



# Arc Strategic Plan April 2021 – Sept 2022



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#### Related Documents:

Staff Away Day December 2020  
Mission, Vision, Purpose and Values  
Board Away Day January 2021  
Board Meeting Minutes from January 2020  
Arc Risk Register - last reviewed March 2021

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## This document is a formal strategy that will take Arc to the end of September 2022.

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At the time of writing, we are just beginning the start of coming out of a year long lockdown due to a pandemic called Covid-19. This has presented Arc with a number of challenges as well as a number of opportunities. This strategy is about looking at those opportunities and is largely a forward-looking document rather than one looking back over the last year. The last strategy ran from April 2020 to March 2021, and many of the goals were simply unachievable due to restrictions, especially our aims that involved people being together for learning and developing. While some of this has been possible it has been limited.

Conversations are now focused on transforming Lindley House into an exciting new service, a repurposed building and refreshed service offering. Other building acquisitions are possible during the plan period depending on needs and discussions are currently taking place with our local government leads on these investments.

With financial stability and strong governance wedded to a confident and robust staff team with strong leadership there are huge opportunities for Arc moving forward. With the current situation within our economy it is difficult to plan much further than 18 months. What is, in our experience, a better way forward is to remain clear about our vision and mission and be able to flex quickly, divert resources, scenario plan and continue forwards. We are unique and advanced in our skills in this way of thinking (as a charitable organisation), and this is an approach which is endorsed by our external auditors.

The above reference documents are current and valid, so we have valuable, up to date information on which to forge our next steps.

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**Arc's Purpose is:**

'We work together to house, support and enable homeless people, to maximise their potential.'

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**Arc's Mission is simple and clear:**

'to offer supported accommodation where people can be inspired and empowered by their own strengths'.

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**Our Vision is:**

'for homeless people to have a safe and supportive environment'.

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**Our Values are:**

Integrity  
Dignity  
Resilience  
Respect  
Empathy and  
Inclusion

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## OUTLINE STRATEGY

Coming through a pandemic which has limited human contact in so many ways, the focus is distinctly on developing a clearer understanding of what our clients actually want from us in terms of learning and developing. We need clear understanding of the obstacles and challenges ahead as well as the huge benefits and opportunities they present. We have tried numerous strategies and while there have been successes, the Transition Plan which was set up two years ago made logical sense but never found its rhythm. Now however, with the separation of client groups proposed by our local authorities we plan to review this process by focusing on those who are contemplating change. Developing life skills as well as more focused learning and developing is central to Arc, for staff, volunteers and clients alike.



The issue of clients being able to work for Arc has long been discussed. The conflict in professional boundaries became too complicated and so the alternative of creating Social Enterprises was seen as a solution. These could be set up to employ former clients and depending on the nature of the enterprise, potentially current clients. Last year we wrote “This is something we feel we should pursue with some energy”. This year we are seeing the benefits of maintaining this energy, and with funding in place, the creation of our first Social Enterprise, Crescent Cleaning Services has been achieved. The leadership of this new entity is now in the hands of its newly appointed manager who will undoubtedly drive the enterprise forward during this plan period.



We feel that the time is right to nurture a greater volunteer base, to extend our reach to our communities. Just prior to the start of the pandemic we recruited a Volunteer Co-ordinator. Despite it being a frustrating year due to Covid restrictions, our volunteer base has grown, and time has been used to create structures, new platforms and invest in our social impact

accounting systems ready for the lifting of restrictions and further investment in Arc’s volunteer community.

Our satellite services remain robust, offering first class housing and a Pathways Team now mature in their support provision. In the last 12 months over 50 clients have successfully moved on to live independently. We wish to invest further in this model of success during the period of this plan, specifically in extending our reach to clients who have moved on, supporting them to sustain their new independence.



The built environment at Lindley House has required investment for some time. The building is functional but tired. During the last year its future was questioned by our local authority for a period and Arc developed several scenarios to secure its future. Our local authority partners wanted to create long term strategies in a holistic way to prevent and manage homelessness in our community, and building this strategy took some time. The emerging strategies are now being approved and Arc can now move forwards with the repurposing of Lindley House with a comprehensive review of the services provided in this substantial building, as well as considering additional investment in other buildings and services. Work has already commenced with the replacement of the windows in this beautiful Georgian building.



Behind Arc's strategy is the backdrop of a Unitary Authority for Somerset. Part of our time needs to be spent planning for this change, the potential for new partnerships, aligning ourselves for a change in political structures, different political priorities, maintaining our presence as

a leader in single homeless provision in the new authority as well as ensuring our mission remains high on new political agendas.

## CONTEXT and KEY QUESTIONS

### What is the external environment?

Arc operates in an environment where Government funding and contracts remain under resourced. What money there is, is often misdirected in our view and comes with constraints and sometimes impossible outcomes.

Government funding also comes with time limits and the eventual financial cliff edge at the end of a contract leaving providers facing redundancy costs or the option to re-tender for the same work (or more) with less funding and the dichotomy where the Third Sector subsidises statutory authorities with hard earned reserves.

We are aware that the National Probation Service is currently reviewing the arrangements for longer term prisoners being released where they have no fixed accommodation, and this is an area where Arc has had some successes in recent years. Our participation in this review is important and Arc has a lot to contribute.

Locally, it is likely that services will be commissioned, but at a lower level and with Housing Benefit as the main revenue source. Service Level Agreements are more typical. We know Arc's fees are competitive but we need to ensure we can prove our services are the very best value for money. Increasingly, our Social Impact needs to be branded as we move forwards.

As the economy braces itself for financial challenges post Covid and realigns itself post Brexit, Arc needs to be aware that homelessness is likely to increase. Our relationships with our local government partners will need to be robust if we are to contribute to the solutions to this change.

### What is our Business Model?

Arc has procured an established property portfolio that enables us to house up to 174 people every night giving them a safe and supportive environment. Arc is funded mainly through rental income via the housing benefit system as well as ineligible service charges from its clients. Arc is now a sustainable charity which has a turnover of around £2.2 million without the reliance on government contracts.



We have a strong relationship with our bankers, strong gearing and headroom for further investment in buildings.

Around 7% of Arc's income comes from donations, the majority of these being unrestricted.

Any single homeless person, the majority being over the age of 24 years old, has access to the services. Arc houses and supports over 300 people a year.

Arc works with clients so they can eventually move into independent living. Over the last year there have been over 50 people who have, with our support, moved successfully into independent living. One of the 16 houses is a veteran's project where Arc house and support 8 veterans, the lower floor is set up for clients who may have various physical disabilities.

#### What about our Staff?

We have a dedicated and passionate staff team who deliver our services. Staff Away Days are very productive and the drivers behind our core functions being delivered in such a way that we maximise our reach and our services are robust and meaningful for our clients. Their support is very much person centered and in no way directed by a systemic approach. Support is organic, individual and timely. A recent away day informed us of what is working well, where we need to grow and what could be next for Arc.



Your Voice is a unique body of staff within Arc that allows our Values to be scrutinised by staff representatives on a regular basis and is also represented at Board and SMT (Senior Management Team) meetings.

Our Health and Wellbeing Committee provides generic support promoting the mental and physical health of our staff. This has been especially valuable during the recent pandemic. Our Investors In People review was completed at the start of this plan period. Arc now enjoys a Gold status with sights set on an even higher rating for the next review.

### How do we demonstrate our value and worth?

We are already collecting statistics and data on the services we provide and we report these using robust empirical methods of analysis, but we are now doing more than that by measuring our social impact. We map our clients' journey where we can but aim to develop a more thorough set of social impact accounting systems during this plan.

### How can volunteers help us reach further?

At our recent staff away day our teams told us that volunteers will extend that reach even further. This plan will embrace that concept and sets out our plans for generating even more volunteer energy.

### What are our Fundraising ambitions?

Our fundraising work is growing in stature, with income having increased by 50% in the last 12 months. We have our sights on further opportunities and our ambitions are set out in this plan.

### What about our own Built Environment?

Our satellite houses are all in excellent condition with up-to-date facilities. Lindley House will be refurbished over the plan period and with clear direction from our local authority we can now invest in this significant building and possibly others with confidence.



Caveat: This plan is subject to the impact of restrictions on Arc due to the current COVID-19 virus.

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## STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 2021 – SEPTEMBER 2022

WHAT?	HOW?	WHEN?	WHO?	WHEN DO WE KNOW WE HAVE ARRIVED?	TIMELINE For Completion
What issues are we targeting and what are our expectations?	How are we going to get there?	What are our milestones?	We are all busy, so what resources can be called upon?	This is a live document and will receive regular achievement updates	
<b>PEOPLE</b>					
Ensure equality, diversity and inclusion in all we do	Introduction of an EDI strategy Regular reviews of Arc's Equality and Diversity Policy	Draft EDI strategy approved by Your Voice and SMT. Board to review March 2021	EDI working party/SMT/Board Filtering to all staff/volunteers	Feedback and recording of outcomes. A review of the strategy will reveal weaknesses and room for improvements	<b>July 21</b>
Understand what will create better client engagement in learning and developing, including Life Skills	Conduct further research into what clients like and want from Arc using our established AQA College as a platform	Initial surveys completed, but more work to be undertaken including 1 to 1 meetings and house meetings	Service Delivery Managers and teams with L&D Coordinator Programme and scope to be built by SMT and coordinator	Proposals in place by September 2021 and launch of Arc Academy by December 2021	<b>December 21</b>
To create a plan that allows Arc to be carbon neutral by 2030	By establishing our carbon footprint and working out ways of reducing each area of our work	Outline in place by May 2021	A self-selected group of staff via a Themed Thursday invite	The plan needs to be in place by December 2021	<b>December 21</b>
Additional multi agency support for Arc clients Mental Health Dependency support Physical Health (GP Surgery completed) DWP surgeries Counselling Specialist providers e.g. Nelson Trust	Development of the Reach Centre – Arc's multi agency hub in Alfred House  Attracting services from our partners as well as volunteer services	When Restrictions allow 2021 following refurbishment of Alfred House (July-Oct 2021)	SMT create the scope and ensure delivery	Agreements in place and signed off with providers and volunteers	<b>Opens November 21</b>
Record our Impact using empirical data and Social Impact accounts	Impact Accounting package to include:	Continuous	Support staff overseen by SMT	Significant records available that provide empirical evidence as	<b>September 21</b>

	Recorded feedback from clients on their experiences from a personal perspective – all joiners and leavers to complete surveys. Data capture on Arc’s SDM database to record all interactions with clients during their time with us. Individual interviews or videos with clients Use this to inform a range of investors. Produce annual reports			well as social impact reports completed on a rolling basis Clients and Local government satisfied with our value and worth together with stakeholders	
Help our clients sustain their tenancies when they have left Arc	Successfully delivering services via funding from local authorities Extend funding to employ an additional F/T Pathways worker, allowing extended reach and manageable workload for the team	In place with funds - Summer 2021. Agreement to recruit additional Pathway worker April 2021	SMT Fundraising Team	Service operational and 100% sustainment with client group receiving the service, no ‘revolving door’ referrals from that client group	<b>Ongoing</b>
Look at a number of specialist services such as a dry house/wet house, women's project etc	Create working groups to explore these matters in more detail, learning from others	Surveys and inclusion in these discussions by those affected during summer 2021	Interested staff and Board members	Firm proposals by December 2021	<b>December 21</b>
Provide effective services for prison leavers	Develop our relationships with prisons and the National Probation Service. Create a pathway from prison ‘through the gate plus’	As the NPS develops its strategy for prison leavers with no fixed abode	CEO, Chair, Head of Operations	Have options available when the NPS has completed its current review	<b>Unclear – NPS Service is in review</b>
Social Enterprise (SE) to be developed in line with approved Business Plan	SE Manager recently appointed to drive Business Plan	Commenced with Project Plan in place and timelines	SE Manager supported by SMT and Board	SE Open and running, employing former clients	<b>See Business Plan</b>

		to include opening for business			
Deliver Rough Sleeper support as part of our partnerships with Local Authorities	Outreach worker posts funded (2 at SDC + Recovery Navigator)	SDC on going funding	Head of Operations and CEO	A full year of outreach support for Rough Sleepers	<b>On-going</b>
To increase our community reach and embrace the power of volunteering	We recruited a Volunteer Coordinator in March 2020 who has already improved the whole Volunteer Journey. Now increase our team of volunteers to fill the gaps introducing new services and support. This will start with the recruitment of volunteers to support clients as 'Buddys' Evaluating current volunteering processes, looking at the recruitment, induction, support and feedback procedures. Connecting with Voluntary Advice organisations. Volunteer Coordinator will work with all departments within Arc to ensure we are placing Volunteers where they are most needed	In place and being developed by the Coordinator	Part time Volunteer Coordinator, supported by SMT and embraced by all staff	Roles developed and delivering services. Good feedback from clients	<b>On-going</b>
To strengthen our Board	Agree a plan for Board Development focussing on Governance as well as continued professional development and training by the Board Development Agency.	July 2021	Chair, CEO and Company Secretary	A stronger Board by December 2021	<b>On-going</b>
Increase staff welfare	Health and Wellbeing Committee.	Health and Wellbeing	Chair of Health and Wellbeing	Happy and contented staff, with good productivity, no complaints,	<b>On-going</b>

	YourVoice Committee Simply Health welfare package. Investigate a rewards programme for going the 'extra mile'. Complete IIP Review	Committee in place and fully operational. Simply Health on-going IIP meeting scheduled for April 2021	Committee, Your Voice, SMT, Board	low sickness rates and low turn over. This is ongoing with continuous improvements being the theme. Increased IIP rating	
Hear more from our staff and communicate in a variety of forums	Your Voice to follow up staff survey and review of scope, re-purpose. Explore communication platforms, perhaps refine SMT to ensure equality of communication. News headlines weekly page on SharePoint/emails to All Staff. CEO to have a regular base in Lindley.	Some work is already under way and progress made by Your Voice is on-going	SMT and Your Voice	SMT discussing situations more frequently to ensure fairness in decisions Weekly updates now come from each support team, Your Voice is re-purposed and full representation is regular at meetings The CEO will have a workstation in Lindley House CEO is shadowing staff on a routine basis	<b>On-going</b>
<b>PLACES</b>					
HUB is created from Alfred House to deliver the aim above	Property Team set as priority	Spring – summer 2021	Property Services & Development Manager lead	Hub building is fit for purpose and available on time for opening	<b>November 21</b>
Repurpose Lindley House – 40 beds, additional facilities, in line with SW&T strategy Review of Service offering Review of management structure	Budget created for 2021/22	Refurbishment to last 12 months from July 2021	SMT, specifically the Property Services and Development Manager	Refurbished fit for purpose building, with referrals coming through. Rewarding built environment	<b>July 22</b>
Ensure all accommodation is managed and maintained to regulatory standards and to our own exacting standards	Systems in place to ensure servicing takes place eg gas, fire equipment/installations	Continuous	Property Services & Development Manager, Head of Operations, CEO	100% compliance	<b>On-going</b>

	Approved plans for day to say, cyclical and major repairs Regular audits				
<b>RESOURCES</b>					
Deliver our Fundraising objectives	Expert team with continuous engagement.	FR plans agreed in March 2021 (see budget attached)	Fundraising Team, SMT and the whole organisation	Regular successes to be reported, together with year-end totals	<b>Monthly reports</b>
Using the forthcoming Unitary Authority to promote Arc	Positioning Arc at the forefront of best practice in Somerset. Focus relationships and identify opportunities for new relationships, both in local government and emerging partners which can complement Arc's role	Forthwith	CEO	Arc emerges as a key partner with the new Authority	<b>May 22</b>
To sustain our relationship with lead Registered Provider, LiveWest	Renewal of leases and Management Agreement	Completed Dec 2020, review by March 2023	CEO and FD	Leases and Management Agreement signed off	<b>On-going</b>
Ensure a viable and self-sustaining Business Model	Maintain relationship with Livewest, LA's and other groups such as Positive Lives Audit and Risk Committee functions Investment Appraisal reviews	On-going	CEO/FD/Audit and Risk Committee/Full Board Internal and External Auditors	Meeting objectives, maintaining financial KPI's Risks mitigated and maintained External Auditors report Arc as a 'going concern' Selected partners by government	<b>On-going</b>
Risk avoidance	Risk Register is now a 'live' resource	Continuous	Audit and Risk Committee/SMT shared ownership	No adverse business interruptions that could have been avoided	<b>On-going</b>
Ensure a first-class relationship with both Sedgemoor and Somerset West Authorities,	Work with then supporting them to deliver their strategies. Deliver the currently funded	Continuous	CEO SMT Board where appropriate	Referrals. Contracts. Preferred Provider status	<b>On-going</b>

transitioning into a Unitary authority	programmes without fault. Maintain excellent working relationships with key members. Maintain Arc's vision and mission throughout			Arc setting standards for service delivery Strategic reviews include Arc. New opportunities include Arc.	
Continue to contribute to and benefit from the work of Positive Lives (PL) The Homeless Reduction Board (HRB) and the funding that comes from these bodies	Continue to attend Board meetings, contribute towards the PL & HRB Mission and use the funding for specific projects and outcomes	Continuous	CEO	Successfully secure PL and HRB funding and monitor outcomes from projects funded	<b>On-going</b>
Capital investments. Potential increases in housing stock	Maintain relationship with our primary lender, NatWest, to ensure capital is available for potential increases in housing stock. Retain sufficient cash levels for deposits/works etc	In line with Local Authority Strategies, our own financial capacity and agreed level of gearing	SMT/Board	Arc houses more homeless people on their way through our services on to independent living where possible, monitoring and recording journeys	<b>On-going</b>