



Environmental, Social and Governance report (ESG report) 2021/22



Environmental, Social and Governance report

2021/22



Introduction by Nusheen Hussain, Executive Director of Customers and Communities.

In May 2022 we launched our new five-year strategy. Given the success of our previous plan there was no need for major readjustments. Our focus remains on building the right homes in the right places, supporting our customers and helping our communities to grow.

However, there is one area that has jumped up the pecking order. Whilst sustainability was integral to our previous plan, we will see increased investment and focus in this area over the lifetime of this new strategy, and beyond.

All of our development and regeneration activity will be aimed at delivering energy efficient homes which are cost effective for our customers, and which support our 2050 Net-Zero targets, along with those of the Government and the United Nations (UN).

Our focus has increased significantly on delivering a strategy which ensures we green our business, homes and communities. And we have witnessed good first steps already in this long-term plan which will see major investment.

In 2022/22 we were awarded £1.2m from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to upgrade 90 homes in Cumbria, which was supplemented by £3.3m of our own investment.

The learnings and experience from that round has led us to submit a bid to the second round of funding, which would allow us to retrofit a further 1,000 homes. This would put us well on the way to our five-year retrofit delivery plan.

Our investment in this area and across the organisation in general over the next five years is substantial. We are investing heavily in our building safety programme, and we have brought in a new team to ensure our buildings meet and even exceed the regulator's expectations.

Exceeding our customers' expectations is also our goal over the next five years. At the forefront of our plans is the delivery of our Customer Promise, a set of six standards that ensure we meet the needs of customers - from providing safe homes and a reliable service to helping communities grow and thrive.

Supporting customers through these extremely challenging times has been a focus, and will continue to be so. Our financial inclusion team has helped 330 customers per month maximise their income; reduce their outgoings and more effectively manage their finances. In 2021 more than £2m additional income

was gained for customers and £522,000 lump sum payments received by customers.

Not all of our investment over the next period will be focussed on land or materials. Investing in our colleagues - new and existing - is a major part of our new strategy in a competitive market.

A key element within our plan is what we call 'Grow Our Own' - investing time and resource to develop our existing talent.

Already, we have seen that working in practice, with a range of internal promotions, including our previous Director of Finance, Helen Brindley, taking up the role of Chief Financial Officer, Will Gardner, previously Director of Development, taking up the role of Executive Director of Development and Sales, Paul Walker joining the executive team as Executive Director for Repairs and Maintenance and my own move from Business Development to Customers and Communities.

Our people are key to achieving our goals. We have a strategic ambition to become an exemplar in Equality,

Diversity and Inclusion and investing in people is of paramount importance. We fully expect to see more talent coming through the organisation as we develop our 'Grow Our Own' programme. It's a programme which has also helped us to reduce our gender and ethnicity pay gaps this past year, along with targeted recruitment activity.

We expect this programme to further cement our reputation as one of the best places to work, having been in the top ten of the best places to work in the in the UK Great Place to Work rankings for the past three years.

In 2021 we became an early adopter of the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing and produced our first ESG report under that standard. This year we can see even more development in this area, which we are delighted to be able to share in our latest report, with customers, colleagues, investors, long-standing partners and key stakeholders.



Our approach to ESG reporting

ESG continues to be at the heart of Home Group's social and ethical purpose. We are now into the second year of our ESG reporting journey and we are still as committed as ever to sustainability, creating social value for our customers and communities and demonstrating strong and effective governance to our stakeholders and partners.

This year, we carried out an ESG reporting planning exercise, with a workshop for key stakeholders and external expert partners, to challenge and continue to improve our ESG reporting in 2022. But, we are not standing still, we will continue this through 2023 and beyond.

Home Group was an early adopter of the Sustainability Reporting Standards (SRS) and our 2022 report showcases our performance against this standard. Our report is structured to respond to each core and enhanced theme and we're delighted to feature customer and colleague stories within the report to bring it to life.



A summary of our ESG performance in 21/22

Financial support for customers

- Financial inclusion team has helped **330 customers** per month maximise their income
- Over the past year, more than **£2m additional** income and £500,000 in lump sum payments was gained for customers
- **98%** of Home Group's general needs and affordable homes have rents that are lower or equal to Local Housing Allowance
- Home Group rents are on average 73% of Local Housing Allowance



Customer involvement

- Between April 2021 and March 2022, we asked **4,469 customers** their views, listened to what they said and acted on their ideas
- We received **175** nominations to Home Group customer awards
- **39** customers involved in recruiting colleagues into **206** 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
- **90%** of our apprentices stay in jobs with Home Group

A greener future

- Home Group is a founding partner in Greener Futures Partnership, made up of five of the UK's largest housing associations with a joint turnover of **£2.3bn**, representing over **600,000** customers in **300,000** homes

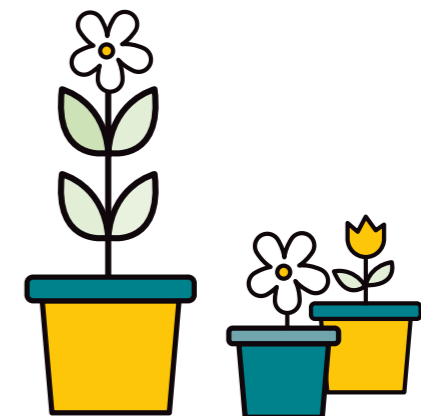
A Great place to work

- Ranked **9th** in the UK's best workplaces for wellbeing
- **5th** in the Great Places to Work Survey (Super Large Employer)
- **5th** in the UK for a Great Place for Women to work



Social value through procurement

- We commit to providing a minimum of **10%** of contractor spend via SMEs
- Our One Strawberry Lane (OSL) project scored a **44% social value return**



Our report structure

"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).

The three high level areas of this report "Environment, Social and Governance" each include information from a set of themes aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



UN Sustainable Development Goals



ESG area	Theme	Alignment to UN sustainable development goal	Page reference
Social	Affordability and security	No poverty Reduced inequalities	10
	Building safety and quality	Sustainable cities and communities	12
	Resident voice	Sustainable cities and communities	14
	Resident support	Sustainable cities and communities	20
	Placemaking	Sustainable cities and communities	26
Environmental	Climate change	Climate action	32
	Ecology	Life on land	38
	Resource management	Sustainable cities and communities	40
Governance	Structure and governance	Peace, justice and strong institutions	44
	Board and trustees	Peace, justice and strong institutions	46
	Staff wellbeing	Decent work and economic growth	48
	Supply chain management	Responsible production and consumption	54

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

98% of Home Group's general needs and affordable homes have rents that are lower or equal to Local Housing Allowance (LHA). This amount is based on the area in which claimants live and the size of dwelling appropriate for their household.

	At 1 April 2021	New homes completed in 2021
Social rent	34,493 / 69%	154 / 25%
Affordable rent	7,150 / 14%	137 / 22%
Supported housing	3,346 / 7%	223 / 36%
Housing for older people	1,584 / 3%	0 / 0%
LCHO (Low cost home ownership)	2,840 / 6%	109 / 17%
Care homes	155 / 0%	0 / 0%
Private rented sector (including mid-market rent)	489 / 1%	0 / 0%

Fixed term tenancies

9.5% (2020/21: 12%) of Home Group's general needs tenancies in England are fixed term.

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.



On average Home Group rents are 73% (2020/21: 72%) of LHA. 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	105.99	90.00	15%
Tyneside	115.72	85.33	26%
Sunderland	103.97	83.26	20%
Durham	94.71	79.63	16%
Teesside	101.63	85.85	16%
North West London	298.96	130.74	56%
North Cumbria	108.03	90.65	16%
Bradford & South Dales	113.38	94.55	17%
York	155.43	101.64	35%
Harlow & Stortford	207.13	119.71	42%

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.



99.8% (2020/21: 99.1%) of homes have an up to date gas inspection and service certificate.*

Providing a safe place to live is at the heart of our customer promise.

In the past year we have partnered with specialist safety and compliance contractors to benefit from their enhanced expertise. We have also reshaped our operating regions including the introduction of an in-house workforce in some areas to ensure we are delivering consistently across the UK.

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.

99.3% (2020/21: 100%) of blocks of flats have a fire risk assessment.*

We complete regular fire risk assessments for our 1,982 buildings that require them, at intervals defined by our risk classification. We work with our partners to deliver the follow on works required to make sure our customers have safe homes. We are currently working on a three year programme and have revised dates for any overdue FRAs.

Decent Home Standard (DHS) (2020/21: 99.9%)*

99.9% of our eligible properties meet DHS (43,676). Those properties that do not meet DHS require thermal insulation works and we are remediating this.

Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)*

98% of our eligible properties in Scotland meet SHQS. We currently have 80 properties which do not meet the SHQS. 44 of these relate to properties identified for demolition and five are a result of customer refusals.

The remaining properties (31) relate to a converted primary school which does not currently meet energy performance standards. We are working with all customers to provide immediate support as well as longer term solutions.

Home Group are committed to ensuring all homes meet DHS and SHQS and has a targeted approach to ensure all customers' homes meet these standards.

*as at 31 March 2022

Resident Voice



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



We have a clear accountability framework to make sure customer feedback comes from our estates and services, filtering through the organisation, right up to Board.

We have a dedicated Customer Engagement Team that oversees this, ensuring it adapts to what the customers require and what is happening in the housing sector.

The framework is based on our Customer Promise and includes local neighbourhood assessments, regional Viewpoint Teams, a National Customer Forum and two customer Board members.

We also have specialist scrutiny groups to hold us to account on things like complaints, grounds

maintenance and our performance on delivering the customer promise, which is measured through KPIs designed by customers.

Over the last year, we have seen the inception of a customer led National Development Group to scrutinise our development activity and we are currently creating a scrutiny group for our sales activity.

We have used the Housing Ombudsman Report to facilitate a specific consultation on damp and mould and we are developing a scrutiny model on this subject to ensure we are accountable.



“Being involved has been life changing for me. I’m part of a really important team on Customer Forum and I can see the difference I am making in other people’s lives.”

Gary - Customer Forum member

“There are some really positive outcomes which reflect what customers said is important to them.”

Sheila - Customer involved in procurement

“Customer Forum shows me that senior leaders want to hear from us and that they want us to be involved in decisions, they aren’t just bosses in the ivory tower, they are people who we work alongside.”

Emma - Customer Forum member

“Since becoming a panel member, my self esteem and confidence has dramatically improved. I hope that my involvement has helped to bring some measure of closure to those who have made complaints.”

Luke - Independent complaints panel member

Between April 2021 and March 2022 we asked 4,469 customers their views, listened to what they said and acted on their ideas. In 2020/21, we asked 3,786.

Our Customer Forums meet quarterly, with attendance from senior leadership welcomed. Output from these meetings are shared with Board members and customers are invited to the Board to discuss key items in person.

In addition, our regional scrutiny groups and our viewpoint teams feed questions and information from their local areas and groups to a representative at Customer Forum. They also work with our local managers to make a difference in their communities.

There are over 30 ways to get involved at Home Group, although the number keeps growing. We have a variety of specialist scrutiny groups run by customers. Actions are given to relevant managers and responses are recorded on a 'you said, we did' document which is given to customers to close the feedback loop.

Customer awards

- **175** nominations
- **5** customers involved in shortlisting and judging
- **11** lockdown celebrations across the country

Recruitment, and training

- **39** customers involved in recruiting colleagues into 206 roles
- **9** customers involved in delivering training



Public affairs

- **7** customers involved in
- **6** national external events

A year in involvement

Between April 2021 and March 2022, we have engaged with a total of

- **4,469** customers
- **2,915** at a local level
- **1,554** with regional and national groups and projects led by the Engagement team

Scrutiny and governance

- **2** customer Board members on Home Group and 2 on Home Scotland Board and 10 customers presented to Board on a range of issues
- **70** customers involved in 16 Grounds Maintenance scrutiny meetings
- **22** customers from New Models of Care Services involved in 8 Honest Opinion Group meetings and consultations and presented to Home Group Board
- **6** customers scrutinised Key Performance Indicators at 3 meetings
- **32** Customer Forum members in 4 meetings at 12 sessions
- **173** Viewpoint Team members took part in 57 Viewpoint meetings at 128 sessions

Complaints

- **10** complaints investigated by the independent complaints panel with 42 of their 48 recommendations implemented
- **18** complaints reviewed by Complaints Scrutiny Group

Equality and diversity

- **50** Life Swap members delivered 78 Life Swaps to 1,309 customers, colleagues and stakeholders
- **7** Easy Read documents created by customers from 9 disability services at 17 meetings
- **4** customers co-created and delivered equality, diversity and inclusion training to 8 customers



Communication

- **21** customers involved in
- **3** Homelife Editorial panels



Community engagement

- **13** Summerhill Retrofit Pilot' customers came to an open day
- **245** Christmas gift bags delivered in 'Spreading a little Christmas cheer' project for over 55s services in Cumbria
- **24** customers involved in 'Memory walks' for the Alzheimer's Society
- **500** 'Bags of Hope' delivered in Cumbria with advice on mental health
- **10** Digital Estate Inspections involving 22 customers
- **18** customers involved in the distribution of the community patch fund in the south west





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.

The overall satisfaction score is then made up by a weighted calculation of satisfaction with three areas of the service:

Overall satisfaction with repairs service - **40% weighting**

Overall satisfaction with gas service - **25% weighting**

Satisfaction with customer support centre repairs logging - **35% weighting**

Year	Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) score
2021/22	93%
2020/21	91%
2019/20	95%

Since July 2021 we have been piloting a more in depth approach. Our Customer Promise Survey was created with two purposes.

Firstly, to enable customers to give us specific feedback on all areas of the customer promise. As the promise was designed by customers, we know it covers the areas they prioritise.

Secondly, we wanted to be working towards the Tenant Satisfaction Measures suggested by the Social Housing White Paper. Through our Customer Promise KPIs, customers are starting to look at targets. We also have some pilot projects in regions, where we are developing specific plans for sharing the scores and showing what we're doing with our findings.



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

	Number of HOS referrals	% of total complaints	Service failures upheld	Maladministration upheld
2021/22	25	0.8%	7	1
2020/21	25	0.8%	8	2

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

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 in order 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.

One of the most successful schemes to support customers is the Home Achievement Programme (HAP). The 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 of our accommodation and community-based services but can also be delivered as a stand-alone service.

The main 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 750 customers per year take part in the training programme.

In the summer of 2019 we identified a need for a training course for potential new board members based on feedback from out-going customer board members and those interested in applying for Board positions but lacking knowledge of the role and confidence. As a result, we created our "On Board" training course for customers.

One of the most effective schemes that we run in order to support our customers continues to be our award-winning apprenticeship programme.

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 with Home Group.



Case study



Apprenticeship opportunities Laura Duggan

Apprenticeships have proven to be an excellent way of providing on-the-job learning and career opportunities to customers of all ages and backgrounds. At Home Group, we are fully focussed on supporting those interested in taking up these opportunities.

In Rayners Lane, Harrow, Laura Duggan is one such customer. She recently started as a Home Group apprentice.

Laura, a long-time resident of Home Group's Rayner's Lane estate, was so supportive during the consultation process for the estate's regeneration in 2002. As a member of the first council resident panel she added so much to the process.

Now, we are supporting Laura to be able to use her experience and skills to help people across her local area.

Laura said: "I have been an involved customer in some way since 1997, both with the London Borough of Harrow and Home Group. Through the initiatives and their general ethos, Home Group actively look to employ and support their residents.

"I have just started as an Apprentice Housing Manager for the East Region and will gain a housing qualification paid for by Home Group, while gaining invaluable on the job training. They've gone out of their way to put their customers first."



Case study



Inclusive workplace Becky Leonard-Dixon

Earlier this year Becky Leonard-Dixon was on stage in Manchester picking up the 2022 Women in Housing Inclusion Champion Award.

Ten years earlier Becky couldn't have been any further from receiving such an accolade. She was in a very dark place, living in a mental health service, struggling with a range of serious issues. Since then, Becky has been on a journey with Home Group which has seen her be a customer, a volunteer, a colleague, and a mentor. We are so proud to have played a very small part in helping to get her to that Manchester stage. The heavy work was all Becky.

She said: "The person-centred support I've had, the inclusive environment and the opportunities to progress from customer to volunteer, to apprentice and now permanent colleague, gave me what I needed to manage the change and sustain my wellbeing long-term alongside a job I love!"

Becky's story at Home Group is not unique and she has been a vocal, passionate part of the team implementing mentoring, networks, and opportunities so that we can continue to support our customers and colleagues to thrive.

Supporting our customers through tough times

The financial impact on customers of Covid in 2020/21 was massive and amazing efforts were made by colleagues to support them through this hugely challenging time. The cost of living crisis is proving to be even more challenging for customers.

A House of Commons briefing stated that the impact on low income households is much greater than any other group, citing rising costs of food, energy, and travel playing a key part in these financial struggles.

It's vital that we continue to support customers to maximise their income; reduce their outgoings and manage their finances, enabling them to feed their families and heat their homes.

With heavy promotion of how our Financial Inclusion Team could assist, they received **3,954** customer referrals in 2021/22, with an average of **330** customers per month contacting them for financial help or advice.

This resulted in the team achieving **£2,017,623** in additional income for customers and gaining **£521,776** lump sum payments for customers.

“An absolutely lovely lady called Michelle from the financial team has called me and helped me no end. Absolutely wonderful lady with such a friendly calm nature. Made tough times so much easier. Thank you to Michelle.”

Trust Pilot review

“She began fighting for us immediately, filled out the paperwork and kept pushing until we got results.”

Our support for customers in, or close to being in fuel poverty has grown over the last year. And with greater intelligence and more robust data we have been much more effective in being able to target and support those most in need.

In addition to existing communications activity to all customers about energy, repairs and Universal Credit, we also delivered a targeted communications campaign to customers most at risk of fuel poverty with the advice, support and interventions that we believed would help them.

To this targeted group, we were able to offer each customer £113 towards their energy bills.





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 a significant part in our new build developments, and particularly our regeneration programme. 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.

Wherever we build we take account of geography, demographics, people, communities, and crucially, need, inside and outside the home.





Jennifer Thornton

Jennifer Thornton has lived on the Hartlepool estates for more than 25 years and has seen the changes made first hand.

A long-time Home Group customer, Jennifer is pleased to see people wanting to move to and live on the Clarence and West View estates again, as it was when she first moved there. She said: "I've been here for 25 years on and off, and it has changed over the years. There was once a huge waiting list, but then as things got worse, we had periods of people wanting to move out.

"All the regeneration work that has gone on, including putting in new windows, doors and roofs has made a big difference. People are pleased to move back. They're taking pride in the area once again."

Move On/Hartlepool

In Hartlepool, Teesside, the Clarence and West View Estates were two parts of the town faced with significant challenges.

Too many properties were empty, homes in general were in need of significant repair and anti-social behaviour had taken hold. The outcome being customers no longer had pride in their once thriving communities.

But a major regeneration project led by ourselves, in partnership with key local partners, has transformed the estates.

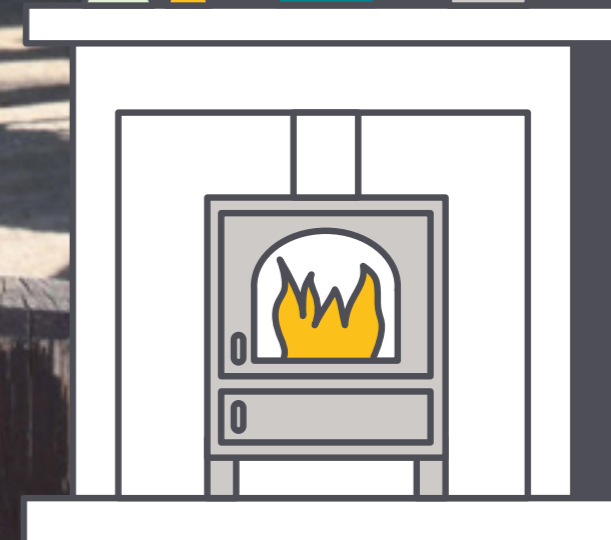
Work began by targeting the large number of void properties and aiming to improve the quality of life on the estates. One of the key areas of this was to take many of the unwanted, empty 3-bedroom properties on the estates and convert them into 1- and 2-bedroom flats, which were in much greater demand. Other homes were also modernised. One property was also converted into a new Community Hub, which has allowed both Home Group and other partners - including the police, social services and support agencies - to meet and hold sessions for customers.

Customers are able to feedback or raise any concerns through regular drop-in sessions. A focus group has been set up. Home Group staff are much more visible on the estates and responsive to customer queries.

Through a much stronger approach by ourselves, and in partnership with the police, anti-social behaviour is down by 35%. This has also led to improved relationships with community police, as well as social services and Hartlepool Council housing team.

We intend to remain engaged with customers and keep working to improve life on the Clarence and West View estates as part of our customer promise to help communities grow and to work with customers and partners to provide safe places to live.

The integrated and collaborative approach we took internally, and externally with partners, is a template we expect to roll out to enhance other homes and communities in need of support.



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.



Home Group and the environment What energy actions have we undertaken in the last 12 months?

In 2020 we developed a 30-year sustainability roadmap, a detailed plan which would allow us to green our business, homes and communities, while working towards the UK government's 2050 Net-Zero targets and the sustainability aims of the UN.

This past year we have started at a pace with the early parts of the plan. Underpinning our approach to sustainability is the certification of our ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management System. In December 2021, we achieved recertification with no non-conformances. Auditors commented on seeing real growth in our strategic approach to environmental sustainability over the past few years.

Last year we began work on a major retrofit programme in Cumbria having been successful in securing funding from the first wave of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

This pilot plan involves whole house retrofit solutions on estates which are predominantly without gas, and will see the installation of new roofs, heat pumps, solar panels, battery storage and external wall insulation, as well as upgraded windows and doors.

This year we are applying for funding from Wave 2 of the fund, which will see us take a similar retrofit approach on 1,000 homes across our portfolio. This will put us well on the way to our five-year retrofit delivery plan.

In 2021 we set up a Sustainability Customer Forum, as part of wider engagement strategy, in order to support customers on the Net-Zero journey, ensuring they able to engage and make informed choices.

Part of the SHDF Wave 1 pilot involved turning voids into Net-Zero learning hubs for customers. Equipped with storyboards of the journey, the properties act as a showcase for suppliers, councillors and customers to learn about Net-Zero.

Customers were welcomed along to engagement days at the properties, but recognising one size doesn't fit all, a multi-faceted outreach approach was taken to engage as many customers as possible in the pilot.

Home Group's approach has already been recognised as best practice, and was presented at the BEIS funded Social Housing Retrofit Accelerator.

The plan is for Home Group to take the learnings from the project and roll it out nationally - setting a standard for both retrofit and customer engagement.

Last year we put all of our buildings with a heat network through a government cost effectiveness tool and only four buildings out of a portfolio of 210 require retrofit to improve. Work is being planned in to upgrade this year.

We agreed this year that through our five-year Strategic Asset Delivery Plan we will commit to being Net-Zero for Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2026.

The biggest development over the past 12 months has been our work within the Greener Futures Partnership - a collaboration of like-minded housing associations - Abri, Anchor, Home Group, Hyde and Sanctuary.

The Greener Futures Partnership was set up in 2021 because we knew a joint effort will do so much more to help the social housing sector seriously address the green agenda.

The Partnership is made up of five of the UK's largest housing associations with a joint turnover of £2.3bn, representing over 600,000 customers in 300,000 homes - from Victorian street properties and post-WWII estates through to modern flatted developments, across rural, suburban, and urban settings. By pooling our resources, experience and expertise we will be able to increase our impact across a range of areas.

Our culture, our collaboration and our hands-on role as practitioners, positions us perfectly to lead the way for our sector.

We aim to be the trusted voice for sustainability in social housing; influencing policy makers, setting national standards, mapping out pathways and shaping solutions to improve things for everyone, especially our customers.

Over the past year we have made significant progress in laying down the groundwork and putting in place a foundation which will allow us to achieve our aims and ambitions.

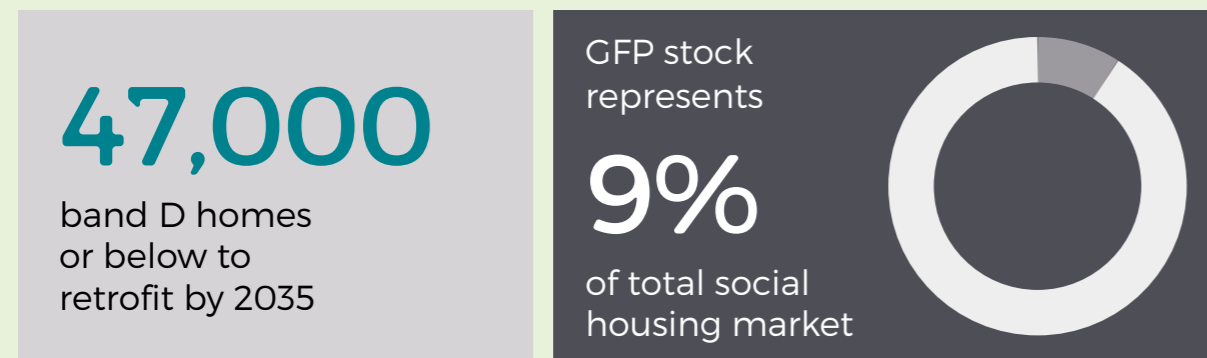
Working with the Greener Futures Partnership (GFP)

Within the first year we have:

- A legal and governance structure in place – entitled the ‘collaboration agreement’
- A financial plan, with full partner buy-in
- A data sharing agreement in place – with everyone’s data pooled and modelled into one dataset

- The sector’s only known fuel poverty dashboard indicator
- In the process of setting up a joint procurement framework
- Four commissioned reports active – with one already published (shared with sector)
- Created a partnership brand, website, and social channels to promote our work and influence stakeholders

About Greener Futures Partnership



Now we have achieved the groundwork and laid the foundations, including a fully costed and bought in financial plan, as partners we are now focussed on achieving our aims.

They include delivering our existing retrofit projects, and developing a successful bid in the second wave of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, which would see 5,000 homes retrofitted as a partnership.

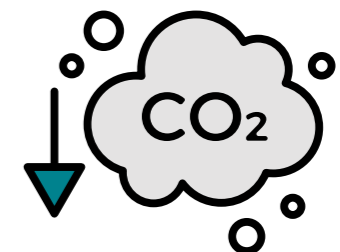
Our insights and research agenda is expected to grow significantly this year as we assess a whole range of issues and opportunities in the sustainability sphere. To date, we have commissioned four pieces of research for retrofit and sustainability. In anticipation of the continued demand and supply pressures across an under-developed supplier market in England, the partners have appointed a procurement specialist to develop a national framework to engage a range of new suppliers across the regions.

This will allow us to diversify our procurement approach removing the reliance on centralised mainstream contractors and seek alternatives – particularly small to medium sized contractors – which will support local engagement and increase employment opportunities, while reducing our carbon impact through reduced transportation of goods and services.

We will create a dynamic purchasing system which, whilst tapping into innovative decarbonisation solutions, will also be accessible to the wider sector, once established. This increased procurement muscle will help us to tackle the challenges ahead.

Achieving these aims independently would have taken much longer but together, with our commitment as a partnership, we have the energy, determination and focus to deliver for our 600,000 customers in our 300,000 homes.

Our work with the partners, alongside our own 30-year sustainability roadmap, puts us in a strong position to deliver on our own Net-Zero aims, while supporting the UK Government’s green agenda along with that of the UN.



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 2021-22		New build 2020-21		Existing stock to 31/3/2021		Existing stock to 31/3/2020	
	Stock	%	Stock	%	Stock	%	Stock	%
Scoring breakdown								
EPC rating A = 92-100 Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) points (most efficient)	0	0.0	0	0.0	80	0.2	77	0.2
EPC rating B = 81-91 SAP points.	553	88.8	507	91.6	4,576	10.8	4,472	10.6
EPC rating C = 69-80 SAP points.	48	7.7	10	1.8	25,997	61.5	25,730	60.9
EPC rating D = 55-68 SAP points.	19	3.0	18	3.2	10,732	25.4	11,075	26.2
EPC rating E = 39-54 SAP points.	3	0.5	18	3.2	832	2.0	856	2.0
EPC rating F = 21-38 SAP points.	0	0.0	1	0.2	24	0.1	49	0.1
EPC rating G = 1-20 SAP points (least efficient)	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	0.0	5	0.0
Total	623	100.0	554	100.0	42,245	100.0	42,264	100.0

Of the 623 homes handed over in the year, 535 were new build and 97% of these were rated EPC B with the balance rated EPC C. We also purchased properties, primarily older bungalows in which we deliver complex care services, and refurbished some of our existing stock which together added 88 homes. Of these in 22 properties have an EPC rating below C.

As part of our wider Asset management plan we are committed to retrofitting homes to EPC C by 2030 and Net-Zero by 2050. We use a third party to assess our property data and present retrofit options to hit relevant targets.

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting (SECR)

In FY 21/22 our overall carbon footprint was 2,228.97 tCO₂e. This is an increase of around 320% from last year. Our intensity ratio (total number of homes with DHS/SHQS Rented & Supported against our footprint) is 0.0468.

Our carbon footprint figure has increased due to normal operation post Covid-19 pandemic and the introduction of our Direct Labour Organisation (DLO). This figure represents a more realistic 'normal operating' metric. Over the past 12 months we have improved our carbon data accuracy alongside quantifying more aspects of our scope 3 emissions. 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
Emissions from combustion of gas	1	315.85
Emissions from air refridgerant leaks (F-gas)	1	9.10
Emissions from Combustion of Fuel (DLO)	1	784.96
Scope 1		1,109.91
Electricity	2	323.23
Scope 2		323.23
Emissions from mileage claims, pool van, rail & air	3	688.71
Emissions associated with hotel stays	3	74.82
Emissions associated with electricity T&D	3	28.60
Emissions from water usage	3	3.69
Scope 3		795.83
Total tonnes CO₂e		2,228.97

Intensity Ratios	Figure	Conversion Factor
Homes Managed	47,627	0.04680062
Total Number of Employees	1,471	1.51527761
Turnover	£338m	0.00000659

Chosen Intensity Ratio: Homes Managed: **0.047**

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. We are fully committed to meeting this challenge and providing robust and workable solutions to alleviate these risks. We are working with both internal and 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 these risks through retrofit projects and customer engagement and education. We are also continuously actively engaging with manufacturers and all relevant bodies to implement the most effective flood resilient and overheating 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 and overheating are key components in our housing and estate design. We also maximise the benefits of these

programmes 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

Our customers play an important role in helping us to become a more environmentally sustainable and responsible organisation. We want to operate properties that are the most environmentally sustainable they can be and our customers have a vital role in running them in the most efficient way. Engagement and education with our customers on correct ventilation, efficient heating, recycling, biodiversity and sustainable travel continue to be key themes in our customer relations through both active estate-based programmes and communications like our quarterly Homelife magazine for customers. The rate and content of our environmental sustainability engagement and education is independently analysed and audited by ISO14001:2015 and SHIFT assessments.



Ecology

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

Space and promoting biodiversity on or near homes

Biodiversity net gain, flood management and carbon neutrality are integral parts of our environmental sustainability planning. We are with engaging partners, suppliers and our customers on how we can collectively work together to help alleviate biodiversity decline.

We believe by maximising ecosystem services derived from our natural capital we can produce a more environmentally sustainable green landscape for our customers, the climate and biodiversity. We are investing in land surveys across our portfolio which will allow us to understand the size, quality and complexity of our green spaces alongside gaining an invaluable understanding of their topography. We will use this information to improve our land management, improve biodiversity levels, incorporate carbon sequestration on our land via tree planting and improve our estates for our customers.

We are also a member of the Green Spaces Advisory Board and are currently helping the sector develop a toolkit for biodiversity in housing which will launch early 2023.

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.



Sustainability in the supply chain

We take environmental sustainability seriously and expect our partners and suppliers to do the same. As an organisation we have a big challenge ahead to move towards Net-Zero and we understand that we won't achieve our goals without the support of our supply chain. Through our tender processes we as a matter of course 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 the contract for the fit-out of our new head office where the contractor selected has a track record in low carbon fit outs considering environmental impact in their site set up and waste management approach and will provide us with reporting on the embodied carbon of the project.

We have also introduced the following actions 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 possible, 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. Working with key supply chain partners to establish projects to make our homes more sustainable through renewable technology.
4. Move to renewable green energy in all our directly procured areas.
5. We will be building new homes that exceed the sustainability standards specified in the building regulations in England and Scotland.

Our Procurement Policy is regularly reviewed and we are updating our responsible procurement statement to include more detail on sustainable and ethical sourcing. Overall we are developing a supply chain sustainability plan – supporting the organisation's drive towards Net-Zero.



Waste management

We fully understand that the end of life use of products is a core pillar in sustainable operation. We actively promote the waste hierarchy and are constantly looking for sustainable ways in which we can procure, manage and dispose of products. We inform, educate and encourage reduction, reuse and recycling to all colleagues alongside providing recycling facilities in all offices.

We are also actively educating and engaging with customers about the importance of recycling. By working with suppliers that provide us with recyclable and recycled products we are improving our ability to use the most environmentally friendly products in the most sustainable way. We have a robust environmental policy which incorporates waste management and have centralised our waste services nationally in order to obtain greater control and visibility on how our waste is managed and processed.

We monitor our diversion from landfill and recycling rate monthly and through annual independent ISO14001:2015 and SHIFT benchmarking audits we provide performance-related data and targets to drive improvements organisation wide.

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.



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;

Live Smart @ Home Limited, a private non-charitable company which provides funding within the group.



Home Group retained its G1:V1* status from the RSH in its latest In-Depth Assessment (IDA) in June 2021.

The Home Group Board has adopted and is compliant with the requirements of the National Housing Federation (NHF) Code of Governance 2020.

The Home Group Board is committed to adhering to high standards of corporate governance and has adopted and is compliant with the NHF Code of Conduct 2012. Home Group has also adopted the NHF Code on Mergers, Group Structures and Partnerships 2015.

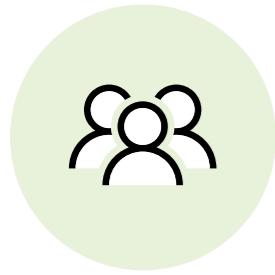
Under our Risk Management Framework, the Home Group Board is responsible for ensuring

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.

Our risk management strategy was externally audited in October 2019 with a finding of substantial assurance and is due to be externally audited again in 2023.

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

* As part of our regulator assessment, we are given a rating for governance and financial viability.



Board and trustees

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

Details of our Board and executive team members can be found on our website [here](#)

Our Board and executive team demographics are*:



Gender

Home Group Board
6 Male / 6 Female

Executive team
4 Male / 2 Female



Disability

Home Group Board
2 out of 12

Executive team
1 out of 6



Average age

Home Group Board
59

Executive team
53



Ethnicity

16.7% of our executive team identify as multicultural.
8.3% of our board identify as multicultural

The **Group Board** has ten non-executive directors (83% of the Board are non-executive including two customers, Chris and Indra) and 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 non-executive 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 non-executive board members is just over four years. 16.7% of our Group Board members and 16.7% of the 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 five non-executive directors, including one independent member who does not sit on the Home Group Board. Two of the members currently have recent and relevant financial experience.

Our **Governance Committee** which is responsible for executive remuneration is made up of all non-executive members.

Our external audit partner, Deloitte, were appointed in 2020 and carried out their second audit of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022.

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. Only two members of the Home Group Board are permitted to serve on the boards of Registered Providers outside the Group to minimise any resulting conflicts of interest.

*As at 31 March 2022



Staff wellbeing

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

We're committed to taking an energised approach to wellbeing to attract, recruit, retain, develop and engage 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.



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

- **Dedicated wellbeing hub on our intranet** – hosting numerous support tools, information, external links, recordings and a wellbeing events calendar as well as physical fitness support
- **Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA)**
- **Peer and ally support groups**
Multicultural Allies, Partner in Pride, Pride at Home, Multicultural Colleagues, Multicultural Action Panel, Mental Health Allies, Disability Peer Support, Women of Home Group, Neurodiversity Allies, Disability Network Group
- **Employee Assist and 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**
- **Promotion of key wellbeing events** – we actively highlight national health awareness campaigns and encourage our colleagues to share their own lived experiences

- **External accreditations** – we are a signatory to Mindful Employer, White Ribbon accreditation, Disability Confident and the National Suicide Prevention Alliance, which allows us to check our practices against best practices and provide additional support and resources to our colleagues
- **Wellbeing (Investors in People)** – we have achieved platinum standard
- We have support in place for colleagues diagnosed with **cancers and experiencing pregnancy loss**
- **A guide to self care**
- **'Let's talk about menopause'**

We continuously review our wellbeing approach to ensure our offer is fit for purpose, in line with best practice and delivers brilliant wellbeing tools and support to all colleagues.

- **Mental health support tool kit** – a resource that brings together all the relevant tools to support colleagues and managers
- **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 if they move around the business
- **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
- **Financial wellbeing support** – this year this has included a financial wellbeing week in May for all colleagues, with expert sessions as well as ongoing guidance and colleague discounts

Average number of sick days taken per colleague in the year ending 31st March 2022 was 12 days (2020/21: 8.8%).



In our annual Great Place to Work survey

The overall 'wellbeing' category scored **77%**. This was higher than the external benchmark.

We also ranked 9th in the UK's best workplaces for wellbeing.



Home Group's approach to pay

We passionately believe that embedding equality in everything that we do enables our colleagues to be at their best, to realise their potential and to deliver outstanding service to our customers.

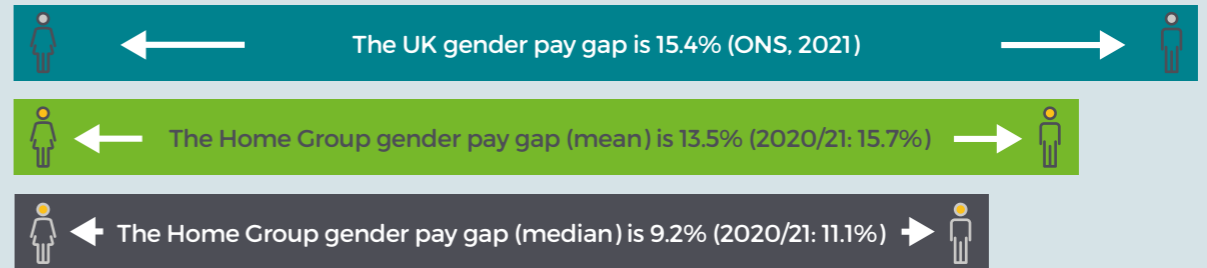
We are proud to have been voted **5th in the Great Place to Work survey (Super Large Employer)**, **5th in the UK for a Great Place for Women to work** and recognised as **40th in the Stonewall Top 100 employers (2022)**, reflecting the effort we put in to promote diversity. We very much welcome the 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 are publishing this information alongside our gender pay gap.

Home Group pays colleagues the Real Living Wage (Living Wage Foundation Rate and Living Wage Scotland).

Our apprentices are paid in line with the national minimum wage at an enhanced rate above the national minimum wage for apprentices.



Gender

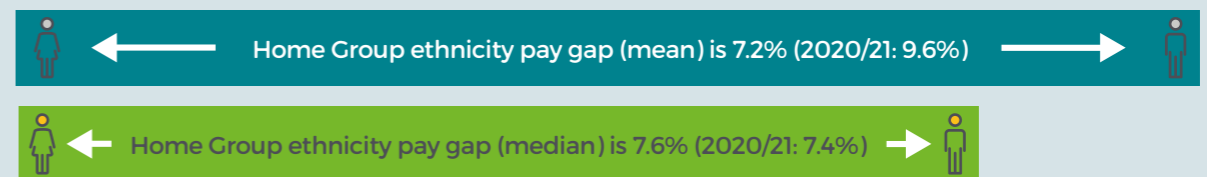


We employ **3,001** people

63.95% are female and 36.05% are male



Ethnicity:



We employ **3,001** people

We employ 3,001 people; 75.5% identify as White, 9.4% as multicultural and 15.1% did not declare their ethnicity



CEO: worker pay ratio

The CEO: worker pay ratio following the BEIS Option A methodology shows ranking from low to high.

Remuneration of employees ranked from lowest to highest, 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
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.

Sustainability and Social Value are key to Home Group's procurement strategy. We are committed to strong ethical practices and reducing our environmental impact, whilst also encouraging greater economic and social opportunities for disadvantaged people and communities.

Our procurement strategy is to incorporate key areas of sustainability within our contracts, and deliver social value which is defined as 'looking beyond price, and working with suppliers to add a collective benefit to society when we award contracts'

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

Many of the goods, services, and works that we procure impact upon our customers' experience of Home Group as their landlord. For this reason, where a contract has a direct customer impact, we will endeavour to involve customers in the procurement process. This involvement varies, from securing feedback on existing services or collaborating on customer specification creation, and could sometimes involve active participation in the tender evaluation process.

This year customers had a key role in the evaluation of our new painting and decorating contract for the UK, where they had strong views on the sustainability of the product selection as well as commitments regarding waste and the move to electric vehicles. Having customers on the evaluation panel ensured that we could hold suppliers to account on these important topics.

On the new build development side of the organisation we are working with customers to co-create the Home Group Standard for new and existing homes. This standard will exceed the standards currently in place by the UK and Scottish governments and will put safety and sustainability first.

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 wider communities in which we work together.

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.
- Social value plans to be created within the first 6 months of a contract start.
- 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. An example of this would be:

- 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.
- Employment opportunities commitments – in relation to all contract employment opportunities, all Home Group customers who meet the minimum criteria will be offered a guaranteed interview with some of our supply chain partners
- Community projects and volunteering – we ask suppliers to provide a minimum of two days of volunteering support per year per contract team member towards Home Group social value initiatives.

We're also working on a new social value tool using the Themes, Outcomes and Measures process which aligns to Home Groups values. This is in the stages of being finalised and will be rolled out very soon.

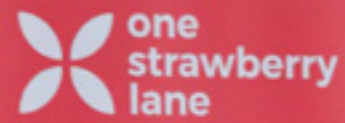
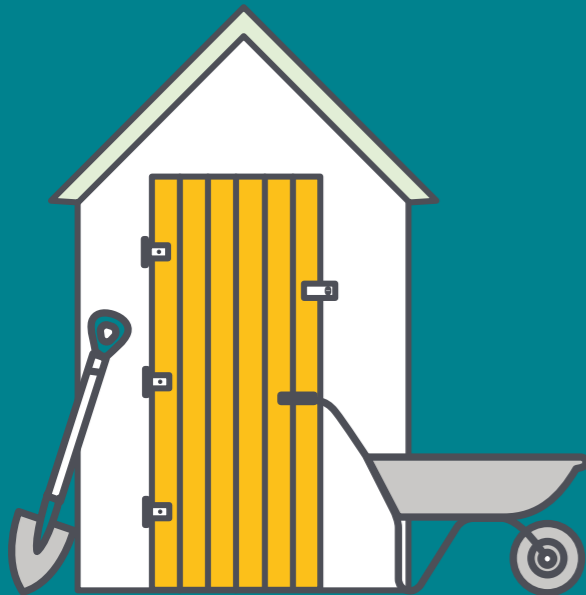
Socially responsible sourcing

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 are committed to supporting our supply chain in this area providing access to resources, training and our experience in this field and are working to a 5 year plan to drive improvement in this area.

We recognise the benefits that engaging with SME businesses can bring to both our organisation and the local economy. As such we do our best to make Home Group accessible to SME organisations. Examples of our work in this area include:

- We proactively structure our contract opportunities to ensure that where appropriate contracts are split into lots to make them more accessible to SMEs.
- We attend SME 'Meet the Buyer' events.
- We have voluntarily adopted the Supplier Diversity and Inclusion Code of Conduct and will support SMEs to build capacity and complete our Partner Registration Process.
- We deliver sessions for SMEs on how to access our opportunities and how to be successful through our procurement processes.
- We commit to providing a minimum of 10% of contractor spend via SMEs.



one
strawberry
lane

Newcastle's freshest workspace. Built for a new way of working.

One Strawberry Lane is c.7,000sqm/75,500sqft of innovative workspace in the centre of Newcastle. It's been designed and built to support new ways of working for all types of organisations.

Case study



Home Group's new office

One of the best examples to emerge from last year in terms of socially responsible sourcing came from the development of our new head office, One Strawberry Lane, in Newcastle City Centre.

Working in partnership with developers Ask Real Estate and construction company BAM, we delivered a social value return that was three times the national average.

As well as the social value delivered through the construction of the new building, the three partners supported local community groups and organisations with projects they would not have been able to deliver otherwise. The community fund has transformed green spaces and buildings for those groups.

The headline figures from the development and the community project include:

- 44% social value return
- 7 community projects supported with a value of £129k through the Community Fund
- 77% local spend
- 182 people engaged in industry workshops
- 31 local unemployed people into work
- 19 apprentices gained training on the project
- Grassroots sports supported
- Mental health and wellbeing initiatives for the workforce throughout

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

**Please don't
print me unless
you need to!**



www.homegroup.org.uk

Home Group Limited
(Co-operative and Community Benefit Society No: 22981R)
Regulator of Social Housing Registered No: L3076

