



# Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) Report 2023 / 2024

Our commitment to being a responsible and sustainable social housing provider



## Wakefield Families

The Healthier Wealthier Wakefield Families project provides support for poor families to help tackle any problems that could impact on a healthy household.

Support for... and children...



# Introduction

**WDH is West Yorkshire’s biggest social housing provider owning and managing over 32,000 homes within the Wakefield district and our wider operating area across the north of England.**

<p><b>Our vision</b> is to create confident communities.</p>	<p><b>Our mission</b> to inspire, transform and promote excellence.</p>	<p><b>Our values</b> to be creative, inclusive and work with integrity.</p>
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**We are committed to being a responsible and sustainable social housing provider.**

Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) plays a critical role in helping us to achieve our vision to create confident communities.

The ‘Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing’ was launched in November 2020, setting out a standard approach to ESG reporting for the social housing sector.

We published our first ESG Report for 2020 / 2021 and became an official adopter of the standard in December 2021.

With everyone likely to be impacted by long term sustainability challenges, ESG provides a framework which we and our peers in the social housing sector can use to drive improvement and increase transparency over our sustainability performance amongst our customers and stakeholders.

I hope you find our 2023 / 2024 report of interest.



**Andy Wallhead**  
Chief Executive

ESG reporting area	Theme	Alignment to UN Sustainable Development Goals		
Environmental Pages 04 - 09	Climate change 04	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	13 CLIMATE ACTION 	15 LIFE ON LAND 
	Ecology 08			
	Resource management 09			
Social Pages 10 - 18	Affordability and security 10	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 		11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 
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The UN Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve lives. They were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as part of The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, see [sdgs.un.org/goals](https://sdgs.un.org/goals)

# Environmental

## Climate change

This theme demonstrates how we are being responsive to climate change.

### Energy Performance Certificate rating of our homes

An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) measures the energy efficiency of our homes, giving each one an EPC rating of Band A to G.

Our aim is to improve all existing homes, where feasible, to a minimum of Band C by 2030.

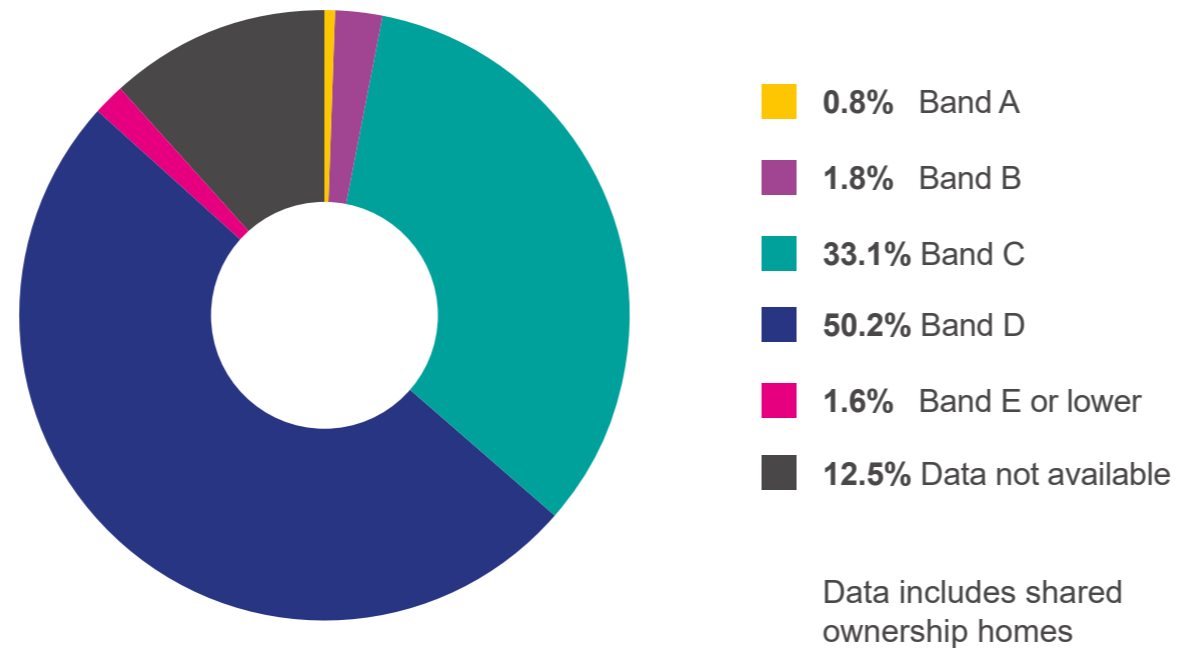
This will help reduce carbon emissions, tackle fuel poverty and improve the health and wellbeing of our residents.

During 2023 / 2024 we improved a further

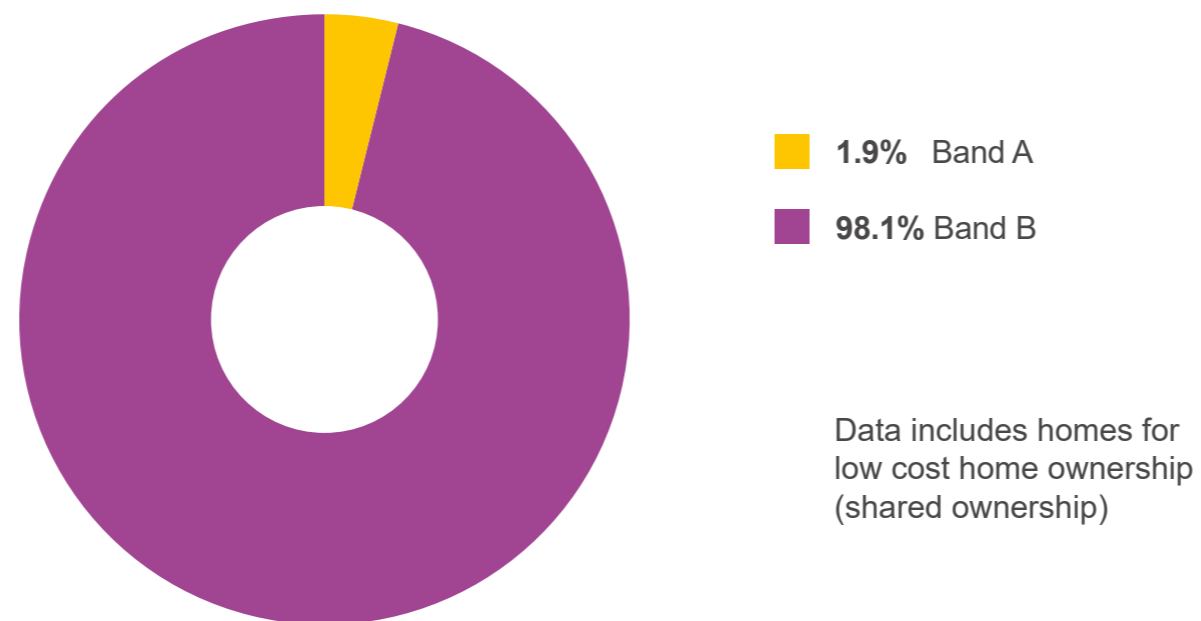
**873**

existing homes to EPC Band C

EPC rating of existing homes (homes completed before the 2023 / 2024 financial year<sup>1</sup>)



EPC rating of new homes (homes completed during the 2023 / 2024 financial year)



<sup>1</sup>EPC criteria under the SRS differ to that reported to the Regulator of Social Housing through the annual SDR return. This showed that at 31 March 2024, the EPC rating of 31,111 owned social housing units was as follows: 1% Band A, 4% Band B, 38% Band C, 48% Band D, 1% Band E or worse, 7% Not Known.

# Environmental



## Aiming for net zero

Our aim is to be net zero carbon across our business operations by 2030, ahead of the Government's 2050 target.

During 2023 / 2024 we commissioned consultants to help us to review and develop a roadmap for achieving net zero carbon operations by 2030, and to advise on best practice and alternative methodologies / options for decarbonisation.

We also commenced roll out of Carbon Literacy Training. Training our Board, Corporate Management Team and a number of employees across the business. All those trained developed 'carbon pledges' outlining the action they would take to help reduce WDH carbon emissions. This helped us to achieve carbon literacy accreditation.

We continue to take action to reduce our carbon emissions, including:

- actions to reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions to 2030 focussing on reducing gas, electricity consumption and transition of a proportion of fleet vehicles to electric.
- reducing waste and increase recycling across our offices and operations;
- further carbon literacy training to raise awareness of the carbon costs and impacts of everyday activities and motivate employees to reduce emissions across the organisation; and
- consideration of a revised target in line with the Science Based Targets Initiative encompassing all scopes of emissions (i.e. incorporating housing stock and supply chain) over a longer time period.



## Retrofit actions

Our aim is to improve all our homes to EPC Band C or above where feasible by 2030.

Since 2021 / 2022 we have improved 2,263 homes.

During 2023 / 2024 we spent £5.5 million which included some external funding to support our retrofit programme to help us to achieve our target for all existing home to be EPC Band C by 2030.

This included:

- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) funding to enable homes to receive cavity wall, loft insulation and underfloor installation.
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority Gainshare Fund to support energy improvement works to homes in high deprivation areas, delivering cavity wall insulation and solar PV panels.

A number of heat pump trials are ongoing to understand costs for WDH and also running costs for customers, as well as feedback on user experience.



During 2023 / 2024 we improved a further

# 873




existing homes to EPC Band C.

At 31 March 2024, 43% of our rental homes were rated EPC C or above.

At 31 March 2024, 50% of our rental homes were rated EPC Band D or worse. 7% are unknown.

# Environmental

Greenhouse gas emissions generated from our operations

	2023 / 2024	2022 / 2023
<b>Scope 1</b> 	<b>4,125</b> tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e Made up of: 2,913 tonnes from use of gas. 1,212 tonnes from use of our van fleet (white fleet) for transport.	<b>4,396</b> tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e Made up of: 3,205 tonnes from use of gas. 1,104 tonnes from use of our van fleet (white fleet) for transport.
<b>Scope 2</b> 	<b>686</b> tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e From electricity use.	<b>716</b> tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e From electricity use.
<b>Scope 3</b> 	<b>149</b> tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e Made up of: 105 tonnes from use of employee own vehicles (grey fleet) for business use. 34 tonnes from waste managed through our waste transfer station and corporate buildings 10 tonnes from water use.	<b>145</b> tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e Made up of: 97 tonnes from use of employee own vehicles (grey fleet) for business use. 38 tonnes from waste managed through our waste transfer station and corporate buildings. 10 tonnes from water use.
<b>Total CO<sub>2</sub>e</b>	<b>4,960</b> tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	<b>5,270<sup>2</sup></b> tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e



<sup>2</sup>2022 / 2023 emissions updated from 5,303 previously published due to revisions to Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions.

# Environmental

## Ecology

This theme demonstrates how we are promoting sustainability and protecting the environment across our neighbourhoods and estates.

### Enhancing green space and promoting biodiversity

We are committed to improving green space and promoting biodiversity.

Our Landscaping Team works with our grounds maintenance contractor, Tivoli Group Ltd, to improve how we manage our green spaces to increase biodiversity, for example by reducing grass cutting in some areas and creating wildflower meadows.

We are improving our approach to tree management and planting more trees on the land we own across our neighbourhood areas.

There are 24,500 trees on our land and we have a target to increase tree numbers by 1% per year. We planted 3,500 new trees during 2023 / 2024.

We are developing a Greenspace Framework to set out the key principles we will follow in the future, for managing and improving green space and increasing biodiversity across our estates and neighbourhoods.

Since January 2024, in line with legal requirements set out in the Environment Act 2021, we have a legal duty to consider biodiversity net gain in new build development as part of the statutory planning process.



Where a development has an impact on biodiversity, we are encouraged to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features to leave the biodiversity of a site being developed, in a better state than it was before.

Where we are unable to do this, we have to consider alternative conservation activities, known as 'biodiversity offsetting', designed to deliver biodiversity benefits in other ways, in compensation for losses on the site being developed.

### Strategy for managing and reducing pollutants

We are accredited to and audited against the ISO 14001 - Environmental Management System standard. This sets out requirements for managing the environmental aspects of our activities, to ensure legislative compliance and continuous improvement.

Our waste management procedures set out how we manage and dispose of hazardous waste and ensure it is segregated from non-hazardous waste before it is disposed of by our waste disposal contractor. We also work with our paint supplier to recycle paint cans and send our waste paint, where possible, to be turned into recycled paint.

In line with new legislation and guidance, we introduced a new procedure in January 2023 to fully segregate all Persistent Organic Pollutant waste within the transfer station.

We planted  
**3,500**  
new trees during  
2023 / 2024.  
We now have  
**23**  
wildflower meadow and  
relaxed mowing sites

# Environmental

## Resource management

This theme demonstrates how we are responsibly managing our use of natural resources.

### Strategy for using and increasing the use of responsibly sourced materials for building works

Our Sustainability Plan sets out our intentions to improve sustainability in the procurement of goods and services across all aspects of service delivery.

Our procurement rules ensure we consider how we can reduce environmental impact when procuring different goods and services.

We are continuing to embed principles to ensure sustainability is considered as part of the procurement process and that sustainable products and services are specified wherever possible.

### Strategy for waste management incorporating building materials

Our waste is managed and disposed of in line with government legislation. We ensure best practice in waste management through our environmental management system, which conforms to and is audited against the ISO 14001 standard.

Our waste transfer station is covered by an environmental permit, monitored by the Environment Agency. To meet permit requirements, our operating procedures and policies ensure the transfer station is managed correctly, waste is segregated, and the waste hierarchy is observed to focus on reducing, reusing, recycling and energy recovery from waste, wherever possible, to reduce disposal through landfill.

We also have a certified competence management system (CMS) for the waste transfer station. The CMS was certified to Version 5 standards in November 2022. This supports environmental permit compliance and demonstrates commitment to ensuring that employees interacting with the waste transfer station have the correct level of competence with regards waste segregation and the waste hierarchy.



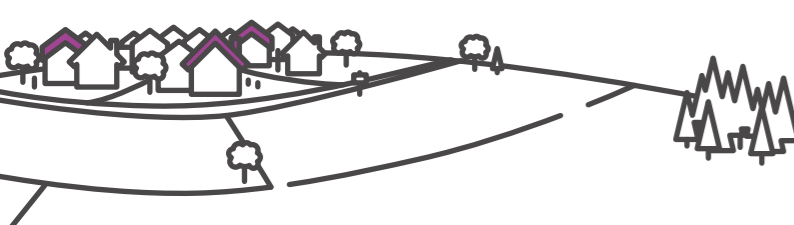
### Strategy for good water management

Water use only makes up a small part of our carbon footprint so we do not currently have plans to develop a strategy for water management. However, we continue to monitor our water use as part of our carbon reduction targets and act responsibly, to ensure this remains low.

To help our residents monitor and manage water use, new build properties are fitted with water meters in line with legislative requirements. In older homes without a water meter, residents are able to request one to be installed through their water supplier if they would like to have one.

During 2023 / 2024  
we recycled  
**57.7%**  
of our waste

The remaining waste is further processed to produce energy and the remaining ash is then used for producing aggregate, breeze blocks and other constructions materials.





## Affordability and security

This theme demonstrates how we are providing homes that are affordable to those on low incomes.

### Affordability of homes to rent

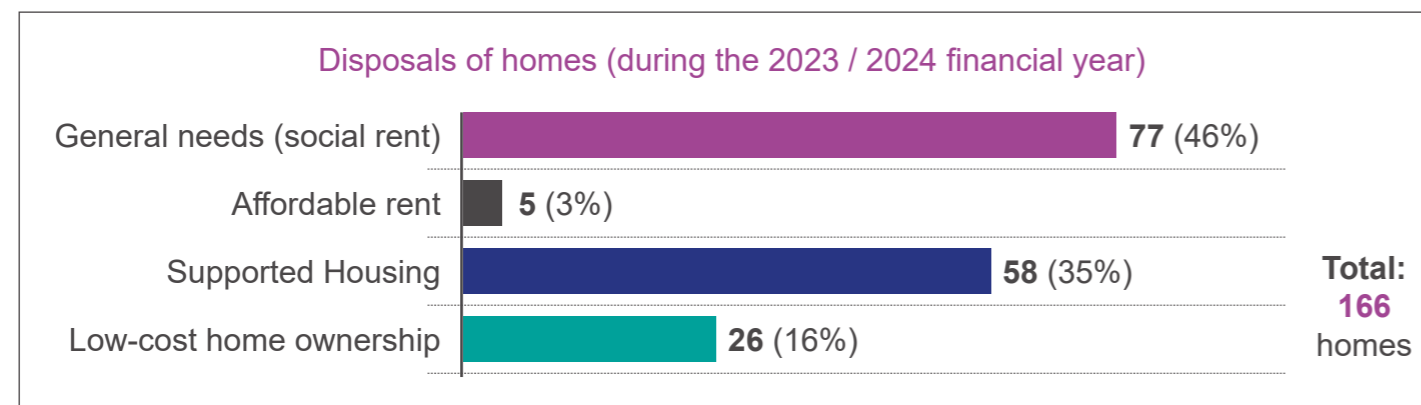
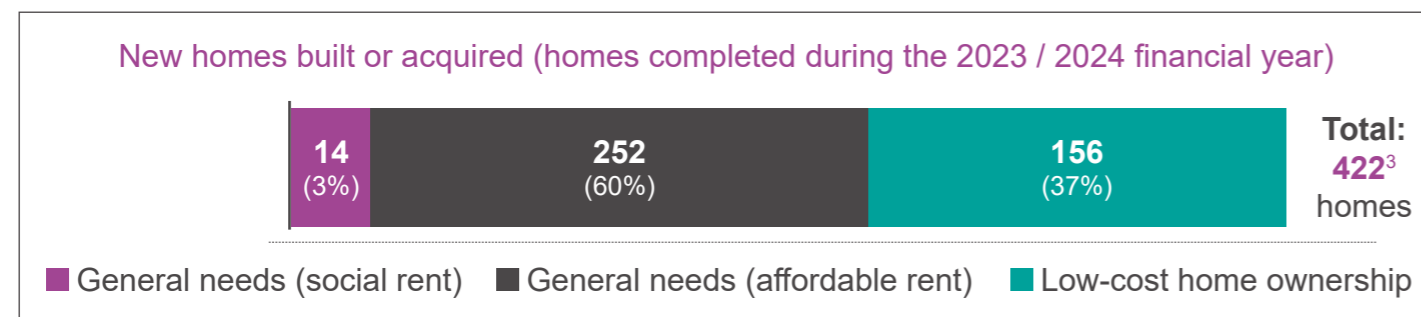
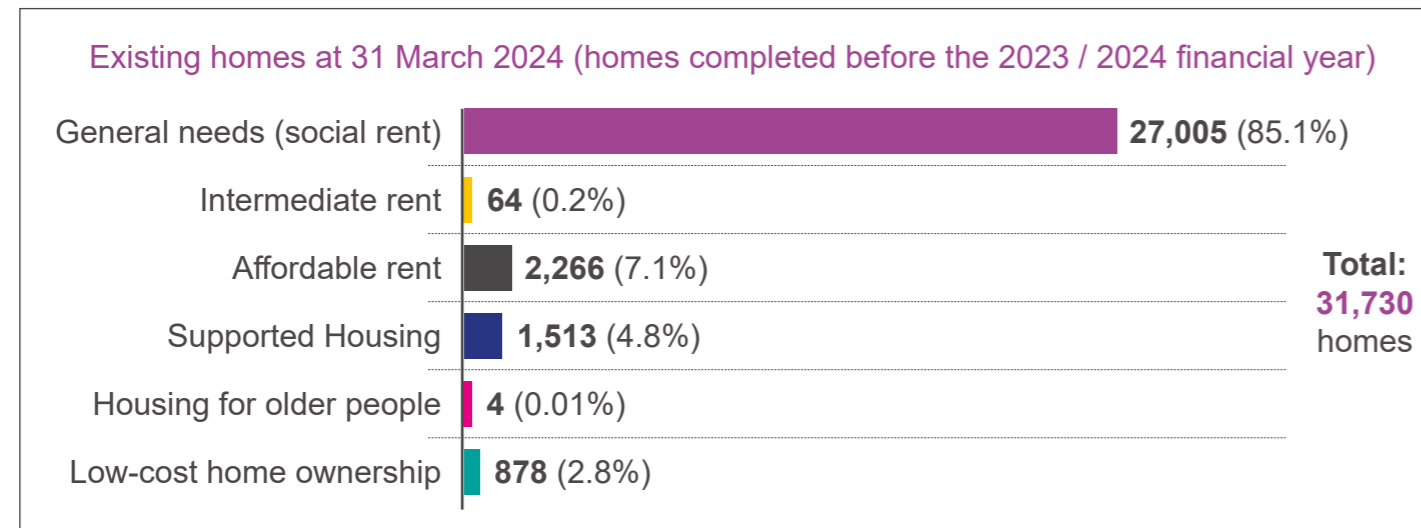
For homes subject to the rent regulation regime, the average weekly rent for April 2023 to March 2024, compared to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) was:

Number of bedrooms	Average WDH rent	Average LHA	Average WDH compared to LHA
Bed sit	£72.24	£115.07	<b>63%</b>
One	£83.11	£115.07	<b>72%</b>
Two	£94.68	£136.93	<b>69%</b>
Three	£104.82	£166.85	<b>63%</b>
Four	£115.43	£203.67	<b>57%</b>
Five or more	£125.03	£203.67	<b>61%</b>
<b>Overall average</b>			<b>67%</b>



# Social

## Share and number of our homes



### Reasons for disposal of our homes

We disposed of 166 homes for the following reasons:

- 75 sold to tenants under Right to Buy or Right to Acquire
- 60 homes plans to be demolished and replaced with new homes as part of regeneration schemes.
- 26 low-cost home ownership homes (shared ownership) now 100% owned by the tenant.
- 5 homes due to other sales and losses.

In 2023 / 2024 we built or acquired **422** new homes.

# Social

## Reducing the effect of fuel poverty on our residents

We have a target to improve our existing homes, where feasible, to a minimum of EPC Band C by 2030 and continue to invest in them to improve the energy performance of the worst performing properties and help to lower energy costs and reduce fuel poverty.

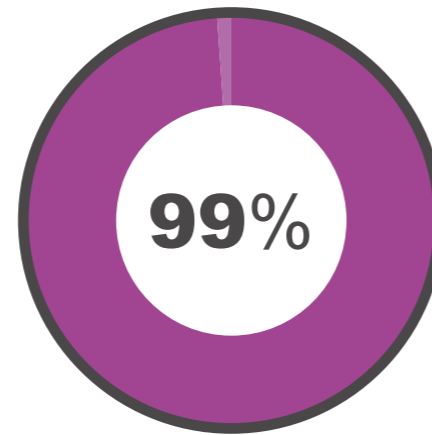
During 2023 / 2024 we improved a further 873 homes to EPC Band C.

We have partnered with Groundwork Green Doctors to offer residents a completely free of charge energy saving service, which provides one to one support to help reduce energy consumption.

## Providing fixed tenancy agreements

We offer a range of tenancy options.

99% of our homes for rent are rented to tenants on a tenancy agreement of at least three years or longer, providing long term security for our tenants.



We provide a range of services to support tenants to successfully maintain their tenancies.

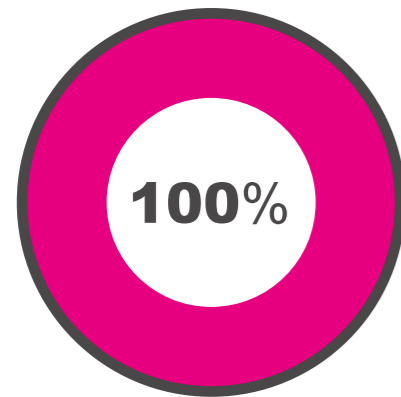
These include:

- our Tenancy Ready Team, who provide a range of support to those taking up a new tenancy;
- Cash Wise support to help tenants manage their finances and to help access grants and benefits; and
- Debt Team support for anyone struggling with not being able to pay their rent including support with accessing benefits and our Hardship Fund.



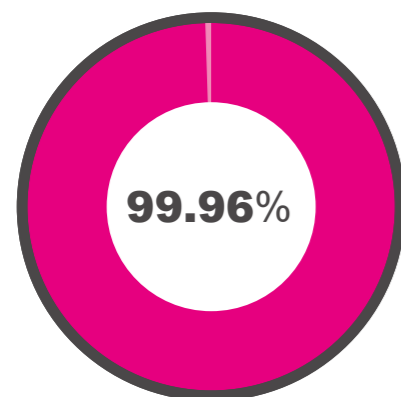
## Building safety and quality

This theme demonstrates how we are providing high quality homes and keeping residents safe in their homes.



**We completed checks on 100% of our homes requiring a ...**

- gas safety check.
- Fire Risk Assessment. (Fire risk assessments are required to be completed annually or every two, three or five years subject to the type of property).
- an electrical safety check.
- an asbestos management survey.
- a legionella risk assessment.
- a communal passenger lift (LOLER) inspection.



### Decent Homes Standard

**At 31 March 2024, 99.96% of our homes to which the Decent Home Standard applies, met the Standard. 11 out of 31,111 of our homes required to meet the standard failed to meet it.**

However, eight of these did meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing. We are taking action to bring these homes up to the required standard.

We undertake Housing Health and Safety Rating System risk assessments, based on criteria defined in the Decent Homes Standard alongside taking action where necessary to rectify any hazards identified to ensure homes continue to meet the standard.



### Managing damp and mould in our homes

We share information and advice on damp, mould and condensation through a dedicated video, fact sheet, and frequently asked questions section on our website.

We have set up dedicated working groups, made up of specialists from teams across WDH that look at how we deal with and resolve issues relating to damp and mould in our homes that are reported to us.

We have a specific Damp Mould and Condensation Policy and Procedures to deal with issues.

During 2023 / 2024 we completed a self-assessment against the recommendations made by the Housing Ombudsman Damp and Mould Spotlight Report and developed an action plan for identified gaps.

During 2023 / 2024 we received 2,839 reports of damp, mould and condensation (DMC) to our OneCall contact centre.

1,403 of these homes needed DMC works or treatment. 4.4% of our owned homes.

## Resident voice

This theme demonstrates how we listen to and involve residents and customers in making decisions about the services we provide.

### Resident satisfaction with WDH

Overall customer satisfaction is measured through our annual Tenant Survey\* in line with the new Regulatory Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

We have developed an action plan in response to the results of our most recent survey. Some of the things we have done recently include:

2023 / 2024

# 82.4%

of tenants and shared owners surveyed were satisfied



#### Complaints

Reviewing the complaints process to ensure customer experience and prior learning from complaints is incorporated, and that the policy continues aligns with the updated Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code.

Completing a review of 'Your Account' and our website to give tenants the ability to report incidents and request services.

#### Repairs

Emailing a new 'Guide to Repairs' to over 26,000 tenants to ensure they know what is their responsibility and what is WDH's, what is considered a rechargeable repair and the cost of rechargeable repairs.

#### Neighbourhood Charters

Producing new Neighbourhood Charters and communicating them to customers. We are using them to shape investment in neighbourhoods so our activities align with customer priorities. This will include environmental improvements and partnership working around key issues such as speeding, antisocial behaviour and grounds maintenance.

#### Anti social behaviour (ASB)

Producing a map of ASB and crime and disorder 'hotspots' using West Yorkshire Police and WDH's data to help determine priority areas for community activity aimed at preventing ASB and crime.

\* Our 2023 / 2024 survey was undertaken by telephone in July and August 2023. We received 2,512 responses.



## Resident voice

This theme demonstrates how we listen to and involve residents and customers in making decisions about the services we provide.

### Arrangements for residents to hold management to account

Our residents are at the heart of everything we do. We value feedback and take every opportunity to listen to their voice, to ensure it influences our decision making and shapes our services.

As part of our commitment to tenant involvement, we have adopted the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants Charter.

We provide a range of platforms to ensure meaningful engagement. These include:

#### Customer Panel

Our Customer Panel has enabled us to increase resident involvement in how we run and improve services, offering more digital forms of involvement. At the end of March 2024, the panel had just over 871 members.

#### Neighbourhood Panels

There are seven panels, one for each neighbourhood in the Wakefield district. Tenants form the majority membership of each panel and each one has a tenant chair.

The panels help to determine local priorities and contribute to the development and challenge of local plans and engagement strategies. They also support the work of the Customer Committee.

#### Board and Committees

The work of our Board is supported by a number of committees which includes the Customer Committee and Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee.

The Customer Committee considers and challenges matters relating to operational and local activities including housing management. It has tenant representation from each of the seven Neighbourhood Panels and an independent member.

During 2023/2024 we recruited into a new role of independent member for our Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee.

#### Total Inclusion Group

The Total Inclusion Group is made up of customer and employee representatives.

The role of the group is to monitor and challenge our progress and to champion and influence how we embed diversity, equality and inclusion and promote opportunity for everyone.

#### Resident Involvement Monitoring Group

The role of the Resident Involvement Monitoring Group is to monitor and challenge our resident involvement activities, as a critical friend.

The group scrutinises the local engagement strategies for each of our neighbourhoods, to ensure that our actions meet the needs of residents and provide assurance that they deliver value for money and achieve positive impacts for residents.

#### Customer insight and engagement events

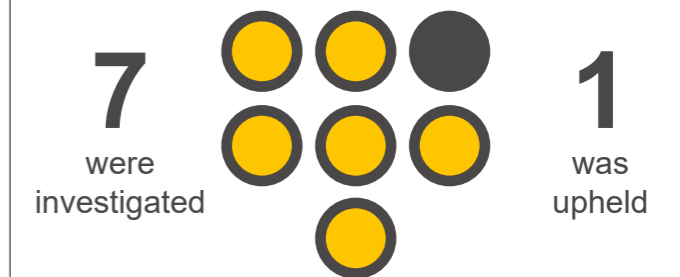
We complete an annual programme of Customer Insight activity, including our annual Tenant Survey, surveying residents and customers on a range of issues.

We also conduct a range of other engagement activities and events each year relating to projects and initiatives across our neighbourhoods.

#### Housing Ombudsman complaints

1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

##### Complaints



In the 12 months to 31 March 2024, seven complaints completed through our Complaints Procedure were investigated by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The Ombudsman determined there had been maladministration and service failure in the handling of 1 complaint.

We have responded to the Ombudsman findings and made improvements to respond to the recommendations, to try to prevent complaints of a similar nature in future.



Tpas membership enables us to learn from good practice and improve our approach to resident involvement.

We were the first housing association to achieve this accreditation in 2019 and were reaccredited with the Tpas Exemplar accreditation in 2023, for a further two years.

# Social

## Resident support

This theme demonstrates how we support our residents and the local community.

We provide a range of additional services for our residents and communities, and work with key partners to support people to develop and live healthy confident lives.

Our achievements during 2023 / 2024 included:

Cash Wise support to tenants and customers, including:

Supporting access to **1,325** emergency food provisions.

Unlocking **£3.4 million** of income in benefits, grants and utility savings.



Providing debt support to our tenants, including:

Supporting access to **£540,000** of grants from the WDH Hardship Scheme.

Preventing eviction for **1,089** tenants at risk of eviction.

Unlocking **£1.2 million** in grants to reduce rent and utility debt.



Worked with partners to deliver

**460** hours of activities and programmes to

**2,544** young people.

Community Employment Advisors engaged with

**746** new clients supporting:

**124** individuals to find employment and

**192** referrals for training.



Occupational Therapy Team support to tenant health and wellbeing including:

**247**

assessments for rehousing on medical grounds.

**970**

minor adaptations to tenants homes.

# Social

Care Link telecare and 24 hour responder services including:

Responding to

**2,866**

falls in the home, preventing calls to 999 and 111 and admissions to hospital.

Supporting

**40 tenants**

on our Training for Employment Programme in environmental assistant, caretaking and office based roles.

Providing

**£16,582**

of Foundation Grants to support

**17**

tenants with training and development.

Working with the NHS to provide Housing Co-ordinator, Mental Health Navigators and Wellbeing caseworkers support to

**1,315**

clients on a range of health and wellbeing issues.

Providing

**£66,983**

of grants to support local Foodbanks.





## Placemaking

This theme demonstrates how we support residents and the wider community to create better places for people to live.

### Supporting community groups

Our Tenant Involvement Officers and Resident Involvement Officers work with schools, colleges and local community and resident groups across our seven neighbourhood areas in Wakefield.

They attend local resident group meetings to offer advice and guidance on local issues raised, support groups to advertise and events in their local communities and attend events providing information about a range of services offered by us.

We encourage the development of tenant and resident associations (TARAs) who work in their local area, to campaign for better services, improvements to the environment and tenants' homes and organise activities that bring people closer together.

Our Communities Together Agreement sets out the support we provide to TARAs, ranging from grants, help with funding applications, general information and advice and membership of Tpas, a national tenant participation organisation.



**St Mary's School, Wakefield** - Providing a new home for 38 birch trees moved from the Chantry area, which WDH is redeveloping for new housing and replanted by WDH and WDH grounds maintenance contractor, Tivoli Group Limited, after being donated by Wakefield Council.

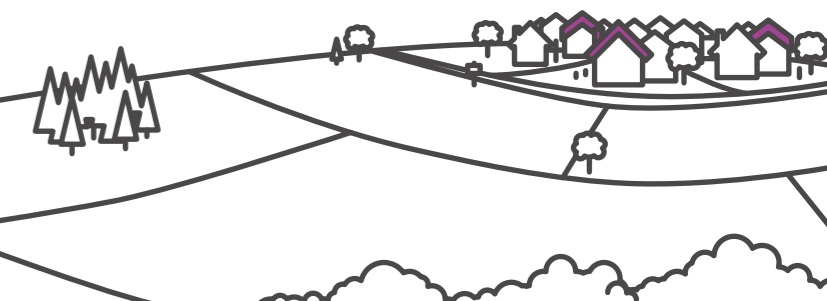


**Highfield School, Ossett** - In partnership with our grounds maintenance contractor Tivoli Group limited, creating a wilding area planting over 200 assorted hedgerow whips and two wildflower areas, installing raised beds and planting a number of large trees. Our Apprentice Team also installed a 'bug house'.



**Tombridge** - Supporting bulky waste collection, litter picking and bulb planting.

We provided  
**£5,987**  
in grants to support  
the activities of TARAs  
during 2023 / 2024.



# Social

## Community regeneration

We are supporting communities and working with partners to deliver community regeneration, creating thriving, vibrant places to live. A number of projects, are underway and will be delivered over the years ahead.

### Project Pontefract

We are working in with Wakefield Council and other partners to regenerate Pontefract, through the council's Reconnecting Pontefract Masterplan. This sets out proposals for the redevelopment of priority areas around Pontefract Town Centre.

We transformed the former fire station in Pontefract during 2022 / 2023, into Newport House, providing 37 high quality, secure, one and two bedroom homes for affordable rent.

We are also continuing to progress the regeneration of our Horsefair Estate, Pontefract which is made up of 10 residential blocks of medium and high-rise accommodation. The next stage of the regeneration programme will see the redevelopment of Warren House.

### Kirkgate, Wakefield

In December 2020, WDH and Wakefield Council agreed a partnership to deliver affordable homes on the former Chantry House site in Kirkgate, Wakefield owned by Wakefield Council.

The development is part of the Council's larger regeneration plans for Kirkgate and is set to deliver 50 properties for a mix of affordable rent and shared ownership.

Planning permission was approved in March 2024 and we hope to start work on site towards the end of 2024 for completion towards the end of 2026, early 2027.



**Newport House, Pontefract**



**Horsefair Estate, Pontefract**



**Chantry House site, Wakefield**

### Tombridge Crescent, Kinsley, Knottingley

Building on the success of Phase 1, Phase Two of the regeneration works and the new build site which will create 27 more homes for our customers in this popular area.

The transformative project will bring improvements to 101 of our homes as well as some private owners who have been given the opportunity to be part of the regeneration.

Homes will benefit from new roofing and external wall insulation, as well as new driveways, boundary walls, fencing, drop crossings and new garden turf.

The programme of re-investment is expected to finish on schedule in October 2024.



**Tombridge Crescent, Kinsley**

# Social

## Community safety and antisocial behaviour

Ensuring our residents feel safe in their homes and neighbourhoods is important to us.

We have a robust approach to managing nuisance and antisocial behaviour (ASB).

We are a member of the Wakefield Together Community Safety Partnership and work closely with our partner agencies, which include the police and Wakefield Council, to deal with issues through a combination of support, diversion or enforcement.

Our Tenant Involvement Officers attend Police and Communities Together meetings held by the police and local Councillors, with residents and businesses, to report and respond on issues within our neighbourhoods.

Our dedicated Community Safety Team specialises in managing ASB and we fund additional support, including five seconded police constables and five police community support officers.

During 2023 / 2024  
we resolved  
**6,064**  
complaints of antisocial  
behaviour and nuisance  
on our estates.



## Improving our estates and neighbourhoods

Our Estates Team works across our communities engaging with and supporting our tenants.

Their work includes carrying out street audits to identify any areas that require improvements, consulting with tenants and Neighbourhood Panels to identify and agree priorities. Action plans are in place for each neighbourhood panel to respond to issues raised from our 'On Your Street' consultation undertaken in 2022, with our 32,000 households.

During 2023 / 2024  
we spent

**£573,249**

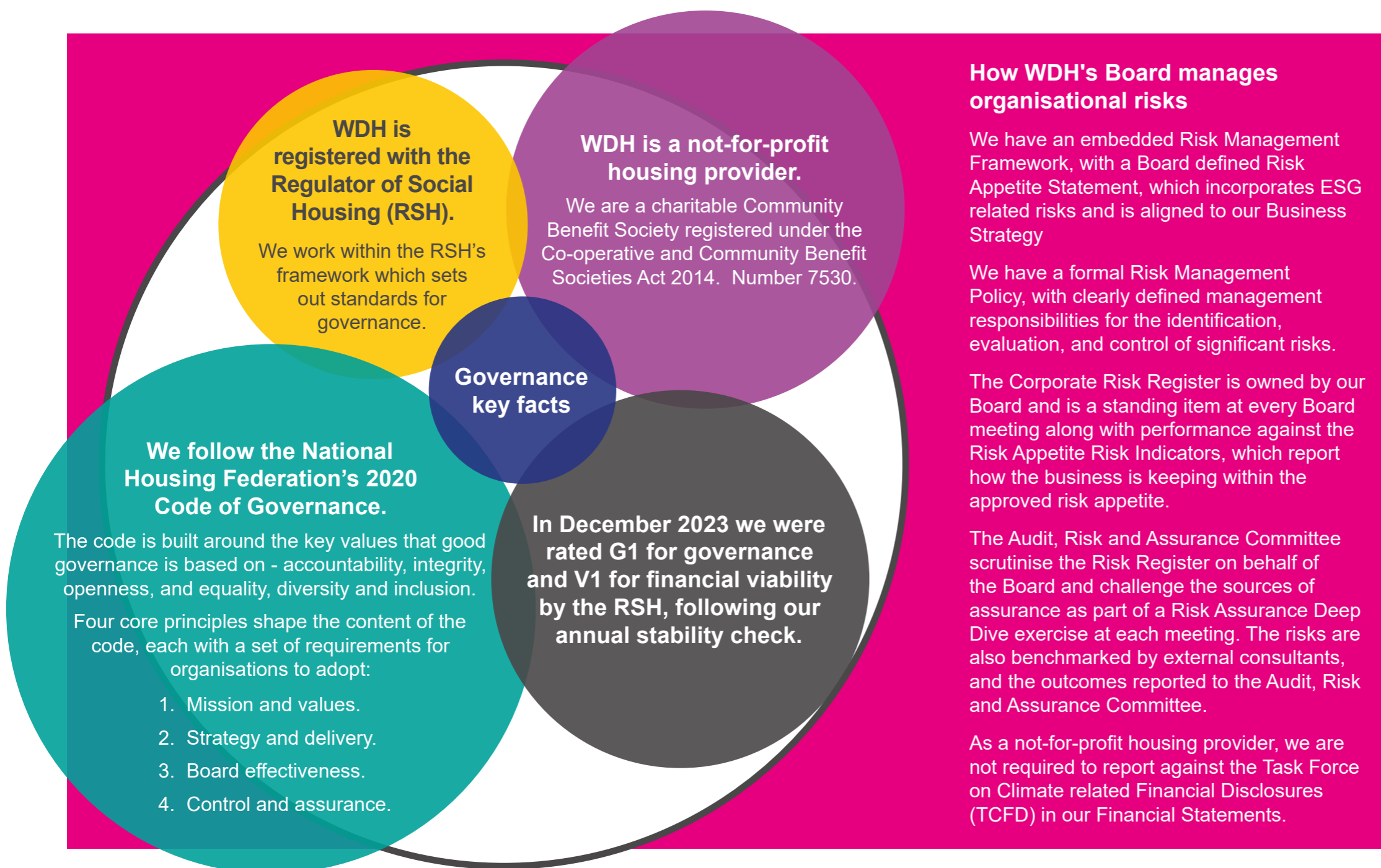
on schemes to enhance  
estate environments  
and increase feelings of  
security.



## Structure and governance

This theme demonstrates how well we are governed.

Governance underpins everything we do, ensuring effective decision-making and that we are accountable to stakeholders.



### How WDH's Board manages organisational risks

We have an embedded Risk Management Framework, with a Board defined Risk Appetite Statement, which incorporates ESG related risks and is aligned to our Business Strategy

We have a formal Risk Management Policy, with clearly defined management responsibilities for the identification, evaluation, and control of significant risks.

The Corporate Risk Register is owned by our Board and is a standing item at every Board meeting along with performance against the Risk Appetite Risk Indicators, which report how the business is keeping within the approved risk appetite.

The Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee scrutinise the Risk Register on behalf of the Board and challenge the sources of assurance as part of a Risk Assurance Deep Dive exercise at each meeting. The risks are also benchmarked by external consultants, and the outcomes reported to the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee.

As a not-for-profit housing provider, we are not required to report against the Task Force on Climate related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) in our Financial Statements.



### Adverse regulatory findings

We are obliged to report on any adverse regulatory findings.

We have not been subject to any adverse regulatory findings (for example, data protection breaches, bribery, money laundering, Health and Safety Executive breaches or notices) in the last 12 months that resulted in enforcement action or equivalent.

## Board and Trustees

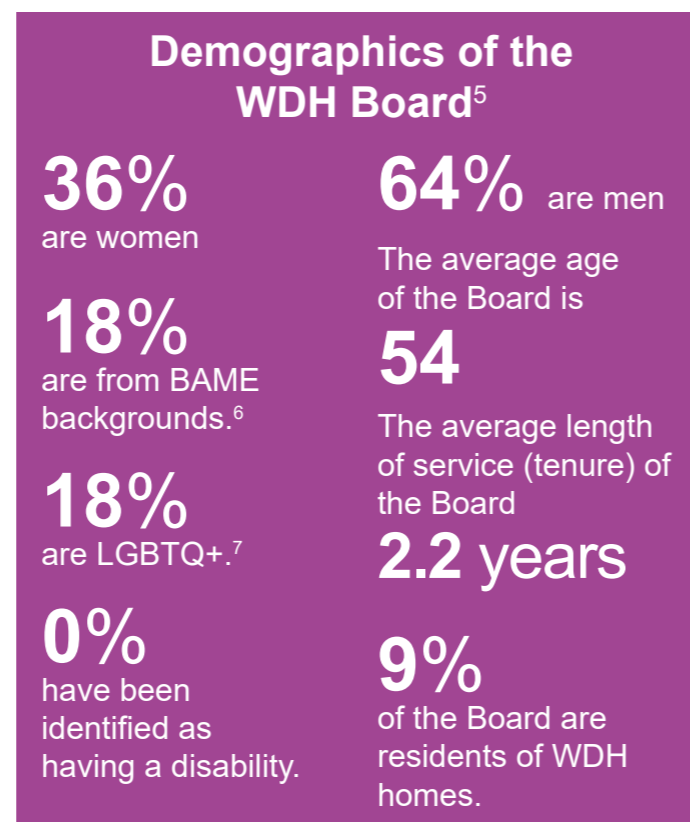
**This theme demonstrates how we ensure we retain a high quality Board.**

Our Board is responsible for setting the overall strategy of the organisation. The Board decides the policies and reviews performance and is legally accountable for the ownership of our properties and running the organisation. It meets the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing, demonstrating effective governance, financial viability and control, and properly managed services to tenants.

### Board diversity and resident voice

Board diversity improves the quality of the decision making process as it brings new voices to the table from a range of different backgrounds. It helps us innovate and ensures we improve our customer insight and focus, by welcoming different perspectives and ideas to this governance group.

We consider Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into the recruitment and selection of board members and senior management, in line with our recruitment and selection policies. Working with colleagues at Housing Diversity Network (HDN), we have a Board Trainee programme to help support succession planning and increased Board diversity.



Resident voice is heard at a Board and senior management level through a range of mechanisms ( see Page 13 ) and through consultation outcomes considered in reports presented to our Board and its committees.

We have one tenant Board member and a number of tenant representatives sit on our Customer Committee, along with our Independent Customer Committee member.

During 2023 / 2024 we recruited into a new role of independent member for our Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee.

## Board and assurance - key facts



Board turnover was 36% and Management Team turnover was 33% in the last two years to 31 March 2024.<sup>9</sup>



During 2023 / 2024 one of the four Board members who sat on the Audit and Risk Committee had recent and relevant financial experience as qualified accountants with extensive experience in roles across the private and public sector. We do not have a specific remuneration committee. Decisions on remuneration are made in line with our Standing Orders, which includes Board approval.

**100%**

100% of our Board members are non-executive directors of WDH, meaning they are not part of the executive management team responsible for the day to running of WDH.



A succession plan was discussed and approved by the Board on 25 May 2024 as part of the annual review of the statement of preferred composition.



The current external auditor, BDO, has been responsible for auditing our accounts for three years (Since 2022 for audit of 2021 / 2022 accounts).



An independent review of Board effectiveness commenced in April 2022 and was reported to the Board December 2022.

### Managing conflicts of interest

Board members are required to complete an annual declaration of interests and inform us if there are any changes to their interests during the year in line with our Code of Conduct.

At Board meetings, members are required to raise any potential conflicts of interest for the agenda item being discussed. The member will be asked not to contribute to the discussion or vote on the decision and may be asked to leave the meeting while the specific agenda item is being discussed.

<sup>5</sup> Board data based on 11 members in post at 31 March 2024.

<sup>6</sup> Includes all other ethnic groups except white british.

<sup>7</sup> Data relates to those identifying as LGB+ only.

<sup>8</sup> Board comprises a maximum of 11 members, there were four resignations from the Board over the period and four new appointments. The Management Team comprises the Chief Executive and five Directors. There were two resignations over the period.

## Staff wellbeing

This theme demonstrates how we are a responsible employer and support our employees.

### Gender pay gap

Our mean gender pay gap for the 2023 / 2024 reporting year was 13.4%. This means there was a 13.4% difference between the average pay of males and females employed within our organisation. The gap increased from 11.3% in the previous year.

We continue to have a greater proportion of females in lower paid grades and a greater proportion of males in higher paid grades. This results in the average male hourly rate being greater than the average female hourly rate which contributes to our pay gap.

During 2022, we established our Gender Pay Gap working group and developed our Gender Pay Gap action plan to help us continue to reduce our gap in future years, and ensure equal representation at all levels of our organisation.

Our mean gender pay gap for the 2023 / 2024 reporting year was

13.4%



### Employee pay and the real living wage

We have paid the Real Living Wage to all employees (excluding contractors and apprentices) since January 2022.

### CEO median worker pay ratio.

For the 2023 / 2024 financial year the ratio was 6.1:1.

### Promoting equality, diversion and inclusion across our employees

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is about recognising, valuing and celebrating our differences.

We are committed to diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work and as employees in the organisation we all have a responsible role to play. We make sure all new policies, services and procedures, as well as any changes to them, are equality analysed to make sure we promote equal opportunity and we do not directly or indirectly affect any groups with Protected Characteristics.

### What we do to drive EDI forward...

We provide a range of diversity awareness training every year for both our employees and tenant representatives.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Plan is aligned with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

We are members of the Housing Diversity Network (HDN) and other associations, where we get access to up to date briefings, reports and consultancy advice. We use HDN to scrutinise our key policies and services and make sure we get an independent perspective.

Our approach to Diversity and Inclusion is scrutinised and challenged by our Total Inclusion Group that meets on a quarterly basis.

This includes representatives from our seven Neighbourhood Panels and local champions to make sure the services we provide our tenants are inclusive and recognise difference.

We have a number of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), which are sponsored by a member of the Corporate Management Team (CMT). These are:

- EmbRACE – which supports all ethnic minorities.
- Pride Network.
- The Future Workforce for people aged 25 and under.
- Women@WDH - which includes looking at the Gender Pay Gap.

# Governance

## Supporting the physical and mental health of our employees

We place a strong focus on supporting the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees. Initiatives in place include:

- Our WorkSmart approach which provides flexibility to employees to manage their working day around their daily lives.
- A range of training courses to help our employees maintain good mental health and wellbeing and provide additional support for colleagues through employee volunteer Mental Health First Aiders.
- An Employee Assistance Programme which is a confidential support service delivered by a third party, providing 24-hour counselling access for employees and their immediate family members.
- Access to an external Occupational Health Unit and to physiotherapy referrals.
- Providing cycle storage, shower and locker facilities enables employees to cycle to work and participate in activities such as running, before or after work and during lunch breaks.
- Employee wellbeing and other events throughout the year.



## Supporting the professional development of employees

We place a strong focus on the professional development of our employees.

Initiatives in place include:

- annual appraisals;
- an annual learning and development programme offering a range of courses and qualifications;
- graduate trainee placements; and
- apprenticeship programmes.

We are responding to the requirements set out in the Social Housing (Regulation) Act, through delivery of additional training, to ensure relevant managers maintain a professional housing management qualification.

During 2023 / 2024 we:

Provided training to  
**1,200**  
employee delegates.

Supported **82**  
employees to achieve  
formal qualifications.

Supported **10**  
employees on our  
extended leadership  
programme.

Appointed **5** new  
graduate trainees.

Recruited **11** new  
apprentices.

## Supply chain

This theme demonstrates how we promote social value and reduce the impact on the environment when procuring goods and services.

### Considering social value when procuring goods and services

The Social Value Act 2012 is statutory legislation designed to ensure that social value possibilities are explored. We have an obligation to consider the legislation in service-related contracts where the value is calculated to be above the Public Contract Regulations (PCR) 2015 thresholds.

This places a duty on us to consider how the service being procured could contribute to 'economic, environmental and social wellbeing or benefit' to the areas we operate in.

We consider what level of social value can be delivered when we procure services for any significant contract, even if it falls below the PCR 2015 thresholds.

On construction related contracts, we consider if the procurement can contribute to providing direct employment and skills training opportunities in the local community.

We recognise the purchasing activities we engage in can also help to shape, support and regenerate the local economy and promote the growth of small and medium businesses (SMEs) around the Wakefield district.

To aid this we break down larger requirements, where relevant, to make procurement opportunities more accessible and attractive to SMEs.



In the interests of supporting the local economy and where possible, for quotations under £10,000, we seek to invite quotations from local businesses based within the Wakefield district.

We have a Contractor Minimum Standards Charter, which sets out a range of expectations, including those related to creating social value.

During 2023 / 2024  
as a result of our  
awarded contracts  
we created:

3

new apprenticeships  
and supported

6

ongoing  
apprenticeships.

### Considering environmental impact when procuring goods and services

We consider how we can reduce our environmental impact when procuring different goods and services.

We are continuing to embed principles to ensure sustainability is considered as part of the procurement process and sustainable products and services are specified where possible.

During 2023 / 2024,  
we spent over  
**£30 million**  
with local suppliers.





# Future improvements

We continue to take a range of actions to contribute to improved Environmental, Social and Governance including:

- Taking a 'fabric first' approach to improve the energy efficiency of our homes by improving insulation, to reduce carbon emissions, energy consumption and energy costs for residents. We have a target to improve all of our existing properties to a minimum of EPC Band C by 2030, where feasible.
- Trialling low and zero carbon heating systems in some of our homes to gain resident feedback and evaluate system performance, to help inform any potential future decisions on moving to alternatives to gas heating in our existing homes.
- Reviewing specifications for our new build homes to reduce carbon emissions and comply with the 2025 Future Homes Standard which is currently being developed by Government.
- Implementing measures to reduce our carbon footprint and achieve our aim to be net zero carbon across our business operations by 2030.
- Implementing measures to improve the management of our green spaces and increase biodiversity, including planting more trees and wildflower meadows.
- Working with partners to deliver regeneration schemes across our estates and neighbourhoods.
- Continuing to take action to reduce our gender pay gap and provide ongoing support to employee health and wellbeing.
- Embedding our Supplier Charter across all procurement contracts to improve environmental sustainability and social value.



# Vision

to create confident communities

# Mission

to inspire, transform and promote excellence

# Values

to be creative, inclusive and work with integrity



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This document is also available  
electronically at [wdh.co.uk](http://wdh.co.uk)



This document is also available in  
other formats on request.



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Calls to OneCALL may be recorded for training purposes.



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Wakefield and District Housing Limited

A charitable Community Benefit Society registered under the Co-operative  
and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Register Number: 7530

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0345 8 507 507 or email [onecall@wdh.co.uk](mailto:onecall@wdh.co.uk)

The information in this publication was correct at the time of publishing and  
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They reflect WDH's current view and no assurance can be given that they will  
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