

Strategic Plan

2021-2024



Contents

Foreword.....	3
Planning Process.....	4
Vision, Mission, and Values.....	5
Regional Context.....	6
Past, Present and Future.....	8
Our Strategies and Tactics.....	10

Acknowledgement of First Peoples:

Advance Housing Ltd respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and serve; the Noongar People and pay respect to the First Nations Peoples and their elders, past, present, and future.

Foreword

Advance Housing Ltd, as a community based business, holds to the belief that all people have the right to good quality housing that enables a genuinely high quality of life.

Strategic planning is a vitally important facet of running any business, but particularly so in the delivery of vital community assets and services, such as affordable housing.

What is clear from the work undertaken in preparing this plan is that the need for a broad range of affordable housing options in our region has never been more acute, with demand increasing by more than 25% in the last year. This increased demand, particularly in a post COVID-19 world, has created pressure across the entire range of housing options in the Great Southern.

This pressure has particularly impacted those most vulnerable members of our community such as those people on very low, low, or moderate income, people with disability or mental health support needs, youth, seniors, and people experiencing or at risk of experiencing domestic violence.

In looking to the future, we recognise that the various parties with responsibility for effectively meeting affordable housing demand, including Commonwealth and State Governments, Local Government Authorities, and Community Housing Providers, must work in collaboration to narrow the gap between what is available and what is needed.

Whilst Advance Housing Ltd have a well-deserved positive reputation and a history of effective delivery of affordable housing, we recognise that we now have the capacity to not only capitalise on opportunities as they arise but to be the driver of new opportunities.

Advance Housing Ltd is committed to taking a lead role in creating and driving growth in affordable housing at all points along the demand continuum.

In other words, Advance Housing Ltd is committed to becoming the Affordable Housing provider that the region needs.

By implementing this plan via our annual business plans and strategic initiatives we will achieve our objective of increasing supply and access to a wider range of affordable housing.

Peter Adams
Chairperson

No single party
has the capacity
to meet demand
in isolation.

Planning Process



In line with the above, the detailed steps undertaken in developing this strategic plan were as follows:

- Detailed review of the extensive research undertaken for the previous planning cycle.
- Environmental scanning of the current funding and regulatory environment.
- Environmental scanning of the current building and construction environment for sustainability innovations.
- Review of tenant and stakeholder feedback.
- Collaborative Board and staff workshops reviewing the existing Mission, Vision and Values along with the strategies and indicators of success contained in the previous Strategic Plan.
- An independent strategic review undertaken by sector experts to confirm our understanding of our environment, and the veracity of our proposed strategies and tactics.

The implementation of the above planning processes has resulted in the following elements being developed to make up the new strategic plan:

- Updated Vision, Mission and Values – Our reason for being.
- Strategic Objectives – What we want to achieve.
- Strategies and Tactics – What we are going to do and how we are going to do it.

These elements are detailed later in this document and will be supplemented by annual business planning processes, project planning in support of strategic initiatives, and detailed evaluation efforts to ensure best application of resources to meet our objectives.

Vision, Mission, and Values

Advance Housing Ltd's Vision, Mission and Values act as our guiding principles. All our decision-making and strategic approaches are underpinned by these.



Vision

A home for everyone



Mission

To improve the quality of life in our community by:

- Providing access to a range of innovative housing options that meet varying needs.
- Respecting changing societal values and expectations.
- Minimising negative environmental impact.
- Collaborating with service delivery partners to ensure access to community services.



Values

We are socially responsible: We seek to find a balance between economic growth and the welfare of society and the environment.

We are people focussed: Whilst we utilise built assets to achieve our Vision and Mission, this approach is always applied through the lens of ensuring the best outcomes for our people.

We embrace innovation: In order to ensure continuous improvement in our products and services, we invest heavily in looking at creative ways to maximise our effectiveness.

We build relationships: As a people focussed organisation, we recognise that respectful and transparent relationships with our tenants, customers, partners, and stakeholders are critical to meeting our Vision and Mission.

We act with professionalism and integrity: We recognise that as an organisation we have a key role to play in supporting people to meet their housing goals and therefore strive to have the requisite skills, systems, and resources in place to achieve this. We always strive to do what we say we will do.

Advance Housing Ltd is committed to taking a lead role in creating and driving growth in affordable housing.

Regional Context

Advance Housing Ltd operates throughout the Great Southern region of Western Australia. The region has the following key characteristics:



Agriculture remains the largest employer in the region at 16%, closely followed by the growing Health Care and Social Support sector at 12% of the workforce. Other key areas of employment include Retail Trade (11%), Education and Training (10%), Services (8%), and Construction (8%). The balance of the workforce (36%) is made up of a number of smaller industry sectors.

The regional population is expected to grow overall over the next decade with the majority of growth projected to come via the City of Albany, the Shire of Denmark and the Shire of Plantagenet. Conversely, most smaller population centres in the region are expected to contract as people migrate to the larger regional centres mentioned above. Net regional population is projected as per the below table:

Shire	2016 Population	2031 Population Projection	Change (%)
Albany	37,500	44,340	18.24%
Broomehill/Tambellup	1,160	845	-27.16%
Cranbrook	1,100	940	-14.55%
Denmark	5,940	7,090	19.36%
Dumbleyung	675	575	-14.81%
Esperance	14,500	14,240	-1.79%
Gnowangerup	1,235	1,070	-13.36%
Jerramungup	1,130	940	-16.81%
Katanning	4,210	3,390	-19.48%
Kent	570	455	-20.18%
Kojonup	1,990	1,660	-16.58%
Lake Grace	1,280	1,070	-16.41%
Narrogin	5,240	4,725	-9.83%
Plantagenet	5,130	5,230	1.95%
Ravensthorpe	1,785	1,300	-27.17%
Wagin	1,865	1,620	-13.14%
West Arthur	815	735	-9.82%
Wider Great Southern Region	86,125	90,225	4.76%

With an ageing population, and the key growth employment sector (Health Care and Social support) expanding as a result of that ageing population, demand for affordable housing is expected to continue to grow. This is particularly the case in Albany where many people from rural and remote communities relocate as they age in an effort to readily access services. Ongoing and significant reductions in the pool of dwellings available for private rental in the region have also pushed up private rent levels and added to the demand for dwellings under affordable housing arrangements.

Currently, Advance Housing Ltd manages affordable housing dwellings in:

- Albany
- Denmark
- Katanning
- Kojonup
- Gnowangerup
- Lake Grace
- Newdegate
- Varley
- Lake King
- Esperance
- Jerramungup
- Bremer Bay
- Mt Barker

These dwellings are provided via a combination of State Government dwellings under management contracts, head lease arrangements with local government authorities, and dwellings that Advance Housing Ltd owns.

A key challenge for the future is ensuring that the types of dwellings available for affordable housing meet the individual needs of the various cohorts accessing them. This includes a move away from traditional four bedroom or three bedroom dwellings to smaller two bedroom and one bedroom options to reduce running costs for our tenants and to prevent under-occupancy in an environment of extreme demand.

A key challenge for the future is ensuring dwellings meet needs.



Past, Present and Future

The organisational characteristics of Advance Housing Ltd have changed dramatically since its creation in 1997. Our past, our present, and our aspirations for the future are illustrated in the below summary:

	The Past	The Present	The Future
Our Portfolio	Less than 20 total dwellings in the portfolio.	Portfolio of 382 dwellings and 60 affordable student housing beds	Portfolio exceeding 900 dwellings across regional WA
Supporting our Tenants	All dwellings were provided for very low-income households.	A mix of affordable housing for people on very low to moderate income, people with disability or mental health support needs, youth, students, seniors, and people experiencing domestic violence	Embrace non-residential/ housing services where they complement core business.
Our Assets	Negligible built assets owned	Ownership of 107 properties in the affordable housing portfolio. (approximately 28%)	Ownership of over 600 properties in the portfolio. (approximately 70%)
Our Structure	An Association under the WA Incorporations Act in November 1997	A company limited by guarantee (2017)	Corporate Collaborations that support shared operating costs with small regional housing providers.
Our Workforce	Single employee	15 employees in finance, asset management, and property and tenancy support	Limited team number growth with a focus on technology driven resourcing
Tenant satisfaction	High tenant satisfaction	High tenant satisfaction	High tenant satisfaction
Affordable Housing Delivery	Dwellings available for rent only	Dwellings available for rent only	Dwellings available for rent, shared equity, and affordable home ownership
Regulatory Environment	Not subject to a housing regulatory framework	A registered provider (Tier 2) under the WA Community Housing Regulatory Framework	A registered provider (Tier 1) under the WA Community Housing Regulatory Framework

	The Past	The Present	The Future
Tenant Engagement	Simple tenant engagement practices	Developing tenant engagement frameworks	Mature and effective tenant engagement frameworks
Approach to Growth	An organisation entirely driven by dwellings supplied/owned by the State Government with limited growth opportunities	An organisation whose growth is driven by opportunity arising in the operating environment, rather than created by the organisation itself	An organisation that creates its own opportunities independently as well as in conjunction with the marketplace
Asset Management	Basic asset management practises	Improving maintenance and asset management practises and systems	Mature and effective maintenance and asset management practises and systems



In looking to the future, we recognise that the various parties with responsibility for effectively meeting affordable housing demand, must work in collaboration to narrow the gap between what is available and what is needed.



Our Objective and Strategies

Our strategic objective:

To increase supply and access to a wider range of affordable housing.

Our strategies and tactics:

The strategies and tactics outlined in the following table, are geared towards delivering on our objective.

Core Strategies	Tactics
1. Meet housing need by increasing our property portfolio	1.1 Ensure every available dwelling is occupied at all times.
	1.2 Expand portfolio through gaining control of non DoC dwellings and dwellings in other locations.
	1.3 Secure alternative finance arrangements including private capital, social bond schemes, Government, and build to sell developments.
	1.4 Use our healthy balance sheet to expand our accommodation portfolio in the areas of greatest need - implement a growth program.
	1.5 Explore new/alternative product offerings that address current tenant needs and additional parts of the housing continuum.
	1.6 Explore and implement redevelopment and urban renewal projects.
	1.7 Pursue collaborative opportunities to design and deliver new housing models that address Government priorities or challenges.
	1.8 Lead the development of project proposals seeking Government investment in innovative affordable housing initiatives.
2. Deliver quality homes and housing services	2.1 Effectively engage with people in the AHL community and build and maintain a strong line of communication.
	2.2 Ensure our culture at all times is tenant oriented.
	2.3 Deliver high quality and proactive tenancy management.
	2.4 Ensure a high quality of asset management and guarantee that our dwellings are always at a standard to meet a reasonable tenant need.
	2.5 Provide assistance to tenants in connecting with other services as necessary.
	2.6 Further develop partnerships with service delivery organisations (NGOs) for social programs.
3. Govern effectively	3.1 Meet all our regulatory and compliance responsibilities as and when due.
	3.2 Maintain a strong and constant alignment between the Strategic Plan and the Business Plan.
	3.3 Develop a system to measure the impact we have on society through the delivery of our Strategic Plan.
	3.4 Work closely with tenants to ensure they have input into operations and planning that affects them.
	3.5 Develop an Asset Investment Strategy (including investment decision tools).

Core Strategies	Tactics
4. Manage the business sustainably	<p>4.1 Maintain strong financial management and operational performance.</p> <p>4.2 Implement a strategic whole of life approach to asset management.</p> <p>4.3 Implement and embed technologies that support customer service and organisational support.</p> <p>4.4 Ensure ongoing improvement in risk management practices.</p>
5. Improve our workplace	<p>5.1 Ensure the right organisational structures and roles are in place at all times to support the strategic objectives.</p> <p>5.2 Attract, recognise, reward and retain quality staff.</p> <p>5.3 Deliver training, development and performance management systems aligned closely with strategic objectives.</p> <p>5.4 Provide a fit for purpose workplace.</p>
6. Enhance our communication and increase our corporate profile	<p>6.1 Develop a communications strategy to engage with the wider community to generate positive promotion of AHL's services, brand, and capability.</p> <p>6.2 Advocate to elected government officials, government agencies, our business associates, our staff, our tenants and our potential partners on AHL's growing capacity and capability in increasing the provision of affordable housing for those people on low to moderate incomes and with special needs.</p>
7. Embrace design and construction innovation to achieve high performing properties	<p>7.1 Invest in the balanced application of new building technologies to minimise tenant running costs and reduce long term maintenance costs.</p> <p>7.2 Minimise Carbon Footprint for all new developments.</p> <p>7.3 Minimise Carbon Footprint for all major refurbishments.</p>

The need for a broad range of affordable housing options has never been more acute.

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