



YHN Business Strategy 2011-2014 (revised July 2011)

'Stepping up: improving on excellence in challenging times'

In 2009 we launched our first business strategy. The document outlined what we wanted to achieve by 2014 and how we were going to achieve it.

What have we achieved so far?

Since we published the first strategy we have achieved a lot. There were 17 actions in the original action plan. When we reviewed the strategy in July we had completed five actions and we were on target to complete another five actions.

Some of our achievements from over the past few years include:

- Helping over 300 customer's access training and employment.
- Helping tenants to:
 - Get the right amount of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit;
 - Join Moneywise Credit Union;
 - Learn how to manage their money, and
 - Sign up for home contents insurance.
- Improving the way we deliver services to try and make sure everyone receives a fair and equal service.
- Achieving the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) Award in 2010. This means we meet the government's standard with regard to customer service.
- Making YHN a better place to work.
- Opening our new learning and development centre at Newburn Riverside in early 2011.
- Making over 80% of our homes decent.
- Building 82 new homes.

Reviewing the strategy

The government is now very focussed on reducing the nation's debt and improving the economy. To do this they have made cuts to public spending and made changes to the way social housing is to be provided.

These cuts and changes have brought about new challenges for YHN. We understood that to continue to provide excellent homes and services in light of these challenges, we needed to review our priorities.

What are the new challenges?

As well as the challenges outlined in the first strategy we also face three new ones:

- 1. Less funding**
- 2. Changes to the way our rental income is managed**
- 3. Changes to the benefit system**

How has the YHN Business Strategy changed?

To help us review the strategy we have asked customers, Board members, YHN staff and Newcastle City Council (NCC) what they think we should do. They told us that our mission

statement and our strategic objectives should stay the same; but that we must change the way we work to make sure we can continue to achieve them.

We have not completely re-written the strategy. Instead we have used the feedback from YHN Board, customers, staff and NCC to update the action plan.

The new action plan

Please find below a list of actions we will take to achieve our strategic objectives:

1. Support and care to communities

- Achieving 100% in all assessments of our support and care services;
- Helping customers get into work by helping them to access training and providing work experience and employment opportunities.
- Helping customers manage their money by providing training, advice and support.
- Improving local communities;
- Reducing anti-social behaviour, and
- Improving local estates.

2. Three star excellent services

- Performing well in comparison to other housing providers;
- Delivering our services equally and fairly;
- Developing and improving our customer service;
- Improving the IT systems which support our work;
- Generating new income;
- Planning for the long term;
- Collecting income and reducing arrears;
- Making sure all our services demonstrate value for money;
- Meeting the required standards for social housing;
- Improving the way we communicate with customers, and
- Improving the way we provide repairs and carry out maintenance work.

3. A quality workforce

- Developing our staff, leaders and managers;
- Having a happy, healthy and positive workforce;
- Rewarding and recognising the good work our staff do, and
- Employing the right staff with the right skills.

4. Refurbishing and building homes

- Making sure our homes meet the decent homes standard and stay decent;
- Making sure our homes meet the needs of our customers;
- Improving the estates and communities within which our customers live, and
- Making our homes and services more environmentally friendly.

We aim for all these actions to be achieved by 2014. The strategy action plan will be reviewed every year.



Want to find out more?

If you would like more information about anything mentioned in this summary please contact Helena Hammock (Performance Management and Policy Officer) on 0191 278 8616.

Alternatively you can view the YHN Business Strategy (the original 2009 version, the 2011 addendum and the action plan) on our website or ask any YHN Officer for a copy.