



# An absolute pearler.

Annual Report 2016 - 2017



Supporting BME Communities  
and Multi-Cultural Neighbourhoods



Providing choice, improving  
life opportunities and  
addressing inequalities



Providing choice, improving  
life opportunities and  
addressing inequalities

# An absolute pearler!

Shiny and usually creamy white, high quality pearls are gemstones – for thousands of years an object of both beauty and value. That's why the pearl has become a metaphor for something very special.

Of course, here at Unity, we're a humble bunch and wouldn't dream of applying any of those descriptions to ourselves. Nor, of course, have we been around for thousands of years. But, if we're talking about age, we are in a position to celebrate something very special – our thirtieth.

And we reckon that those thirty years have been an absolute pearler. We've built new homes, delivered outstanding customer service, worked with tenants, improved neighbourhoods and even gone into business through Unity Enterprise. All of which deserves a very special celebration to mark our pearl anniversary.

You're more than welcome to join us.





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# The Pearl Fishers

George Bizet's opera, 'The Pearl Fishers' is best known for a famous duet between Nadir and Zurga, the two main characters. And like any successful show, our organisation needs two leads who can sing in perfect harmony when it comes to housing. In our case that's Shutri Bhargava and Ali Akbor.

Over the past year, Unity has continued its story of solid and steady progress. Financially sound our group profit for the year of £1.5m will, largely

be ploughed back into our ongoing development and regeneration programme. Over the past year we've added 46 much needed affordable rent homes in Chapeltown, Harehills and Beeston. The provision of new homes such as these makes a real difference to people's lives.

Our financial strength also enables us to improve Unity's existing housing stock. A wide range of home improvements were completed at 237 properties both cosmetic (new kitchens and bathrooms) and practical (installations of new energy efficient boilers). We're equally pleased



to report that, despite some contractor-related challenges, our housing services' team scored highly on repairs.

To improve customer service in general we invested in IT and customer communications. All Unity's PCs were upgraded; as a result our staff can now access tenant information far more speedily. We also upgraded our broadband connection. On the communications front, our housing officers now have smart phones, giving them email access wherever they are. The introduction of a texting facility means that appointments with tenants can be quickly arranged and confirmed. And, finally, to ensure business continuity we now have a cloud-based telephone system.

As for the business side of our business, Unity Enterprise goes from strength to strength. The £1.4m refurbishment we completed at the Business Centre in 2016 is clearly paying off. Not only are occupancy rates at near capacity, tenant retention is at an all-time high.

Meanwhile from its base at the Unity Business Centre, Unity Employment Services had another successful year, working with nearly 300 clients, helping them to find work or improve their skills. Through employment, our tenants become financially independent. And there's a benefit for Unity – it enables them to pay their rent.

None of what we've achieved would be possible without the partners mentioned throughout this report. Key are Leeds City Council and the Homes & Communities Agency. It's an arrangement that works for the benefit of all concerned. They have confidence in Unity's strategic vision and we deliver on what we promise – with impressive results.

Looking ahead Unity faces plenty of challenges. The housing crisis may perhaps have changed over the past thirty years, but it is still with us. The economic downturn and general uncertainty makes it harder to deliver our housing programme. But despite this and the paucity of subsidies for housing development, Unity continues to deliver. Indeed, over the coming year we'll be embarking on our biggest ever development programme.

Our ability to do this is achieved through good management of our resources. Unity has bucked the trend of the social housing market. We have yet to feel the full impact of the welfare reform/benefit changes. Our view is that, over the



next few years we'll have to look at the business differently. We will, of course, continue our social mission, but there will be big changes for tenants and the communities we serve.

The very welcome success of Leeds as a city, continues to push demand for housing ever higher. Unity meets an essential need in a particular market where affordability is key.

Unity is indebted to its team of devoted and committed staff. The cohesive nature of our team is undoubtedly another factor in our success. We're an organisation in which everyone is pulling in the same direction, ably demonstrated recently when Unity was awarded Investors in People Silver Standard accreditation. Mention must also be made of our Board. Unity continues to appraise and review its governance arrangements and board membership to ensure that people with the right skills and background are at the helm of the organisation.

Looking forward, our future has never been brighter. Our vision is clear; the provision of good quality, affordable housing coupled with our wider strategy of achieving economic, social and physical regeneration of the communities which we serve.

Ali Akbor - Chief Executive  
Shruti Bhargava - Chair of the Board

# A perfect pearl

Sometimes referred to as the 'Queen of Gems', a pearl is the only gemstone produced naturally – by a living organism. It can take up to 20 years for a perfect pearl to be created in an oyster shell. A pearl is also a tough cookie, renowned for its strength. That, along with its lengthy gestation period, is one of the reasons why the pearl has come to be associated with a thirty year anniversary.

Like a pearl, we've certainly put in the time! Unity was established in 1987 to improve housing for the West Indian population in Chapelton and Harehills. Over the past 30 years, we've never lost sight of our roots.

Of course, like all successful organisations, we've adapted, we've innovated and we've improved to meet the constantly changing demands of the social housing market. And, like a pearl, we're strong. Whilst other BME housing associations have been swallowed up by larger organisations, Unity stands proudly independent, as one of the UK's leaders in its field.



We're still based in Chapeltown, Leeds and now manage over 1,200 properties, providing homes for families, singles, the older generation and those with special needs. Our work focuses on Chapeltown, Harehills, Beeston, Holbeck and a number of other areas in Leeds. Whilst the provision of quality homes at an affordable rent is our main business, we also include properties for shared ownership in our developments.

Tenant care, primarily through the delivery of first rate housing services, is at the heart of what we do. However we also look to help tenants in other ways too. That's why we now have an Income Management team and launched Unity Employment Services to help tenants and the wider community into the jobs' market. Unity also has a highly successful tenant involvement strategy.

Early in our history we recognised that creating sustainable neighbourhoods requires more than the provision of affordable quality housing. So we added Unity Enterprise to our remit. Comprising three business centres, it provides affordable workspace for a wide range of local businesses.



# String of pearls

A 1941 hit for the late, great Glenn Miller, the smooth upbeat jazzy tones of 'String of pearls' had dancers on their feet within seconds of its opening bars. Perhaps not quite as jazzy, but a smooth, upbeat service is the key aim of our housing management team. We're pleased to report that they've been hitting all the right notes over the past year.

## **A property portfolio we're proud of**

Unity has a first rate property portfolio. That's not just an idle boast; it was confirmed by the stock condition survey carried out by independent assessors during the year. Using 30% of our housing stock as a sample, the results were excellent. Over the six years since our last stock condition survey it's been a story of continual improvement. What's more, because we're a highly efficient organisation, the work has been completed at a cost considerably less than forecast. Our properties also scored well on the Decent Homes/Health & Safety Hazard Rating





System (HSHRS). In a nutshell, Unity properties offer modern facilities and are warm and welcoming. Across all the sample properties surveyed just two failed on HSHRS standards and 20 were in need of catch-up repairs. All these properties were, in fact, already within our planned maintenance/improvement programme.

### And the work goes on

As the results of the stock condition survey show, Unity prides itself on the continual improvement of its housing stock. During the past year 237 Unity properties benefited from improvements – that equated to a £812k investment in our housing stock. Work completed included new kitchens, bathrooms, windows and doors. We also installed 72 energy efficient boilers – 27 more than planned. They are now helping reduce heating bills for our tenants.

### Repairs and improvements

Working closely with our two contractor partners, Forrest and IDM, Unity's Housing Management team had another successful year. Over the past twelve months they dealt with 3,964 requests for repairs. Despite the high volume of demand, we met the agreed timescales for completion of both urgent and non-urgent repairs. Equally pleasing are the customer satisfaction ratings for the quality of our repairs and maintenance service. Once a repair was completed, 64% of our tenants took the time and trouble to complete a feedback form. Out of those, 99% told us they were happy with our repairs service. An excellent performance.



### Full gas

The annual servicing of gas appliances is a routine legal requirement for all landlords. An important and essential safety measure, it pinpoints any gas appliances in our properties that may be faulty or dangerous. We're pleased to report gas appliance servicing was completed at all Unity properties during the year under review.

### Reducing rent arrears

Rent is the lifeblood of our business; it pays for the services we provide to tenants and helps finance our development programme. During the past year Unity has maintained tight control of its rental income with a firm but fair approach. Early action is key and our Housing Officer 'health checks' enable us to quickly identify tenants who may need support. The strategy clearly works. Whilst we just missed this year's challenging target of 4.75% of total rent roll, it was a good performance in a tough economic environment.

### Homes that are NRG efficient

Fuel poverty and ever increasing fuel costs continue to make headlines in the media, as do concerns about the environmental impact of heating our homes. So it's good to know that Unity tenants live in energy efficient homes. Unity's SAP rating – that's the nationally recognized standard used to score energy efficiency across our property portfolio – is now up to 74. This places us firmly amongst the most energy efficient housing providers in the UK.

# Pearly gates

Let's hope, when our time comes, the fabled pearly gates are open and there's a warm welcome for us within. In the meantime, back here on earth, Unity Housing Association's development and regeneration strategy continues to open the gates to new and affordable homes for people across Chapeltown, Harehills, Beeston/Holbeck and a good number of other neighbourhoods in Leeds.

There is no doubt that the UK is facing a housing crisis. Leeds provides a perfect example. The city has a thriving economy; this in turn pushes up demand for housing - particularly affordable housing. The obvious answer is to build more homes, but suitable land at a viable price isn't always available.

Despite these headwinds Unity continues to be one of the leading local Housing Associations developing affordable housing in the city. Unity's Regeneration & Development team have had a busy and productive year. They are well into their 2015-18 Affordable Homes Programme, which,





when completed, will add a further 120 top quality affordable homes for rent to the local housing market. Of course, for Unity, it's not just a numbers game. Our development programme recognises the differing needs of our tenants old and new.

For instance, if you're wheelchair bound, a home on one level is essential. That's why bungalows continue to feature in our development plans. Working with Adult Social Care and other partners we ensure the properties we build are fit for individual client needs. We've added a further four this year with more to come.

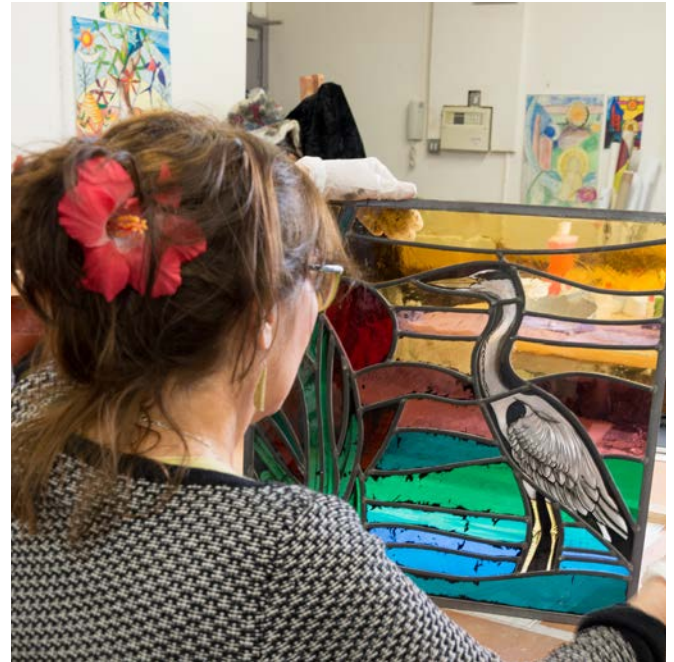
## Completed developments

During the year, three new developments were completed at Parkwood Road Beeston, Holborn Court Little London and Rocheford Court Hunslet. These schemes added a total of 46 new homes, all of which were quickly let, highlighting the need for this type of good quality affordable accommodation. The schemes consisted of one, two and three bedroomed houses and flats, plus bungalows to meet the needs of disabled clients.

## Work is ongoing on the following projects:

### 146 Chapeltown Road

A refurbishment of a derelict property and new-build extension to adjoining land in a Conservation area to create six flats, whilst retaining the original façade.



### Parkwood Road, Beeston (Phase 2)

Due for completion in June 2017, this project will comprise six new houses.

Elsewhere projects at Avenue Crescent, Lenhurst Avenue, Beckhill Grove and Leopold Street in Leeds and Quarmby Road in Kirklees are all at various stages in the planning process. A mix of houses and flats, these projects will add a further 80 units of affordable housing stock when completed.

Looking further ahead, our ability to deliver housing developments has enabled us to secure further development opportunities with our key strategic partner, Leeds City Council. Our 2016/21 Shared Ownership Affordable Homes Programme will see Unity build an additional 100 low cost homes for sale to meet increasing demand for this type of property.

### Creating sustainable neighbourhoods

Regeneration isn't just about building new homes. It's also about sustainability. And that means creating neighbourhoods which are economically viable. Ones in which residents have the skills to find work, creating a virtuous economic circle of financial inclusion and independence.

That's where Unity Employment Services (UES) fits into our organisation. Operating from the Hub at Unity Business Centre, UES now has a three person team (including an apprentice) helping find employment and training opportunities for local people living in Unity's heartland areas.



From school leavers who need guidance on how to take the first tentative steps in to the jobs market, to mothers wanting to return to work, or people in low paid employment who want to find a job which pays more, UES is here to help. UES works with a number of partners offering support and guidance. They include: Path Yorkshire (training, mentoring and coaching), PLUSS (services targeted at the disadvantaged and those with disabilities) and the YMCA. Courses delivered by the partnership include: English as a Second Language, Digital Inclusion and Financial Inclusion.

During the past year UES has helped:

- 95 people find work
- 149 people improve their skills and employability through training
- 26 people find voluntary work

### **Collaborative working**

As part of Unity's regeneration programme, we continue to seek out and establish opportunities for collaborative working with local groups and

organisations which will result in improvements to the lives of people living in our communities.

### **Holbeck Neighbourhood Forum (HNF)**

The Forum plays a key part in the ongoing regeneration and general improvement of Holbeck - one of the most deprived areas in Leeds. Forum members are keen to ensure that investment in Leeds South Bank (Leeds City Station and the HS2 project) will provide an economic boost for Holbeck. Supported by Leeds City Council, the Forum comprises residents, ward members, businesses and local stakeholders.

During 2016 good progress was made on Holbeck's Neighbourhood Plan which was completed and the resultant report submitted to the Council. When the plan is adopted the Forum will become a statutory consultee on all planning matters in the area.

Working with Groundwork, an organisation dedicated to improving people's lives through the creation of green spaces in urban environments,



partners acquired further funding to refurbish an area of land known as Holbeck Moor.

As part of the Leeds Neighbourhood Approach initiative, the Forum has also been improving Private Sector Rented Housing in Holbeck. This year, partner organisations inspected 340 properties, identifying over 600 hazards; 57 notices were served on landlords and 67 unoccupied properties were brought back into use. Forum members undertook joint walkabouts every quarter, which are having a positive impact. As result of this multi-agency initiative Leeds City Council has also committed £4.5m to fund a Group Repair Scheme which will target 180 properties during 2017.

On top of all this complementary activity, a Pop-up Hub has been established as a focal point for local people to attend for help/support with job opportunities, benefits and a wide range of other advice.

### **Beeston & Holbeck Regeneration Plan**

Partners include Housing Leeds, South Leeds Employment & Skills Board and Holbeck Neighbourhood Forum. Via the various Improvement Boards, partners are able to discuss emerging local issues and seek ways to improve neighbourhoods.

### **Chapelton Housing Investment Strategy (CHIS)**

Unity has been part of this steering group for several years. The group comprises various Leeds City Council Departments, Private Sector Housing, Housing Leeds plus Latch and six other local social



housing providers.

Alongside CHIS's commitment to the improvement of housing standards across all tenures for all local residents, it has focused its activities on: bringing derelict land/property back into use; providing advice to local residents on Financial Inclusion; scheduled local Action Days and launched the Chapelton News website.

### **Working with Older People**

In our efforts to create cohesive and sustainable communities, it's important that the requirements of the older generation aren't overlooked. That's why Unity works with local organisations such as Leeds Black Elders, The Feel Good Factor and Care & Repair. Following the successful research conducted by Leeds University into the needs and aspirations of older people living in Chapelton and Harehills, grant funding was secured by The Feel Good Factor to enable a number of initiatives to start in 2017. They include a gardening and decorating project (Leeds Black Elders), aids and adaptations to homes (Care & Repair) and additional support to help older people with ongoing health issues such as dementia, to live more independently (The Feel Good Factor). The Care & Repair team also offer support to clients where it is thought a move to alternative accommodation may be beneficial.



# A pearl of great price

That's Unity Enterprise, Unity Housing Association's business arm. Spread across three sites in Chapeltown and Harehills, Unity Enterprise comprises: Unity Business Centre (UBC), Chapeltown Enterprise Centre (CEC) and the Leeds Media Centre (LMC).

Across the three centres we have 139 units of quality and affordable business space which is let to a wide range of commercial enterprises and organisations. Very much part of the Leeds business community, Unity Enterprise is an important element in our business plan.

Over the past twelve months enquiries and lettings for all three sites has been buoyant. Alongside affordability, tenants at our three business centres value being part of a business community. We actively encourage them to talk to each other, to swap ideas and share past experience to help fellow tenants grow their business and overcome challenges to further business development.



### Unity Business Centre (UBC)

The UBC's value for money offering continues to be extremely popular with good rates of tenant retention and 100% occupancy over the past year. Our flexible short-term lets use an easy to understand one page tenancy agreement, removing the need for a solicitor, which has obvious cost saving advantages. The UBC is home to a wide variety of businesses and organisations. During the year we welcomed 'Positive action for refugees and asylum seekers' to the Business Centre. Previously a single unit tenant at the CEC, demand for its services has grown and it now occupies three units incorporating a waiting room, meeting room, office and food bank. And, of course, they benefit from UBC's reception facilities and car parking.

### Chapeltown Enterprise Centre (CEC)

Our competitive rents continue to give us a leading edge over the competition. As a result, the Centre has also enjoyed 100% occupancy rate during the year. We regard the CEC very much as a business incubator and work closely with Chapeltown Development Trust (CDT) to nurture and sustain new businesses in the area. Unity Enterprise's manager was previously a manager in a high street bank and has the commercial knowledge and experience to provide advice to help small businesses grow. Of course, whilst we regret losing any tenant, it is always pleasing when a business start-up outgrows us and has to move to larger premises.



### Leeds Media Centre (LMC)

The LMC is in direct competition with city centre office accommodation. However the availability of plentiful free parking – and our excellent product offer – ensures we both win and retain tenants. Our anchor tenant is 'Made in Leeds TV'; the brand has centralised its operations across the UK at the LMC, employing around 60 people in a variety of roles. Other tenants include a restaurant, a firm of solicitors and the national charity, Barnardo's, has its Leeds office at the Media Centre. During the year one of our units was let as a recording studio and is available for use by the local community.

# Mother of pearl

The inside layer of an oyster or mussel shell, in the 1900s polished mother of pearl was much used for the production of buttons. Of course, Unity tenants are anything but buttoned up! And we welcome that. Feedback and tenant involvement - whether it's through our tenants' forums, surveys or via our housing officers – helps us improve housing management services and form policy for the future benefit of everyone. The close working relationship with

our tenants is undoubtedly one of the reasons why we continue to get such high levels of customer satisfaction.

Unity tenants are involved through our Tenants' Panel and the Leeds Collaborative – a group of active tenants from three local housing providers supported by tenant involvement managers. For tenants not directly involved, 'Unity News', our quarterly newsletter, keeps all our residents up to date with stories, special offers and other tenant-related issues.





## Tenant Panel

It's been a busy and meaningful year for the 22 members of our Tenant Panel. They've worked alongside Unity staff on a number of key issues including anti-social behaviour and Unity's repair service. Members have also given crucial insight into the tendering of our new maintenance contracts, ensuring that the final decision reflects the needs of our tenants.

The panel was also involved in Unity's development programme, helping ensure that the new homes we build continue to meet exacting quality standards. Visits were made to construction sites at an early stage and when the projects were nearing completion.

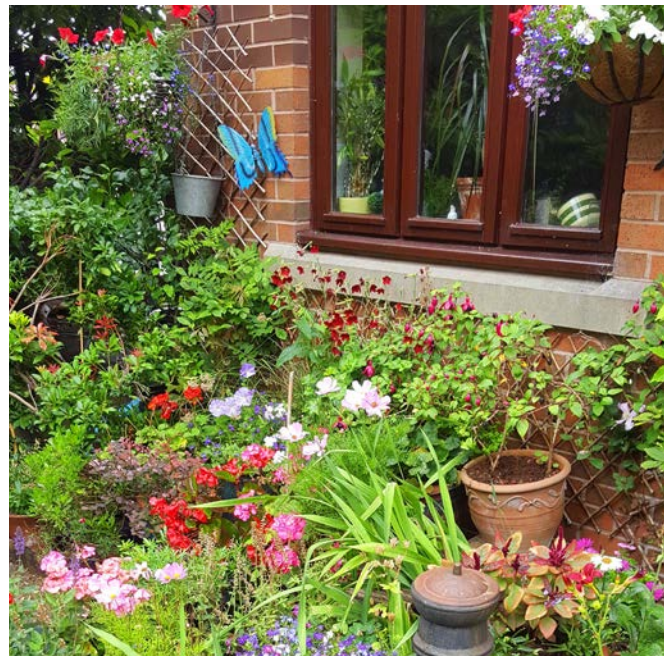
And, talking of high standards, our Tenant Panel was involved in Unity's customer service excellence assessment and a mystery shopping exercise.

In line with our cost control policy it is appropriate, from time to time, to review every aspect of the Unity business to ensure that it delivers good value for money. So this year we undertook a review of the Tenant Panel. When it comes to value for money, the Panel continues to deliver. However to further improve efficiency, meetings now take place on a bi-monthly basis. This has had a double benefit: the change has resulted in cost savings which are being used to enhance other services. At the same time, we've found that Tenant Panel meetings are now more purposeful and effective.

## Growing nicely

Gardening and growing have been to the fore of our tenant involvement agenda this year. Neat and well-tended gardens improve the look of our estates, creating a pleasant environment whilst fostering pride amongst tenants. Gardening also plays a role in a healthy lifestyle. It gets you out in the fresh air; a dose of double digging is a great way of keeping fit. And the benefit is even greater if you're growing your own fresh fruit and veg.

So, alongside a bigger and even better 'Unity in Bloom' gardening competition, we teamed up with 'Back to Front', an organisation that promotes the growing of fruit and veg in your front garden. They ran a series of gardening workshops and, to further enthuse horticultural efforts, tenants received free fruit and vegetable seeds.



Meanwhile, after the successful launch of 'Unity in Bloom' last year, new categories – including best smaller and best eco-friendly gardens – were added to widen the scope for potential winners. Members of the Tenants' Panel took two full days to visit and judge gardens across Unity estates. Entrants were invited to an Awards' Ceremony where the winners and runners-up were announced and prizes awarded.

## Leeds Tenants' Collaborative

The Collaborative is a group of active tenants from four local housing providers. Meetings take place every six months. Unity is represented by two tenants and our Tenant Involvement officer. The Collaboratives main function is to facilitate the sharing of best practice, comparing approaches to customer service between the three housing associations.

## Sponsorship

Whenever we can, Unity provides financial support for local events and worthwhile local projects which will bring benefit to the whole local community. During the past year we supported Leeds West Indian Carnival as well as festivals and galas in Beeston, Holbeck and Meanwood.

'Unity News', our quarterly newsletter, keeps all our residents up to date with stories, special offers and other tenant-related issues.

# Knit one, purl one

Sorry about the pun, but when it comes to counting, our finance team are anything but woolly. That's been reflected in another year of strong financial performance with a higher than expected surplus of £1.5m for the Group.

This was achieved mainly by cost savings, lower interest charges and other efficiencies. Unity's performance on rent collection has again improved and we have also continued our strong performance on voids and bad debts. Our running costs per unit of housing fall well within the top quartile of housing associations nationally.

Unity's financial strength enabled us to invest £812k

on cyclical and programmed improvements to our existing housing stock which, of course benefits our tenants. It also meant that we were able to negotiate a new £15m loan facility with our lenders, Yorkshire Bank and a further £3.25m facility with the Charity Bank, a total of £18.25m of new funding. This, alongside the funds we generate through our surpluses, will be used to finance our ambitious development and regeneration programme.

Unity is a highly efficient organisation. So, looking ahead, we will continue our focus on delivering value for money; making cost savings where this can be done judiciously, without any reduction in the quality of service our tenants and partners have come to expect.



## Group statement of financial position

at 31st March	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Tangible fixed assets		
Housing properties	59,312	55,332
Non-housing freehold properties	2,844	2,893
Other tangible fixed assets	119	130
	62,275	58,355
Current assets		
Debtors due within one year	305	283
Properties for sale	-	511
Cash at bank and in hand	4,909	7,808
	5,214	8,602
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(3,539)	(3,206)
Net current assets	1,675	5,396
Total assets less current liabilities	63,950	63,751
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year		
Grants	(30,651)	(31,011)
Others	(18,204)	(19,157)
Total net assets	15,095	13,583
Reserves		
Revenue reserve	15,095	13,583
Total reserves	15,095	13,583

## Group statement of comprehensive income

at 31st March	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Turnover	7,401	8,061
Operating costs	(5,467)	(5,884)
Operating surplus:	1,934	2,177
Interest receivable	40	53
Interest payable & similar charges	(462)	(554)
Total comprehensive income for the year	1,512	1,676

# Pearls of wisdom

Originally a reference to wise advice and counsel, these days thanking someone for their 'pearls of wisdom' is often used in a humorous way to suggest that it's anything but. Of course that's not the case with Unity's directors and senior management team, their continued wisdom and wise leadership has helped deliver another highly successful year.

## Senior management

Ali Akbor	Chief Executive
Parveen Sidhu	Operations Director & Deputy Chief Executive
Wayne Noteman	Regeneration & Development Director
Tony Osborne	Corporate Services Director

## The Board

Shruti Bhargava	Chair
David Heels	Chair of Audit & Risk Management Committee
Richard Walker	Chair of Operations Committee
Naseer Ahmed	
John Jefferies	
Emma Green	
Shazia Khan	
Tim Yeardley	
Waheed Butt	
Nothabo Changwe-Dube	Observer



# Success Stories

## Corinne Lapierre

Corinne Lapierre launched her unique range of felt craft kits in 2009. With three young children to bring up, Corinne started marketing her kits from home. Aimed at the adult craft market, orders flooded in, attracting customers from as far afield as Germany, Holland and Australia.

A regular slot on the 'Create and Craft' shopping TV channel raised her profile further and Corinne soon needed quality, affordable workspace to take her business to the next level. She became a Unity Business Centre tenant in 2013 ensuring her charming craft kits continued their growth story.

Corinne Lapierre's enterprise now employs five people and occupies three units: one used as an office, one as a workshop and the other as a stock room. Alongside her retail output, Corinne has also published two books. "The craft market is booming. So whether by luck or by design I started my business at a perfect moment," says Corinne. "Unity were very helpful in the early days, providing business advice and direction."

## Jonathan Griffiths

Jonathan Griffiths' life was completely and unexpectedly changed when a blood clot resulted in the amputation of his right leg.

Confined to a wheelchair, Jonathan found himself increasingly dependent on his wife and daughter to complete simplest of tasks. A move to one of Unity's new bungalows at Rocheford Court has made a massive difference to both him and his family.

"The layout of the property makes it easy for me get around," says Jonathan. "The sink, worktops and hob in the kitchen are fully adjustable so I can lower them to suit my particular needs. The bathroom has also been kitted out with a range of facilities easily accessible to both me and able-bodied users. I want to be self-sufficient, not forced to rely on my wife and daughter. Thanks to Unity I've been given a great deal of my independence back."



# A pearl of a performance

	2015/16		2016/17	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
<b>Gross Turnover</b>				
Unity Housing	£5,823k	£7,576k	£5,706k	£6,841k
Unity Enterprise	£536k	£485k	£550k	£560k
<b>Surplus For The Year</b>				
Unity Housing	£989k	£1,636k	£724k	£724k
Unity Enterprise	£(37)k	£40k	£14k	£104k
Interest cover	424%	341%	415%	583%
Gearing ratio	37%	39%	35%	40%
Rent arrears	5.75%	5.56%	4.75%	4.91%
<b>Voids</b>				
Unity Housing	1%	1.02%	1%	0.69%
Unity Enterprise	17.16%	18.9%	14.14%	12.71%
Re-let times	22 days	20 days	20 days	14 days
BME lettings, no less than	50%	67.1%	50%	78%
<b>Repairs Performance</b>				
Emergency	99%	99.2%	99%	99%
Urgent	99%	99.1%	99%	98%
Routine	99%	99%	99%	99%
Gas safety inspections	100%	100%	100%	100%
Planned/responsive spend %	60/40	61/39	57/43	58/42
Number of new housing units	28	28	46	46



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# Unity Homes & Enterprise

## An absolute pearler!

### Our mission

Provide housing choice, improve life opportunities and address inequalities.

### Our objectives

- Provide and continue to develop good quality mixed tenure housing which reflects needs and aspirations.
- Provide high quality affordable housing services.
- Involve and work with our tenants and the communities we serve to inform and improve services.
- Work with our partners to encourage the regeneration of our target neighbourhoods.
- Provide and facilitate business support services and encourage local enterprise.
- Be a progressive and expanding business with a sound resource base.

### Our values

**Integrity** – being honest, transparent and sincere with strong principles

**Respect** – in the way we treat people, service users and each other

**Flexible** – in how we work for the benefit of our tenants, other people, the organisation and each other

**Commitment** – to provide services to meet the needs of our tenants, local people and local neighbourhoods.

**Business focused** – continually review and adopt best practice and ensure we operate efficiently and effectively in order to make the best use of resources

**Equality and fairness** – in the way we work and deliver our services



### Unity Housing and Enterprise

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A charitable housing association registered with the Homes & Communities Agency LH3737. Registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefits Society Act 2014 25616R. Affiliated to the NHF. VAT registration no. 734 5524 34

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