



**ANCHO - CAIRN
PARTNERSHIP
END OF YEAR REPORT
2019/2020**

STRONGER TOGETHER - ANOTHER YEAR ON

The partnership between Ancho and Cairn Housing Association is now firmly established in both organisations, with significant progress during this year on the plans that were put in place to align systems and processes. These changes allow the staff team to focus on great services to customers and achieving value for money.

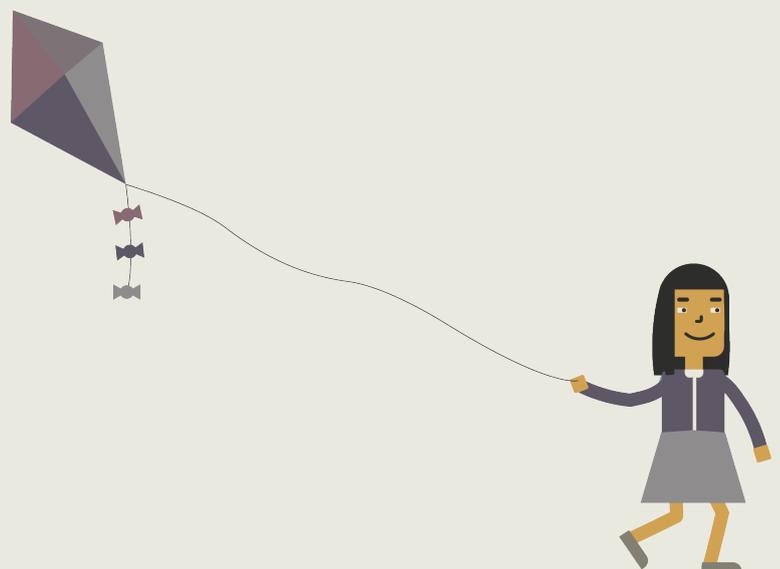
In the period following this report we have faced enormous challenges with the Covid-19 pandemic, and many of our customers are experiencing difficult times. The partnership with Cairn Housing Association has given Ancho the strength and resilience to face the problems that lie ahead and the Boards of both organisations are engaged in a full review to reflect on how we should plan for a positive future together, where we can continue to meet the needs of our communities.

This report sets out a summary of the progress against our partnership promises over the last year. The staff and Board members across the Cairn Housing Group are committed to working together to deliver on the partnership promises, in the best interests of tenants and the local community.

Jason MacGilp
Group Chief Executive

Don Jamieson
Chair, Cairn Board

Mary Black
Chair, Ancho Board



UPDATE ON PARTNERSHIP PROMISES

1. Local services from the Ancho team in Irvine

The Ancho team continue to deliver day-to-day services from Irvine, although since March 2020 the team has been mostly working from home as they meet the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

They continue to perform to a high standard and are working to find ways to continue to improve services, with the support of their partners at Cairn Housing Association.

Governance

In 2019/20 we submitted Ancho's first Annual Assurance Statement. We introduced new procedures and carried out staff training so that we are ready for the new Freedom of Information legislation. We carried out a governance review and are now carrying out the actions from the review. We recruited six new Ancho Board members to ensure we have a wide range of skills and experience. Several policies were updated so that Cairn and Ancho processes are aligned, including Board Succession and Delegated Authorities.

Finance

We are providing Ancho with financial services, including the preparation of management accounts, annual statutory accounts, treasury management, and giving advice to the Ancho Board and staff.

IT

The Ancho network was migrated onto the Cairn platform, which has improved accessibility and security for Ancho staff. The team also received new laptops and mobile phones so that they are able to work more flexibly and from home. Telephone and IT support is now carried out by the same provider Cairn uses.

Customer Involvement

Ancho tenants, staff and Board members took part in the Scottish Government programme, Next Steps, alongside Cairn. The programme was run by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service and aimed to help organisations develop new and innovative ways to involve customers. This has laid the foundations for a new Customer Involvement Strategy.

Human Resources & Organisational Development

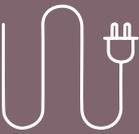
Ancho staff now use the same HR systems as Cairn to book holidays, carry out training and manage staff performance. Ancho took part in the Best Companies survey last year and will soon start the new staff engagement system that is being rolled out across the Group. Staff joined Cairn colleagues in online workshops for the Out of Office Staff Festival and managers are taking part in the Leadership Development Programme.

Health and Safety

Cairn are providing Health & Safety support and advice. A full-time Health and Safety Manager was appointed for the Cairn Housing Group last year to ensure high levels of health and safety management and best practice across Ancho and Cairn.

2. £4.5m in additional investment in your community from the Cairn Housing Group, with hundreds of new kitchens and other home improvements

Ancho has completed the second year of the five-year planned maintenance programme, with £1,159,962 spent on upgrades in 2019/20.

	Five year commitment	Completed in 2019/20	Spent in 2019/20	Completed overall	Spent overall
 <p>New kitchens</p>	560	64	£207,722	119	£394,539
 <p>Rewiring</p>	300	121	£284,132	265	£623,265
 <p>New roofs</p>	200	13	£63,924	70	£331,356
 <p>External wall insulation</p>	160	67	£601,803	105	£1.35m
 <p>New windows</p>	100	3	£2,381	84	£269,874
 <p>New door entry</p>	90	0	£0	0	£0
 <p>New external doors</p>	70	0	£0	63	£95,640

3. An affordable rent guarantee for five years

The rent guarantee to Ancho tenants promised that annual increases would be based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for five years. CPI was 1.7% in September 2019 and, in line with the rent guarantee, tenants were fully consulted on the proposed increase before it was confirmed to be implemented from 1 April 2020.

4. The potential to develop new affordable homes in North Ayrshire

Although new build projects continue to be at a very early stage of discussions with North Ayrshire Council and the Scottish Government, we have two development sites in the North Ayrshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for approval in 2022/23. We will shortly tender for an architecture practice to progress proposals towards the next stage.



IMPACT OF COVID-19

The lockdown restrictions from March 2020 have had an impact on our ability to provide services. Ancho and Cairn were well positioned to adjust quickly to home working arrangements when offices were closed and some non-essential services were postponed as the team responded to evolving guidance from the Scottish Government. As lockdown restrictions were eased services were reintroduced, with safety measures, in accordance with Ancho's published route map.

Customers were kept informed through newsletters, social media and website updates. Any impact on the partnership promises and continued integration with Cairn will be reflected in the partnership report for 2020/21.

OUR KEY TASKS FOR 2020/21

- New reporting arrangements with Cairn for management reports to Board members, managers, staff and the Scottish Housing Regulator
- The ongoing alignment of data and processes across the Cairn Housing Group
- Introduction of a new system for managing arrears (Rentsense)
- Development of Health and Safety procedures to help protect staff, tenants and third parties during the Covid-19 pandemic
- The Cairn Housing Group Health & Safety Strategy will include a focus on developing improved management systems and more effective risk management for frontline staff
- Introduction of a new platform for gathering and monitoring staff engagement feedback across Cairn Housing Group
- The Cairn Housing Group Customer Involvement Strategy will include new commitments to tenant participation, with an emphasis on digital involvement
- Adopting new approaches from the Group Customer Involvement Strategy to consult tenants on new repairs contract
- Launch of new online self-service portal for tenants
- Integration of contact centre services
- Completing Board Self-Assessments and introducing Board metrics
- Completing a review of constitutional arrangements for Cairn Housing Group

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