

# Strong for the Future

Strategic Plan Update 2023 – 2024



# Advance is

# 50

**This year marks an important milestone for Advance as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary.**

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# Foreward

## An introduction from the Chief Executive



**We've come a long way since we started in 1974 with just a handful of customers and their dream to live independently in the community. Since then, we've supported many more customers to achieve this dream, and others besides.**

**We're tremendously proud of our history and longevity and we are completely committed to ensuring that we can continue working with customers to transform their lives by delivering the best quality of housing and support services now and long into the future.**

Our 50th Anniversary milestone also marks the end of one chapter and the beginning of another in the Advance story as our current Chair, Marie Li Mow Ching, comes to the end of her final term serving on the Board.

Marie has been part of our journey for the past six and a half years and I know colleagues on the Board and across the organisation will want to join me in thanking her for the significant contribution she has made to the organisation during that time. We are pleased to welcome our new Chair, Jonathan Higgs, who we look forward to working with to achieve our ambitions for Advance in the years ahead.

**Julie Layton, Chief Executive**

## A message from the incoming Chair, Jonathan Higgs

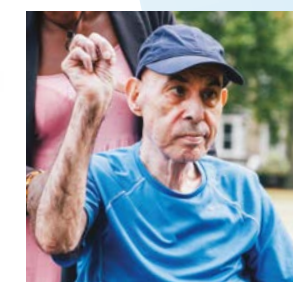


***I am delighted to be joining Advance at such a pivotal moment in its history. This is an organisation that is built on strong values with a long track record of delivering for its customers.***

It isn't easy providing Supported Housing or Social Care services. Funding is tight at the best of times and the pressures to deliver more with less has never been so great. But as this report demonstrates, Advance is an organisation that has shown resilience over time and a good degree of innovative thinking to make it possible for people with Learning Disabilities and Mental Health conditions to live and thrive in their communities.

I am looking forward to working with my colleagues on the Board, with the staff team and with customers to make sure Advance can continue delivering excellent services to people over the coming years.

**Jonathan Higgs, Chair**





# Strong for the Future



**When we wrote our strategic plan for 2023-2026 – ‘Strong for the Future’, consistency and long-term resilience were front of mind.**

**Rather than focusing on ambitious growth targets, the plan recognised the challenging operating environment that we, and all providers of social housing and social care services, are currently having to contend with and prioritised investment in core services, our people and improved systems.**

**We were right to do so.**

In the autumn, the Regulator of Social Housing’s Sector Risk Profile highlighted the complexity and significant external issues that landlords are grappling with, including higher borrowing costs, price inflation and difficulties accessing skilled labour. At the same time, the Social Care sector continues to be chronically underfunded and under-resourced.

Certainly, this national picture has been reflected in our experience at Advance, with financial pressure being an overriding theme for this year. Six months into the plan, we recognised we needed to make significant changes and some difficult decisions if we were to meet our budget expectations for the year. We are pleased that by diligently

implementing a savings plan and by significantly reducing spend on agency workers, increasing recruitment and managing void properties, we have been able to turn this around and end the year in a strong financial position.

In November, we maintained our top rating of G1, V1 for Governance and Financial Viability from the Social Housing Regulator, signalling external confidence in Advance’s prudent approach to financial management and decision-making.

Despite all of these challenges and the need to focus on cost savings, we have still made good progress against the goals we set ourselves in the Strategic Plan.

Investment in our HR function is already paying dividends in our ability to attract and retain the right people, upskill colleagues and bring down the use of agency workers. Further investment in our core systems and processes positions us well to continue delivering excellent services for customers long into the future.

We have developed new homes – both for rent and shared ownership – and maintained and won support contracts, helping us to achieve our goal of extending our services to more people who need them.

We have involved more customers in more ways, listening and responding to their feedback and involving them in events and activities to enhance their quality of life.

Advance has never strayed from its vision of putting customers at the heart of what it does. When it comes to things like proactively managing the condition of homes, offering choice to customers and making sure we can deliver sensitive and responsive services, we are confident that we are ahead of the curve. A strong focus on getting the basics right during this year – understanding our properties and our customers, continuous and incremental improvement of core service delivery, ongoing strengthening of governance and oversight – puts us in a strong position to respond to the step change in regulatory expectations which will come into effect in the year ahead and to face the challenges that will undoubtedly continue to affect the sector.

**Julie Layton / Chief Executive  
& Marie Li Mow Ching / Chair**

## Our highlights:



**46 new homes delivered**



**G1, V1 rating from the Regulator of Social Housing retained**



**Budget and value for money targets achieved**



**Agency use reduced to 10.9%**



**90% of colleagues think Advance is a good place to work**





## Advance today



We were  
established in  
1974



We provide  
over 2,290 people  
with a home



We have over 800  
employees



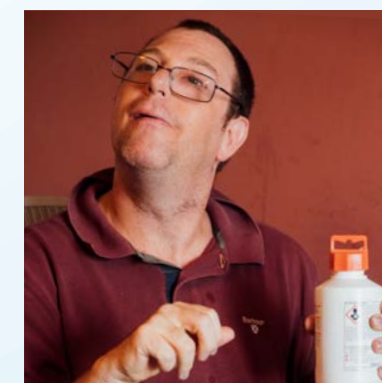
UK wide, with offices in  
Witney, Leicester, London  
and Hampshire



We provide  
support to over  
1,958 people



771 of our customers  
part-own their  
own home





# Our vision and values

To transform the lives of people with a disability or mental health condition by providing the best quality housing and support services – to enable them to live the lives they choose, achieve their personal goals, feel valued and know their voices are heard.



# PRIDE

## Partnership

We work in partnership with our customers and build relationships with others that help us serve our customers better

## Respect

We treat our customers, colleagues and others as we would like to be treated

## Inclusion

We work to create an environment where diversity is celebrated and where everyone can thrive

## Drive

We do the right thing at the right time and everything we do is driven by our customers' needs

## Efficiency

We make good use of resources, find innovative ways to do things and maximise efficiency to deliver the best services for our customers

# Customers involved

During this year, customers have had the chance to provide feedback on Advance's performance against our Strategic Plan in a variety of formal and informal ways.

Performance against the customer scorecard has been reported to the Customer Collective who meet monthly, online and to the Housing Customer Partnership.

The Housing Customer Partnership has a particular role in monitoring how Advance is performing against the Consumer Standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing.

This year, the Housing Customer Partnership has been involved in:

- Monitoring performance against the Customer Scorecard
- Reviewing feedback from the Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Developing the Customer Engagement Plan
- Learning about the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures



Grant Paton is an active member of the partnership. He said:

The partnership is made up of people like me with lived experience who have a learning disability or mental health condition. We meet and look at the performance of Advance. We make sure that customers' voices are heard and that any concerns raised are taken to the Board.

It is important for customers to be involved to make sure there is action, and that Advance are acting on what customers want. It does make a difference when they really listen to our voice and what we have to say.



# Report against the Strategic Plan

During 2023-26, we said we would:

1. Deliver quality homes and services
2. Achieve sustainable growth
3. Invest in our people
4. Be a high-performing organisation

See how we did...





# Quality homes and services

**Continuously improving the quality of our homes and services is a clear priority for Advance.**

**During this year, we have placed a strong emphasis on getting the basics right as well as making good progress against our goals, ensuring we are well positioned for future growth and able to continue meeting evolving customer expectations and regulatory standards.**



We have maintained strong performance in relation to landlord health and safety and general repairs and maintenance, despite having to unexpectedly retender a major contract following the collapse of one of our Midlands contractors.



**Customer satisfaction with repairs, measured by transactional surveys, averaged at 93% for the year.**

Meeting our targets for voids has continued to prove challenging this year with delays due to commissioning, staffing and resource issues for other support providers and works on some properties taking longer than expected to complete. Having said that, performance by the end of the year was better than anticipated with **5.8%** void loss against a target of **5%**. A strategic review has helped us to identify where improvements to some properties and the disposal of others will help to improve performance in this area next year.

We have continued to be proactive in ensuring the quality of our homes and work has taken place to further strengthen our approach to spotting and treating damp and mould, along with other stock condition issues. In addition, an external stock condition review was commissioned to determine our preparedness for enhanced standards. The reviewers found that *'Despite [Advance] being a relatively small RSL, they have a large amount of asset data and suitable methodologies in place for its management and reporting.'*

Work has progressed to improve the energy efficiency of homes, completing energy improvement work to five properties in Cornwall with funding from the Cornwall Sustainable Warmth programme, and progressing, albeit more slowly than anticipated, a programme to retrofit energy efficiency measures to properties in the Midlands with funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. At the end of the year, **66%** of homes had achieved an EPC rating of C or above (against a target of **68%**).

The introduction of a new Monthly Management Monitoring approach has strengthened oversight and governance of individual support contracts and improved our approach to Support planning.

A significant reduction in agency workers as a result of our 'project no agency' is also helping to drive up the quality of support services with permanent staff members being trained to Advance's standards and providing consistency to the customers they support.

## During 2023-26, we said we would:



- Make sure our homes are places where people really want to live: comfortable, safe and well maintained
- Provide enhanced levels of housing management services to help customers live well in their homes
- Significantly improve the energy efficiency of our homes through a major programme of investment
- Continuously improve support services, modernising our approach to meet the individual needs and aspirations of customers
- Demonstrate the impact of our services; the difference they make to customers' lives
- Engage purposefully with more of our customers, listening to and acting on their feedback
- Enhance the role technology plays in maximising customer choice, control and independence



# Quality homes and services

In line with trends across the sector, satisfaction with the way we handle complaints has been lower than target this year **(62% against a target of 72%)** and we have failed to meet our target of resolving **80%** of complaints within timescales.

In response, we have implemented a number of improvements to our complaints process, and we have delivered communications training to colleagues across the business. We are already seeing improvements which we hope will continue into the year ahead.

We have made the necessary changes to be ready to comply with the new Complaints Handling Code, which was introduced by the Ombudsman on 1st April 2024 and puts effective complaint handling on a statutory footing.

Staff shortages in some areas has meant we have not quite met our target for carrying out annual Housing Officer visits **(82% complete against a target of 90%)**, although there has been a significant increase in the Customer Engagement Manager and Housing Outreach Workers getting out and about,

speaking to customers in their homes, collecting feedback and organising social and added value activities.

We were also behind target on ensuring Support customers received their annual health check **(55%)** and this is something we will be focusing on in the year ahead.

The Customer Collective has met online each month, and the Housing Customer Partnership has met quarterly in person to review Advance's performance and input into key topics affecting customers, including shaping the future of partnership meetings and wider customer engagement. Customers have also been involved in recruiting the new Chair of the Board and Chair of Audit and Risk Committee, as well as other senior roles.

Just under 200 customers were involved in shaping the new Customer Engagement Plan which was published this year and sets out a road map for gathering and responding to feedback, involving customers in decision making, working with customers to enhance their quality of life and providing transparency to customers.

3-Year Target / 2023 – 2026	23-24 Target	Actual
85% of Housing customers are satisfied with our services	75%	74%
95% of Support customers are happy with our services	95%	95%
90% of Housing customers are happy with their home	80%	83.6%
72% of homes achieve EPC C rating or above	68%	66%
100% of our services are rated as 'Good' by the CQC	100%	75%*
90% of eligible support customers access their annual health check	90%	55%

\*of those with a current rating

- **82% of customers received their annual visit from their Housing Officer.**
- **Housing Outreach Workers worked with customers throughout the year to support tenancy issues and provide additional support to tenants.**
- **£10k was awarded to customers through the Advance Hardship Fund – mainly to support customers to meet rising energy costs.**
- **We reviewed our approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour resulting in 90% of cases being responded to within our 2-day timescale.**



- **Hundreds of customers had the opportunity to provide feedback and get involved in added-value events and activities during this year, including social events, outings and garden improvement projects.**

## During 2024-25, we will:



- Involve customers in: the procurement of new repairs and maintenance contractors, a review of Advance communications, and the development of the new customer portal
- Carry out a programme of social events with customers to mark Advance's 50th anniversary
- Maintain performance around Landlord Health and Safety and repairs
- Improve customer services response times
- Reduce void losses to **5.5%**
- Continue to improve the way we deal with complaints
- Develop an improvement plan based on customer feedback from the annual satisfaction surveys
- Continue to strengthen our approach to person centred planning
- Develop our approach to measuring support outcomes



# William's story

When William was admitted to hospital earlier this year for a minor operation, he stopped communicating and refused to stand or move. After a six week stay, William's mobility had declined to the point where hospital staff felt he may need to move into a care home.

William has been an Advance customer for ten years and his regular support team were keen to try and support William at his flat instead. Once back in a familiar environment among familiar people, William made daily progress to regain his independence.

His team arranged to have 'moving and positioning refresher training' so they could support him to use a hoist at home. But before the training had taken place, William had made significant progress, was walking independently and back to being his 'old self'.

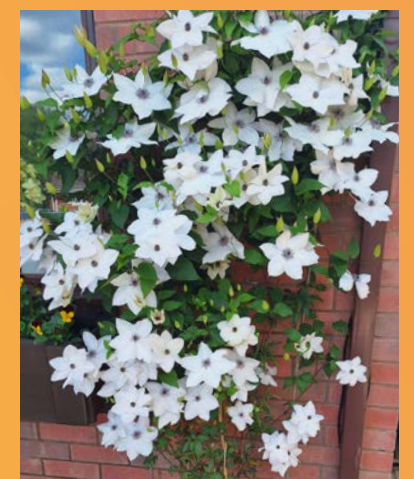


# Just Add Water

Working with our customers to enhance outdoor spaces.

Customers and colleagues at Turner Court in Lincoln have created a welcoming outside space in their communal garden area to eat, do gardening and socialise. They worked together to paint and build the bird feeder, install garden furniture and plant flowers in pots.

Customers across the country have spoken about the importance of getting outdoors, their interest in gardening and the positive impact this has on their health and wellbeing. We have already worked with customers to plan three mini-makeovers this year and have more in the pipeline for 2024-25 as part of our new 'Just Add Water' initiative.





# Sustaining growth

Advance wants to continue to grow the number of people we can house and support so that more people with disabilities and mental health conditions have the opportunity to live in their community as independently as possible.

Development and growth is extremely challenging in the current environment and we have struggled to meet our overall targets in this area. However, we have made progress and are particularly proud of our success in supporting a further **36 new shared owners** through the HOLD (Home Ownership for people with Long-term Disabilities) scheme.

Advance continues to be the leading provider of HOLD in the country and we have been working this year to raise the profile of the scheme with other registered providers whose customers could benefit from it.

We set ourselves an ambitious target for new rented homes which we have not met. However, we have developed **10 homes**, and have continued to explore partnerships with other providers and opportunities for stock acquisition. We have a strong pipeline of development opportunities for 2024-25, although we have reduced our targets for both HOLD and rented schemes in response to sector pressures.

### During 2023-26, we said we would:



- Sustain our focus on the provision of new and refurbished rented homes
- Engage with Commissioners to ensure the sustainability of our care and support contracts
- Actively seek opportunities to increase the homes we own and manage through stock-acquisition
- Develop strategic partnerships with organisations who share our values and enable us to maximise our impact

We have worked closely with commissioners during the year to achieve adequate financial uplifts to support contracts in most areas and we have handed back a small number of unviable contracts. While we handed back a small number of services that were not financially viable, we have retained **100%** of services which were due for retender during the year and won framework positions in Worcestershire, Southend, Warwickshire and Newham. We were also approached to provide a new service in Hampshire to support four customers coming out of treatment and assessment facilities.



- In Kent, we acquired 21 homes previously leased from L&Q
- We developed 36 homes for shared ownership and 10 properties to rent
- We have largely maintained overall Support hours

## Esme's Story

After a short period in a supported living scheme which didn't suit her, Esme came across Advance and the HOLD scheme which has enabled her to fulfil her dream of owning her own home in the village where her family lives.

Esme absolutely loves living in her new home and has also enjoyed getting involved in Advance's Housing Customer Partnership.

She says: *"I never even dreamed of owning my own place. I'd always thought I'd be living with my parents then in a supported care home when they were weren't around anymore. Now I can't imagine living anywhere else!"*

Her mum, Louise said: *"For Esme to have her forever home has given us and her family great peace of mind for her future. To be able to live in her local community but also become involved with the organization that will support her in being able to express herself means so much. Esme continues to surprise us and her confidence and self-esteem have been given the opportunity to continue to grow in a safe environment."*





# Sustaining growth

## New homes in Dorset are enabling young people to transition to independent living

Advance has worked with Dorset Council to complete two new schemes this year which are all about enabling younger people with disabilities or mental health conditions to develop their independent living skills.

The latest scheme on Dorchester Road (right) provides four bedrooms in the main house and a separate annexe for 18-25 year olds leaving their parents' home or children's services. It provides them with the opportunity to learn how to live independently, safe in the knowledge that support is on-hand 24 hours a day, 7 days a week should they need it.

Once people have developed their skills and confidence, they will be supported to move on into their own home in the area.

**Jo Bonner from the Development team said explains:** *"Most young people have aspirations of moving out of their parent's home and becoming independent, but not everyone is able to take that leap.*

*This provides a perfect stepping stone: it is effectively a house share, but with support available on hand to help residents navigate the complexities of running a home for the first time. The customers I met are incredibly excited about having their own place!"*

3-Year Target / 2023 – 2026	23-24 Target	Actual
Secure an additional 165 shared ownership properties	45	36
Achieve 100 new rented homes	35	10
Achieve a 2.5% increase in support hours each year	2.5%	-1%

### During 2024-25, we will:



- Develop a further 45 homes for shared ownership and 39 rental properties
- Continue to grow the number of customers we support
- Continue to explore opportunities for stock acquisition and new partnerships

Gail Gardiner, from Dorset Council and Martin De St Aubin from Care Dorset visit Dorchester Road.





# Investing in our people

## Attracting and retaining the right people, and investing in their development at Advance is crucial for us to be able to deliver every other aspect of our Strategic Plan.

We have made notable progress in this area during the year which is already having a positive impact on the wider business in terms of recruitment, training and development and business growth, as well as improving the efficiency of our HR systems and processes.

Increased capacity in the HR team and improvements to the recruitment process have played a fundamental role in helping to bring down agency spend and increase the recruitment of permanent staff in Support. Not only is this important in terms of delivering better value for money, it is also fundamental to the quality of service we can offer. Customers are benefiting from more consistent support from staff who are trained to Advance standards and passionate about what they do.



Recruitment is up by **100%** compared with last year and by the end of the year, more than **78%** of the workforce were permanent members of staff. New processes have improved the candidate experience, provided additional support to recruiting managers, increased the quality of candidates and sped up the on-boarding processes.

We have significantly improved our training offer, driven by better data and new partnerships with organisations like Grey Matter which are allowing us to better understand the training requirements of all our staff and implement a broad programme of cost effective, industry leading training.

During the year, six members of staff completed a range of apprenticeships, from Adult Care Worker qualifications to a BSc in Building Surveying.

We have delivered a number of initiatives to improve the way we support colleagues' wellbeing and furthered the aims of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy throughout the year.

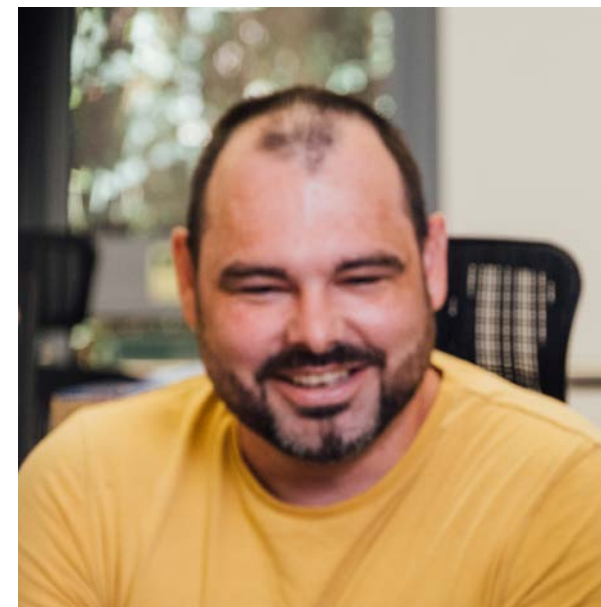


## Karl's Story – Apprenticeship success

Property Services Manager, Karl Hurst, was one of six colleagues who completed apprenticeships this year. Karl achieved a first-class BSc in Building Surveying.

*"My Manager talked with me about my future training and what I wanted to achieve. I was encouraged to look at a degree and found that taking it as an apprenticeship would mean that my fees would be covered by the apprenticeship levy."*

*"The course was hard work, but I am proud of what I have achieved. I think I am living proof that it is possible to dream and then achieve such high levels of learning if you put the work in, and if you have a great team to support you!"*



### During 2023-26, we said we would:



- Ensure robust financial viability and strengthen our resilience to any economic shocks
- Ensure our systems, processes and procedures operate with sound commercial disciplines and good professional practices
- Improve the efficiency, quality and reliability of customer facing and central functions, including the effective implementation of major new ICT systems
- Continually improve the security of our systems to protect Advance from cyber-attack



# Investing in our people

In March, we published our gender pay gap report which revealed a further reduction of the mean gender pay gap from 10.1% to 8.3%. This compares favourably to the national average pay gap of 14.3%.

More work needs to be done to grow understanding of the makeup of our workforce, but significant progress has been made this year. We can report that 37% of colleagues are from ethnic minority groups (against a target of 30%) and that 5.37% have a declared disability or health condition (against a target of 7%).

We have continued to promote the benefits on offer to colleagues through membership of the Employee Assistance Programme and have formed a partnership with the London Capital Credit Union to provide savings opportunities and low-cost borrowing to Advance employees. In partnership with Zurich, plans are underway to carry out a mental health and wellbeing health check early in the new year which will help us to identify where further work is needed.

Our people conference which took place in November was planned around the theme of our Strategic Plan: Strong for the Future and focused on wellbeing and personal resilience. The conference featured external speakers, sessions run by colleagues and input from customers.

To better understand the sentiment and experience of colleagues working at Advance, we carried out a colleague survey in March. We were pleased that 90% of colleagues said they feel Advance is a good place to work, and 88% feel supported to carry out their role.



88% of respondents agreed that Advance treats staff equally regardless of their gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, marital or parental status and 80% agreed they could be their true self at work and still be accepted. Staff responded less favourably around work-life balance and pay and benefits, with 43% agreeing they are paid fairly for what they do.

- A new menopause policy has been introduced following consultation with colleagues
- IOSH training for managers in Support has been developed
- Communications training has been delivered in response to customer feedback on complaints handling
- Colleagues, managers and customers have been engaged in developing new training and improving the induction process.
- Work is underway to develop Management and Leadership Development training

## Investment in people supports new contract wins

During 2023-24, Advance secured a new contract in Hampshire to support people with complex needs coming out of treatment and assessment facilities.

Advance's enhanced ability to support recruitment and provide specialist training has played an important role in securing and successfully mobilising the contract.



## Customers help shape staff induction session

Customers have worked with the Learning and Development team to develop an introduction to Advance session which will form part of the induction programme for new employees. Customers will also be involved in delivering the session once it is finalised.

3-Year Target / 2023 – 2026	23-24 Target	Actual
More than 85% of colleagues feel that Advance is a good place to work	85%	90%
Maintain a vacancy rate of less than 7%	<7%	5%
Ensure no more than 5% of the support workforce are agency workers	<5%	10%
More than 10% of vacancies are filled by internal applicants (excluding support workers)	10%	43%

### During 2024-2025, we will:

- Continue to invest in improving HR systems and processes
- Develop an action plan in response to Colleague survey responses
- Further develop the learning and talent programme to equip colleagues to carry out their roles effectively and provide excellent services
- Finalise and implement a People Strategy and associated targeted strategies, including Learning and Talent and Health and Wellbeing



# High-performing organisation

**Across the sector, registered providers and providers of social care have had to contend with rising costs, high interest rates, reduced income, supply issues and challenges in staff recruitment and retention. This alongside managing competing priorities of improving standards of care, maintaining the quality of homes, meeting ambitious energy efficiency targets and increasing the number of affordable homes.**



## During 2023-26, we said we would:



- Ensure robust financial viability and strengthen our resilience to any economic shocks
- Ensure our systems, processes and procedures operate with sound commercial disciplines and good professional practices
- Improve the efficiency, quality and reliability of customer facing and central functions, including the effective implementation of major new ICT systems
- Continually improve the security of our systems to protect Advance from cyber-attack

Advance has not been immune to these challenges, falling behind our budget target during the first half of the year. Since then, significant work to reduce costs, including a major project to reduce spend on agency workers and a focus on reducing void properties, has allowed Advance to achieve savings of **£810k** and end the year ahead of budget.

Although some projects were delayed, overall we have continued to maintain the quality of our core services and make good progress against the goals set out in our strategic plan despite these pressures, which demonstrates that Advance's prudent approach to financial management makes it resilient to the kind of economic shocks we have seen this year and are likely to continue experiencing in the years ahead.



**In November, the Regulator of Social Housing assessed Advance as G1, V1 – the highest rating for Governance and Financial Viability.**

The regulator makes this assessment based on the current position of the organisation in the context of its long-term business plan and its judgement signals confidence in Advance's long-term viability. It sends a positive message to customers and partners that Advance is an organisation that can be relied on to deliver long into the future.

During the year, we have also maximised income in Support by working closely with commissioners to negotiate suitable uplifts to the majority of existing contracts, and identified and handed back a small number of schemes which were not financially viable. Although we did not meet our target of **12%** contribution from Support, we made significant progress considering the half-year position, ending the year at **8.4%**.

We have continued to invest in new systems and processes throughout the year. An important project has been the successful re-tendering of the Housing Management system. We are now in the process of implementing the new Active H system which will go live during 2024-25 and deliver significant benefits including improvements to data management, workflow automation and mobile working.

The new system will also enable us to upgrade the 'My Advance' Customer Portal, improving the customer experience.





# High-performing organisation

- A new Chair and Chair of Audit and Risk Committee have been successfully recruited to the Board
- The Internal Audit programme has been delivered
- We have retained our Cyber Essentials accreditation
- Updates to the finance systems have been implemented, improving the user experience
- Improvements have been made to the Select HR system
- We completed a self-assessment against HQN matrix for the new consumer standards, and assessed the implications of 'Awaab's Law'



## During 2024-2025, we will:

- Maintain close financial management in line with budget
- Implement new Housing Management System
- Maintain performance around agency spend reduction, debt management and void losses
- Achieve value for money savings targets
- Provide timely regulatory returns, including new reporting against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures

# Year Two Targets (2024–2025)

Full 3-Year Target / 2023 – 2026	24-25 Target
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## Providing quality homes and services

85% of Housing customers are satisfied with our services	80%
95% of Support customers are satisfied with our services	96%
90% of customers are happy with their home	85%
72% of homes achieve EPC C	70%
100% of our services are rated as Good by the CQC	100%
90% of eligible support customers access their annual health check	90%

## Sustaining growth

Secure an additional 165 shared ownership properties	45
Achieve 100 new rented homes	39
Achieve a 2.5% increase in support hours each year	2.5%

## Investing in our people

More than 85% of colleagues feel Advance is a good place to work	>85%
Maintain a vacancy rate of less than 7%	<7%
Ensure no more than 5% of the support workforce are agency workers	<5%
More than 10% of vacancies are filled by internal applicants* revised to 40%	40%

## High performing organisation

Maintain interest cover covenant headroom of at least £1m each year	£1.2m
Support contracts achieve a minimum 10% annual contribution to central overheads (with an average of 12% over the three years)	>10%
Achieve annual VFM savings target	£1,434
Central overheads do not exceed 12% income each year	<12%
Retain G1 rating from the Regulator of Social Housing	G1



# Value for Money

**Providing Value for Money is integral in delivering our Vision and our Strategic Objectives.**

**We aim to run services in an economic, cost effective and efficient manner. Keeping a close eye on costs and making sure we spend money well enables us to deliver the services our customers need and expect, and to ensure that we remain financially viable for the long term.**

Our Value for Money plan isn't only about reducing costs and we recognise that Advance's costs can be higher than other housing providers because of the complexity of the services we deliver. The Board uses both financial and non-financial measures to target specific service areas and to monitor progress in delivering financial savings and improving quality.

This year, our performance against our targets has been mixed. We had improved financial performance in our social housing activity, but this has been offset by poorer performance in the support side of the business due to increased temporary/agency staffing costs.

**During the year ahead, Advance will continue to focus on delivering good quality services, which are of paramount importance to its customers and have benefits for society as a whole.**





**Customer Services:**

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**0333 012 4307**

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