

Environmental, Social and Governance report (ESG report)

2022/23



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Introduction by Helen Meehan Chief Financial Officer

We became an early adopter of the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing and produced our first Environmental Social and Governance report under that standard. In the same year we set out a 30-year road map to green our homes and help the UK reach net zero.

This is now our third ESG report and within it we can share some of the early gains already being made in our long-term sustainability plan.

Over the past three years, alongside laying the foundation which will help us to achieve our longer-term goals, we have already seen tangible results that have impacted our customers, our partners, suppliers, and our business. We have some way to go to achieving those goals, but our returns so far give us confidence moving forward.

This year we finished our first major retrofit project. After securing funding from the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) we retrofitted 90 homes in Cumbria which had low Energy Performance Certificate ratings. We used the project as a test bed to ensure we would be on the track to retrofit at scale in the near future. The outcomes were excellent. Our customers are now reaping the rewards of greener and more energy efficient homes, which has brought a range of benefits, particularly cost savings.

The success of the project led us to apply for Wave 2 of the SHDF in November. Our successful application means we plan to retrofit 1,000 homes over the next two years.

The submission was part of a wider bid with our partners in the Greener Futures Partnership (GFP). Made up of some of the UK's largest housing associations – Abri, Anchor, Home Group, Hyde Group and Sanctuary – we were successful in securing funding to retrofit 5,500 homes, with a combined investment of close to £100m.

Greener Futures Partnership have 600,000 customers in over 300,000 homes with a turnover of £2.3bn and represent around 10% of all social housing. Earlier this year GFP established a £1.5bn procurement framework to support its retrofit plans. Multinationals to SMEs have signed up.

This year, our colleagues moved into a new office, uniquely designed as a community hub, and for hybrid working. Its Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) 'Excellent' rating demonstrates our commitment to the sustainable performance of our offices. In addition, its role as a community hub has been brought to life through the dedicated space within the building for voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE). This space is used to hold events for the VCSE sector like 'Strawberry Soup', a regular event for charity fundraising.

Home Group invested heavily last year, and plans to do the same this year, in building new homes and ensuring its existing ones are fit for purpose.

We invested £179.6m last year on 1,098 homes across England and Scotland, 685 of those being affordable housing for rent and low cost home ownership.

Last year we started work on a major regeneration project in the London borough of Barnet. The DBP estate will benefit from 392 new, energy efficient, affordable homes, replacing 272 homes that were much in need of change. They will be complemented by 361 homes for sale in an overall mix of tenure blind apartment blocks, maisonettes, and houses.

We also invested £152m last year – an increase of £42m on the previous year – improving and maintaining our customers' homes. This included £15m on building safety works.



“Customers are at the heart of what we do.”

We also expanded our in-house repairs service after the hugely successful pilot in the North-East. The Home Group Repairs Partnership is also now operating in the South-East.

These are serious investments we are making and we are being supported by our partners. For example, we extended our sustainability linked loan from Lloyds this year from £125m to £200m, while resetting the term.

In Scotland, we recently secured a £15m loan from Allia, which will support the delivery of over 900 homes across Scotland. The interest we pay on the loan will be used to fund more social rented homes.

Customers are at the heart of what we do, quite literally. Our customer involvement programme is a national exemplar. We have customers involved across all parts of the business, scrutinising our activity.

They are involved in everything from recruitment panels, procurement, and scrutiny panels to deciding on maintenance contracts and sitting on the board.

This allows our customers to hold us to account and ensure what we deliver meets their needs.

Customers tell us we are doing a good job, but they also remind us that we aren't perfect. By involving customers in our operation, and crucially, listening to them we aim to get to a place where they are satisfied overall.

Helen

Our approach to ESG reporting

Home Group was an early adopter of the Sustainability Reporting Standards (SRS) and our 2023 report is the third summary of our performance against this standard.

Our report is structured to respond to each core and enhanced criteria and, for the third year, we're pleased to include stories from customers and colleagues to bring it to life.

We are still as committed as ever to sustainability, creating social value for our customers and communities and demonstrating strong and effective governance.



A summary of our ESG performance in 22/23

Financial support for customers

- Over the past year, more than **£5m additional** income and £983,889 in lump sum payments was gained for customers.
- **96%** of Home Group's general needs and affordable homes have rents that are lower or equal to Local Housing Allowance.



A greener future

- As a member of the Greener Spaces Advisory Board we've helped develop the new Green Space Model. We know that access to fully functional ecosystems is key to tackling climate change and to improving physical, social and mental wellbeing.

Customer involvement

- Between April 2022 and March 2023, we asked **2,080 customers** their views, listened to what they said and acted on their ideas.
- We received **255** nominations to Home Group customer awards.
- **72** customers involved in recruiting colleagues into **181** roles.




Customer recruitment and training

- Home Achievement Programme (HAP) – around **750 customers** per year take part in the specialised Home Group training programme.
- Each year, Home Group employs around **120 apprentices**.
- 70 of these annually (58%) are exclusively for Home Group customers who have been long-term unemployed.
- We Invest **£1m** each year in employment costs for our customer apprentices and over **£200k** each year in their learning.

A great place to work

- **10th** in the Great Places to Work Survey (Super Large Employer). 
- **1st** in the UK for a Great Place for Women to work (Super Large Employer).
- Ranked **9th** in the UK's best workplaces for wellbeing.

Social value through procurement

- 100% of our tenders for customer-facing contracts had customers involved in development of the specification and participating on the evaluation panel. 



Our report structure

We have structured this report against the Sustainability Reporting Standard themes of Environmental, Social and Governance.

Each of these themes include information that is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



“The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of common global goals that demand investors, government, business and society to do more to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure people enjoy peace and prosperity.”

– (UN, Transforming our world: the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, September 2015).

UN Sustainable Development Goals (key)



ESG area	Theme	UN Sustainable Development Goal	Page reference
Social	Affordability and security	No poverty	12
		Reduced inequalities	
	Building safety and quality	Sustainable cities and communities	14
	Resident voice	Sustainable cities and communities	16
	Resident support	Sustainable cities and communities	22
Placemaking	Sustainable cities and communities	28	
Environmental	Climate change	Climate action	34
	Ecology	Life on land	44
	Resource management	Sustainable cities and communities	46
Governance	Structure and governance	Peace, justice and strong institutions	52
	Board and trustees	Peace, justice and strong institutions	54
	Staff wellbeing	Decent work and economic growth	56
	Supply chain management	Responsible production and consumption	62

Social



Affordability and security

This theme seeks to assess the extent to which the housing provider provides long-term homes that are genuinely affordable to those on low incomes.

Home Group properties

96% of Home Group's general needs and affordable homes have rents that are lower or equal to Local Housing Allowance (LHA).*

The table below shows the tenure of homes we owned and managed at 1 April 2022 and the tenure of new homes completed in 2022/23.

	At 1 April 2022	New homes completed in 2022/23
General needs (social rent)	34,440/67%	219/32%
Affordable rent	7,250/14%	145/21%
Intermediate rent	439/1%	0/0%
Supported housing	4,388/9%	72/11%
Housing for older people	1,659/3%	64/9%
Low cost home ownership	2,993/6%	176/26%
Care homes	113/0%	0/0%

Fixed term tenancies**

6.4% (2021/22: 9.5%) of Home Group's general needs tenancies in England are fixed term.

On average Home Group rents are **76% (2021/22: 73%)** of LHA.

*This amount is based on the area in which claimants live and the size of dwelling appropriate for their household.

**Fixed term tenancies are not used in Scotland, supported services or older people's properties. All Home Group general needs tenancies are granted with greater than a 3 year period. As fixed term tenancy periods come to an end each renewal is considered within our new policy and most tenancies are being renewed as lifetime unless in keeping with a local authority tenancy strategy.



The table below shows analysis for the ten local authority areas where we have the most homes:

	Average weekly LHA (£)	Average weekly Home Group rent (£)	Home Group rent discount (%)
West Cumbria	105.93	93.80	11%
Tyneside	115.89	89.01	23%
Sunderland	104.00	86.66	17%
Durham	94.77	82.95	12%
Teesside	101.68	89.43	12%
North West London	303.73	137.41	55%
North Cumbria	108.05	94.41	13%
Bradford & South Dales	112.65	98.11	13%
Worthing	176.84	113.03	36%
Harlow & Stortford	209.48	124.73	40%



Building safety and quality

This theme seeks to assess how effective the housing provider is at meeting its legal responsibilities to protect residents and keep buildings safe.

Providing a safe place to live for customers a fundamental part of our customer promise.

99.9% (2021/22: 99.8%) of homes have an up-to-date gas inspection and service certificate.

We have dedicated compliance colleagues carrying out quality checks on 100% of completed servicing documentation and we have also increased the number of checks carried out by our third party on-site technical auditors.

99.0% (2021/22: 99.3%) of blocks of flats have a fire risk assessment.

We complete regular Fire Risk Assessments on all of our 1,951 blocks as required by legislation. The regularity of the assessments is determined by our governance which sets out the risk categorisation that will be applicable to the relevant blocks. Our programme of review, depending on the risk rating of the building, will range from an annual review to a review once every three years. The balancing 1% of buildings that had an overdue assessment at the end of the financial year have all been completed. We continue to work with our partners to deliver follow on works ensuring our customers live in safe homes.

99.1% (2021/22: 99.9%) of our eligible properties meet Decent Home Standard (DHS).

This is a decrease on last year due to more stock condition surveys undertaken. The vast majority of properties not meeting DHS require investment in thermal efficiency measures such as loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and heating controls. Once we know a home doesn't meet DHS we get the works done as quickly as possible.

Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)

97.9% (2021/22: 98%) of our eligible homes in Scotland meet SHQS. We currently have 84 homes that do not meet SHQS, 44 of which are due to be demolished and 40 homes are exempt from SHQS standards due to either customer refusals or the home is unable to be within quality standards due to constraints of the building such as it being a listed building. Exemption is applied as we have done everything possible to maximise the performance of the home.



Resident voice

This theme seeks to assess how effective the housing provider is at listening to and empowering residents.

Home Group customer, and board member, Indra Mudie shares her views on the voice of the customer.

The Government's 'Making Things Right' campaign, along with the recent media coverage, especially on the tragic story of Awaab Ishak, have brought things to the fore, at last.

Finally, it has given customers a greater voice. What is disappointing is it has taken such a tragedy, and much media attention to give customers that voice. Most housing associations have been far too slow in giving their customers a platform.

I'm happy to say that's not the case for Home Group. We have a platform. It's not always perfect but it is good and getting better.

I've been a customer board member at Home Group for four years and in that time I've seen lots of great work done by Home Group. I've also seen times where they've not gotten it quite right, but also how they have learned from it.

It's been refreshing to see how they've handled customer engagement in that time. I've seen it evolve, and how they take on board feedback directly from those they are trying to speak to as an organisation: us customers.

Their journey is by no means complete. There is always going to be room for improvement, and especially regards their communication with customers.

There's been moments when they could have gotten something out slightly earlier or if they'd mentioned a certain thing, it might have stopped a situation from happening. The upshot is that they can learn from it. And they do in my experience.



“They've made a real effort to listen to and learn from customers when messages don't quite land right.”

Even when they've had to share difficult communications with customers, which they know will get a negative reaction, such as rent increases or service charges, it is so important that they consider the customer.

A perfect example of this is when they recently sent out our rent increase letters. It does a deep dive on the letter to show what is going up, the justifications behind it and what help is out there and how to access it. That is so important at times like these.

It's encouraging to see, as a customer myself primarily, that Home Group are trying to listen and always improve. When things haven't been quite right first time, or there are new ways of thinking which customers have brought up, they have been listened to when it might have been easy to ignore or overlook.

As a customer board member I can share my experiences – and those of the customers I speak to regularly – directly to the highest levels of the organisation.

When here, talking to the rest of the board or the executive team, I've always felt heard and able to contribute as an equal. Our chair John Cridland is phenomenal for doing that. There are times in meetings where he'll turn round and say 'well, before we open it up to the floor, I want to hear the customer's point of view first'. It really makes you feel a part of the conversation.

It is more than just paying lip service. When I or others have made suggestions, they have been genuinely taken on board. For example, when I first started, our customer

board members were not able to be involved in other groups.

We used to argue how can we be the voice of the customer if we can't actually hear the customer ourselves. Yes, I can speak from personal experience, but we wanted to bring others' voices to the table too.

The board listened and agreed. Now, we can stay on the viewpoint teams, customer forums, all our engagement groups. It means we can relay the customer voice.

That's really important because something can be said in a customer forum in January and it might not get implemented until November or December, if at all. As far as they're concerned, for twelve months they are ignored until suddenly it appears.

This way, we can come from board and say 'that thing you wanted taken up in January, it was put on the agenda in March. It allows us to share more information with fellow customers.

There is still quite a lot they must improve on as an organisation when it comes to engaging and communicating with customers, but they are learning and improving all the time.

The 'Making Things Right' campaign will help housing associations focus on communication and engagement more than they have. But in my experience, not every housing association will do it from a standing start.



Between April 2022 and March 2023, we asked 2,080 customers their views, listened to what they said and acted on their ideas. We also engaged with 4,550 customers at a local level in our communities and services, a total of 6,630 customers.



Scrutiny and governance

- **2** customer board members on Home Group Board and **2** on Home Scotland Board and **5** customers presented to Board on a range of issues.
- **26** customers signed up for our 'On Board' training and **16** completed the course.
- Involved **43** customer forum members in 4 meetings at **8** sessions.
- **43** customer assessors assessed **13** supported services and **8** neighbourhoods against our customer promise, speaking to **293** customers.
- **4** local customer consultations following complaints involving 30 customers.
- **199** viewpoint team members took part in **40** viewpoint meetings.
- **39** customers involved in **3** grounds maintenance scrutiny meetings and consultations.
- **13** customers involved with the national development group which focuses on design and development, sustainability and asset management.

Public affairs and external events

- **5** customers involved in **7** external events.

Complaints



- Independent complaints panel investigated **4** complaints.
- Made **16** recommendations.
- Reviewed **12** complaints using complaints scrutiny model.

Equality and diversity

- **37** Swap members delivered **59** Life Swaps to **1,161** customers, colleagues and stakeholders.
- Captured **7** role model stories.
- **8** customers from Do You Hear Us, our multicultural customer group involved in **5** digital meetings throughout the year.
- **26** customers involved in our Wonder Women group in **6** digital and 1 face to face meeting and attended **4** Women of Home Group network meetings.
- **9** customers at **3** meetings of We are Unique and Proud, our disability group.
- **22** customers from Rainbow Roofs, our multi-agency LGBTQ plus customer group involved in **12** digital, hybrid and face to face meetings.
- **9** customers from Alphabetti Spaghetti, our Life customer led LGBTQ plus support group, involved in **12** sessions.
- **10** customers involved in **4** Men's group meetings.
- **356** customers from **33** independent living schemes met with colleagues across **8** regions as part of the over 55s forum.

Community engagement

In addition, **4,550** customers took part in over **400** different local engagement activities from jubilee parties and street clean ups to barbeques and gardening projects.

Customer awards



- **255** nominations.
- **6** customers involved in shortlisting and judging.
- **12** celebrations across the country.

Communication

- **11** customers involved in **2** Homelife Editorial panels.

Recruitment, induction and training



- **72** customers involved in recruiting colleagues into 181 roles.
- **33** customers involved in recruitment training.
- **2** customers involved in local induction training delivered to 13 colleagues.
- **3** customers involved in It's Good to be Home induction sessions.
- **7** customers involved in creating e-learning for colleagues.

Procurement

- **18** customers involved in procuring **7** new services and contacts.

Digital consultations

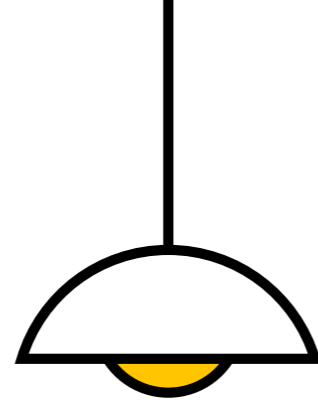
anyone@home has **373** members who contributed to **22** consultations.

Consultations

- **3** high rise buildings consultations involving **51** customers.
- **1** damp and mould customer consultation involving **18** customers.
- **582** customers in Scotland involved in the regulatory rent consultation.



Measuring satisfaction



For many years we have measured satisfaction using a sample of customers who have had a repair or gas service completed within the previous month and are contacted by phone.

In addition, we have been tracking with a more in-depth approach since 2021. This approach, called our Customer Promise Survey, means that we can gather specific feedback from customers on how well we are delivering against our customer promise. It also allows us to track the things that the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) covers. We started to survey customers on the TSMs in Q1 2023/24.

The TSMs cover:

- Customer satisfaction.
- How we're keeping properties in good repair.
- How we're keeping homes safe.
- How we're delivering respectful and helpful engagement.
- How we're handling complaints.
- How we're dealing with anti-social behaviour.
- Responsible neighbourhood management.

Our Customer Promise

We worked with almost 300 customers nationwide to develop our Customer Promise; a set of guiding statements.



In the last 12 months, how many complaints have been upheld by the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS)?

	Determinations	Service failure	Partial maladministration/ maladministration	Severe maladministration
2022/23	26	7	14	0
2021/22	26	9	8	0

This data is sourced from the Housing Ombudsman Landlord performance report.

We have a robust lessons learned framework which we deliver in partnership with our customers. The framework means:

- We learn lessons from complaints.
- Customers have the opportunity to scrutinise complaints and make recommendations.
- Learning is shared across the organisation and with customers.

Year	Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) score
2022/23	93%*
2021/22	92%
2020/21	91%

*This CSAT score is 93% for the year until September 2022 when we changed methodology. This was due to the TSMs which we will publish in next year's report.

Resident support

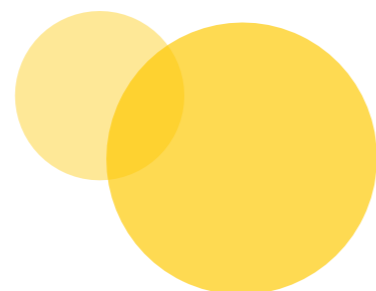
This theme seeks to assess the effectiveness of the initiatives that the housing provider runs to support individual residents.

Resident support takes on many forms within Home Group – from supporting customers to enhance their skills, build aspirations and/or gain employment, to assist in better managing their finances and help increase their income, support their physical and mental wellbeing to training for new customer Board members.

Over the past few years our award-winning apprenticeship programme has undoubtedly been the most impactful area in which we have supported our customers.

Each year Home Group employs around 120 apprentices. 70 of these annual apprenticeships are exclusively for Home Group customers who have been long-term unemployed. More than 60% of these apprentices tell us that they feel they would not have been offered a job or an apprenticeship elsewhere. We invest over £1m per annum in employment costs for our customer apprentices and over £200k in their learning. Across our wider programme we deliver 26 different apprenticeship types that range from Level 2 (GCSE level) right through to Level 6 and 7 (Degree and Masters level).

- 64% of our apprenticeships are filled by disadvantaged and diverse groups.
- 90% of our apprentices stay in jobs within Home Group.



Case study



Andy McDowell Customer Apprentice

When Andy moved into our Tyneside Foyer service a year ago, he was homeless, out of work and very down. Fast forward a year and he is back up and has new meaning in his life.

Andy's attitude and dedication to improving his situation saw Foyer support colleagues recognise how valuable he could be, and recommended he look at an apprenticeship opportunity with Home Group.

With their support Andy was successful and has joined our Health & Safety Team where he has settled in brilliantly.

"Honestly, it's been incredible. Every single person that I work with has been so kind. They've taken the time to talk to me and help me.

"If I could put it into one word, the support I've received has been very nurturing."

Once in work, Home Group were able to set Andy up with his own tenancy.

"It's been amazing. Having a routine again has done so much for my mental health and confidence. In fact, it has been beneficial for almost every aspect of my life."



“Having my own space, I genuinely would say that it has opened up my life and given me the ability to believe in myself again.”

Helping customers achieve their goals

One of Home Group's other successful schemes which supports customers is the Home Achievement Programme (HAP). The HAP programme is Home Group's unique, specialist training programme, helping customers to work towards achieving an accredited qualification in a range of varying areas tailored to their needs. Run for over 10 years, HAP is included as standard in all our accommodation and community-based services but can also be delivered as a stand-alone service.

The principal areas of focus are:

- Health and Wellbeing.
- Employability.
- Social Responsibility.
- Promoting Independence.

The programme is modular and credit-based, allowing for a targeted and person-centred learning path. Customers work with our specialist team to identify areas of individual need and are supported through the process. The programme, accredited by One Awards, gives individuals the opportunity to learn new skills, build confidence and improve their overall wellbeing. It also supports customers to secure housing and employment. Around 600 customers per year take part in the training programme.

In the past five years more than 3,000 customers have registered for the programme and over 2,400 have completed the course.

Supporting customers' finances

The past few years have been extremely hard indeed on some of our customers. Many were just about getting back on track following the impact of Covid, when they were hit with an even bigger issue in the form of the cost of living crisis.

As energy costs and fuel prices begin to drop, a large proportion of the UK's population are starting to see light at the end of the tunnel. For many in social housing, this isn't the case.

They have had to take some awful decisions on what they spend their extremely limited and stretched resource. Too many were having to make a choice between eating or heating.

“Stephanie from the financial help team really helped us when we were crippled with fuel payments through the cold snap. ... amazing and understanding and really came across as wanting to help.”

Rachael, Cumbria customer

Home Group's Financial Inclusion Team have been a lifeline for many of those customers over the past year.

The team have never been so busy and have been working overtime in-order-to support customers to maximise their income; reduce their outgoings and manage their finances, enabling them to feed their families and heat their homes.

They make it as easy as possible to support customers struggling to make ends meet.

The specialised staff offer free one-to-one support based on a customers' individual situation. They can help with:

- Spending and saving money.
- Claiming benefits.
- Filling in forms.
- Universal Credit journal updates.

They will look at a customers' financial situation and offer personalised options. They really care about helping people, as can be seen in their achievements last year.

The team received 5,801 customer referrals – close to a 30% increase on the previous year.

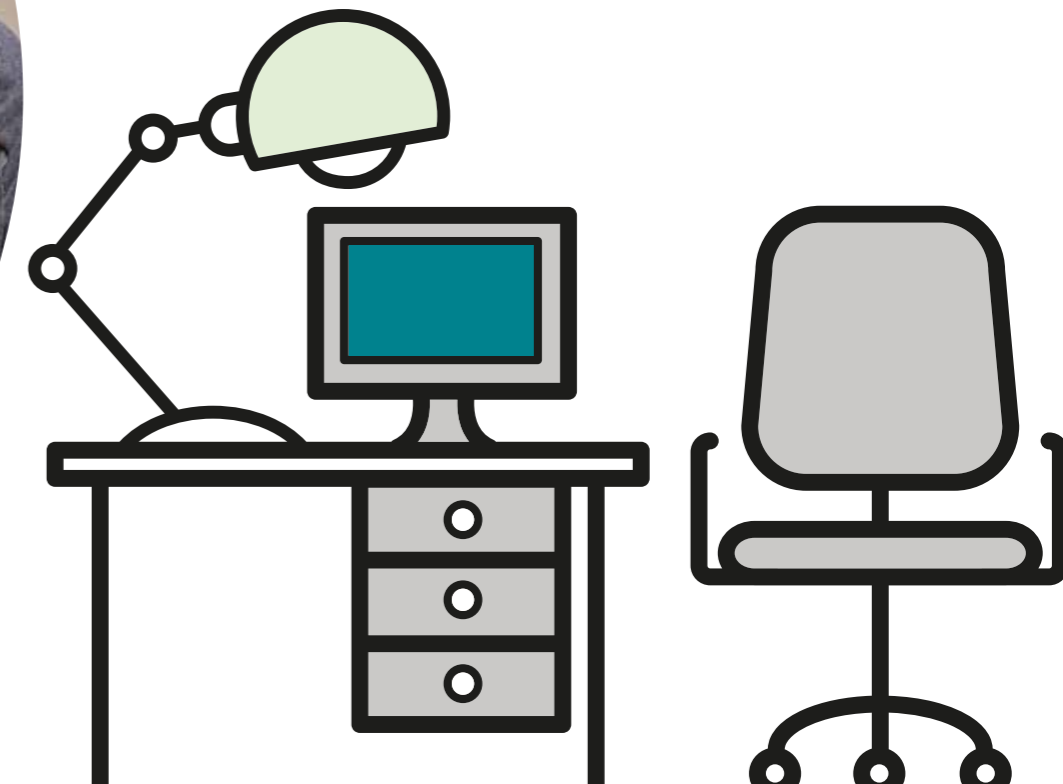
The team supported customers to increase income by just under £6m. This consisted of:

- Lump sums: £983,889.
- Additional annual income for customer: £4,951,526.
- This equates to over £1,200 for each customer (average figures).



“Thank you again for your support yesterday... first night's peace I've had in a long time.”

Maxine, London South East customer



Case study



Robert Hindmarsh

Customers supporting customers

Robert is one of our amazing, supported customers. Throughout his time with us he has received support to help with his mental health. But the support hasn't been one way.

Robert is a perfect example of one of our customers who goes that extra mile; not only being supported himself but using his life experiences and positive attitude to help support other customers.

His involvement in our befriending services is a great example, where he helps some of our customers to tackle isolation. Robert has consistently been a friendly face for customers to lean on for support.

"I got involved with Home Group when I was invited along to a group session by a friend of mine, and I found the group really interesting. Speaking to people, learning about what others have been through and survived by helping others helps you.

"Once you start speaking to people, you learn from them and that gives you an opportunity to help people build their confidence back.

“Once you start speaking to people, you learn from them and that gives you an opportunity to help people build their confidence back.”

"Home Group have supported and encouraged me all the way. I've got a teaching qualification and I'm really passionate about that. They were quite happy for me to pass on my knowledge, and other customers have passed on their knowledge to me. It's a partnership and it's helped in so many ways.

"It's not just the support they've given me mentally and physically that has allowed me to do this. It's that they're always there to back you up - if you have a problem, they'll talk to you, and it's always honest."



Placemaking

This theme seeks to highlight the wider set of activities that housing providers undertake to create well-designed homes and places that meet local needs and provide great places for people to live and enjoy.

For well over a decade, placemaking has played an especially significant part in our regeneration programme, as well as in our new build developments. The London School of Economics' regeneration framework, which acts as a yardstick by which not only physical, but social and environmental regeneration programmes should be measured was based on Home Group's Rayners Lane regeneration in London. One of our goals is 'providing the right homes, in the right places'.

This cuts across our plans for the delivery of social homes, affordable homes, our innovative flexible rent programme, and homes for outright sale, through our own brand Persona Homes. It also includes the investment in existing homes. Wherever we build we take account of geography, demographics, people, communities, and crucially, need, inside and outside the home.



Case study



East Balornock, Glasgow

Residents living in the East Balornock Estate in 2003 were unhappy with the state of their homes. They were old, tired, and fell well short of the energy efficient homes being built elsewhere in the city at the time.

They were also having an impact on the social fabric of the estate, with people who had lived there all their whole lives moving, which was changing the estate's dynamic. This led to a range of issues, worst among them being increased anti-social behaviour.

Fast forward twenty years, however, and the picture couldn't be more different. Residents are delighted to be part of an invigorated estate that has strengthened the long held sense of community - not to mention the fact they are living in homes that are fit for purpose.

The transformation came about in late 2003 when Home Group successfully achieved a stock transfer of the 233 orlit rented properties and started work on a major regeneration plan - the largest in Glasgow to date.



There were 79 owner occupiers also residing within orlit properties who would need to be engaged with to ensure the successful regeneration of the area.

A series of consultations took place over the preceding years to make sure the regeneration met the needs of the residents and the community. A significant amount of the feedback made its way on to the plans for the estate's regeneration, which was to take place over seven phases.

It has been a bespoke regeneration with the housing mix tailored on each phase very much to the physical needs of the community.

Home Group are just about to handover phase six, with phase seven currently in planning.

On completion of phase six and prior to phase seven commencing Home Group will have delivered 236 new homes to date, 197 for social rent and 39 shared equity, while demolishing 240 defective orlit units.

Feedback from customers on the £30m project has been overwhelmingly positive. They are delighted with their two, three and four bedroom houses, bungalows, and cottage flats, as well as their rejuvenated community.



Case study



Elizabeth MacDuff

Long-time resident

Elizabeth has lived in East Balornock since 1986. Three years ago, as part of Home Group's regeneration of the estate, she moved into her new bungalow with her daughter and her grandson, who has autism.

"It's been lovely. We've gone from living upstairs in a maisonette block, to everything being on one level which makes life so much easier.

"Previously, if my grandson wanted to play in the garden, someone had to go and sit outside with him. Now, with the garden off the back of the kitchen, he can play, and we can keep an eye on him from the house.

"Home Group were keen to listen to our ideas, and concerns with a new house, and what we needed as a family. Not just the physical needs, but also our mental and emotional needs. They arranged for us to meet an occupational therapist, so that they could better understand my grandson's autism and his day-to-day needs.

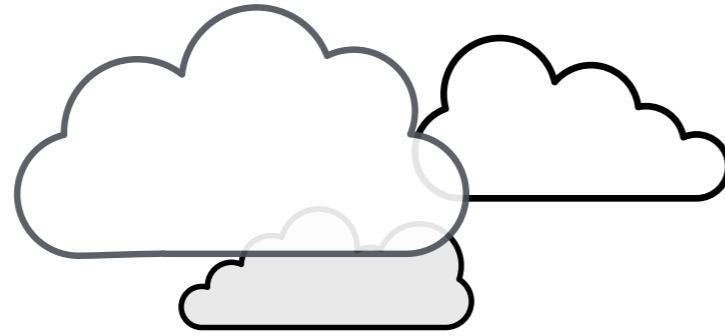
"Our needs were right at the heart of the decisions that were being made - it was incredible. They've been so supportive since the start of the process."



Environmental



Climate change



This theme seeks to assess how the activities of the housing provider are impacting on climate change, and how they are mitigating the physical risks of climate change.

We are now into the third year of our long-term sustainability roadmap, a detailed plan which will allow us to green our business, our homes and our communities, while helping the UK reach net zero, as well as the sustainability aims of the United Nations.

Underpinning our approach to sustainability is the certification of our ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management System. In December 2022, we once again achieved recertification with no non-conformances. And again, auditors highlighted that they could see real growth in our strategic approach to environmental sustainability.

In July 2023, we were awarded a silver SHIFT certification. The specialised, evidence-based certification is used across the housing sector and evaluates the environmental impact of an organisation's activities across 21 criteria. This was a very satisfactory accreditation for a housing association with over 55,000 properties, and which builds around 1,100 homes per year.

In May this year, we finished our first main retrofit project. After securing funding from the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) we retrofitted 90 homes in Cumbria which had low EPC ratings.

The scope of works to the homes included installing external wall insulation, cavity wall and loft insulation top-ups and new energy efficient double-glazing. In addition, existing heating and hot water systems were replaced with air source

heat pumps, and solar PV with battery storage was also installed.

Customers received bespoke in-home energy advice, as well as full training on how to use the heat pumps effectively. Monitoring equipment was also installed to several different property types which is measuring internal temperatures, relative humidity, carbon dioxide levels and help measure how successful the retrofit works have been in terms of reducing carbon and increasing thermal performance.

They have already been successful in delivering significant reductions to customers' energy bills. This project was the next step up in a long running plan to make our homes more efficient, which began back in 2018 with the innovative Gateshead Innovative Village project.

This year's Cumbria project was used as the main test bed to ensure we would be on the right tracks to retrofit at scale in the near future. The outcomes were excellent.

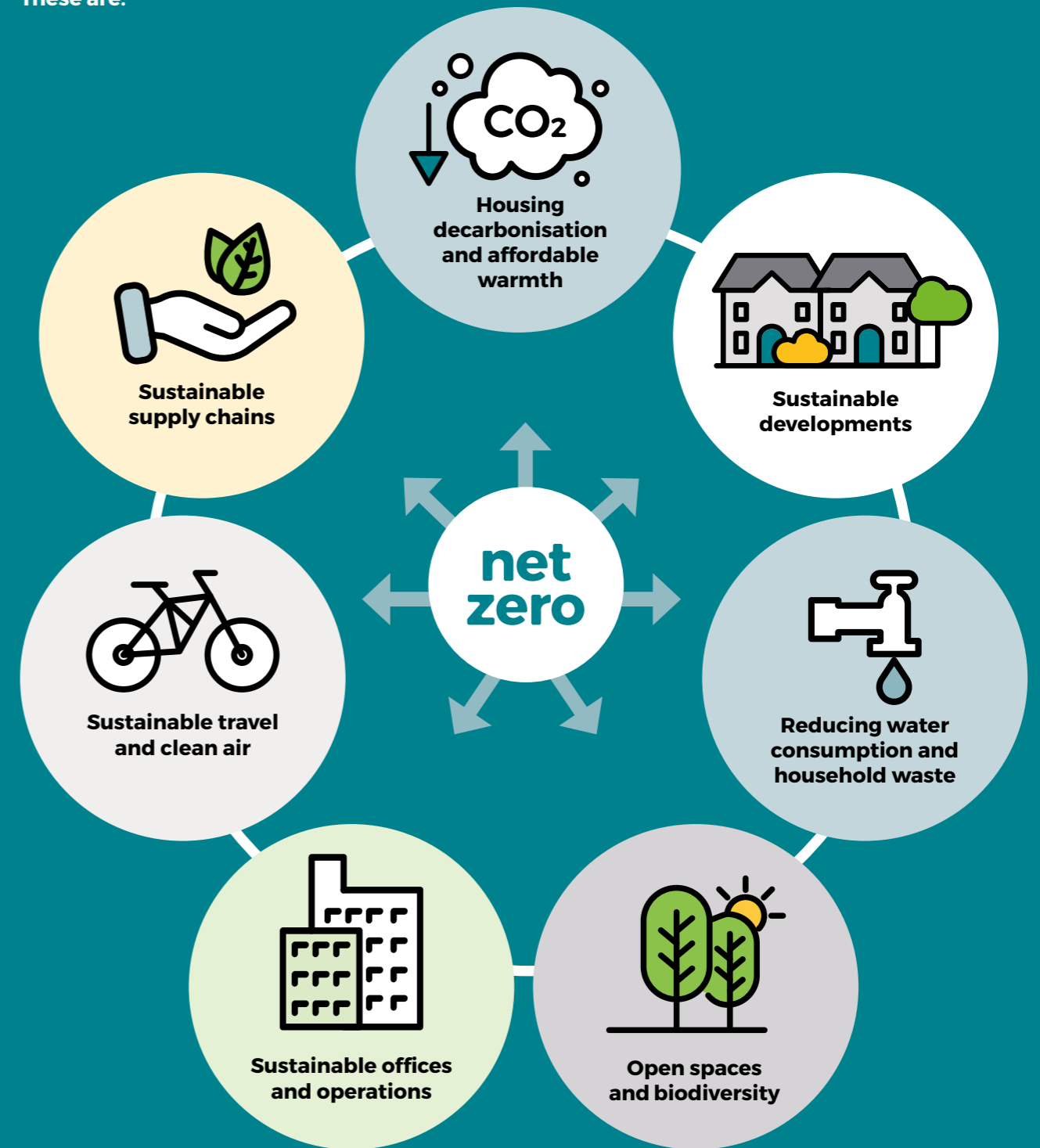
The success of the project led us to apply for Wave 2 of the SHDF in November. Our successful application means we plan to retrofit 1,000 homes over the next two years. This will almost follow the exact same design and process of the work carried out in Wave 1.

Home Group's successful Wave 2 bid was part of a wider bid with its partners in the Greener Futures Partnership.

Our approach to meeting net zero targets

We are focusing on seven key areas to further improve our environmental performance as part of our commitment to achieving the UK Government's net zero aspirations.

These are:



Greener Futures Partnership

Greener Futures Partnership (GFP) is a collaboration of like-minded housing associations who know a joint effort will achieve so much more to help the social housing sector to play its part on helping the UK reach net zero.

We are made up of five of the country's largest housing associations – Home Group, Abri, Anchor, Hyde Group and Sanctuary – with a joint turnover of £2.3bn and with over 600,000 customers in 300,000 homes, we represent around 10% of all social housing.

By working together, pooling our resources, experience, and expertise we are increasing our impact.

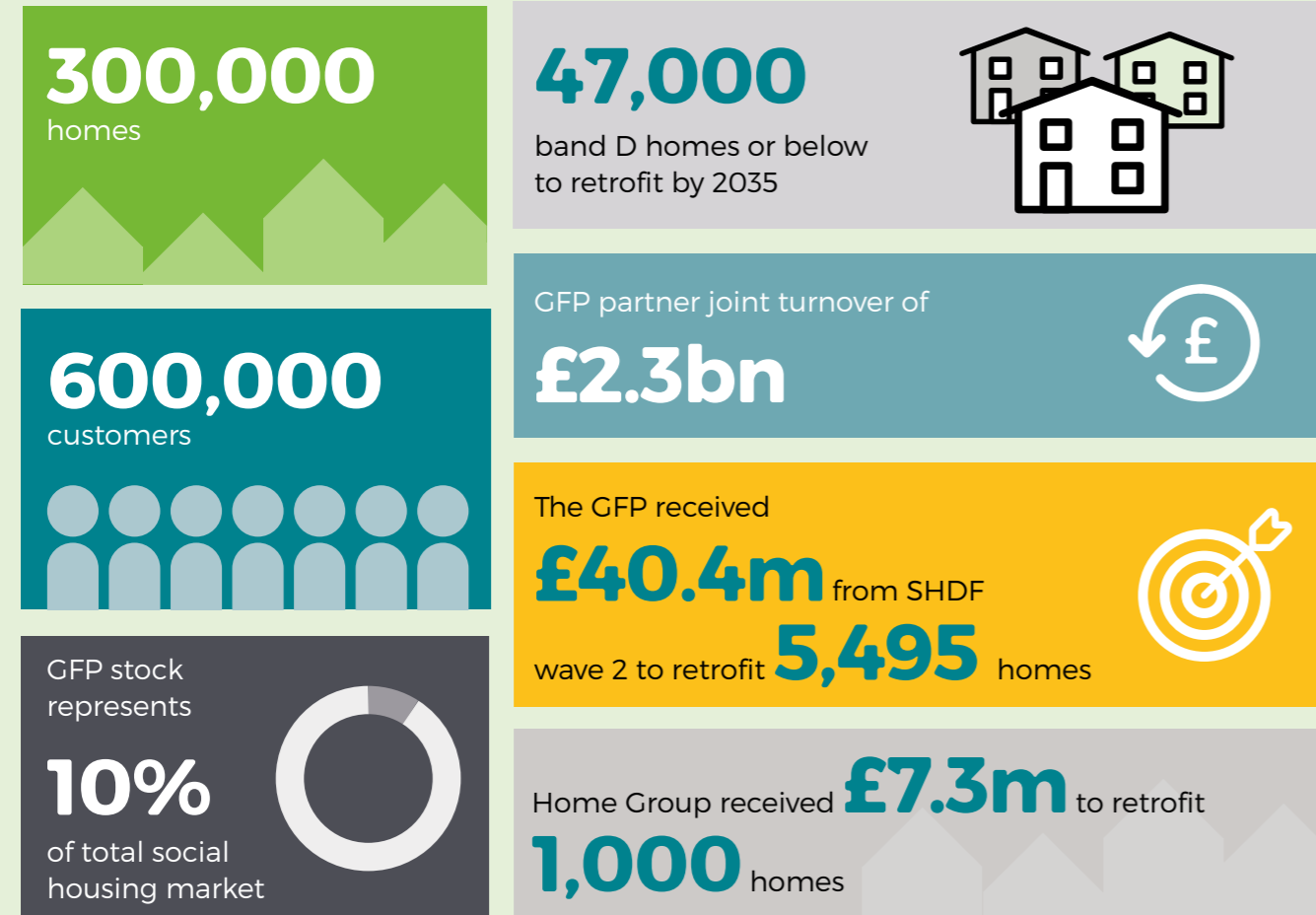
Earlier this year GFP established a £1.5bn procurement framework to support its retrofit plans.

We are also pioneering practical approaches to help accelerate energy efficiency improvements in our homes and combat fuel poverty and we are at the forefront of social housing's drive to meet the challenge of climate change.

But our aspiration is bigger than that, and that's one of the things that makes us different. We aren't looking for quick fixes: our aim is to provide sustainable homes for our customers for the long-term – real, lasting change and, ultimately, wider social value. The voice of our customers is vital to promoting long term sustainability.

To achieve that we need some issues resolved and support from a range of stakeholders. We have been working closely with experts, including the Centre for Social Justice, to outline what needs to change in order to achieve a wide-spread upscale in successful decarbonisation.

About Greener Futures Partnership



Decarbonisation and funding

Continued funding for decarbonisation is essential to achieving the challenging 2050 net zero targets.

We need:

- Commitment to the next wave of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and early clarity over the application window and process.
- A longer delivery window or multi-year funding settlements for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, which would allow social housing decarbonisation to be delivered on a greater scale, benefiting more of our customers, and doing so at a low unit cost.
- Joined up thinking across Government on social housing and net zero policy including on rent setting and funding models.

Skills and employment

To address the green skills shortage holding the UK back from seizing the obvious net zero opportunities, including decarbonising our social housing stock, we need:

- A comprehensive green skills offer, embedded within an all-age all-stage skills offer, alongside effective employment support for those who need it.

- Department of Education to deliver curriculum / syllabus that support green skills delivery.
- An accredited skills programme to deliver the upskilling needed at scale to transition to alternative heat sources.

Market making, development and supply chain

One of the biggest issues holding back the UK from achieving its net zero aims is the lack of investment and research and development in green tech, a lack of big players, and high taxes on green materials.

We need:

- Greater investment in the design, quality, effectiveness, and reliability of green tech to achieve at scale.
- Energy providers and manufacturers to match the ambition of housing associations to achieve transition to alternative heat sources.
- A significant reduction on the 20% VAT on green materials and an acknowledgement within the VAT rules that retrofit works are best delivered in conjunction with other works to maximise value and minimise disruption – enabling multi-measure projects to access VAT reductions.



What are our Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings?

EPC ratings evaluate the energy performance of the homes we build and maintain.

All stock	New build 2022-23		New build 2021-22		Existing stock to 31/3/2022		Existing stock to 31/3/2021	
	Stock	%	Stock	%	Stock	%	Stock	%
Scoring breakdown								
EPC rating A = 92-100 Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) points (most efficient)	13	2	0	0	43	0	80	0
EPC rating B = 81-91 SAP points.	632	93	553	89	3,594	8	4,576	11
EPC rating C = 69-80 SAP points.	31	5	48	8	26,026	62	25,997	62
EPC rating D = 55-68 SAP points.	0	0	19	3	10,973	26	10,732	25
EPC rating E = 39-54 SAP points.	0	0	3	0	1,233	3	832	2
EPC rating F = 21-38 SAP points.	0	0	0	0	43	0	24	0
EPC rating G = 1-20 SAP points (least efficient)	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
No EPC data*	0	0	0	0	399	1	0	0
Total	676	100	623	100	42,311	100	42,245	100

The energy performance of our properties is a key data set for Home Group providing invaluable information on the thermal performance of our customer homes. This data is used to inform our asset investment plan allowing us to meet regulatory targets alongside dedicating work to help improve our housing stock where it's needed most. Achieving EPC C in England by 2030, EPC B in Scotland by 2032 (for note this target is currently under review), net zero in England by 2050 and 2045 in Scotland are major challenges where accurate stock data plays a key role.

As part of our continued commitment to data accuracy and planning, Home Group has undertaken 28,000 home condition surveys over the past 18 months and we intend to complete a further 14,346 surveys in 2023/24. All home condition surveyors, employed by Home Group or

subcontracted, are domestic energy assessors who undertake energy assessments where applicable. Historically not all energy assessments have been lodged as Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) but have been recorded on our asset management system. EPCs are now lodged as standard practice where a current EPC is outside of a five year cycle.

Undertaking a vast number of surveys has rebased a number of energy performance ratings but the updated accurate data has informed business planning to meet key targets. Surveys will be undertaken on a five year rolling program moving forward ensuring we record and present an accurate updated position on energy performance. This includes addressing the small number of homes without energy performance information.



Streamlined energy and carbon reporting (SECR)

In FY 22/23 our overall carbon footprint was 2467.0 tCO₂e. Last year was 2,228.97.

Contributing factors towards the increase include the expansion of our Director Labour Organisation and the inclusion of a new set of data from our Server Units which are managed by a 3rd party.

We have a dedicated team working to fully understand and reduce our carbon footprint and we have made great progress in targeting and achieving CO₂ improvements across multiple office sites and beyond. We are continuing our commitment to use the data gathered to understand trends, impacts and areas where we can make targeted improvements.

Methodology Data used to calculate and convert tCO₂e for all carbon streams comes from the following business usage areas; gas, F-gas (Fluorinated gases) leakage, electricity, rail, air, mileage claims, water, electrical Transmission & Distribution (T&D) and lease van mileage. Where gaps in data existed, we have used best practice to estimate realistic figures. These estimations used industry standards, Suss Housing SHIFT recommendations and previous data trends to produce the most accurate figures.

All carbon calculations have been conducted using Greenhouse Gases (GHG) Protocol methodologies in line with the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) regulations 2019. In line with Environmental Reporting Guidelines (SECR) 2019, our internal carbon scopes have been broken down as

- **Scope 1** (Direct emissions): Activities owned or controlled by your organisation that release emissions straight into the atmosphere. They are direct emissions. Examples of scope 1 emissions include emissions from combustion in owned or controlled boilers, furnaces, vehicles; emissions from chemical production in owned or controlled process equipment.
- **Scope 2** (Energy indirect): Emissions being released into the atmosphere associated with your consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling. These are indirect emissions that are a consequence of your organisation's activities, but which occur at sources you do not own or control.
- **Scope 3** (Other indirect): Emissions that are a consequence of your actions, which occur at sources which you do not own or control and which are not classed as scope 2 emissions. Examples of scope 3 emissions are business travel by means not owned or controlled by your organisation, waste disposal, or purchased materials or fuels.

Measure	Scope	tonnes CO ₂ e
Scope 1		
Emissions from combustion of gas	1	213.4
Emissions from Combustion of Fuel (DLO)	1	786.3
Emissions from pool van	1	9.7
Total Scope 1		1,009.4
Scope 2		
Emissions from electricity	2	240.1
Total Scope 2		240.1
Scope 3		
Emissions associated with electricity T&D	3	22.0
Emissions from water usage	3	1.3
Emissions from air reffridgerant leaks (F-gas)	3	6.1
Emissions from mileage claims	3	779.6
Emissions from server consumption	3	279.2
Emissions from air travel	3	27.5
Emissions from rail travel	3	52.3
Emissions from hotel stays	3	49.6
Total Scope 3		1,217.5
Total tonnes CO₂e		2,467.0

Our Intensity Ratio (Carbon against number of rented stock) is: **0.054**



Mitigating climate risks

As the climate changes, mitigating the risks of overheating and flooding across our housing and land portfolio is an integral part of Home Group's sustainability plan.

Much effort is underway within Home Group to meet this challenge head on, in-order-to provide robust and workable solutions to alleviate these risks. We are working with external partners to continuously improve our understanding of where these climate factors pose a risk, and we are investing in programmes of work designed to mitigate the through both new development and retrofit projects.

For example, in order to mitigate overheating in our homes we are focusing on making sure that our homes have the right levels of ventilation and insulation.

When we are retrofitting housing stock, appropriate ventilation options are chosen to make sure our properties are able to naturally or actively cool in the warmer weather. This also allows us to improve indoor air quality and reduce instances of damp and mould for our customers.

Alongside ventilation we know that the way in which we insulate our homes plays a vital role in reducing overheating. We engage with best practice quality standards such as PAS235 and have qualified specialists in house who dedicate their time to making sure overheating risks are mitigated when designing housing retrofit projects or upgrades.

We have learned so much from our first major retrofit work, which was supported through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) last year - learnings we take into a 1,000 home retrofit this year, thanks to funding from wave 2 of the SHDF.

In terms of flood risk, we continually engage with manufacturers and all relevant bodies to implement the most effective flood resilient components and design standards.

We work in partnership with an E-Map provider to continue to develop a localised view of likelihood, severity and impact of extreme weather events.

When designing new developments, flood risk is a key component in our housing and estate design. We maximise the benefits of the programmes we invest in, such as designing sustainable urban drainage systems to provide other ecosystem services such as biodiversity net gain or sense of place for our customers.

Talking to customers about ventilation, heating and recycling

Environmental engagement with our customers is an essential and independently audited part of our environmental management approach.

We communicate with the vast majority of our customers each quarter via our customer magazine Home Life, which has a dedicated sustainability section where, depending on the season or customer requests, we provide relevant and effective advice on themes such as ventilation, heating, recycling and so on.

Throughout the year information is posted on our customer facing website. These include videos, blogs and general signposting to external support and advice.

We also hold regular customer focus groups where our in-house experts deliver training and advice to customers to help them with any sustainability related issues such as effective heating and cooling.

The rate and content of our environmental sustainability engagement and education is independently analysed and audited by ISO14001:2015 and SHIFT assessments - for which we received silver accreditation this year.



Ecology

This theme seeks to assess how the housing provider is protecting the local environment and ecology.

Biodiversity

We are members of the Greener Spaces Advisory Board (GSAB) and have contributed to the development of the new Green Space Model as we know that access to fully functional ecosystems is key to tackling climate change and to improving physical, social and mental wellbeing.

We are also:

- Designing plans for nature incorporation into our land as part of our ambition to support biodiversity net gain.
- Assessing the potential of using our vacant land to plant trees which will enable us to increase biodiversity and sequester carbon.
- Conducting a full biodiversity above-ground biomass survey to establish where we have green space and how we can better manage it.
- Working with our grounds maintenance teams to improve how we manage our green assets in a more nature-friendly way.

Reducing pollutants

When tendering and setting our contracts for our development, maintenance and facilities management services environmental performance is a key component in selecting partners. The reduction of pollutants is a key area of focus within these contracts and we monitor, audit and engage with these partners to continuously drive pollutants out of our supply chain and operations.



Resource management

This theme seeks to identify the extent to which the housing provider has a sustainable approach to materials in both the construction and management of properties.

We take environmental sustainability seriously and expect our partners and suppliers to share our values in this regard. As an organisation we have a big challenge ahead to move towards net zero and we recognise that our supply chain will play a key part in our achievement of this goal.

When tendering, as a matter of course, we assess the environmental policies of applicant organisations and will frequently qualitatively assess their sustainability experience and proposed approach to the contract in question. An example would be our recently tendered contracts for the supply of building materials where the tenderers were asked to describe their approach to recycling, reduction of waste, reduction of packaging and how they intend to reduce carbon emissions in transportation.

We also adopt the following approach in specific areas:

1. We try to make sure that the products we buy for our homes and offices have as little environmental impact as practical, from recycled paper and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood products to low flow taps and showers. Every time we purchase goods and services we try to consider any associated sustainability matters.
2. In the repairs and maintenance area:
 - a. Green appointments - dynamic resource scheduling to reduce the carbon footprint.
 - b. Collaboration with other Housing associations in the same region - partnering up to avoid using multiple resources inefficiently in the same area.

3. We are working with key supply chain partners to establish projects to make our existing homes more sustainable through renewable technology.
4. A move to renewable green energy in all our directly procured areas.
5. We will be building new homes that meet or exceed the sustainability standards specified in the building regulations in England and Scotland and will have lower running costs for the benefit of our customers.

Our Sustainable Procurement Policy is regularly reviewed to ensure continuous improvement in the reduction of the environmental impact of our business activities and support the organisation's pursuit of net zero.

We understand that not all spend categories have the same environmental impact. This year we intend to identify the high impact categories of spend to better understand the key sustainability issues and develop action plans for the measures that either Home Group or our suppliers can take to reduce their impact.



Waste management

We're promoting recycling to all colleagues and customers as well as providing recycling facilities in all offices.

We also continue to promote the waste hierarchy and continue to look for sustainable ways to procure, manage and dispose of products. This also means working with suppliers that provide us with recyclable and recycled products so that we are using the most environmentally friendly products in the most sustainable way.

Our robust environmental policy incorporates waste management and our centralised waste services nationally mean we have greater control and visibility on how our waste is managed and controlled.

We monitor diversion from landfill and recycling rate monthly and our annual independent ISO14001:2015 and SHIFT benchmarking audits give us performance related data and targets so that we can continue to make improvements and changes throughout the organisation.

Water management

Water management across both our office portfolio and housing stock is an important part of our organisational environmental management. Through engagement and education of both our colleagues and customers we actively seek to increase awareness on the importance of sustainable water usage.

We invest in water saving devices, such as low flush WCs and rainwater harvesting, in our office, our new developments and retrofitted housing stock. Water usage and sustainable water components in offices and housing stock is monitored via our environmental management system where targets and trends are verified and independently audited annually by both our ISO14001:2015 assessors and via Suss Housing as part of our SHIFT benchmarking accreditation.



Sustainability

Beyond the bin

You told us you would like to know how to improve your recycling.

Here are some tips from sustainability manager, Ben:

- Do not put bags in your recycling bin. They could be recycled at specialist drop off points, but not via your home recycling bin
- Do not recycle anything smaller than a credit card. It can block sorting machines
- Recycle plastic bottles with the cap on
- Empty, wash, and dry your recycling. If it is not clean enough to use again it cannot be recycled
- Mixed materials cannot be recycled. Paper and bubble wrap envelopes, Pringles cans and plastic lined coffee cups cannot be recycled as the two materials cannot be separated

Have your say
Help shape our content · Make design suggestions · Share experiences
involvement@homegroup.org.uk

Homelife Summer 2023 19



Look at your **local council's website** to find out more about what you can recycle in your area. Always double check **what can be recycled**, you may be surprised.

Governance



Structure and governance

This theme seeks to assess the housing provider's overall structure and approach to governance.

Home Group Limited is a registered society, registered with the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 (registered number 22981R). It has charitable status but is exempt from registration with the Charity Commission.

Home Group Limited is a non-profit Registered Provider of Social Housing registered with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) (registered number L3076). Home Group Limited is the parent organisation in Home Group and has four trading subsidiaries;

Home in Scotland Limited, a charitable Registered Social Landlord registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator undertaking Home Group's business in Scotland;

Home Group Developments Limited, a private non-charitable company which undertakes new build construction of affordable housing and homes for sale on the open market;

North Housing Limited, a private non-charitable company which acts as a vehicle to facilitate joint venture activity across the Group;

Home Group Repairs Partnership Limited, a private non-charitable company limited by shares providing market and mid-market products. Home Group Repairs Partnership Limited (HGRP), a private non-charitable company which provides repairs and maintenance services to HGL.



Home Group has G1:V2 status from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). The Home Group Board is committed to adhering to high standards of corporate governance and has adopted and is compliant with the requirements of the National Housing Federation (NHF) Code of Governance 2020.

Home Group detail our risk management approach through a biennial reviewed Risk Management Framework which establishes roles, responsibilities and reporting lines. Under our Risk Management Framework, Home Group Board is responsible for ensuring that Home Group has a robust approach to the management of risk. Detailed scrutiny and evaluation of risk is delegated to the Audit Committee which receives regular reports on the status of the strategic and operational risk registers.

Specific risks are detailed for Home Scotland and as well as being reported to every audit committee, Home Scotland risks are reported twice yearly to the Home in Scotland Board.

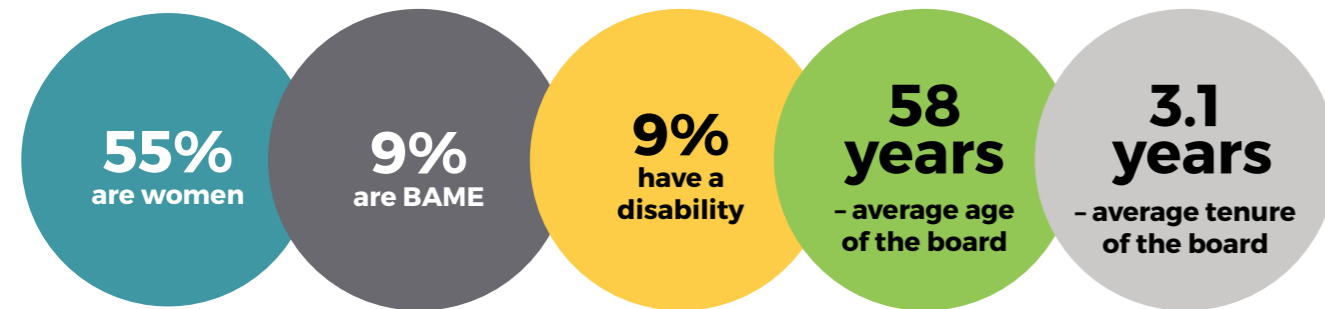
We have not been subject to any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months that have resulted in enforcement or equivalent action.



Board and trustees

This theme seeks to assess the quality, suitability and performance of the board and trustees.

Group board



There are 13 members of the Group Board of which 11 (84.6%) are Non-Executive Directors (NEDs). The remaining posts are two executive directors (the Chief Executive and the Chief Financial Officer). The roles of the Chairman of the Board and the Chief Executive are held by two different people. Since adopting the NHF 2020 Code of Governance, and in line with best practice all new nonexecutive directors are appointed for a maximum of two three year terms.

Succession planning is discussed at every meeting of our Governance Committee and a Board Skills Matrix is used to inform recruitment decisions. The average length of service of our current nonexecutive board members is just over 3 years. 30% of our Home Group nonexecutive board members and 50% of our executive team have left in the last two years.

The Home Group Board annually assesses its own effectiveness and regularly assesses its skills. A governance review is carried out annually by the Governance Committee and Board to assess compliance with our Code of Governance. The last external review of board and committee effectiveness was carried out in 2022 by specialists Altair who concluded that Home Group had a

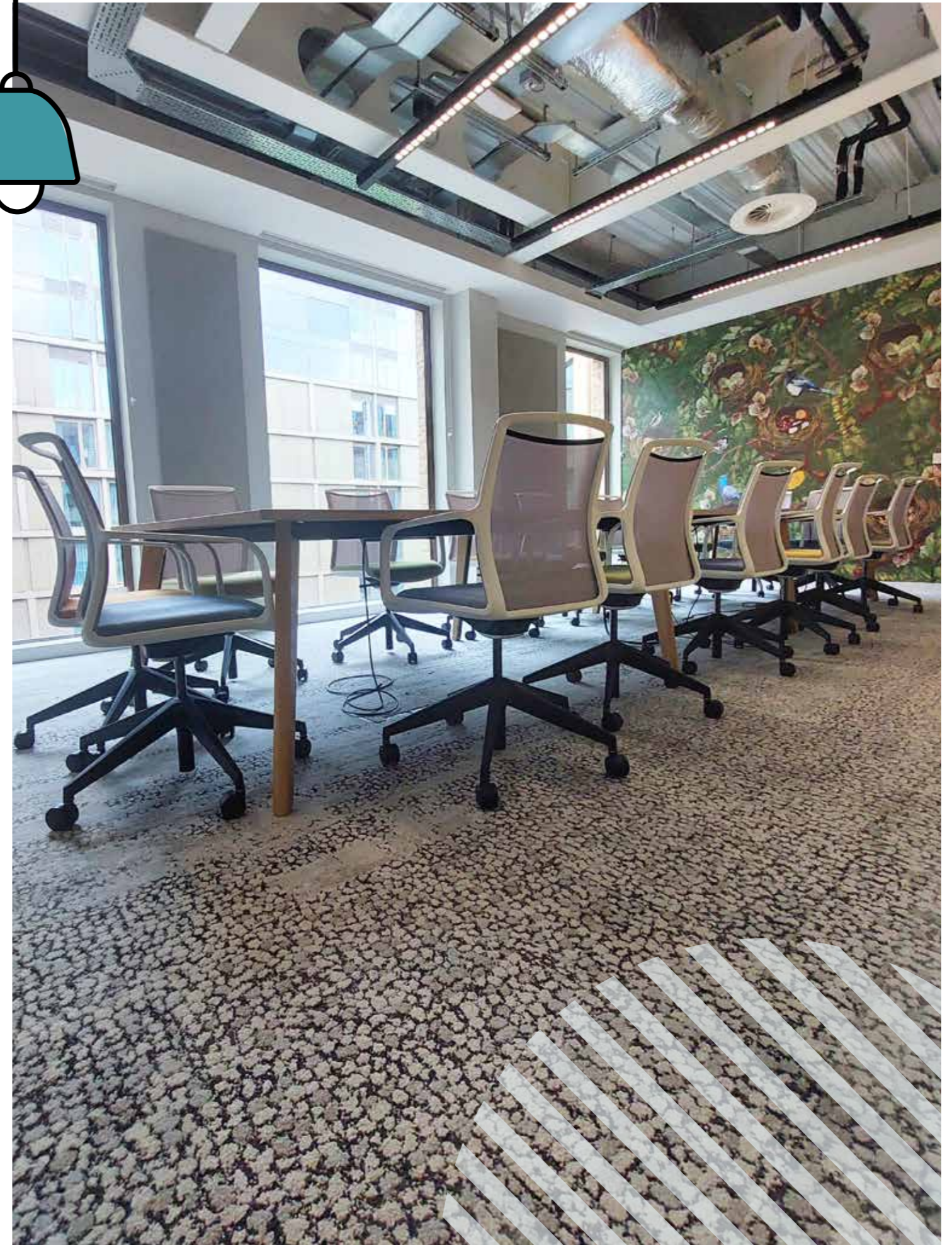
robust governance framework and an effective board.

The Audit Committee is made up of four NEDs and an independent member. Three members of the Committee have recent and relevant financial experience. The Audit Committee is supported by an independent, internal audit function (Assurance services). They deliver an annual assurance plan.

Our Governance Committee, which is responsible for executive remuneration consists of four non-executive directors and supports the Board in maximising the effectiveness of the Group's governance arrangements.

Our external audit partner, Deloitte, were appointed in 2020 and carried out their third audit of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Board/committee and executive team members are required to complete an annual declaration of interests which are published on our website and to inform the Group of any changes to their interests during the year. Conflicts of interest are a standing agenda item at the start of every Board and committee meeting and are managed in accordance with our Code of Conduct.



Staff wellbeing

This theme seeks to assess how staff are supported and how their wellbeing is considered.

At Home Group when we talk about wellbeing, we mean everything that's going on with us personally and beyond, our sense of purpose, how we think, feel and act. We normalise conversations about health and wellbeing and feel wellbeing is not only about a colleague's physical and mental health, it's also about financial wellbeing and how we think and feel about what's going on in the world around us and in our lives.

We continuously review our wellbeing approach to ensure our offer is fit for purpose, in line with best practice and delivers brilliant wellbeing resources and support to all colleagues. We do this by working collaboratively with our colleague forum to empower, educate and enable all colleagues to help make Home Group an even healthier place to work.

The impact on colleague wellbeing whilst living and working through a cost-of-living crisis has been enormous and here at Home Group we've made it an even greater priority to focus on financial wellbeing to do all we can to support our colleagues.



We have an enhanced wellbeing offer to support our colleagues, covering:

- **Dedicated wellbeing hub on our intranet** – Hosting support tools, information, external links, recordings and a wellbeing events calendar.
- **Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA)** – There are over 140 trained MHFAs within Home Group, we regularly upskill our MHFAs and hold quarterly sessions to support their needs, so that they're fully equipped to support our colleagues where needed.
- **Peer Support Groups** – We have a mental health allies group set up on our workplace communications platform, so that colleagues can support each other and share their experiences.
- **Employee Assist & Occupational Health** – We work with an external supplier to provide round the clock support to our colleagues, promote the service offering and actively review the usage taking action to enhance the offer where needed.
- **Weekly message from our CEO** – An individual email as well as a video on workplace – which is a roundup of all the important information that has been shared over the week and what to look out for in the coming weeks. These communications support our colleague's mental wellbeing, as they are being kept in the loop with business information and decisions that have a direct impact on them.
- **Promotion of key wellbeing events** – We actively highlight national health awareness campaigns and encourage our colleagues to share their own lived experiences. This educates our colleagues on a variety of conditions and how they can support others around them whilst creating a sense of belonging to those who share their individual experiences.
- **External Accreditations** – We are a signatory to Mindful Employer, Disability Confident and the National Suicide Prevention Alliance, which allows us to check our practices against best practice and provide additional support and resources to our colleagues.
- **Great Place To Work (GPTW)** – The overall 'Wellbeing' category scored 79% this year, which was +2% on last year and +11% on the external benchmark.



We continue to make brilliant advances in colleague wellbeing, some of our noteworthy accomplishments are as follows:

- **Wellbeing plan** – We’ve recently developed our 3 year wellbeing plan. Our strategic vision is to create and sustain a psychologically safe working environment that supports our colleagues mental, physical, organisational and financial wellbeing so that we create a vibrant, customer focused organisation.
- **Wellbeing Conversations incorporated into Brilliant Conversations** – These are for every colleague within the organisation and managers are provided with a template detailing specific questions to provide some structure to a wellbeing discussion.
- **Mental Health Support Toolkit** – A resource that is refreshed regularly and that brings together all the relevant tools to support colleagues and managers with all things mental health related.

- **Being me at Home Passport** – This is a ‘tell us once’ document, it allows colleagues to disclose any health conditions they may have and what support they possibly need, without having to constantly share this information.
- **My Wellbeing Plan** – Supports colleagues to stay well at work and can be used to discuss a physical or mental health condition they may like support with.
- **My Stress Support Plan** – Supports colleagues to understand their stress triggers and what adjustments may be useful to support them to cope with their stress.
- **Digital wellbeing conference with internal and external speakers** – The event focussed on financial wellbeing. We held a number of sessions online such as a keynote speaker from an expert in global financial wellbeing. The conference covered the behaviours associated with managing our finances, financial ability, breath work and gut health. It was recorded and hosted on the wellbeing hub for colleagues to access as and when they needed.

- **Workplace Adjustments** – We’ve developed a workplace adjustments process to support new and existing colleagues to have the right equipment and support to be able to work at their best.
- **Carers** – We’ve launched a carers network group for colleagues to support each other with similar experiences, share their lived experiences and introduced a paid element to carers leave entitlements.
- **Pregnancy loss guidance** – This was designed to ensure an open and supportive environment for colleagues who’ve experienced or are experiencing pregnancy loss. We introduced paid leave and a buddy system for when colleagues felt able to return to work.
- **Menopause policy** – We introduced a policy to make managers aware of menopausal symptoms and how they can support their colleagues, by encouraging an environment of openness and transparency.

We see strong engagement from colleagues for all of the wellbeing activity and support tools and we regularly canvass feedback in the form of pulse surveys and in the moment feedback after an event. In addition, our Great Place to Work survey tells us we’ve got it right when it comes to colleague wellbeing. Colleagues tell us to ‘continue doing what we’re doing’ and ‘more of the same’.

Average sick days 12.41

“It’s great to work somewhere that puts such an emphasis on wellbeing and flexibility.”
Home Group colleague

Our approach to pay

As an organisation with a strong social mission, we are absolutely committed to equality and diversity in the workplace as this reflects the customers and communities we exist to serve.

We welcome the legislative reporting requirement for organisations to publish details of their gender pay gap and support the drive for ethnicity pay gap reporting to become mandatory - which is why we continue to publish this information alongside our gender pay gap.

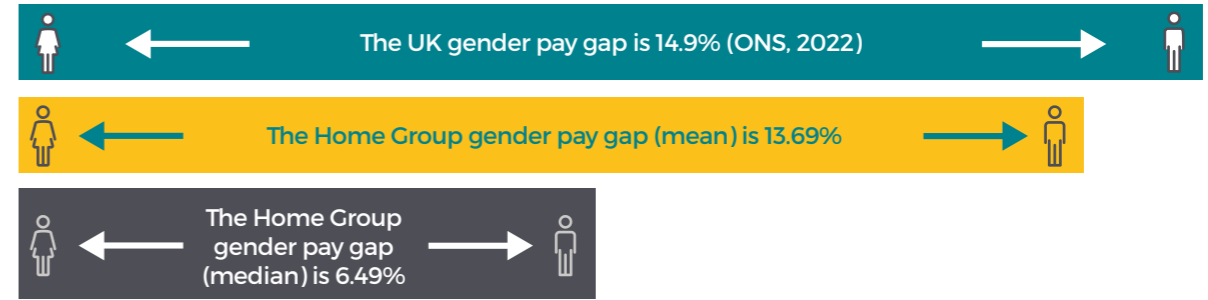
'Grow our own' plays a crucial part in enabling us to retain talent within the organisation, but it is equally important to be a strong employer of choice across all under-represented groups for us to attract diverse talent and ensure our employer value proposition is aligned to support us with this.

We'll continue with our extended Rooney Rule approach for all senior roles across the organization at the same time as building diverse talent pipelines both internally and externally.

Home Group continues to pay the Real Living Wage through the Living Wage Foundation Rate in England and the Scottish Living Wage in Scotland. We also ensure that our supply chain commit to this too.



Gender



Median - If you place a set of numbers in order, the median number is the middle one.

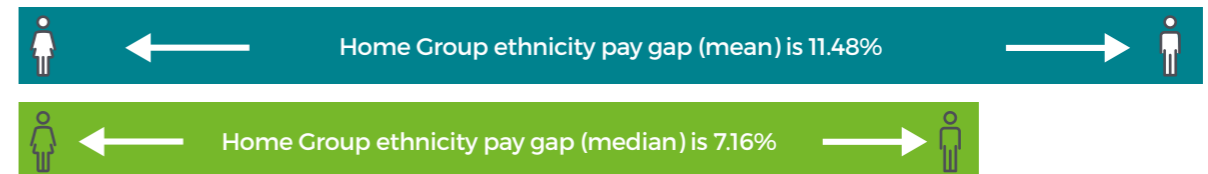
Mean - To calculate the mean, add the values together and divide the total by the number of values.

We employ 3,190 people

64% are female and 36% are male



Ethnicity



We employ 3,190 people

71% identify as White, 17% as multicultural and 12% did not declare their ethnicity



CEO: worker pay ratio

The CEO: worker pay ratio follows the BEIS Option A methodology which shows ranking from low to high, identifying those employees in 25th, 50th and 75th percentiles. Remuneration includes FTE earnings, bonus and employer pension contributions. Any organisation-wide colleague bonuses are determined by our colleague forum, without management involvement.

Year	25th Percentile Pay Ratio	Median Pay Ratio	75th Percentile Pay Ratio
2022/23	11.6 : 1	9.9 : 1	5.6 : 1
2021/22	11.5 : 1	9.5 : 1	5.1 : 1
2020/21	11.5 : 1	9.8 : 1	5.8 : 1

Supply chain Management

This theme seeks to assess if the housing provider procures responsibly.

The Home Group approach to procurement puts strong sustainability and social value at its centre. We have high expectations from our partners, contractors and suppliers and expect them to adhere to the strong ethical practices we work to.

We work proactively with partners to reduce our environmental impact as well as to deliver a collective benefit to society by encouraging greater economic and social opportunities for disadvantaged communities.

Our key objective is to incorporate key areas of sustainability within our contracts, and 'look beyond the price' to deliver social value.

We know that buying more sustainably offers potential whole life cost savings, supports our commitment to good corporate citizenship, safeguards our reputation as a responsible housing association and charity and protects the health of colleagues, customers and clients and the wider public.

Through our sourcing decisions and ongoing procurement activity we will:

- Work together with customers and partners and help communities grow in line with our Customer Promise.
- Ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within our contracts and supply chain.
- Deliver outcomes in line with our Environmental Sustainability strategy.
- Demonstrate our strong ethical values.



Working with customers

We work by the rule that every pound we spend is a pound of our customers' money. For this reason, where a contract has a direct customer impact, we do our best to involve customers in the procurement process. This involvement varies, from securing feedback on existing services or collaborating on customer specification creation, to active participation in the tender evaluation process.

In 2022/23 100% of our tenders for customer-facing contracts had customers involved in development of the specification and participating on the evaluation panel. Our customers have strong views on the sustainability of the delivery of the services, sustainability of the products selected, and the positive impacts that our contracts can have on their community.

Our established National Development Group made up of customers continues to go from strength to strength with customers who provide input into the design of the homes we build.

Community benefit

We like our business partners to align with us to deliver community benefit activity, supporting not only Home Group customers, but also the communities in which we work.

Through our tender processes, we frequently ask bidders to tell us how, in delivering the contract, they propose to support Home Group's community initiatives financially (e.g. committing a portion of the contract turnover), and non-financially (in-kind contributions such as apprenticeships, volunteering, training).

Bidders' responses to these questions are assessed as part of the tender evaluation and ultimately influence the outcome of the process. Once commitments are made at bid stage, care is taken to ensure that they are fulfilled by incorporating them into the contract and monitoring as part of the contract management process. Understanding and evaluating the impact that the supply chain has on the local area and local economy is an important factor with all key contracts.

Our approach varies by contract but frequently includes:

- Social value resources & champions included within the requirements.
- Contract management to incorporate monitoring of outcomes. Where it makes sense, we look to use the social value commitments secured from our supply chain to support Home Group's own social value initiatives.
- Apprenticeship commitments - We ask bidders to commit where possible to apprenticeship programmes and support customer apprenticeships.
- Work experience programmes - training and on the job experience in the work that our contractors do.

We use a new social value tool based on the Themes, Outcomes and Measures process which aligns to Home Group's values and allows us to measure the impact of the benefits delivered via our supply chain.

Socially responsible sourcing

As an organisation we believe that we have a duty to act in the best interests of society as a whole. Further examples of considering social responsibility in the way that we procure are:

- **Living Wage** – We commit to ensuring that all roles engaged directly on our contracts are compliant with the Living Wage including those in the supply chain.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** – We require those working with us or supplying services to us, to share our values and commitments, and to work to the same Equality Diversity and Inclusion principles as we work to. We proactively support our supply chain in this area providing access to resources, training and our experience in this field and have short, medium and long term road maps to drive improvement in this area, working collaboratively with our supplier base and sharing their best practice.

We have also launched a refreshed procurement strategy, which details how we will work with small and local businesses, which is a vital priority for Home Group and our customers. This will be achieved by actively publicising our opportunities and engaging suppliers within key communities and streamlining and simplifying our processes as much as possible, making it easy to do business with us.

Modern Slavery – We have a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery and are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships. Through a proactive risk-based approach within our sourcing and contract management processes we have mechanisms to ensure that our suppliers share our values and are assessing and managing the risk of modern slavery in their own supply chains.

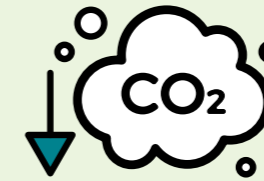


Case study



Collaborating on green procurement with Greener Futures Partnership

Home Group is proud to be part of Greener Futures Partnership, made up of five of the UK's largest like-minded housing associations with a joint turnover of £2.3bn, and representing over 600,000 customers in 300,000 homes.



This year, the partnership has created a decarbonisation delivery framework to support achievement of net-zero. This is a truly collaborative framework where all parties are contributing and continually developing best practice in the field of decarbonisation.

The framework will be for a total of seven years to enable the delivery of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF). The framework consists of three workstreams – construction work up to £5m, construction work over £2.5m and consultancy work. Each of the three workstreams were split regionally.

By splitting the framework by value bandings and regional lots, we encouraged diversity by enabling small, medium and large constructors and consultants to join the framework. Customer representation was at the forefront throughout in the form of consultation and involvement in tender evaluation.



The framework represents an innovative approach with bespoke commercial models, allowing various options to call off work. In conjunction with the framework, we will also be procuring a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for emerging technology and materials to support the delivery of the wider decarbonisation construction work.

Other key benefits of Greener Futures Partnership include:

- An agreed and tested approach to delivering sustainable housing.
- Using our strong partnership to procure services, build skills and capacity in the sector.
- Improving energy efficiency and creating healthier homes.
- Showing the benefits of sustainable living for our customers.
- Being a trusted and influential voice for sustainability in the housing sector.
- Social value measures to be applied to all works awarded under the framework.

In a turbulent world, our commitment to delivering for our customers and communities remains constant and we exist to deliver on our customer promise every day.

We hope you find our reporting interesting and insightful and that it demonstrates our absolute commitment to improving our ESG performance and reporting on it transparently.

If you are an investor and have any questions or feedback at all, please get in touch with steve.hallowell@homegroup.org.uk

If you are a customer, please contact communications@homegroup.org.uk

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