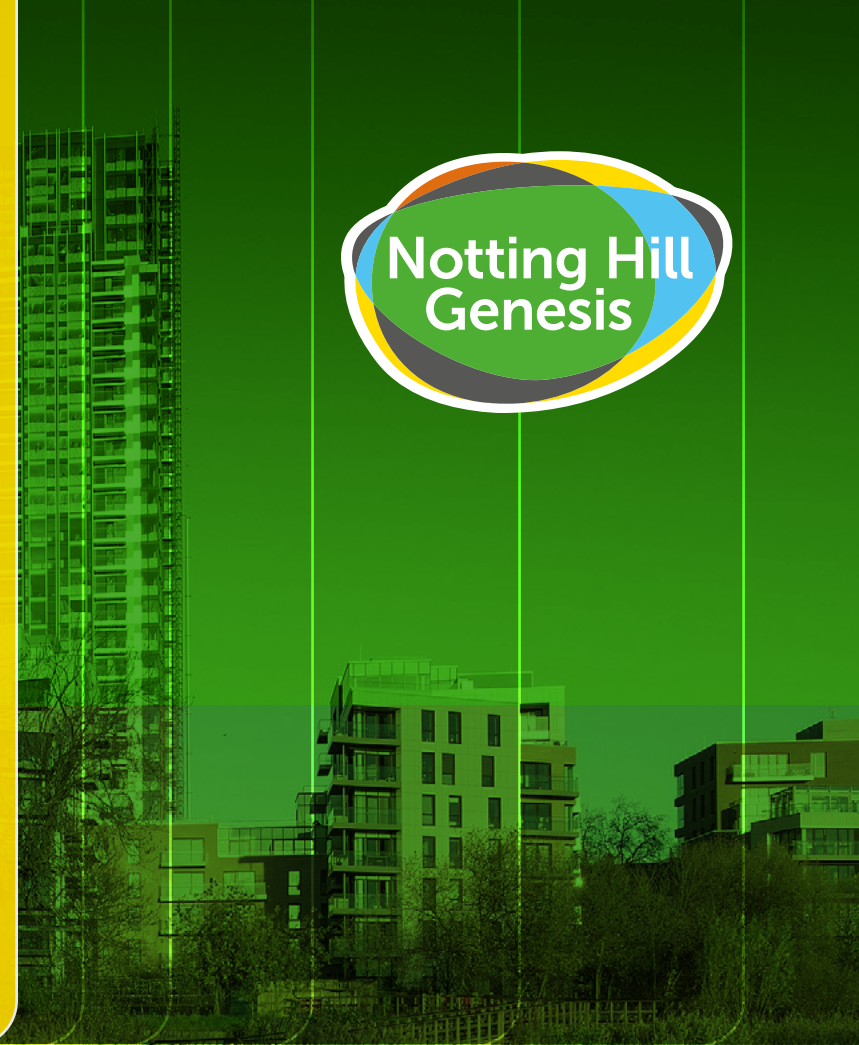


# Environmental, social and governance report

2023/24





## OUR VISION

# Making London home

Our vision for Notting Hill Genesis, making London home, is our response to the housing crisis in London. We are committed to working better together to provide good quality homes to enable our residents to live their lives well.







OUR MISSION

Working  
better  
together  
for our  
residents



# Our story

A home provides the basis for a stable and healthy society, but the capital's housing crisis means that for too many Londoners, a home is out of reach.

We're a not-for-profit organisation with a focus on providing quality homes at below market rents for people who would otherwise struggle to afford them. We are both a landlord and a developer, with more than 60,000 existing homes and plans to build 3,000 more over the next five years. We engage in commercial activities and any surpluses we produce support the provision of homes below market rents across the capital.

Founded in the 1960s to address slum conditions in west London, we're now one of London's largest charitable housing associations and a leading advocate and trusted partner to local councils and government. Our aim is to give Londoners a base and community from which to achieve their potential.

Powered by £770 million of investment into our homes over the next 10 years, and guided by our Better Together strategy, we're on a mission to improve how we deliver even better quality homes, connections and places for our 130,000 existing residents. Alongside working better together for our residents, we'll also continue to build and develop new and more affordable homes, so that more people can continue to make London home.





## About this report

This environmental, social and governance (ESG) report sets out how we continue to provide genuine social value and explains how we are contributing to tackling climate change through the introduction of more sustainable practices.

It demonstrates to our residents and other stakeholders the positive impact that we are making against those important themes. Specifically, the report shows potential investors that by supporting our organisation, their money can have a positive social impact. We know that criteria associated with ESG are increasingly considered by investors as they look to invest ethically in businesses and organisations that provide social value, and hope this report assists them in that.

Our ESG document provides performance data aligned with the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRSSH), published in November 2020 and updated in October 2023. The updated standard covers 12 core themes and has 46 qualitative and quantitative criteria, which are identified as the core requirements to demonstrate strong ESG performance.

This report sets out how we comply with each of those criteria alongside case studies to provide more colour. At the start of each section, we set out which of the 12 SRSSH themes are covered, and how those complement the core objectives of our Better Together strategy and the shorter-term goals of our sustainability plan, alongside the United Nations sustainable development goals to which they align.

The ESG report is complemented by two other annual publications. Our annual report and financial statements focus on financial performance to reassure our funders that their investments are sound. At the same time, it seeks to demonstrate the vital contribution those investments make to our residents' lives.

Our customer report, *Working Better Together For Our Residents*, concentrates on issues that directly impact those who live in our homes and use our services. It includes our performance against tenant satisfaction measures set by the Regulator of Social Housing and other internal metrics.



All publications are available on our website at [www.nhg.org.uk/publications](http://www.nhg.org.uk/publications).



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# Welcome from our chief executive

As a not-for-profit housing provider with roots stretching back to the 1960s, a strong social purpose is part of our DNA. Equally, we are committed to robust governance arrangements to ensure we are set up and managed in the right way to deliver what we must for the 130,000 people who live in one of our 67,000 homes.

Environmental awareness and responsibility might well be a relatively modern mainstream concept compared to our social and governance duties, but is one we take equally seriously.



This report tells you more about what we've been doing to address all three of those core themes over the 2023/24 financial year.

In July 2023, we published a new corporate strategy, Better Together. The strategy sets out how we will deliver better connections, homes and places to our residents, our most important customers, underpinned by strong finances, good people and robust data and technology.

Sustainability is an essential part of that strategy, with four priority areas to support its wider objectives:

- Warm, comfortable low carbon homes
- Enhancing green spaces for nature and people
- Using resources sustainably
- Net carbon zero

Although most strongly aligned to the better places and better homes strands of our strategy, sustainability also has a part to play in delivering better connections.

As an organisation, we're acutely aware that ensuring a more sustainable future is a joint endeavour and that progress will be made only if we work in partnership with colleagues, residents and other stakeholders.

To that end, we introduced a new internal group during 2023 to help manage the delivery of One Home, One Planet, our eight-year sustainability strategy. Members of this internal sustainability lead




group support implementation and the delivery of change in their respective parts of the business, ensuring that ownership of the strategy is shared. The group includes directors and heads of service from every directorate who are responsible for delivering specific sustainability objectives and who report progress quarterly.

We have also established a resident sustainability advisory group to provide additional oversight of the delivery of the strategy and ensure that our customers continue to have a voice in the development of our plans. The resident group meets quarterly to discuss opportunities for co-creation of local plans and initiatives with members of our internal group.

**Patrick Franco**  
Chief executive

# Environmental

The better places strand of Better Together includes priority areas for sustainability. Those areas build on our earlier One Planet, One Home sustainability plan. For each priority, we identified a list of actions for 2023/24. This section outlines our progress during the year alongside our performance against the 11 criteria across three SRSSH themes in the environmental category.

INTERNAL ALIGNMENT		EXTERNAL ALIGNMENT	
BETTER TOGETHER STRATEGIC FIT	SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITY	SRSSH THEME	UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
<b>Better places</b>	Net carbon zero by 2050	Climate change	<b>13</b>  Climate action
	Enhancing green spaces	Ecology	<b>15</b>  Life on land
	Using resources sustainably	Resource management	<b>12</b>  Responsible consumption and production

## Climate change

### Improving energy performance

We continue to make progress towards our target of improving all socially rented homes to energy performance certificate (EPC) band C by 2030. In 2023/24 we improved 1,984 homes to EPC C, 301 through retrofit and 1,683 by improving our data.

Our new homes reach a high EPC rating, which will help improve energy performance across our portfolio and reduce the operational carbon of our homes. Our goal is to ensure that all new homes achieve EPC B or above. For 2023/24, 99.4% of new-build homes were rated EPC B or higher. Four new-build homes were rated EPC C, all at development sites where older planning standards applied.

We have additionally set ourselves a target of achieving an average standard assessment procedure (SAP) score of 84 across our new homes, higher than the minimum 81 score required for EPC B. In 2023/24, we achieved an average SAP score of 85.1.

We conducted 8,599 stock condition surveys and 600 detailed energy assessments to improve the baseline of the performance for our homes and understand what improvements we need to get to net zero.

We continue to work closely with Parity Projects, who provide our live energy database, to understand efficiency levels across all our homes, using intelligence from our stock condition survey programme to update SAP scores and EPC bandings.

We were awarded £8.1 million from the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to improve 1,002 of our least energy efficient homes to EPC band C. We've started the first phase of the programme, and have completed 600 energy assessments and 155 individual home energy plans, setting out the specific improvements that can be made to increase an energy performance rating to at least a band C. For homes with energy plans, we've also created a net zero carbon journey, detailing what improvements can be made to reduce emissions as low as possible by 2050.



**Distribution of energy performance certificate (EPC) ratings of existing low-cost rental homes (those completed before the last financial year).**

	2023/24	2022/23
A	0.10%	0.01%
B	19.14%	12.97%
C	58.25%	60.12%
D	20.57%	23.80%
<E	1.93%	2.88%

**Distribution of EPC ratings of all new homes (those completed in the last financial year)**

	2023/24	2022/23
A	0%	0%
B	99.4%	100%
C	0.6%	0%
D	0%	0%
<E	0%	0%

**Improving our heat networks**

We appointed specialist heat network consultants Fairheat to closely monitor and inspect the design and installation of the heat network and energy centre on several new developments, including Kidbrooke Station Square in south-east London. Our aim is to optimise the performance of the heat networks at handover so that we can deliver lower carbon emissions and reduced running costs for residents.

A new heat network technical assurance scheme is due to be introduced from 2025 to ensure the reliable and efficient operation and maintenance of heat networks and energy centres. To

prepare, we have commissioned designs and specifications for all new heat networks aligned to the current primary industry guidance (CIBSE CP1 2020 code of practice for heat networks) on which we expect the new requirements to be based.

We will appoint specialist heat network consultants on every site to monitor the design and installation of new heat network systems, to complete acceptance testing, and to check the correct documentation is in place to ensure compliance with the code of practice. That work will allow us to gain expertise and ensure heat networks already in our new homes pipeline have been designed to the required standard ahead of the new assurance scheme coming into place.

**Working towards net zero**

Our sustainability strategy includes a goal of achieving net zero carbon for our business operations by 2035 and net zero carbon for our homes and supply chain by 2050.

In 2023/24, we carried out energy improvement measures to 3,404 homes. As a result, 301 homes improved their EPC rating to C, with the remainder showing improved standard assessment procedure (SAP) scores. Although not large enough to achieve an EPC banding change, better SAP scores have a meaningful impact on thermal comfort for residents.

Retrofit and planned activities to support achieving net zero during 2023/24 included 99 loft insulations, 1,836 new A-rated boilers, 984 new windows and the installation of 1,250 external doors.

**Measuring greenhouse gas emissions**

We use our carbon footprint for 2022/23 as a baseline against which to measure future progress. We produced that footprint following work with the Carbon Trust, which estimated our total carbon footprint for the year to be 240,310 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e). The table below shows how our overall footprint breaks down, with our homes accounting for most of our footprint across all three scopes.

Average emissions per home are 1.6 tonnes of CO2.

**Scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions**

Scope	2023/24	2022/23
Scope 1	11,663	12,274
Scope 2	7,307	7,361
Scope 3	690	715
<b>Total emissions (tCO2e)</b>	<b>19,660</b>	<b>20,350</b>

Inenco has helped calculate our scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions in accordance with the greenhouse gas protocol. Figures quoted here are contained in our annual streamlined energy and carbon report for 2023/24. These differ to figures reported in 2022/23 due to changes in the emissions sources selected for inclusion in our scope 1 and 2 reporting.

Energy consumption in the tenanted housing stock accounted for 93% of scope 1 and 2 emissions.

At 46%, procured goods and services accounted for the largest portion of scope 3 emissions, followed by energy consumption in our leased housing stock (30%).



## Mapping and assessing climate risk

On new builds we carry out flood risk assessments on all projects in flood risk zones and take mitigation measures where necessary. This is either in reducing the impacts of flooding on the proposed development, or reducing the impact of our development on the local flood risk management measures.

Where necessary for local flood risk mitigation, we provide rainwater attenuation to reduce surface water run-off rates into the sewers. The rainwater that lands on the buildings and landscaped areas is stored and released slowly into the sewer network. This reduces the influx of water into the sewers and local watercourses and lessens the risk of flooding downstream. Typical rainwater attenuation measures include green roofs, brown roofs, blue roofs, soakaways, swales, permeable paving and attenuation tanks.

On new developments, our designers carry out an overheating risk assessment in accordance with industry guidance CIBSE TM59, prior to the planning submission and then again before construction. This involves dynamic computer modelling of the proposed home design against a set of overheating criteria to simulate how the homes will perform in warm weather throughout the year. The home design is then adapted to ensure the overheating criteria are met.

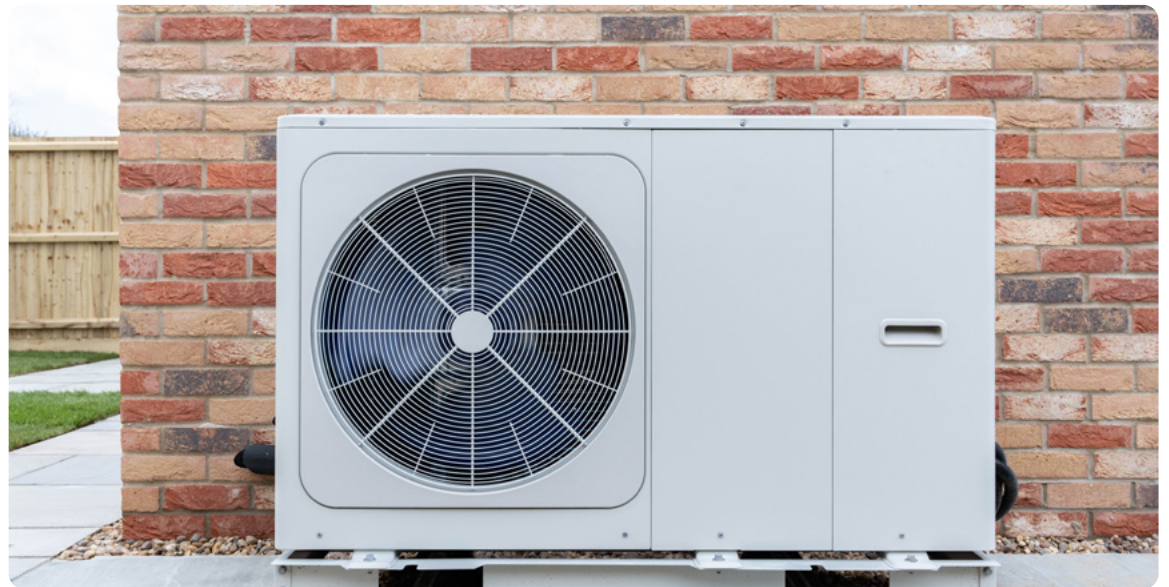
We ensure the overheating risk can be mitigated via passive means such as openable windows and special glazing treatments, with efficient cooling modules added to the mechanical ventilation system where necessary, rather than resorting to energy-intensive air conditioning. We brief the designers to ensure acoustics and air quality are considered when assessing the overheating risk and mitigation strategy. Our in-house technical manager reviews the designs and the modelling to provide an additional level of technical scrutiny.

### CASE STUDY: Warmer homes

Marcus Garvey Mews consists of 33 homes in south London. The homes have historically been cold to live in and expensive to heat. Built in the 1990s, many homes had low levels of loft insulation and old, inefficient electric heating. As a result, homes had the lowest energy performance certificate band of G.

During 2023/24, we worked with residents and partner Equans to embark on a comprehensive renovation project. The primary goal was to increase comfort and reduce fuel bills. The project included the installation of air source heat pumps to most homes (23 out of 33), alongside other improvements designed to make homes warmer such as better windows and doors, and loft insulation. Solar panels have been installed to provide free electricity for appliances in homes and to further reduce the cost of heating.

Residents took an active role in the renovation works and were able to choose their heating system, with most people opting for an air source heat pump. Many residents have been really pleased with the results of the work, and are now enjoying warmer homes and smaller bills. New windows have stopped draughts and the loft insulation has made homes feel cosier in winter.





# Ecology

## Managing our green spaces

Our sustainability strategy includes a goal to protect, restore and enhance our green spaces to maximise benefits for nature and people. It includes four objectives:

- To measure and quantify our green spaces by the end of 2023 to help develop a green spaces management plan
- To work with residents and local organisations in at least seven locations by 2024 to implement different nature enhancements in green space around our estates
- To embed a conservation-led approach to managing green spaces in our new landscaping contracts and offer residents opportunities to be involved in local management plans
- To incorporate space for nature in all new developments, achieving at least a 10% increase in biodiversity on each site, with that target increasing over time

In line with our plan, we completed a comprehensive exercise to measure and quantify some of our natural assets. That work has identified just short of 350,000 square metres of grass across all lots and 7,717 trees on our estates, excluding street trees. We also have 72,000 square metres of land categorised as woodland, most of it part of our out-of-London portfolio.

Mapping our green spaces was a vital element in developing a tender for new gardening contracts, for which we have completely rewritten the specification to ensure that we adopt and deliver a new and more sustainable approach to green space management from early 2025. To support the tender process, we have adapted Parks for London's best practice quality manual into an evaluation framework and created a toolkit for the delivery of the new contract that includes a site enhancement proposal template.

Within the first 18 months of the contracts, tree surveys and work programmes will be undertaken to support green canopy and tree health, and we will offer a cut-and-mulch approach to grassed areas where suitable. We will encourage biodiversity and support nature by offering a wider range of non-utility planting such as flowering shrubs and plants, fruit trees, bug areas and meadows, where possible. Some improvements will be small in scale, but

all will be estate-appropriate and fully consulted on with local residents.

All contractors will be required to join Parks for London and our in-house gardening forum to encourage learning, share best practice and ensure they are fully supported to deliver biodiversity requirements in a consistent manner. Operatives delivering gardening services will be trained to NVQ level or higher to provide a professional approach so that plant health is enhanced and nature encouraged to thrive.

## Identifying, managing and reducing harmful pollutants

In our offices, we monitor carbon dioxide equivalent for several measures as set out in the table below.

	Quantity	tCO2e	Comment
Electricity (kWh)	1,049,068	206	Not green energy
General waste (kg)	43,050	0.705	
Recycling (kg)	21,420	0.361	
Confidential waste (kg)	3,077	0.046	
Gas (kWh)	545,879.1	99.8	Two main offices only
Pool cars		11.3	186,152 miles travelled
Archive	5,569.1	0.079	Destroyed documents

We have a target of sending zero waste to landfill for all corporate office waste and are working towards that as follows:

- We reuse all furniture or larger items at our smaller offices or recycle where that isn't possible
- Battery recycling bins are available at our main offices and are taken to a local supermarket for disposal
- Old toner cartridges are collected by our supplier and recycled

We are trialling segmenting food waste in one of our offices to reduce our use of landfill further. In addition, our car fleet is entirely electric and we use a stationery provider with a wide range of green products.



# Resource management



## **CASE STUDY:** **Garden makeovers boost green spaces**

During spring and summer 2023, helpers from our volunteer programme joined forces with our housing teams and local resident groups to spruce up outdoor community spaces. Having access to nature and green spaces supports good mental health and gardening can have a calming effect on our minds and lift spirits. We worked closely with residents in several areas where they felt their communal spaces would benefit from gardening improvements.

At Western Court in Kilburn, our aim was to provide seating areas, put up privacy screening from the main street, replant the entrance area and supply storage for gardening tools. We also improved the garden's planting areas with fresh soil, flowers, plants, vegetables, colourful shrubs and all-year round greenery.

Our project at Staburn Court in Edgware saw an enclosed garden with large empty concrete planters completely

transformed into a luscious outdoor space. A group of residents got involved and supported with preparing and redesigning the garden.

Nnenna, a resident for many years, said: "When I come out of the lift now, I have a great big beam on my face. This has made such a difference and transformed our space. Thank you to everyone who has helped bring more sunshine into Staburn Court."

Residents at Elsham Road in Kensington highlighted communal gardens that had become overgrown and so collectively we pulled up weeds, repotted plants and set up a barbecue.

We received some lovely resident feedback, including: "Just to say thank you so much for all your help and hard work in the garden. It is really looking good. I have started working on it too now, watering and arranging the pots. It's so much easier for me to get to again. It was great to meet the other neighbours as well. Such a brilliant idea."

## **Using responsibly sourced materials**

We carry out a whole life-cycle carbon (WLC) assessment and a circular economy statement (CES) on all large new development projects to assess embodied carbon and recycled content of building materials. This applies to projects in the pre-planning stage. WLC and CES are assessed during both design and construction and include monitoring of on-site materials and waste, with a view to reducing waste and minimising the amount of embodied carbon associated with the construction and operation of the buildings.

As part of the CES assessment on future large developments, we will target using 20% recycled material on larger schemes, to be assessed before, during and after construction.

We require all timber on projects to be certified by the Forestry Stewardship Council. This ensures the timber comes from socially, ecologically and environmentally sustainable sources.

Our new developments are designed to allow enough space for dry recyclables, food and non-recyclable waste to be separated so that they can be more easily recycled or disposed of once collected.

## **Water management**

We minimise water use on new developments by using low-flow taps and appliances, with a target of 105 litres per person per day on new developments.



# Social

We have a proud legacy as an innovative and important player in London’s housing story. Our core social purpose has not changed since our foundation in the 1960s, but our Better Together strategy, published in July 2023, reflected the need to alter how we deliver our ambitions. It sets out our commitment to focusing on what matters most to our residents and ensuring we invest as necessary to create better connections, better homes and better places with and for them. This section outlines our progress during the year alongside our performance against 13 criteria across the five SRSSH themes in the social category.

INTERNAL ALIGNMENT		EXTERNAL ALIGNMENT	
BETTER TOGETHER STRATEGIC FIT	SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITY	SRSSH THEME	UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
Better homes	Warm, comfortable low carbon homes	Affordability and security	11  Sustainable cities and communities
		Building safety and quality	10  Reduced inequality
Better connections		Resident voice	11  Sustainable cities and communities
		Resident support	
Better places	Enhancing green spaces	Placemaking	

## Affordability and security

We are committed to delivering homes that Londoners can afford, whatever their personal circumstances. General needs homes charged at social or affordable rent levels make up more than half our portfolio, but we also offer shared ownership, leasehold, market rent, supported and temporary housing, and commercial properties.

Since 2019, our policy is to offer assured tenancies to the majority of new residents in social housing and we are in the process of converting remaining fixed-term tenancies to assured tenancies as they come up for renewal. We offer fixed-term tenancies only in circumstances such as supported housing where these are linked to the provision of support for a fixed period, or temporary housing where residents are awaiting a permanent offer of accommodation from their local authority.

Our resident support programme helps residents with the effects of high energy costs and cost-of-living increases more generally through a combination of income maximisation, budgeting and financial education and through directly sourcing available funds.

### Rent compared to local median private rental sector rent and to local housing allowance

Number of bedrooms	Our rent as a proportion of market rent		Our rent as a proportion of local housing allowance	
	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
Bedsit	71%	51%	50%	44%
1	40%	43%	53%	53%
2	36%	38%	39%	49%
3	32%	34%	43%	44%
4+	22%	22%	34%	37%



## Allocation of existing homes by tenure

Tenure type	Number		Percentage	
	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
General needs (social rent)	31,248	30,631	46.7%	45.7%
Intermediate rent	2,821	3,940	4.2%	5.9%
Affordable rent	5,331	5,229	8.0%	7.8%
Supported housing	2,373	3,248	3.5%	4.8%
Housing for older people	1,673	1,171	2.5%	1.7%
Low-cost home ownership	9,053	9,093	13.5%	13.5%
Care homes	76	75	0.1%	0.1%
Private rented sector	4,384	3,210	6.6%	4.8%
Other	9,914	10,513	14.8%	15.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>66,873</b>	<b>67,110</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Allocation of new homes by tenure

Tenure	Number		Percentage	
	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
General rented	394	217	48%	47%
Shared ownership	152	60	18.5%	13%
Market rent	99	18	12%	4%
Private sale	177	164	21.5%	36%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>



### CASE STUDY:

#### Wiping out energy debt for residents

During 2023/24, we helped secure funding to support social housing residents struggling to pay their household energy bills due to the rising cost of living, including higher energy costs. Many have struggled to pay their rent, utilities and even food bills.

To help alleviate some of this stress, we were able to access grants through social housing charity HACT, where they contribute up to £1,000 towards tackling energy debt per struggling household. The pot for this fund is £200,000, with 97 other housing providers also having access.

We worked hard to get as much support as possible for our residents, and as a result we were able to secure and pay off £23,500 worth of energy debt, helping 39 residents in total.



# Building safety and quality

More than 99% of our homes meet the national decent homes standard. We have identified £770 million to spend on improvements to our existing homes over the next 10 years. Our aim is to ensure that they meet not only the national standard, but an enhanced internal standard, which we hope to agree and publish by the end of the 2024 calendar year. For homes that we identify as performing poorly in terms of resident experience or financially, we pursue a disposal strategy that makes sense on a case-by-case basis, including offering residents the chance to move to a suitable home already upgraded to our in-house 'renew' standard for empty properties.

Throughout 2023/24, we have worked to ensure we comply with the Building Safety Act 2022. We registered all of our buildings classed as higher risk with the new building safety regulator in line with the national deadline in September 2023, and have made steady progress in developing building safety cases for each of those buildings. That work ensures we have a full safety story for them all, from how we manage the development process, general maintenance and compliance, to how we deal with customers and complaints.

We report performance monthly against compliance measures and take action as necessary if we fall below the required standard. Our measures cover fire risk, landlord gas safety records, domestic and communal electrical certificates, water safety risk assessments, asbestos surveys and reinspection, and passenger and domestic lift statutory inspections.

The table below shows our performance against the criteria required by SSSHR reporting.

	2023/24	2022/23
<b>Domestic gas servicing compliance</b>	<b>99.93%</b>	99.95%
<b>Fire risk assessment compliance</b>	<b>100%</b>	100%
<b>Domestic electrical safety compliance</b>	<b>98.74%</b>	98.01%

This data relates to homes where services are directly supplied by Notting Hill Genesis. It does not cover homes where a third party is responsible for those services.

## Managing damp and mould

We published a stand-alone policy in spring 2023 to emphasise our commitment to tackling this important topic and support efforts to be transparent in our approach. We also updated and enhanced resources available to customer-facing colleagues, including a checklist of what to look out for, a process map of what to do when damp and mould is identified, and a guide to assessing severity. We completed comprehensive training for all customer-facing colleagues, and introduced a new process clearly setting out refreshed requirements for all parts of our business.

A housing ombudsman review during the year identified several further actions around how we deal with damp and mould, which we're working through now to improve our service. That included an update of our policy to strengthen it further.

Switchee devices installed in almost 1,000 of our homes are helping us identify properties most at risk of damp and mould and take proactive action. The devices offer real-time data on whether the boiler is performing efficiently so that we can spot homes that are susceptible to excessive heat loss and where residents might be experiencing fuel poverty, allowing us to offer assistance before the issue gets out of control.

# Resident voice

## Tenant satisfaction measures

We collated data throughout 2023/24 against new tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs), designed to ensure customers are clear about how their landlord is performing and how that compares with other housing associations by asking all social housing residents the same questions.

We commissioned an independent survey company to carry out our TSM surveys by telephone in four phases over the course of the year, generating 3,254 different survey responses, all of which have been included in the results.

Our overall satisfaction score was 48.4% based on responses to the question, "taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Notting Hill Genesis?"

For low-cost renters the score was 55.6% and for low-cost home owners it was 27.5%. Performance against all tenant satisfaction measures is available on our website, enabling residents to scrutinise how we're doing and supporting greater transparency and openness in line with new consumer standards.

## Holding us to account

Two residents are members of our group board, ensuring that customer voices are heard at the most senior level of our organisation.

Over the course of the year, we consulted with residents to develop a new and improved involvement offer, aiming to bring in new voices, be more inclusive and create positive, focused spaces for collaboration between residents and staff. The changes were developed in response to resident feedback, the new consumer standards for the sector, and to help increase the representation of our residents in our engagement and involvement activities, particularly at a local neighbourhood level.

The new offer, which was introduced on 1 April 2024 focuses on projects and activities that deliver more strategic and measurable outcomes for residents and their homes. It will support task-and-finish activities and one-off projects or consultations as well as local engagement opportunities, with groups reporting outcomes and actions to our resident forum for scrutiny and oversight. Chaired by a board member, who is also a resident, the forum feeds into our operations committee, a sub-committee of the group board.

## Housing ombudsman complaints

The housing ombudsman recorded 165 cases for 2023/24 where one of our residents had asked them to advocate on their behalf to progress a complaint through our process. The ombudsman recorded a total of 446 findings against those cases, of which 260 (58.3%) were detrimental – a finding of severe maladministration, maladministration or service failure.

We were required to pay £179,664 in compensation relating to these 446 findings, a significant increase from the £27,593 paid in 2022/23.

Analysis both of complaints and ombudsman determinations has identified recurring themes and systemic issues. Those relate to delays in completing repairs and follow-up work, communication breakdown, inconsistent documentation and handover, and considering individual needs and vulnerabilities.

To address those issues, we are enhancing our complaints function as part of a new operating model to allow us to conduct detailed root cause analysis and deep dives, giving us further insights into how we improve customer experiences. We also have a newly established customer journey team, who take such insights and look at improving the repairs and service charge journeys to mitigate further occurrences of systemic issues.

Further detail is available in our full complaints report for 2023/24 available on our website alongside our self-assessment of how we're performing against the housing ombudsman code of conduct.



one home  
one planet



### CASE STUDY:

#### Bringing residents to the heart of decision making

As we developed our sustainability strategy, we recognised the need to bring the ideas and views of residents into our thinking to ensure our plans worked well for residents and local communities. Equally, residents told us we needed to do more to harness the contribution communities can make to tackling the climate crisis and improving green spaces for nature.

In response, we established a resident sustainability advisory group who meet every quarter to help formulate recommendations on key areas in our strategy and advise on their implementation.

We held two meetings during 2023/24, one to agree terms of reference and one to provide recommendations on the delivery of our green spaces management plan. In future, we'll work with our sustainability advisory group to think about how residents can actively participate in delivering local projects and solutions.



# Resident support

Our specialist in-house welfare benefits team support residents to maximise their incomes by challenging decisions and making new benefit claims. In 2023/24, the team received 870 referrals and recovered more than £4 million in revenue for residents, a million more than the figure recovered during 2022/23. The team also support with submitting discretionary applications to help reduce rent arrears, which relieves pressure on tenants' budgets.

We made 518 awards through our hardship fund, compared to 357 awards in 2022/23. Our hardship fund supports households in need with the cost of white goods, beds, carpeting and insulation and emergency removal costs. By supporting tenants to cover the costs of essential household items, we aim to ease pressure on budgets and reduce the need for high-interest borrowing.

Our resident support programme helps residents through partnerships with a wide range of local agencies who offer support and advice covering:

- Jobs, training and skills, including volunteering opportunities
- English for speakers of other languages and links to current vacancies
- Money matters, including food support, budgeting, grants and goods, energy and utility support and debt advice
- Family issues, including domestic abuse support and advice for young people
- Health and wellbeing, including support for older people, addiction and those with mental or physical health issues

During 2023/24, the team made 989 referrals to those partnership agencies, compared to 805 in 2022/23.

Details of all partners and the services they provide are listed on our website, where they can be directly accessed by residents.

## **CASE STUDY:** **Helping residents into employment**

Omobolaji recently moved into one of our first new homes on the Aylesbury estate in Southwark, having lived in the locality since 2012, two years before we took on the regeneration of the area in partnership with the local authority.



When Omobolaji completed his engineering degree at London Southbank University in 2014, he had some trouble finding a permanent job. He did agency contracts to get experience in the meantime. Our programme manager on the Aylesbury regeneration team, Chris Cotton, helped him by looking out for opportunities he could get involved in.

Chris came across a programme Transport for London was running with their contractors to help young people get into work and managed to get Omobolaji a place. Omobolaji completed the programme which taught him how to network and helped with CV writing. After the course he got calls from three companies and managed to secure a job with Telent, a contractor at Transport for London.

He then made the brave decision to start a masters qualification while doing full-time work and by which time he had a partner and a new baby.

"It was a real challenge to juggle all these things," he explains. "Working nights wasn't great and then going into the university three times a week while having the baby to look after and my partner working as well. I was determined though, I didn't even tell my work I was doing it. I just wanted to prove to myself I was capable. I was surprised though when my results came and I got a distinction!"

Omobolaji was then able to take the next step in his career with his new qualification and moved onto Siemens where he works now. He's very happy to now be working day shifts which means he sees his partner and daughter far more.




# Placemaking

We take pride in creating and sustaining good quality places where residents can be proud to live, work and play, and that incorporate well-designed and maintained homes and estates with access to a range of local amenities. This includes our approach to placemaking in areas of new development as well as working with local communities to strengthen and sustain existing neighbourhoods.

We continue to make good progress on our regeneration programmes at the Aylesbury estate in Southwark, Grahame Park in Barnet and Woodberry Down in Hackney. In all three locations, we are not only providing new homes, but working closely with local authorities and other partners to ensure local people benefit from associated social and economic opportunities as set out in the tables below.

## Supporting residents through regeneration



	2023/24	2022/23
<b>Woodberry Down – Hackney</b>		
Number of residents we've helped into employment	33	48
Number of residents in training	19	37
Number of apprenticeships	15	31
Residents directed to financial inclusion services	186	188
Residents accessing physical wellbeing activities	555	547



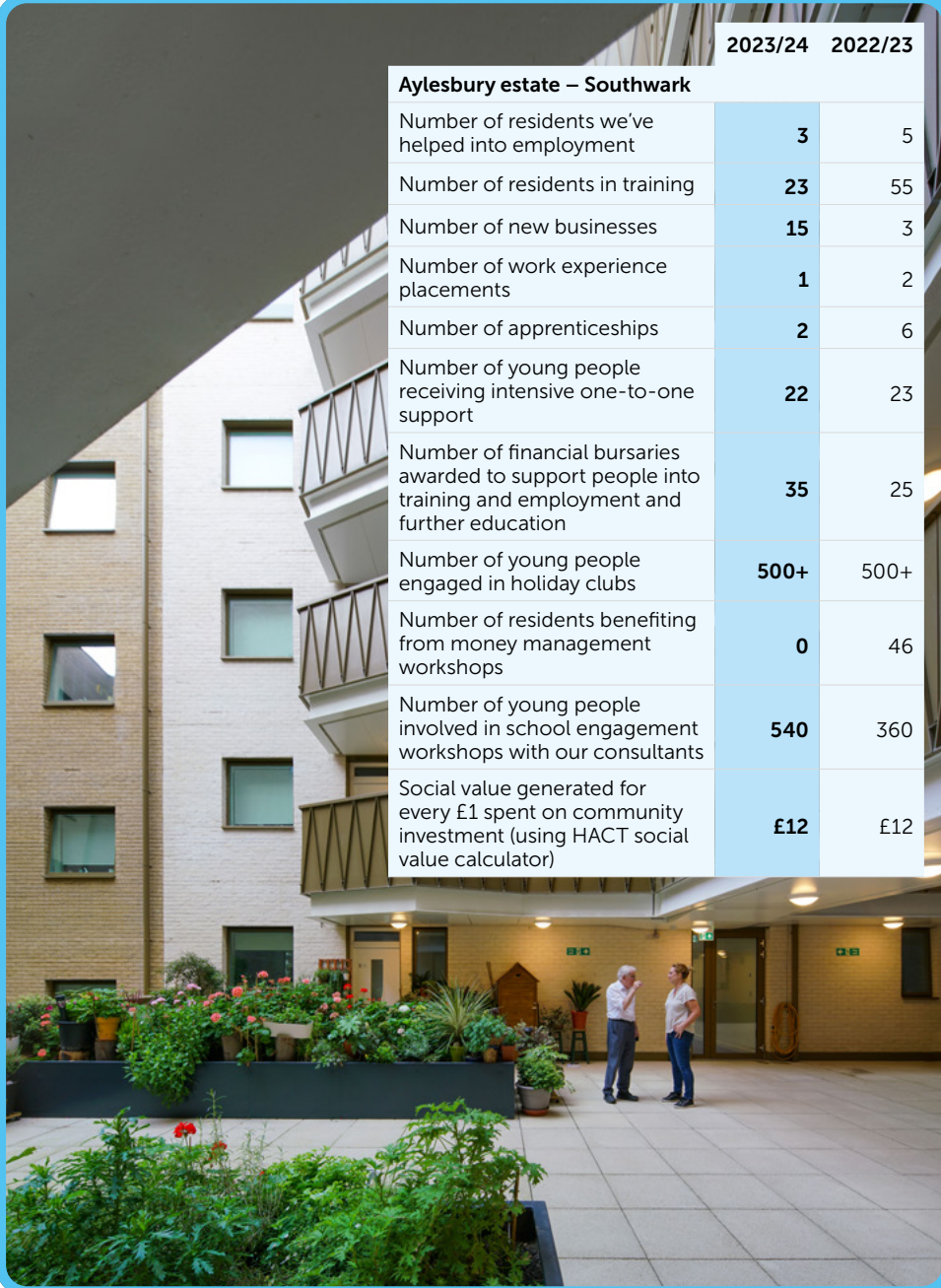
	2023/24	2022/23
<b>Grahame Park – Barnet</b>		
Number of residents we've helped into employment	162	95
Number of residents in training	444	298
Number of new business start-ups	4	15
Number of work experience placements	29	45
Number of apprenticeships	37	10
Number of residents directed to financial inclusion services	222	87
Residents accessing physical wellbeing activities	677	424

This year also saw the introduction of our new NHG Places model across 21 of our larger estates. The model builds on the findings of a pilot during 2022/23, which tested out a new approach to how we manage such schemes.

The NHG Places team manage the estates in their portfolio in a holistic and tenure-blind way that meets the needs of residents and the local community. Each of the estates now has a named estate operations manager who co-ordinates issues such as communal repairs and concierges so that local officers can focus more fully on their responsibilities.

Combined with practical estate management, NHG Places is also overseeing the creation of a fresh look and feel for each estate and the transformation of spaces into thriving environments. The team are collaborating with residents, businesses, local authorities and surrounding communities to ensure everyone's needs are met.





	2023/24	2022/23
<b>Aylesbury estate – Southwark</b>		
Number of residents we've helped into employment	3	5
Number of residents in training	23	55
Number of new businesses	15	3
Number of work experience placements	1	2
Number of apprenticeships	2	6
Number of young people receiving intensive one-to-one support	22	23
Number of financial bursaries awarded to support people into training and employment and further education	35	25
Number of young people engaged in holiday clubs	500+	500+
Number of residents benefiting from money management workshops	0	46
Number of young people involved in school engagement workshops with our consultants	540	360
Social value generated for every £1 spent on community investment (using HACT social value calculator)	£12	£12

**CASE STUDY:**  
**Resident art brightens local neighbourhood**

During 2023/24, we worked with residents in Notting Hill to include their paintings in a new public art installation in their neighbourhood. The artists' creations formed part of 15 artwork panels, stretching along the brick wall linking two of the most vibrant and well-known market areas in the city: Portobello Road and Golborne Road.

The project was a collaboration between us, the Muse gallery at 269 Portobello Road, the wall owners and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. It aimed to showcase local creativity and talent across London's streets, creating a visual link between the two unique markets, as well as enhancing the local area.

The exhibition included a piece by resident Wendy Helm, a talented fine art painter whose work has previously been shown as part of our 2016 Dolly Mixtures and 2022 Unlocked resident art exhibitions.





# Governance

We are committed to robust governance arrangements to ensure we are set up and managed in the right way to deliver what we must for the 130,000 people who live in one of our 67,000 homes.

We ensure that by running an inclusive and well-governed organisation with a diverse leadership, we can hold ourselves to account, make good decisions and comply with the law. This section outlines our progress during the year alongside our performance against 21 criteria across the four SRSSH themes in the governance category.

INTERNAL ALIGNMENT		EXTERNAL ALIGNMENT	
BETTER TOGETHER STRATEGIC FIT	SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITY	SRSSH THEME	UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
Strong finances and value for money	Net carbon zero by 2050	Supply chain management	12  Responsible consumption and production
		Structure and governance	16  Peace, justice and strong institutions
Our people		Board and trustees	
		Staff wellbeing	8  Decent work and economic growth

## Structure and governance

We are a charity incorporated as a community benefit society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing as a social housing provider. Our registration numbers are 7746 and 4880 respectively.

In our most recent regulatory stability check assessment, published on 29 November 2023, we were G1 for governance and V2 for viability. At the time of writing, we are undergoing a fresh regulatory inspection to check our compliance both against new consumer standards and existing economic standards. We expect to be told the outcome towards the end of the 2024 calendar year.

We follow the National Housing Federation's code of governance which applies to all entities wholly owned by the group.

We do not trade for profit and any profits are only applied for the purpose of furthering the objects and/or in accordance with our rules.

There have been no adverse regulatory findings during the last 12 months.

## Managing ESG risks

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) risk management is a critical aspect of our corporate governance and strategy. We have an enterprise-wide risk management framework that provides the infrastructure to enable us to capture ESG risk which in turn supports us in addressing challenges that could have significant financial, reputational and operational impacts.

We monitor all risks, including those relating to ESG, as part of our enterprise-wide risk management framework, which describes how we take an integrated, holistic view of all risks. That approach ensures a joined-up and consistent approach to the aggregation and management of all risks, integrated into business management and decision-making.

The framework includes a statement of risk appetite that provides boundaries on risk taking for the board as well as a system of internal controls to give them adequate assurance on control effectiveness. We also have risk and control self-assessments to provide a consistent framework for the identification, documentation, assessment, monitoring, reporting and communication of significant risks and key controls. At the same time, the self-assessments offer transparency regarding ownership and accountability for risks and controls, enable a robust understanding of the design and operating effectiveness of controls in place to manage risks, and embed a risk and control culture across the organisation.

ESG risk management is embedded into the risk framework that has been introduced across the organisation. We have established a process to enable us to identify, assess, manage, and mitigate risks related to ESG factors. These factors are important to us and our stakeholders, including investors, regulators, customers, and employees, who demand greater accountability and transparency around how we manage ESG-related risks.





# Board and trustees

## Composition of the board

There are 12 people on our current group board. Ten are non-executive directors, of which two are residents, ensuring customers are represented at the most senior level. We have a range of resident involvement groups focusing on task-and-finish activities, one-off projects and consultations or local engagement opportunities. All groups report outcomes to our resident forum for scrutiny and oversight. Chaired by a member of the group board, who is a resident, the forum feeds into our operations committee, a sub-committee of the group board.

Our non-executive board members are 60% women and 30% from Black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) communities. Across London, 46% of residents are from BAME backgrounds, a target we are aiming to achieve within our governance community. To help us meet that aim, our recruitment processes for both the board and our employees include measures to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) are considered at every stage.

The chair of our group board is signed up to the National Housing Federation's 'chairs challenge', which recognises the importance of chair leadership for driving and embedding

ED&I. The challenge is a public commitment to support our board in understanding our current status and then develop a vision for the future. Our commitment to ED&I is further bolstered by the appointment of a non-executive director as board diversity champion, ensuring ED&I is always considered when making decisions at board level.

Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, one new colleague joined our executive board, replacing another who left our organisation.

At group board level, we have recruited an additional non-executive director as well as a new board member who is a resident to replace another resident who had reached the end of their term.

The board considers succession planning on a regular basis throughout the year.

Our current audit and risk committee comprises five members, including three non-executives, one of whom chairs the committee, and two independent members. Two members have recent and significant financial and/or audit experience.

## Board effectiveness

We commission an externally facilitated governance review every three years, with the most recent board effectiveness review taking place in March 2022.

We ensure conflicts of interest are:

- Reportable by staff to their line manager and the director of governance
- Logged in a register
- Declared at formal meetings of board, committee and subsidiary meetings and recorded within minutes of these meetings
- Covered in induction for new non-executive directors

In addition, the director of governance can be contacted for any concerns.

Crowe LLP were appointed as our external auditor in 2023 and audited our annual report and financial statements for 2022/23 and for 2023/24.

# Staff wellbeing

## Mental and physical health

Our sickness management and ill-health capability policies include generous sick pay entitlements and access to occupational health and rehabilitation specialists when needed. Several of our other policies support staff wellbeing and cover topics such as stress, reasonable adjustments, menopause, miscarriage and stillbirth, and dependant care leave.

Colleagues have access to a range of services to support their physical and mental health, including a health cash plan, a comprehensive health and wellbeing package, free exercise classes and financial advice, support and benefits. We also have more than 100 colleagues who are trained as mental health first aiders, and who run sessions to raise awareness and give opportunities for staff to speak about mental health and current events in a confidential safe space.

The average number of sick days taken per employee, including those on long-term sick leave was 12.3 during 2023/24.

## Equality, diversity and inclusion

To ensure we are as inclusive as possible, we have staff networks who support their members by raising awareness and influencing internal policy across five core areas – women, ethnic diversity, carers, LGBTQ+ and health and disability. We publish an annual ED&I report and an associated action plan, ensuring our objectives can be met and that we continue to make further progress towards our goal of making our organisation a more equal and inclusive place to work.

We support career wellbeing through several internal and external development programmes to support colleagues' career progression, alongside regular free-to-attend workshops and webinars to help further skill sets.

We publish annual pay gap reporting both for gender and for ethnicity. As at April 2023, for gender, our median pay gap is 10.2% and our mean pay gap 14.1%, both smaller than the 16% and 22.7% respectively reported the previous year. For ethnicity, our median pay gap is 10.1% and our mean pay gap 14%, also smaller than the previous year's figures of 18.5% and 26.2% respectively.

In our supported housing business, we actively engage with commissioners to secure the London Living Wage for our staff where possible. Our housing assistant night cover staff receive the National Minimum Wage for their sleep-in hours.

The ratio of pay for the chief executive compared to our lowest paid worker is 15:1.



# Supply chain management

All corporate procurement projects include a suite of ESG questions to capture key environmental requirements, including sustainability, and social aspects such as supplier diversity and social value. Suppliers are required to demonstrate these credentials if they are to work with us and align to our core values.

We have mandated environmental questions within our tender documents to ensure suppliers are aligned to our environmental standards. We have also developed a responsible procurement charter, which pulls together our key supplier values and standards, including a supplier code of conduct, probity, ethical sourcing and environmental responsibility.

Further examples of consideration of the environmental impact through procurement projects include our recent development contractor and consultant framework. We reviewed contractors' environmental policies and included site waste management and material requirements, ensuring that all opportunities to recycle and reuse materials are considered at the outset of the procurement process.



## CASE STUDY:

### More sustainable procurement

Our sustainable procurement charter brings together all our sustainability priorities to encourage a holistic approach to improving social outcomes and reducing environmental impact. It sets a platform for suppliers to collaborate and work with us to achieve our aspirations over time. For environmental priorities, we have established reporting expectations and indicative performance indicators so that we can monitor performance and start to set targets to reduce carbon emissions and waste to meet our 2030 and 2050 targets.

We've also appointed eight suppliers to our first-ever decarbonisation framework. These suppliers can provide a complete whole-house retrofit solution compliant with the government's quality mark for retrofit, combining planned maintenance improvements such as window and roof renewals with insulation enhancements and low carbon heating. Crucially, the framework should help us deliver our zero carbon agenda and secure future funding.

# APPENDIX

## Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing – themes and criteria

Section	Theme	Criteria	Report page reference
Environmental	Climate change	Distribution of energy performance certificate (EPC) ratings of existing homes (those completed before the last financial year).	3
		Distribution of EPC ratings of new homes (those completed in the last financial year).	3
		Does the housing provider have a net zero target and strategy? If so, what is it and when does the housing provider intend to be net zero by?	3
		What retrofit activities has the housing provider undertaken in the last 12 months in relation to its housing stock? How do these activities align with, and contribute towards, performance against the housing provider's net zero strategy and target?	3
		Scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions and scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions per home.	3
		How has the housing provider mapped and assessed the climate risks to its homes and supply chain, such as increased flood, drought and overheating risks? How is the housing provider mitigating these risks?	4
	Ecology	Does the housing provider have a strategy to enhance green space and promote biodiversity on or near homes? If yes, please describe with reference to targets in this area. If no, are you planning on producing one in the next 12 months?	5
		Does the housing provider have a strategy to identify, manage and reduce pollutants that could cause material harm? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?	5
	Resource management	Does the housing provider have a strategy to use or increase the use of responsibly sourced materials for all building and repairs works? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?	5
		Does the housing provider have a strategy for waste management incorporating building materials? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?	5
		Does the housing provider have a strategy for water management? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?	5



Section	Theme	Criteria	Report page reference
Social	Affordability and security	For properties that are subject to the rent regulation regime, report against one or more affordability metric: (1) rent compared to median private rental sector rent across the local authority (2) rent compared to local housing allowance.	7
		Share, and number, of existing homes (owned and/or managed) completed before the last financial year allocated to general needs (social rent), intermediate rent, affordable rent, supported housing, housing for older people, low-cost home ownership, care homes, private rented sector and other.	8
		Share and number of new homes (those that were completed in the last financial year), allocated to general needs (social rent), intermediate rent, affordable rent, supported housing, housing for older people, low-cost home ownership, care homes, private rented sector or other.	8
		How is the housing provider trying to reduce the effect of high energy costs on its residents?	7
		How does the housing provider provide security of tenure for residents?	7
	Building safety and quality	Describe the condition of the housing provider's portfolio, with reference to the percentage of homes for which all required gas safety checks, fire risk assessments and electrical safety checks have been carried out.	9
		What percentage of homes meet the national housing quality standard? Of those which fail, what is the housing provider doing to address these failings?	9
		How do you manage and mitigate the risk of damp and mould for your residents?	9
	Resident voice	What are the results of the housing provider's most recent tenant satisfaction survey? How has the housing provider acted on these results?	10
		What arrangements are in place to enable residents to hold management to account for the provision of services?	10
		In the last 12 months, for how many complaints has the national ombudsman determined that maladministration took place? How have these complaints (or others) resulted in change of practice within the housing provider?	10
	Resident support	What are the key support services that the housing provider offers to its residents? How successful are these services in improving outcomes?	12
	Placemaking	Describe the housing provider's community investment activities, and how the housing provider is contributing to positive neighbourhood outcomes for the communities in which its homes are located. Provide examples or case studies of where the housing provider has been engaged in placemaking or placeshaping activities.	13-14

Section	Theme	Criteria	Report page reference
Governance	Structure and governance	Is the housing provider registered with the national Regulator of Social Housing?	15
		What is the most recent regulatory grading/status?	15
		Which code of governance does the housing provider follow, if any?	15
		Is the housing provider not-for-profit?	15
		Explain how the housing provider's board manages ESG risks. Are ESG risks incorporated into the housing provider's risk register?	16
		Has the housing provider been subject to any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months (data protection breaches, bribery, money laundering, HSE breaches etc) that resulted in enforcement or other equivalent action?	15
	Board and trustees	How does the housing provider ensure it gets input from a diverse range of people into governance processes? Does the housing provider consider resident voice at the board and senior management level? Does the housing provider have policies that incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) into the recruitment and selection of board members and senior management?	17
		What % of the board and senior management team have turned over in the last two years?	17
		Number of board members on the audit committee with recent and relevant financial experience.	17
		What % of the board are non-executive directors?	17
		Has a succession plan been provided to the board in the last 12 months?	17
		For how many years has the housing provider's current external audit partner been responsible for auditing the accounts?	17
		When was the last independently-run board-effectiveness review?	17
		How does the housing provider handle conflicts of interest at the board?	17
	Staff wellbeing	Does the housing provider pay the Real Living Wage?	17
		What is the housing provider's median gender pay gap?	18
		What is the housing provider's CEO:median-worker pay ratio?	18
		How is the housing provider ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is promoted across its staff?	18
		How does the housing provider support the physical and mental health of their staff?	18
		How does the housing provider support the professional development of its staff?	18
	Supply chain management	How is social value creation considered when procuring goods and services? What measures are in place to monitor the delivery of this social value?	19
		How is environmental impact considered when procuring goods and services? What measures are in place to monitor the sustainability of your supply chain when procuring goods and services?	19





Environmental,  
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report

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