

CEO overview for AGM 2022

Key achievements in relation to the Business Plan

The Five-Year Business Plan

The five-year Business Plan covers the period 2018 to 2023 & incorporates 6 overarching objectives which are as follows:

- Good governance & effective decision-making processes
- Strong leadership
- Develop and expand our support and accommodation provision
- Working in partnership to underpin our work
- Enabling effective & efficient delivery & maintaining a skilled workforce
- Meeting local need

Key achievements:

- Continued work to develop the land at 32 Victoria Rd site – with a planning application for 9 one bed flats submitted by the end of March 2022 – work is ongoing to agree the design and height of the development working with the Planning officer and architect with support and advice from Orwell E2
- Recruited 4 new board members and updated our board recruitment process
- Continued work to adapt of policies and procedures to meet the governance requirement of the NHF code of governance
- Adopted the TWT charters and started to test new ways of engaging with our residents to seek ongoing feedback about our services
- Adopted the NHF code of conduct for staff, volunteers and board members
- Developed a tender submission for the SCC HRS framework and were successful in this process – followed by a tender for two contracts for HRS in Suffolk working with Orwell HA and ACT
- Completed a review of our HRS contract in Norfolk resulting in a renewed 5-year contract
- Continued to chair the SCC HRS provider forum
- Expanded our provision of Off the street accommodation to 10 beds spaces with a renewed SLA with Breckland DC
- Continued to deliver our Women's Accommodation Service for women in the CJS with funding achieved from Nationwide and South Norfolk DC – this work has allowed us to develop a bid for MOJ funding to hopefully expand this provision in Norfolk
- Continued our participation in NHIN and NHSP
- Been a member of the Eastern Region NHF leaders sounding board supporting the NHF to develop the agenda for leaders forums in the region
- Joined the Smallest HA sounding board to support the focus on smaller HAs via the NHF
- Renewed and embedded our provision of Accommodation Access /Homelessness prevention services in South Norfolk and Breckland working in partnership with the LAs
- Provided 145 bedspaces of supported accommodation across our projects in Norfolk and Suffolk and continued to shape the delivery of our services coming out of the pandemic
- 38 residents our supported accommodation services in 2021-22. Of these 31 moved on positively to independent accommodation, while 7 were negative moves such as evictions or abandonments, with 1 person accepting the accommodation and then not moving in.

- During 2021-22 we provided 132 lodgings bed spaces: working with 96 landlords across Norfolk and Suffolk. We have sadly seen a reduction in Lodgings bedspaces since 2020 – 21 due to local authority contracts ending in Colchester and Ipswich and many landlords ceasing to provide placements during Covid. Our contract in East Suffolk ended in q2 of 22/23 but we continue to provide lodgings in SNDC and BDC – with 31 beds in total during 22/23 so far
- 560 LRS - Solo Housing as part of our 5-year Service Level Agreement with East Suffolk council, the accommodation has been fully occupied throughout 2021 – 22 and there have been no evictions.
- We received funding from Saffron Community fund to run a course in partnership with Make Pivot for up to 6 residents to learn how to design, make, market and sell handcraft jewellery to support training and employment opportunities. The course was a hugely positive experience for the 5 residents who attended and they all graduated from the course. The local community is supporting us to market the jewellery collection & it is now on sale at Designer Makers21 Diss
- Staff turnover was much higher in the last year – an ongoing impact of Covid 19 and the emerging cost of living challenges; however we have been successful in recruiting to all vacant posts and have a multi skilled and dedicated team providing both admin and finance support, property management and service delivery

Future plans

- The existing Business Plan officially expires in March 2023; although we have number of new projects which will roll into 2023 to 24
- I have been at Solo 5 and a half years as CEO – and have thoroughly enjoyed working in such a resident focused and dedicated organisation. As we approach the development of a new Business Plan it feels like a good time to step down from this role to allow Solo to welcome a new CEO with new talents into the organization. I therefore plan to step down during 2023 following a managed handover to the new CEO
- I have had fantastic support from both staff and the Executive Committee over the past 5 years and Solo is in an excellent position to take forward our ambitions to continue to provide supported accommodation and general needs accommodation for single people

Carolyn Howell MBE
13.12.2022