to ensure that the needs of our customers and region are represented in key decisions about housing policy.



- We will prevent tenancy breakdowns by providing a tenancy sustainment service that supports customers to live independently and navigate temporary difficulties or crisis and helps to prevent homelessness.
- We will complete a review of each supported housing scheme and develop a plan to consolidate the number of managing agents and support providers we work with.
- We will develop the work we do to tackle homelessness by creating additional units of temporary accommodation and ten more units for the House Project supporting care leavers.
- We will work with Local Authorities to develop and pilot an approach to rightsizing so we can support people to find and move people into homes that better meets their needs.



Citizen already has some great partnerships and we will build on these as well as new ones to deliver the best outcomes for our customers and communities.

MEASURING SUCCESS

We are committed to monitoring how we perform and making sure that we deliver against the objectives set out in this strategy.

This will help us to focus on what is working well and where we need to make improvements.



Customer

- Overall satisfaction with our services and service level satisfaction across our customer transactions.
- Complaints handling, whether they are responded to on time and how many escalate from a first stage.
- Our repairs service, whether we have attended on time and how many repairs are waiting in our live file.
- Our investment programme; have we delivered the number of replacements and upgrades that we committed to.
- Contact handling; how long it takes us to answer a call, whether it goes to the right person the first time and how many customers are enabled to use our online self-serve options.
- Decent homes standard and EPC levels tells us whether customers are living in safe comfortable conditions.

People

- Our overall staff engagement score including how much of our workforce responded.
- Our staff turnover, how successful we are in retaining and promoting staff.
- How effective our recruitment process is at attracting talent.
- Gender and ethnicity pay gaps and how much progress we have made against these.

Compliance

- Mandatory training for all staff to make sure our workforce is competent, capable and professional.
- Gas, fire, electrical, water and lift safety checks including any actions needed to make sure we meet compliance.
- Data and cyber breaches that may threaten our business.
- Accidents or near misses for staff, customers and visitors to make sure we know any risk of harm is identified.

Financial Health

- Value for money metrics including our target to meet a minimum operating margin during the lifetime of this strategy and deliver our commitment to new affordable housing supply and major regeneration schemes.
- Golden rules are set each year for net debt per unit and EBITDA (MRI) to ensure we comfortably meet our external loan covenants and are on target to achieve a minimum operating margin.
- Customer arrears and void loss which tells us how successfully we are at managing our income but also in supporting customers to maintain their tenancies.



We are committed to monitoring how we perform and making sure that we deliver against the objectives set out in this strategy.

LIVING OUR VALUES

We are passionate about our purpose and values. This strategy reflects our values and it is our overriding objective that the work that we do, the experience our customers have and anyone else we work with reflects them.

OUR PURPOSE: TO PROVIDE HOMES THAT ARE A FOUNDATION FOR LIFE

WE ARE BRAVE

We are willing to take on the tough stuff.

We challenge ourselves.

We don't give up.

WE ARE AMBITIOUS

We find solutions.

We aren't afraid to try things out.

We keep learning and improving.

WE ARE HONEST

We take responsibility.

We are realistic.

People trust us to do what we say we will do.

WE ARE CITIZENS

We are committed to our people and places.

We believe everyone has something to give.

We encourage every person to be the best they can be.