

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2019–20



# Chair's Report



I am delighted to be reporting to you in my first year as Chair of PCHA and it would fair to say it has been an extremely interesting year so far!

Firstly, I would like to thank Tracey Downie, the outgoing Chair, for her steady leadership at the helm over the past 5 years and for her unwavering commitment to PCHA over her 9-year term.

The last year has been a significant one for PCHA as we celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, re-structured the organisation to improve our customer service and launched a pilot with Plentific to modernise our repairs service. We were just beginning to see the benefits of the restructure when the country, indeed the world, was hit by Covid-19. Although this happened towards the end of 2019-20, it would be remiss not to acknowledge the enormity of the challenges this has posed, the results of which will have a significant impact on 2020-21 and beyond.

This pandemic has forced us to re-evaluate the way we work and deliver services both in the short and the longer term. This focus has enabled us to make many improvements to the way we engage with our residents and colleagues; these changes are here to stay. It has challenged our thinking, our communication and our previously-held beliefs about the nature of being a community housing association; this is something we are now actively reviewing.





# Chair's Report

We celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> at a fantastic event at the House of Commons and we were delighted to have MP Bob Neill and NHF CEO, Kate Henderson, to help us mark the occasion. The event was well attended by our partners and stakeholders and it was a great way to celebrate those positive partnerships that have contributed to our success over the last 50 years.

We produced a booklet to celebrate with stories from some of our residents about the importance of having a safe and affordable home and achieving this key objective remains at the heart of everything we do. However, we recognise that being a community association is all about the relationships we have, with each other, our residents and our partners.



Our 50th Event at the House of Commons  
Left to right: Karen Cooper, Tracey Downie, Kate Henderson, Cathy McCarthy

I would like to thank the rest of the Board and staff team for all their hard work over the year.

**Cathy McCarthy**  
Chair

# Chief Exec's Report



**“This has been a rollercoaster year for us but we were delighted to celebrate our 50th anniversary with our residents and other stakeholders”**

PCHA is one of the many housing associations that was born on the back of *Cathy Come Home* and a growing realisation that homelessness was a real issue in the 60s. *Cathy Come Home* shows how easily life can change and how quickly things can spiral out of control.

Fifty years on, much has changed but sadly much has not. The housing crisis today is as harrowing as it was in *Cathy Come Home* and many are in unsafe, unsuitable and unaffordable housing, whilst many others simply cannot find a home at all. In London and the South-East the shortage of affordable homes is acute and the reality is that for many on low incomes, private renting and/or buying a home is simply an unachievable dream. The crisis is only likely to be exacerbated by Covid-19.

Understanding the impact social housing can have on people's lives is why at PCHA we are passionate about providing excellent homes and services and making a positive impact in all that we do. This vision was born in 1969 and is every bit as strong today.

I am certainly proof of the impact social housing can have on people's lives as I found myself homeless when I was 21 (and 7 months pregnant with my daughter) and I was lucky enough to have friends who let me sofa surf for a while. Three weeks before I had my daughter Lauren, I was given a flat by Norwich City Council and I will never forget the Housing Officer – Julie Driver – who saved our lives in April 1987. In that rather damp and cold flat that I absolutely loved, I completed my degree with my daughter Lauren in one hand and a pen in the other (no computers or automatic baby rockers then)! The rest, as they say, is history.

Making a positive impact



# Chief Exec's Report

Alongside our formal stakeholder event to celebrate our 50th, in September we held a residents picnic in Crystal Palace Park and it was lovely to spend a gloriously sunny day with residents chatting and learning to juggle!



As you will see in the next pages we were delighted to celebrate 50 years with a booklet and video made with our residents stories as the focus; this reflects our belief that our residents are the heart and soul of everything we do.

During the year we underwent a major restructure to ensure that the services we deliver are more holistic and proactive and I am immensely proud of the team in embracing this vision and making it a reality. Of course with any major change, there is a period of uncertainty and disruption and this has some impact on performance but equally we have seen some amazing work happening in terms of resident support and engagement. This has really been brought to the fore by the impact of Covid-19 in the last couple of months of the year. We had always prided ourselves on our relationship with residents but the pandemic made us think and work differently and the outcome has been a generally improved relationship with residents, something we are committed to building upon.

It has been an incredibly challenging yet positive year and I would like to thank the Board and my amazing staff team for their unswerving support in moving PCHA forward in difficult times.

**Karen Cooper**  
**Chief Executive**



# 50th Celebrations

2019 saw us celebrate our 50th anniversary. PCHA is one of the many housing associations that was born on the back of the docu-drama *Cathy Come Home* and a growing realisation that homelessness was a real issue in the 60s. In 1969 a group of local church members in and around Penge came together with a desire and the commitment to do something about local homelessness and together they formed Penge Churches Housing Association. We are proud to have been providing homes for local people ever since. Over PCHA's history we have been supported and guided by many local people, as shareholders, Friends of PCHA, Staff, Board Members and other partners and we are still here due to their ongoing passion, support and commitment.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019 we held a special event for our partners and stakeholders at the House of Commons to celebrate our 50th. We were very grateful that the event was hosted by Bromley MP, Bob Neill, who gave a speech about the difference community associations like PCHA can make to the local community. We were equally delighted to welcome Kate Henderson, Chief Exec of the National Housing Federation, who talked about our focus on people and the impact the work we do can have on people's lives.



# 50th Celebrations

## 50th booklet

Our residents are at the heart of everything we do and we recognise that people's stories and journeys are all unique. Our booklet and video celebrating the last 50 years shares some of our residents individual stories and what their home means to them. And so we would like to thank our residents, Felicity, Micky, Denise and Mick, Mourad, Lesley, Terry and Jean, Toni and Katherine for sharing their stories—they were all great sports!



## Video

We are very proud of our short film where one of our residents, Felicity, shared her journey about the positive impact being a PCHA resident has had on her life. More importantly, her story illustrates that the housing crisis is not all about rough sleeping, but also about the challenges of living on a low income in London. You can view the film on our website at <https://www.pengechurchesha.org.uk/pcha-50th-annivesary-video>



# Re-shaping the Team

As well as celebrating our 50th anniversary during the year, we had a major shake up of our structure to improve the way we deliver services.

This was in part a response to an ever-changing and challenging political, regulatory and economic environment, along with the social housing green paper and Hackitt review, both of which required us to think differently, especially about resident engagement and health and safety. Crucially we wanted to improve the services we provide to our residents, increase resident engagement, be more proactive and better support residents to sustain their tenancies going forward.

With all this in mind, we spent part of the year reviewing the way we deliver services, and restructuring our team to better deliver those services.

First to mention is the new role of **Resident Support Officer**. At a time when many associations were withdrawing from this kind of support, we recognised the current challenges posed by changes to welfare reform system and the increasing need for debt prevention and advice. More importantly, we understand the stress that this brings to our residents, many of whom are vulnerable. We know that this, along with other housing-related and lifestyle issues can impact upon an person's mental health and/or their ability to sustain their tenancies. The role of Resident Support Officer has been developed to respond to these needs and over the last six months of the year Sam has been supporting about 30 residents to sustain their tenancies.

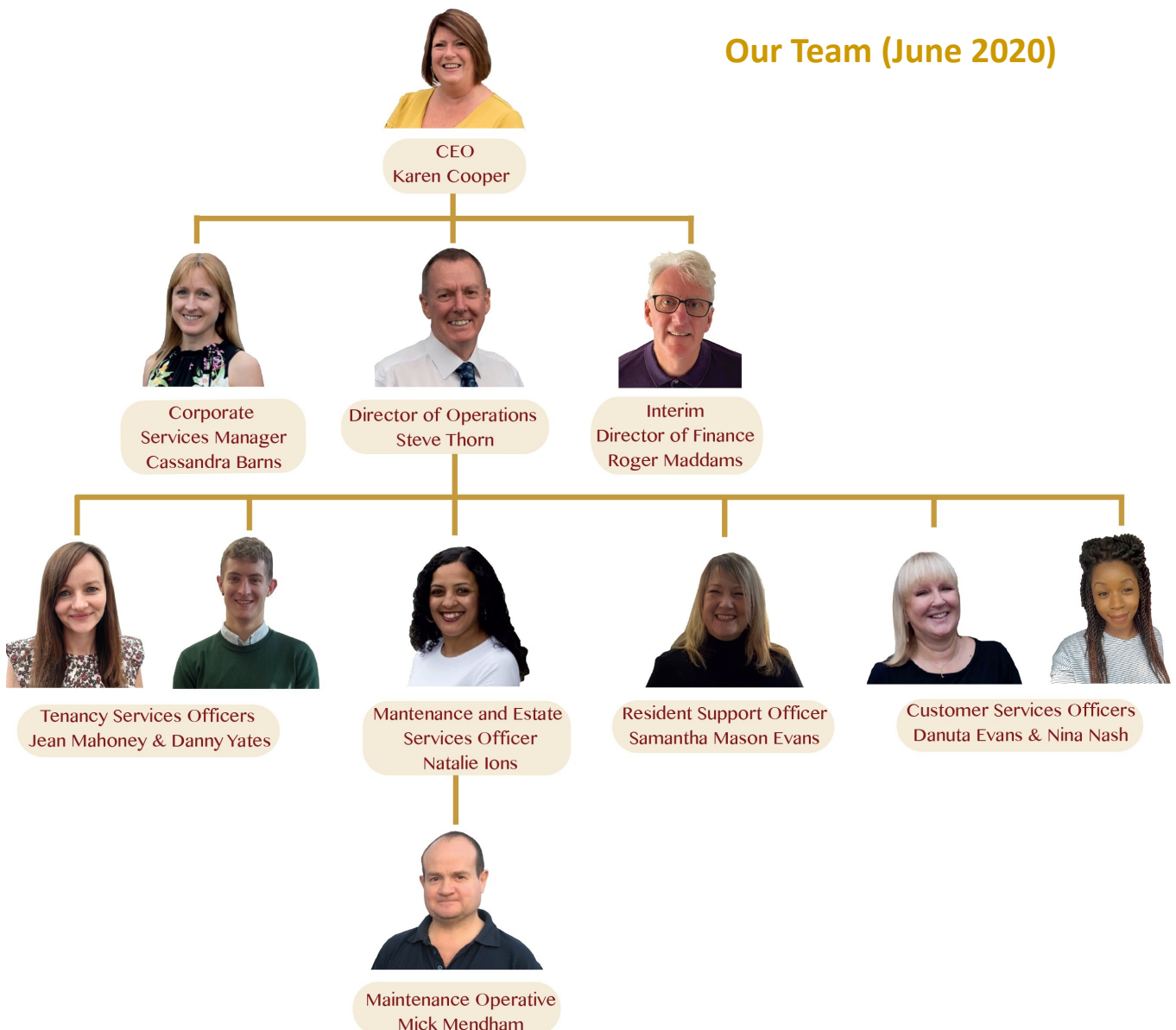
We also recognise that the housing sector needs bright, new, young talent. Individuals who continue to promote the original values and vision of our early social housing pioneers but with the benefit of modern ideas and technology. We were therefore pleased to be able to provide an opportunity to a local graduate by offering a one-year placement within the frontline Operations team as one of our **Tenancy Services Officers**. Danny has been a breath of fresh air and is staying with us a little longer than his original placement!



# The Team

Finally, to ensure a continued focus on customer service and delivery we introduced the new role of **Director of Operations**. Steve heads up our frontline day-to-day services and has a particular focus on health and safety compliance. The team were just settling into their new roles when the pandemic turned everything upside down and meant everyone had to work from home so this was undoubtedly a challenge but one that has enabled us to challenge our service delivery model once again!

## Our Team (June 2020)



# Our Performance



**4.24% arrears**

Two areas crucial to the success of PCHA are the management of our income and assets. With this in mind, I am pleased to report that rent collection rates remained fairly stable throughout the year, although arrears did rise slightly towards year end as the Covid-19 lockdown was implemented. We finished the year at 4.24%, just outside our target of 3.75%.



**28 days void turnaround**

One of the biggest challenges for our customers continues to be the impact of welfare reforms and Universal Credit has undoubtedly tested our staff. With these challenges in mind we recruited a Resident Support Officer, Samantha Mason-Evans, who has assisted 24 residents with various welfare benefit applications. Sam has also worked with residents with other housing relating support interventions and assisted 26 residents to maintain their tenancies by providing targeted advice and signposting.



**Sam Mason-Evans**  
**Resident Support**

Void turnaround times improved steadily throughout the year as we tightened up our processes and worked closely with our contractors to agree timescales and standards. As a result, although slightly outside our agreed target, we achieved an average turnaround time of 28 days.

# Tenancy Services

Anti-social behaviour reports remained relatively low at 15 cases, slightly down from the previous year. Those reports we did receive were mainly low-level nuisance issues, resolved with minimal intervention.

Feedback from our residents is very important to us and we continue to promote our customer service culture amongst our staff. In addition, we carried out some targeted consultation work in South Penge Park and Belvedere Road although our plans to take this work forward have been scuppered somewhat by the pandemic. We will however be continuing with our consultative work as things settle down and some normality returns.

Our strong customer service ethos ensures that dissatisfaction is minimised and we kept complaint numbers down to just 13 informal complaints that we were able to resolve at an early stage. None of these progressed to the formal stage. We are continuing to embed our customer-focused approach and at the same time learning from mistakes when we do get it wrong.



**15 ASB reports**



Feedback



**0 formal  
complaints**



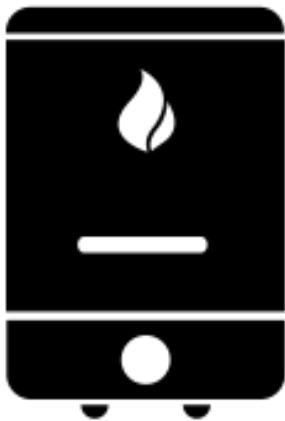
# Our Performance



**10 new  
bathrooms**



**6 new kitchens**



**16 new boilers**

Each year we continue to maintain properties and make further improvements to ensure our customers' homes are safe, secure and as affordable as possible. We also take great care in letting our homes to those most in need and put customers' priorities at the forefront of our decisions and processes.

Maintenance and the management of our communal buildings and estates is of paramount importance and this year we invested over £300,000 towards the maintenance and improvement of our homes and communal areas. This included the delivery of new kitchens and bathrooms, new boilers, external redecoration, improvements to communal areas and garden projects.



**£15,000  
cyclical  
works**

# Property Services

We also continued to invest heavily in the safety of our homes ensuring 100% compliance to legislation and regulation around gas safety, electrical safety, asbestos management and fire risk.



In December, we implemented a significant change to the way we manage repairs and invested in the services provided by a company called Plentific. The organisation provides an innovative solution to effective repairs and maintenance management, enabling us to minimise costs while providing faster response times. At the time of writing this report we are still in the pilot stage of the project but given the results so far, we are likely to make this approach a permanent feature.



It proved a challenging year for the Operations team and, as with any major organisational change, the restructure coupled with the switch to the Plentific repairs platform did impact upon performance to some degree. However, it is also worth noting that we have moved away from the traditional target response times for repairs and our “routine” category is in fact “by appointment” meaning that repairs may be scheduled outside our internal 30 day target to accommodate residents wishes. That said, completion times only tell part of the story and the value of positive feedback and resident’s experience of our service is extremely important to us. With that in mind I am pleased to report a 91% satisfaction rate in respect of our maintenance service, slightly up on the previous year. We continuously strive to improve and continue to work with contractors and residents to raise the service level even higher.

# Value for Money

It is important that PCHA is able to demonstrate that it achieves Value for Money in its delivery of housing and associated services to its tenants and other stakeholders. However, cost cutting is not the primary driver of our Strategy, as we believe quality of service is key and so cheapest is not always best value for money. Nevertheless, we are committed to understanding our costs and ensuring we get the maximum return on our investment. PCHA's vision is to enhance the lives of our residents by providing excellent-quality homes and services. Residents tell us that they value the personal and responsive service we are able to offer as a small community-based association and this separates us from many other social landlords. This is an area we continue to focus on and develop further as we invest in homes and services; this forms a major part of our VFM Strategy. We also remain committed to developing new homes and this is also an important factor.

	PCHA	PCHA	PCHA	Median – all HA's
	2019–20	2018–19	2017–18	2019–20
1. Reinvestment	1.1%	0.91%	7.27%	2.2%
2a. New supply delivered (social housing units)	0.0%	0.00%	2.25%	0.0%
2b. New supply delivered (non-social housing units)	0.0%	0.00%	0.00%	0.0%
3. Gearing	18.3%	23.70%	24.27%	13.0%
4. EBITDA MRI interest cover	240%	279%	348%	430%
5. Headline social housing cost per unit	£5,061	£4,456	£4,258	£4,993
5a. Management cost per unit	£2,676	£1,571	£1,103	£1,362
5b. Service charge cost per unit	£287	£394	£314	£459
5c. Maintenance cost per unit	£1,060	£1,752	£1,908	£1,194
5d. Major repairs cost per unit	£895	£242	£413	£1,314
5e. Other social housing costs per unit	£0	£0	£0	£11
6a. Operating margin (social housing lettings)	22.8%	23.82%	28.93%	22.8%
6b. Operating margin (overall)	20.8%	23.39%	28.39%	16.5%
7. Return on capital employed	2.5%	2.71%	3.36%	2.7%

Making a positive impact





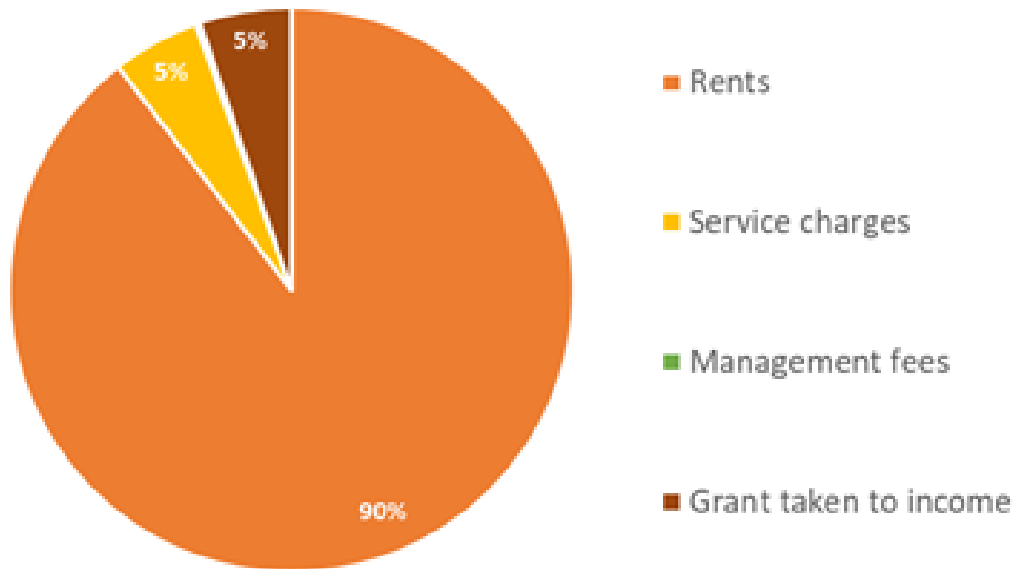
# Value for Money – Benchmarking

PCHA is a member of the BM320 small housing associations' benchmarking club for London and this enables us to compare our costs and performance with other similar organisations. During 2019-20 performance overall compared well, with us being in the top quartiles in most areas but we are not complacent and we recognise that there is more work to be done on voids, arrears and repairs. Our arrears performance remains stable although are still impacted by a small number of large, historical cases; these are not likely to go away, particularly given the eviction restrictions placed on us as a result of Covid. However, the restructure has enabled us to take a fresh and much more proactive approach to rent collection and the creation of the new Resident Support Officer role enables us to provide early support and intervention to those residents who may be struggling. Moving forward we believe these changes will improve services and performance in this area although we must be prepared for the impact Covid-19 is likely to have upon collection rates.

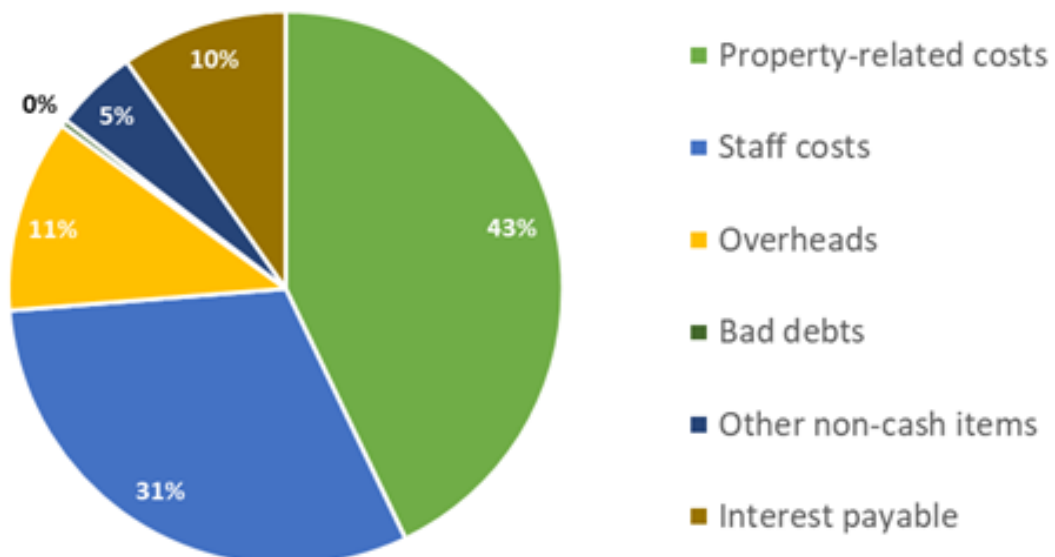
<b>BM320 Benchmarking Report</b>	<b>PCHA</b>	<b>BM320 quartile</b>	<b>SPBM regional quartile</b>	<b>SPBM national quartile</b>	<b>House-Mark quartile</b>
Satisfaction - overall services - GN (%)	92	1	1	2	1
Satisfaction - quality of home - GN (%)	90	1	1	2	1
Satisfaction - listens to views and acts - GN (%)	85	1	1	2	1
Void losses - GN (%)	0.3	1	1	2	1
Average re-let time - GN (days)	28	2	2	3	3
Average days lost due to sickness absence	2.3	1	1	1	1
Rent collected (%)	100	3	3	3	3
Current tenant arrears (%)	4.3	3	3	4	4
Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance (%)	91	2	3	4	3
Emergency repairs completed within target (%)	100	1	1	2	1
Urgent repairs completed within target (%)	97	2	2	2	N/A
Routine repairs completed within target (%)	97	4	3	3	N/A
Dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate (%)	100	1	1	1	1

# Our Money

## Where our money came from



## How we spent our money



The detailed Annual Accounts and VFM Strategy can be found on our website:  
[www.pcha.co.uk](http://www.pcha.co.uk)

# Our Money

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE—Statement of Comprehensive Income

Year ended 31 March 2020	2020 £	2019 £
Turnover	1,766,646	1,735,936
Less: operating costs	(1,403,578)	(1,329,719)
Operating surplus	363,068	406,217
Interest receivable and similar income	861	1,105
Interest payable and similar charges	(152,201)	(156,496)
Total comprehensive income for the year	460,728	102,654
Revenue reserves brought forward	4,012,421	3,909,767
Revenue reserves carried forward	4,473,149	4,012,421

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE—Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 March 2020	2020	2019
Fixed Assets:		
Tangible assets (Housing properties at cost)	14,611,201	14,646,484
Other fixed assets	177,947	182,505
Total Fixed Assets	14,789,148	14,828,989
Current Assets:		
Debtors	77,233	40,275
Cash and bank balance and deposits	516,210	608,431
Total current assets	593,443	648,706
Creditors:		
(Amount falling due within one year)	(571,085)	(506,197)
Net current assets	22,358	142,509
Total assets less current liabilities	14,811,506	14,971,498
Creditors:		
(Amounts falling due after more than one year)	(10,228,341)	(10,564,049)
Total net assets	4,473,166	4,012,449
Capital and reserves:		
Revenue reserve	4,473,149	4,012,421
Share capital	17	28
Total reserves	4,473,166	4,012,449





# Our Vision and Values

## Our Vision

**We are an ambitious local housing association that strives to deliver homes and services we can be proud of. We aim to make a positive impact and work collaboratively with our residents and communities to support them to thrive.**

## Our Values

### Acting with Integrity

- We communicate in an open, honest and transparent way
- We do what we say we will and keep our promises
- We are accountable for our decisions and take responsibility for our mistakes

### Being Ambitious

- We seek to deliver a broader range of services to meet the needs of more people in our community
- We are prepared to take appropriate risks to drive improvement and growth
- We are creative, forward thinking and open to new ideas
- We embrace change and respond positively to new opportunities

### Striving for Excellence

- We will work inclusively and innovatively to continuously improve
- We are people focused and aim to tailor our approach to the needs of individuals
- We support residents in a holistic way, supporting them to thrive
- We strive to be proactive, solution orientated and go the extra mile
- We continually challenge ourselves to improve our performance
- We seek to make sound business decisions and be well governed and managed

### Working in Partnership

- We build strong and positive relationships based on trust and mutual respect
- We strive to create a culture of collaboration and shared accountability

# Our Vision and Values

## Behaving with Respect

- We behave in a fair-minded and non-judgemental way
- We value the individuality and diversity of our residents, staff and communities
- We are inclusive and respectful in the way we work

## Our Strategic Objectives

### Our Services

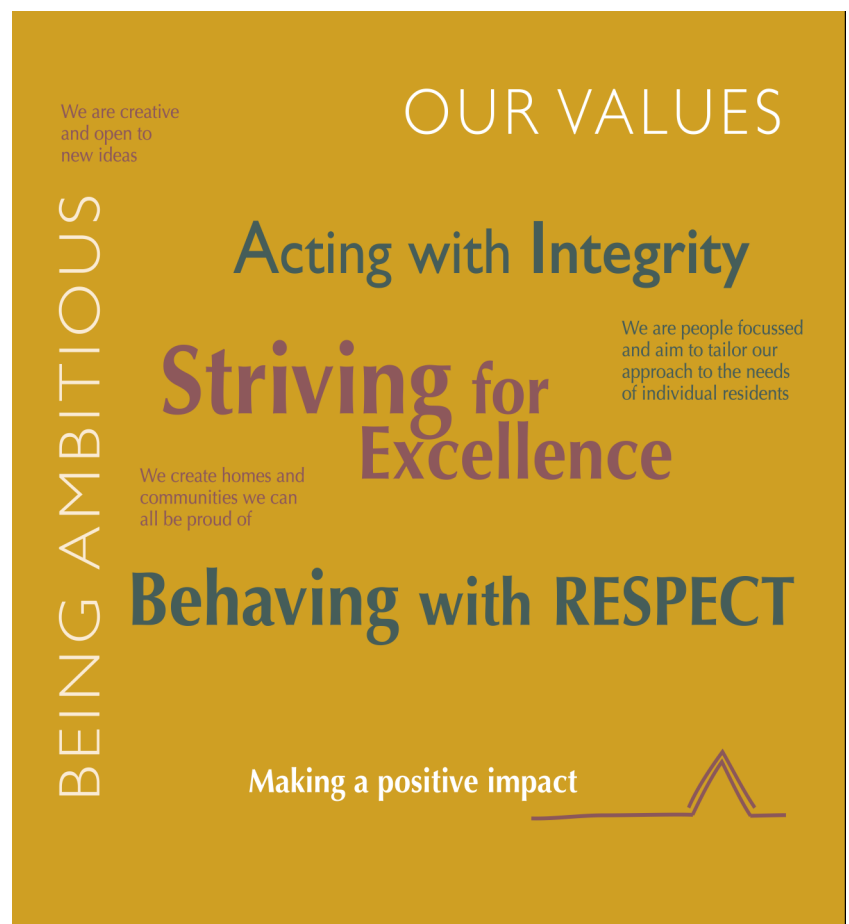
- To provide homes and services we can be proud of
- To provide safer, greener and more homes to local people

### Our Business

- To be a modern, strong and forward-thinking business
- To grow the business and develop new homes and services

### Our People

- To value and invest in our people and partnerships, creating a culture of collaboration and shared accountability



# Board and Staff

As of 31 March 2020 our board had nine active members, including our Chief Executive who is a non-shareholding executive member. Together members have a broad range of relevant skills and expertise. The skills and experience of the Board are reviewed periodically to ensure that the Association has the right mix to meet both current and future needs.

## Our Board:

Cathy McCarthy – Chair	Nicola Dykes (stepped down May 2020)
Dennis Simmonds – Vice-Chair	Richard Ellis (co-opted March 2020)
Adeola Oke	Simon Oelman (co-opted March 2020)
Trevor Crook	Sarah Chatfield (co-opted September 2020)
Rowann Limond—Chair of Finance & Audit	Alan Begg (co-opted September 2020)
Jonathan Bowen	
Karen Cooper – Company Secretary	

## Our Staff:

Karen Cooper – Chief Executive  
Steve Thorn – Director of Operations  
Danuta Evans – Customer Services Officer  
Nina Nash – Customer Services Officer  
Natalie Ions – Maintenance & Estates Officer  
Cassandra Barns – Corporate Services Officer (Corporate Services Manager as of June 2020)  
Samantha Mason-Evans – Resident Support Officer  
Danny Yates – Tenancy Services Officer  
Mick Mendham – Maintenance Operative / Handyman  
Naomi Rainford – Finance Manager (until May 2020)  
Roger Maddams – Interim Director of Finance (from June 2020)  
Jean Mahoney – Tenancy Services Officer (from June 2020)

**99 Maple Road  
Penge  
London  
SE20 8LN**

**T: 020 8659 3055  
E: [housing@pcha.co.uk](mailto:housing@pcha.co.uk)  
W: [www.pcha.co.uk](http://www.pcha.co.uk)**