



SCOTTISH **VETERANS'** RESIDENCES



Strategy



Introduction

This is our strategy. It has been developed by our Governing Body, Executives and Senior Managers after conducting analysis at a dedicated off-site review and two subsequent internal revisions. Our internal output was sent to a broad range of stakeholders, including our Patrons, the Scottish Government, Regulators, our Residents and Tenants, and other organisations in the Veterans' sector. Following a review of their comments, our strategy now describes the WHY, WHAT and HOW, of the support we provide to Military Veterans and eligible former members of the Merchant Marine. Within this strategy, the term 'Veteran' is applied to both cohorts.

The strategy has been published following the merger, on 1 July 2019, of Scottish Veterans' Residences and Scottish Veterans' Housing Association (SVHA) to form a single charitable entity, named Scottish Veterans' Residences (SVR). It equips the merged organisation to move confidently forward. In developing the strategy, we have considered the period from 2019 to 2050. We deliberately chose to look out to 2050 as we wanted to undertake a truly generational review. We have divided this period into the Near (2019-24), Medium (2025-34), and Long Terms (2035-50).

Situational Analysis & Context

We expect national and local governments to come under further spending pressures to provide and maintain adequate health, welfare and social services. Continued pressures may lead to a reduction in funding available to provide supported housing.

We continue to expect the significant majority of Veterans to transition readily back to civilian life and will make a positive contribution to society. We acknowledge that a relatively small number of Veterans (c5%) may at some point, require access to support after leaving service.

By 2050, it is predicted that the overall UK population will rise to around 75m¹. We assume that the number of UK Veterans will reduce, both in absolute numbers (from 2.5m in 2016 to 1.6m in 2028²), and as a proportion of the overall UK population. The Veterans' population in Scotland is very likely to be consistent with that of the remainder of the UK both in absolute numbers and as a proportion.

Extrapolating from the MoD's population projections we calculate that the number of Scottish Veterans

will decrease from 230k in 2019 to 160k in 2028. These figures allows us to estimate the number of Scottish Veterans having some form of 'need' or support requirement over this period. We estimate this to be 11.5k in 2019, decreasing to 8k in 2028. Since 2015, the annual mean number of our Residents was 242³. This represents approximately 0.1% of the total number of Scottish Veterans in 2019.

In the Near Term however, we predict a counterbalance to the reduction in demand:

- Our analysis of the available evidence suggests the number of Veterans with multiple and complex needs is increasing;
- As the overall UK population rises there will be greater pressure on housing, making finding accommodation more challenging, which may lead to higher levels of homelessness;

1 Population Reference Bureau website, <https://www.prb.org/international/geography/united-kingdom> accessed 7 May 2019.

2 MoD Population Projections: UK Armed Forces Veterans residing in Great Britain 2016 to 2018 published 10 January 2019.

3 We acknowledge that a small number of our Residents lived in other parts of the UK, before becoming resident with SVR.

- The Scottish Government seeks to make Scotland the destination of choice for Armed Forces leavers,⁴ which could lead to more Veterans wanting to remain or make a home in Scotland;
- Over time, we have improved our service offering, (and will maintain that offering as our minimum baseline) and this has become increasingly attractive, resulting in a corresponding growth in service users. It is likely therefore that our service offering is sought in preference to alternatives;
- We aspire to develop our service offering further, by doing more to enable those Residents that are able, to return to sustainable employment, and to provide tapered support, to those that take up their own tenancies; and
- We wish to develop and raise our profile and become better known within the Armed Forces' and Veterans' communities, by Local Authorities, the Public, and across the broader charitable sector, as a provider of quality support and accommodation for ex-Service and Merchant Marine personnel who are in need.

In addressing the counterbalance, we conclude that in the Near Term, this will increase our operating costs.



We derive these through rent payments (predominantly housing benefit), which funds our housing service; and investment income, grants and voluntary donations, which fund the provision of support services.

Following the Scottish Independence referendum in September 2014, Scotland remains part of the UK. The Scottish National Party continues to press for another referendum on Scottish independence. This may only take place if authorised by the UK Government. Should authority be granted by Westminster, and Scotland votes for independence, there are likely to be significant implications for SVR, including but not exclusively, funding, legislation, regulation and Defence relationships. A review of our strategy would be necessary should this occur. As a referendum is not currently authorised, the impact of Scottish independence has not been considered further in our analysis.

⁴ Page 3, Renewing Our Commitments, The Scottish Government, published February 2016.

Why

These are the reasons we execute our mission:

- The challenges of military and merchant marine service exert positive and negative effects on individuals, both during and after service. Those challenges may exacerbate or reinforce the effects of adverse events that occurred prior to serving, or affect resilience to adverse events occurring after service.
- Following service, most Veterans (c95%) integrate effectively into society and make a positive contribution. Some however, do not, and require varying degrees of support for them to live in safety and with dignity.
- The demand for supported housing and housing support exceeds supply and SVR exists to satisfy, as far as it is able, that demand for Veterans, which others cannot, or are unable to address.
- In recognition of the promise and commitment that underpin the Armed Forces Covenant, our belief that those who have served the Nation should be supported when in need, in return for their service.

Consequently, we have identified our Mission:

Our Mission

Provide quality⁵ support and accommodation to as many ex-Service/Merchant Marine personnel as possible, for as long as they need it, in order to assist those that are able, to return to independent living.

In delivering our mission, our culture will be inclusive and we will tailor our support and approach to the needs of the individual Veteran. In their practice we expect all our staff to act inclusively and to adhere to our organisational values.

Our Values

- **Dignity and respect.**
- **Unity of purpose.**
- **Expert provision of service.**

⁵ Our benchmark for quality is to achieve a Care Inspectorate grading of 4 (Good) or above for the quality of our Care & Support; our Staffing; and our Management & Leadership.

What

This is the activity we have identified we need to undertake to execute our mission.

In the Near Term (2019-24) we will:

- Continue to support our Residents to help achieve the best outcomes for them as individuals. This will include benchmarking and quality assurance to ensure safe, effective and person-centred support;
- Following the merger of SVR and SVHA;
 - Review our mission statement and our values to ensure accuracy and relevance; and
 - Refine our charitable objects to ensure we are able to target our support to those we identify as being in need, and to provide support and activity that is appropriate to those needs.
- Monitor our property portfolio to ensure that we are able to exploit fiscal opportunities and that the portfolio remains appropriate for our mission to be executed effectively;
- Fulfil our statutory and regulatory duties as a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) to provide high quality, warm and safe accommodation for our Tenants and Residents;
- Develop, in cooperation with appropriate partners;
 - Activity and pathways to support those Residents who are able to enter or return to sustainable employment; and
 - A tapered support service for former Residents who have secured their own tenancies, to ensure that if required, they are able to access timely and effective support to enable them to retain their tenancy and independent living.
- Review our existing funding model to ensure it is fit for purpose and able to provide the additional resource required to enable our employment and outreach services;
- Where necessary further develop collaboration and cooperation with appropriate stakeholders for the benefit of those we seek to support; and
- Develop and raise our profile by playing a positive and supportive role within the charitable and housing association sectors; sustaining the awareness of politicians, local authorities, The Scottish Veterans Commissioner and Armed Forces Champions; conducting appropriate marketing; and use of social media.

In the **Medium Term** (2025-34) we will:

- Conduct a full review of our service provision for Residents to confirm if it remains appropriate and effectively addresses their requirements;
- Keep under review our property portfolio to ensure that we are able to exploit fiscal opportunities and that the portfolio is an appropriate mix that enables us to achieve our mission effectively and efficiently;
- Review with our partners the activity and pathways to support Residents to enter or return to sustainable employment;
- Review with our partners the tapered support provided to former Residents occupying their own tenancies to enable them to retain their tenancy and live independently; and
- Following the expected completion of the consolidation and reorganisation of MoD's estate in Scotland, review whether the location of our residences remains coherent with the geographical distribution of Veterans requiring support.



In the **Long Term** (2035-50) we will:

- Conduct a full review of our service provision for Residents to confirm if it remains appropriate and effectively addresses their requirements;
- Keep under review our property portfolio to ensure that we are able to exploit fiscal opportunities and that the portfolio is an appropriate mix that enables us to achieve our mission effectively and efficiently;
- With Partners review the activity and pathways to support Residents to enter or return to sustainable employment; and
- With Partners review the tapered support provided to former Residents occupying their own tenancies to enable them to retain their tenancy and live independently.

How

These are the ways and means we will use to execute of our mission.

Ways

- Using an outcomes monitoring system we will support and work with our Residents to achieve the best outcomes for each individual. Our benchmark will be for them to be able to live as independently as possible and where appropriate sustain a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST), preferably through employment;
- We will collaborate with local authorities and other Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to provide nomination rights for our Residents to obtain SSTs;
- We will collaborate with other charities and the broader third and commercial sectors to develop volunteering, training and sustainable employment opportunities for Residents. Our aim is to enable those Residents that are able, to sustain tenancies through employment, in preference to housing benefit;
- We will collaborate with other charities and the broader third and commercial sectors to provide a wide range of specialised

support for Residents to help achieve outcomes identified in their support plans and develop the life-skills and resilience to live as independently as possible; and

- We will comply with relevant statutory and regulatory obligations to ensure we deliver appropriate standards of supported housing, housing and financial propriety.

Means

- **Housing benefit income** is currently stable and we are able to sustain our housing service in line with inflation. In conducting our Situational Analysis however, we identified that national and local governments may come under further spending pressure. This could drive down the amount of payable housing benefit. Consequently, we must continue to find ways to maximise housing and support revenue entitlement and improve the quality, cost effectiveness and efficiency of revenue management;

- Based on 4% real rate of return on **investments** over the investment cycle this will continue to provide an annual distributable fund of c£290,000k;
- We will work to retain our strong brand so that it will continue to resonate with the public and charitable trusts. We will strive to receive donations in the region of £120,000 annually;
- Investment and donated income will continue to provide a financial envelope from which we will be able to fund our support provision. In collaboration with others, this will include the development of pathways to sustainable employment and providing a tapered support service for former Residents;
- We will exploit the different locations and characters of our residences⁶ and general purpose **housing stock**⁷ to offer appropriate person-centred options for accommodation. We will provide individually-tailored support for our residents to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives within our accommodation, and enable those that are able, to return to independent living; and

- **Reserves Strategy** and Use:

- We will continue to invest within a risk spectrum agreed by the Governing Bodies, to generate income that is available to be used as they direct;
- Given the age, listed building status, and high routine maintenance costs of 2 of our Residences (Whitefoord House and Rosendael), we have set aside £5m as a contingency should we need to undertake significant structural repairs or maintenance, or for a potential significant increase in demand to accommodate Veterans; and
- We have set aside £1.7m to provide 12-months of staff salaries, and £2.0m to provide 12-months operating costs for the provision of support delivered within our residences, the tapered support provided to former residents, and the activity costs of assisting residents into sustainable employment, to ensure that we remain a “going concern”.

6 Bellrock Close in Cranhill, Glasgow; Rosendael in Broughty Ferry, Dundee; and Whitefoord House on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh.

7 We have 45 homes, predominantly 1 and 2 bedroomed flats located in Glasgow, Dundee and Edinburgh.



Longevity and Validity

The strategy is valid from now. It is to be reviewed for coherence and relevance annually, and in recognition of the potential for change in the environment, if so directed by the Governing Body.

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