



A foundation for purposeful impact

Longleigh's 2025 - 2028 strategy

Contents

Executive summary	3
Vision, Mission, Values	4-6
From the Chair	7
From the Chief Executive	8
Goals	9
Innovate to deliver even more meaningful impact	10-12
Increase our reach by diversifying our funding	13-15
Equip ourselves to deliver lasting change	16-17
Performance measures	18-20



1. Executive summary

Longleigh Foundation's new strategy sets out how we will continue to make a meaningful and lasting difference for people living in social housing.

This strategy will help us respond more effectively to the evolving needs of residents, strengthen the support available in communities, and influence changes in policy and practice that supports long-term wellbeing and resilience for people living in social housing.

It is built on the belief that long-term, systemic change is achievable when we listen to the people we serve and invest in practical solutions that meet their needs.

Over the next three years, we will:

- ✓ Take clear action
- ✓ Test new ideas and ways of working
- ✓ Track our progress
- ✓ Adapt as needed so that our work continues to make a real difference for those who need it most.

We are Longleigh Foundation.

A grant-making charity working to create real change for social housing residents across the UK. In 2024, we awarded **552 grants** to individuals and families.



2. Our Vision

We believe in a future where:

“Everyone living in social housing has the opportunity to thrive, on their own terms.”



3. Our Mission

As a grant-making foundation, we are **accountable** to people living in social housing, working to:

- **Provide emergency grants** when money is tight and times are hard.
- Fund trusted charitable organisations to **support wellbeing**, increase resilience and to encourage stronger community connections.
- **Invest in research** that helps to shape fairer policies and better support services across the social housing sector.



4. Our Values



Compassion

We treat everyone with empathy, fairness, and respect – prioritising kindness in all our interactions.



Collaboration

We work with openness, honesty, and accountability – building strong, supportive relationships with others.



Commitment

We're dedicated, driven, and proactive – focused on making a real difference, every day.

5. From the Chair

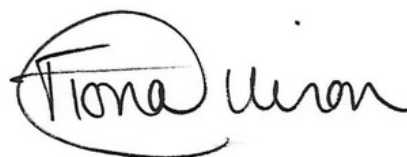
“The role of any grant-making foundation who **wants to create real change**, is not only to provide funding but to **be a catalyst for long-term resilience, dignity, and opportunity**. And at Longleigh Foundation we set out to do just that.

This strategy builds on our track record of responding to need with compassion and purpose. But it also looks ahead – challenging us to be **more innovative, more inclusive, and more effective** in a world of rising inequality, where the landscape is constantly evolving.



As Chair, I am especially proud that this strategy plans to **centre the voices of people living in social housing** across all our delivery and decision making.

As Longleigh’s Board of Trustees, we will continue to work together, **with humility, integrity, and continuous commitment**. We are energised and ready for the work ahead.”



Fiona Ellison
Chair, Longleigh Foundation

6. From the Chief Executive

“At the core of our work lies a simple but powerful belief: **everyone living in social housing should have the opportunity to thrive, on their own terms.**”

Our new strategy sets out how we will make this belief a reality – by:

- Stepping in with **compassion** when times are tough.
- Strengthening the **financial and mental wellbeing** support available in communities.
- Investing in research that helps to **shape fairer policies** that make a real difference to the lives of people living in social housing.

The world around us is changing fast. The needs of communities are becoming more complex, and so our role must evolve too.



This strategy is our promise to act with **care, courage and creativity.** We know that lasting change only happens when we listen, collaborate authentically, and put the people we serve at the centre of every decision.

I am grateful to everyone – residents, partners, funders, staff, and trustees – who have shaped and inspired this strategy. **Together, we’re moving forward with hope, determination,** and a clear focus on what matters most – the people living in social housing whom we serve.”

Aileen Edmunds
Chief Executive,
Longleigh Foundation

7. Goals

- ✓ Innovate to deliver even more meaningful impact.
- ✓ Increase our reach by diversifying our funding.
- ✓ Equip ourselves to deliver lasting change.

Goal	Focus	Key actions
Innovate to deliver even more meaningful impact	Deliver high-quality, flexible, resident-led funding, and act as a collaborative partner that helps others increase their impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial co-created funding models with residents. • Invest in research to shape better services and influence policy change. • Work closely with funded organisations to support, amplify, and grow their impact.
Increase our reach by diversifying our funding	Work to reach more people in more impactful ways, by attracting sustainable funding with organisations who share our values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build relationships. • Improve brand visibility and reputation. • Strengthen impacting reporting.
Equip ourselves to deliver lasting change	We will invest in our people, technology, and ways of working to ensure we are well placed to respond to rising needs and deliver on our mission with care and clarity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise staff wellbeing • Embed resident voice in decisions. • Use digital tools to improve customer experience. • Ensure inclusive, transparent governance.

7.1 Innovate to deliver even more meaningful impact

At Longleigh, we believe that thriving starts with the right foundations – a stable home, good mental and financial wellbeing, and strong, connected communities. Yet for the many people we support, these foundations aren't always in place. Our strategy is rooted in the everyday realities people face and is driven by the belief that with the right support, every individual and community can grow in strength, confidence, and resilience.

This is why we are evolving how we work – becoming even more responsive, person-centred, and focused on what makes the greatest difference. We are committed to listening to people with lived experience, testing flexible funding approaches that respect human dignity, and offering more choice to those we serve. Our delivery will be shaped with residents, putting them at the centre of decision-making.

Through our funding, we will provide practical support that helps people feel safer, more secure, and more hopeful. This might mean easing immediate financial pressure, helping someone furnish their home, supporting their mental health, or backing organisations that strengthen resilience and build skills for the future.

We are also committed to testing new approaches such as participatory grant-making and cash-first support, which offer greater choice and agency. Alongside this, we will continue investing in research and insight that not only informs our own work but supports wider change across policy and practice in the social housing sector.

By doing this, we aim to improve people's day-to-day lives, while contributing to longer-term change: more resilient communities, fairer systems, and a stronger foundations for everyone to thrive.

Activity	Tasks
Embed dignity and choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pilot cash first approaches for individual grants – particularly with heating and eating support.• Trial participatory grant-making, where people living in social housing shape where and how our funding is invested.• Embed customer experience approaches in our individual grant-making, increasing supplier choice and exploring creating a virtual shopping experience for furniture and other items.• Collect feedback from grantees and adapt delivery based on what's working, and sharing our progress.

Build a better understanding of what people need, and focus our support where it will make the biggest difference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All projects and programmes to be co-designed with people with lived experience. • Collect and analyse data – both from our own work and from other funders – about what people need and what’s making a difference. We’ll look at social value across different regions and demographic groups, alongside feedback from residents to guide where and how we invest. • Develop place-based insight by listening to communities, working with local partners, and taking a closer look at specific issues that affect people in different areas.
Build resilience in communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer multi-year funding for project grants, to provide security to our charity partners. • Pilot shared/matched funding of community projects in areas of greatest need, helping to strengthen local community support. • Provide capacity building support to project grantees.
Use insight to shape fairer policies and more impactful support services across the social housing sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share learning and insight with partners and peers to influence wider practice and policy across the social housing and grant-making sectors. • Commission research based on what we see through our grants and projects, to better understand important issues in social housing and how they affect residents’ wellbeing. This will shape both public policy and the practices of social housing providers. • Use research findings to guide how we design our projects and grant-making, ensuring evidence directly influences our delivery.

As a result of this work:

- ✓ Residents will experience greater dignity, flexibility, and choice in how they access and use support from Longleigh.
- ✓ People with lived experience will play a more direct role in shaping our grant-making and programme design.
- ✓ Funding decisions will be even more responsive, targeted, and rooted in insights into resident needs.
- ✓ Our reputation as an evidence-informed, resident-led funder will grow, influencing broader social housing practice and policy.
- ✓ Partners will use the insights and research we produce to drive service improvements and advocate for fairer housing systems.



7.2 Increase our reach by diversifying our funding

To deliver lasting change, we recognise the need for financial sustainability. More resources mean we can help more people in more impactful ways.

We will focus on securing funding from partners who share our commitment to fairness and opportunity. By expanding our donor base, building stronger relationships with funders and partners, and increasing our visibility, we will ensure that more resources are available to those who need them most.

Key actions include strengthening our brand and existing relationships, creating compelling impact reports, hosting stakeholder events, and diversifying our funding streams to build longer-term financial stability.

Activity	Tasks
Build our reputation for impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carry out a brand and perception review to help plan a rebrand that brings us closer to our purpose.• Redevelop our website to accurately reflect who we are.• Host events to share project outcomes and bring funders together on shared issues, to raise our profile and build connections.
Strengthen our reporting and impact measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce social value reporting utilising HACT across all grant programmes, to help make future strategic decisions about funding allocation, and to secure existing and additional funds.• Develop a process to share grantee voices to show real life impact.• Publish an annual impact report and use strong, clear communications to show how our work makes a difference.

Diversify our funding streams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and build relationships with potential funders (philanthropic foundations, the corporate social responsibility arms of our suppliers, government grants) to explore areas of mutual benefit. • Grow through partnership - investigate matched giving on community-based initiatives and partnership funding for projects with other Housing Associations, and other potential funders. • Develop a targeted funding strategy aligned to the mission and values (focus on partners that share our commitment to social housing). • Assign dedicated resources for grant writing and funder relationship management.
Safeguard and build on our existing relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop tailored stewardship plans for current funders, ensuring regular, meaningful engagement and timely impact reporting. • Host insight sessions, and share relevant performance data with partners offering transparency on results, challenges, and future priorities. • Strengthen strategic alignment by co-creating opportunities with existing partners that reflect shared values and long-term goals. • Secure multi-year funding agreements with key funders, and refresh the memorandum of understanding with our founding partner to build shared clarity on the use of our funds.



As a result of this work:

- ✓ We will have a more diversified and resilient funding base, increasing our available resources and reducing dependency on any single source, and enabling us to help more people in more impactful ways.
- ✓ Funders and donors will better understand our impact and be more likely to invest for the long-term.
- ✓ Our brand will be clearer and more aligned with our values, helping us attract new partners and funding.
- ✓ We will demonstrate the real-world impact of our work through richer stories, data, and insight, building trust and credibility.
- ✓ Relationships with our partners will deepen, leading to co-created, longer-term initiatives that increase stability and scale of our work.



7.3 Equip ourselves to deliver lasting change

To deliver our best work, we must be a strong organisation. That means supporting our team, improving how we work, and making sure the voices of people with lived experience shape our decisions.

We will remain responsive, values-led, and fit for purpose in a changing world. Our focus will be on safeguarding our culture, assessing power imbalances, amplifying customer voice in our decision-making, staying ahead of technological advances and emerging tools and exploring how they can strengthen our efficiency, insight and impact. We will also continue to support the wellbeing and professional development of our team.

Key actions include strengthening partnerships with other grant-makers to share learning and improve practice, creating a direct mechanism for grantees to shape our policies and decisions, and supporting the wellbeing and skills development of our team.

Activity	Tasks
Nurture our culture and values and support team development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage reflection and connection to our values, team workshops, and celebrating team contributions and impact stories.• Prioritise staff wellbeing through supportive policies, regular check-ins, and access to mental health first aid and wellness resources.• Provide training plans for all essential skills and knowledge, alongside opportunities for staff to explore opportunities tailored to their roles and aspirations.• Provide clarity for all staff on our internal processes and policies with a revised staff handbook.• Encourage cross-sector learning to build resilience and capability.
Listen and respond to the voices of lived experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish methods for residents to co-design funding priorities and programmes.• Incorporate lived experience into decision-making, policy and strategy development.• Conduct and publish an Equity Impact Review of our grants and operations to identify any systemic blind spots.

Strengthen our governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply the findings from our external governance review. • Recruit trustees with relevant lived and professional experience. • Continually review governance structures to ensure transparency, accountability, and inclusivity.
Make use of digital and emerging technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial digital tools for capturing resident feedback and streamlining application and reporting. • Carefully look at how AI can help us spot patterns and automate tasks, while making sure we protect the people we support and our compassionate approach. • Ensure digital inclusion, accessibility and the need for human connection and empathy are considered in utilising all tech-related innovations.

As a result of this work:

- ✓ Our team will be more supported, skilled, and aligned with our purpose, increasing retention and performance.
- ✓ The voices of people with lived experience will be embedded in our governance, strategy, and day-to-day decision-making.
- ✓ We will be a more agile and efficient organisation, able to respond quickly to change and emerging needs.
- ✓ Governance will be more inclusive, transparent, and reflective of the communities we serve.
- ✓ Technology will enable us to increase impact without compromising compassion, while also protecting privacy and dignity.

8. Performance measures

We have defined a suite of performance measures to make sure we assess our progress in meeting our objectives, which we will report to our Board

Given the emphasis on trialling new approaches in this strategy, additional outcome measures may be needed, and the proposed measures may evolve.

Innovate to deliver even more meaningful impact:

Performance measures	Reported to Board	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28
% of grants using cash-first	Biannually	Baseline	Improved	Maintained/ Improved
No. of grant-making improvement pilots e.g. participatory grant-making	Annually	1	2	3
Customer satisfaction with grant delivery (via survey)	Annually	85%	90%	95%



Increase our reach by diversifying our funding:

Performance measures	Reported to Board	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28
No. of new multi-year funding agreements secured	Annually	1	1	2
Value of total funding secured	Quarterly	£1,025,000 (baseline)	10%	15%
No. of new funder relationships established	Annually	1	3	3
No. of stakeholder engagement events held	Biannually	1	2	3
Brand perception rating (via survey or external audit)	Annually	Baseline	Improved	Further improved
Social value reported across all programmes	Annually	Framework in place	Full rollout	Annual comparisons
No. of impact stories and case studies published	Quarterly	4	6	8

Equip ourselves to deliver lasting change:

Performance measures	Reported to Board	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28
Staff wellbeing score (via annual survey and temperature checks)	Annually	Baseline	Improved	Maintained/Improved
Staff training hours per team member (avg.)	Annually	6 hrs	8 hrs	10 hrs
Resident advisory mechanisms active and reporting	Quarterly	Piloted	Embedded	Sustained
Equity impact review of grant-making	Once	Completed	Action plan established	Embedded
% of Board with lived/professional experience in social housing	Annually	Baseline	Improved	Maintained/Improved
Trustee and governance diversity audit complete	Annually	Completed	Action plan established	Embedded
No. of cross-sector learning exchanges attended by staff	Annually	7	10	14

Given Longleigh's reliance on funding from our founding partner, if a multi-year funding agreement cannot be secured with them, or if the level of funding from them changes significantly, then our ability to achieve these strategic goals and outcomes would be compromised.



Thank you to the Stonewater customers who helped to shape this strategy.
We really appreciated your feedback on the design, imagery and wording.

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