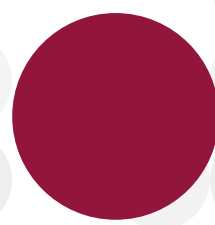




Our Environmental, Social and Governance Report for 2022/23



Introduction



North Wales Housing Association Limited was founded in 1974 and today we are a successful Registered Social Landlord regulated by the Welsh Government providing homes and delivering services to over 2,700 households across North Wales.

Although we have always recognised our environmental, social and governance responsibilities and that they have always been at the heart of everything we do, we have only recently adopted The Sustainability Reporting Standard (SRS) and this is the first year that we will report on our performance against each of the 48 criteria in the standards that has been summarised into 12 themes under the 3 ESG areas, namely Social, Environmental and Governance.

Social

We fully understand the value and importance of a good home, and we aim to make a positive contribution to our local communities by continuing towards our corporate vision - To make a difference to people's lives, by providing homes to be proud of and creating communities in which they can thrive. We care about our communities and want to see them flourish.

Our 2021-24 Corporate plan sets out our ambition and aspirations and our intentions towards our customers, people, our homes and our finances. Our aim is to have a significant positive impact in North Wales, and the desired outcomes in this Corporate Plan will be how we measure our success.

We recognise our responsibility in meeting the ambitions of the Welsh Government in terms of its new homes target, zero evictions target and the seven goals of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act and focus our activities to contribute towards these shared goals.

Environmental

Development is core to our vision for the future. As we build more affordable homes, we will be extending our use of modern methods of construction to create environmentally conscious and sustainable developments.

We are also currently working with the Carbon Trust to develop a Sustainability strategy which details how we intend to improve the way we manage our approach to sustainability and ensure we are developing our business in a sustainable way. Alongside this work, we continue to invest in decarbonisation works which will lead to more energy efficient homes for our residents that will also translate into lower energy bills.

Governance

The Regulator (Welsh Government) issues Regulatory Judgements for Governance and Tenant Services, and Financial Viability. Our latest Regulatory Judgement was published by Welsh Government on 6th January 2023. We are pleased to report that it was confirmed as "Compliant" for both Governance and Tenant Services, and Financial Viability, which is the highest possible result. The following page shows all of the 12 themes we are reporting against:

ESG AREA	Theme	Theme Name	Description
Social	T1	Affordability & Security	This theme seeks to assess the extent to which North Wales Housing provide long-term homes that are genuinely affordable to those on low incomes. The theme is made up of five criteria including the tenure mix of new and existing properties, the security of tenure and fuel poverty.
	T2	Building Safety & Quality	This theme seeks to assess how effective North Wales Housing are at meeting its legal responsibilities to protect residents and keep buildings safe. The theme is made up of three criteria, disclosing gas safety checks, fire risk assessments and meeting Decent Homes Standards.
	T3	Resident Voice	This theme seeks to assess how effective we are at listening to and empowering residents. The theme is made up of three themes that cover board scrutiny, complaint handling and resident satisfaction.
	T4	Resident Support	This theme seeks to assess the effectiveness of the initiatives that we run to support individual residents. The theme is made up of two criteria that cover: What support is provided and how successful it is?
	T5	Placemaking	This theme seeks to highlight the wider set of activities that North Wales Housing undertake to create well-designed homes and places that meet local needs and provide great places for people to live and enjoy. The theme is made up of one criterion, a space for the North Wales Housing to give examples of their placemaking or place shaping work.
Environmental	T6	Climate Change	This theme seeks to assess how the activities of the North Wales Housing are impacting on climate change, and how they are mitigating the physical risks of climate change. This theme considers current practice, as well as the changes being made to improve performance in the future. The theme is made up of six criteria, including the distribution of EPC ratings, emissions data, climate risk mitigation plan and environmental strategy.
	T7	Ecology	This theme seeks to assess how the North Wales Housing is protecting the local environment and ecology. The theme is made up of two criteria around managing pollutants and increasing biodiversity.
	T8	Resource Management	This theme seeks to identify the extent to which the North Wales Housing has a sustainable approach to materials in both the construction and management of properties. The theme is made up of three themes that cover sourcing materials, water management and waste management.
Governance	T9	Structure & Governance	This theme seeks to assess the North Wales Housing's overall structure and approach to Governance. The theme is made up of six criteria covering the regulator, code of governance, risk management and ownership.
	T10	Board & Trustees	This theme seeks to assess the quality, suitability and performance of the board and trustees. The theme is made up of eleven criteria including demographics of the board and the experience and independence of the board.
	T11	Staff Welfare	This theme seeks to assess how staff are supported and how their wellbeing is considered. The theme is made up of five criteria including salary information, additional support for staff and average sick days.
	T12	Supply Chain	This theme seeks to assess if the North Wales Housing procures responsibly. The theme is made up of two criteria assessing how social value and environmental impact are considered.

Social

T1 – Affordability and Security



C1 – For properties that are subject to the rent regulation regime, report against one or more Affordability Metrics.

In 2021/22 we created an affordable rent policy which takes into consideration our residents' circumstances and income. Creating a benchmark for all rents based on Joseph Rowntree Foundation's affordable rent recommendations. Our aim is to wherever possible make sure our rents fall within 28% of resident's income with rents only and 33% of residents' income with Rents and Service Charges.

All of our rents and service charges passed our affordability criteria for 2022/23.

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates are used to calculate the amount of benefit that can be paid to tenants to cover their housing costs. North Wales Housing are in 5 local authority areas. Ynys Mon and Gwynedd use the North West Wales LHA rates, Conwy and Denbighshire use the North Clwyd LHA rates and Wrexham uses the Wrexham BRMA LHA rates. To make the comparison to LHA more meaningful, separate analysis is provided for these three LHA rental market areas.

Number of Bedrooms	Ave Rent Charged as % LHA in North Clwyd	Ave Rent Charged as % in North West Wales	Ave Rent Charged as % in Wrexham BRMA
1 - Bed	103%	102%	93%
2 - Bed	82%	89%	90%
3 bed	80%	85%	N/A
4 - Bed	72%	77%	N/A

We consult with our residents on an annual basis about the affordability of their rent and service charges.

The consultation carried out in the year revealed that the majority of our residents believed our rents and service charges to be affordable. Our rents are also among the lowest in North Wales.

Social



C2 – Share, and number, of existing homes (owned and managed) that were completed in the last financial year, allocated to general needs (social rent), intermediate rent, affordable rent, supported Housing, housing for older people, low-cost home ownership, carehomes, Private Rented Sector or other:

Our primary focus remains to provide affordable homes for residents that would not be able to afford non-social rents and those that are the most vulnerable in our society. 87% of our total stock has been allocated based on this basis as shown in the table below:

Tenure / Property Type	Number of homes allocated as of 31 March 2023	% of homes
General Needs (Social Housing)	2,061	76%
Intermediate Rent	83	3%
Supported Housing	295	6.7%
Older People	195	7%
Low-Cost Home Ownership	83	3%

C3–Share, and number, of new homes (owned and managed) that were completed in the last financial year, allocated to general needs (social rent), intermediate rent, affordable rent, supported Housing, housing for older people, low-cost home ownership, care homes, Private Rented Sector or other:

The majority of the homes we develop remain for social rents as shown below:

Tenure / Property Type	Number completed in 2022/2023	%
General Needs (Social Housing)	16	80%
Intermediate Rent	4	20%
Supported Housing	-	-
Older People	-	-
Low-Cost Home Ownership	-	-

Social



C4 – How is North Wales Housing trying to reduce the effect of fuel poverty on its residents?

Our Income Officers and Money Advice and Income Officers have discussed impacts of rising energy prices with 100% of the residents they have had contact with. This has been part of our wider strategy of providing support to residents that have low financial resilience, addressing acute symptoms of Fuel Poverty such as self-disconnection and under heating. We have commissioned a regional Energy Wardens service that will provide residents with specialist energy efficiency and saving advice.

A key part of mitigating the impacts of the Cost of living crisis is to ensure that the financial resilience of low-income tenants who are 'self-payers' are not disproportionately impacted by both the Cost of living increases and any agreed rent increase for 2023-24. For instance, faced with insurmountable debt related to energy, housing costs and other essential expenditure.

Since January 2023 we have been approved partners for the Fuel Bank Foundation. This means that we can provide electronic vouchers to residents to top up their electricity and gas. Partnering with the Fuel Bank Foundation means that we can use existing Welsh Government funds to help our residents, rather than duplicating existing provision. To date, we have processed 117 applications and our residents have received over £5,000 in cash assistance.

Our decarbonisation project provides new energy efficient technologies to households, with our Energy Wardens providing follow up advice and guidance to residents on how to get the best out of their heating systems.

The Income team works with our Maintenance teams to identify residents who have tell-tale Fuel Poverty indicators, such as self-disconnection and damp and mould due to insufficient heating of the property. Through joint approaches and a concerted effort, we work hard to engage with residents who for a multitude of reasons are hard to reach.

Our Money Advice and Income Officer has worked with our three Extra Care scheme managers to ensure our residents who are on a communal energy supply received government assistance to mitigate the high energy costs. This meant that our elderly residents (many who are on a fixed income) have received about £55,600 of cash assistance.

C5 – What % of rental homes have at least a three - year tenancy agreement?

99.6% of our General Needs and Older Persons properties are let on long term contracts, providing maximum security of tenure for our residents.

We have 7 properties that are leased to the Local Authority for special support services. These are leased on less than 3-year contracts and account for less than 0.3% of our total stock.

We have excluded Supported Housing here where there is an expectation that people will not require the support for 3 years and are therefore let on 12-month contracts.

Social

T2 - Building & Safety Quality



C6 – What % of homes with a gas appliance have an in-date, accredited gas safety check?

As of 31 March 2023, 100% of our homes had an in-date accredited gas safety check in place.

C7 – What % of homes meet the national housing quality standard?

As of 31 March 2023, 100% of our homes meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS).

C8 – What % of buildings have an in-date and compliant Fire Risk Assessment?

As of 31 March 2023, 100% of our homes had an in-date and compliant Fire Risk Assessment in place.

T3 - Resident Voice

C9 – What arrangements are in place to enable the residents to hold management to account for provision of services?

We have a comprehensive complaints management process with a nominated officer monitoring this to ensure that the process and deadlines within are met. Complaints are reported to Board members through our KPIs.

We have an active Residents Panel made up of resident and board members that hold the responsibility for scrutinising our services and performance to ensure that all residents receive the highest possible standards of service. The group meets on a bi-monthly basis to ensure that residents have the opportunity to be involved in decision making at the panel. They approve the Tenant Participation Strategy and receive annual updates on progress against the strategy.

We also have a Tenants forum which is a less formal setting for our residents to attend on a bi-monthly basis. Its aim is to provide an opportunity to obtain information, influence decision making, and strengthen services. A meeting will be dedicated to a particular topic, allowing members to learn more about NWH and provide input and feedback. During 2022/23, they fed into our Tenant Participation Action Plan, Rent Affordability Consultation, various projects including the Housing Management System and QED.

The Sounding Board is a database of residents who are interested in acting as a 'reader of leaflets', forms and policies that provide valuable feedback to us so that we can act upon them before issuing the various documents being reviewed.

We constantly try to engage with our residents through various questionnaires and surveys and tailor our services wherever possible based on the feedback received – e.g, the results of the rent and service charge consultation told us that residents did not understand their service charge sheets and wanted to know more about what services they were paying for and what they should expect as a service from us. Consequently, a service charge review is currently being undertaken during 2023/24, the service charge sheets are being redesigned as a direct result of the feedback received.

Social

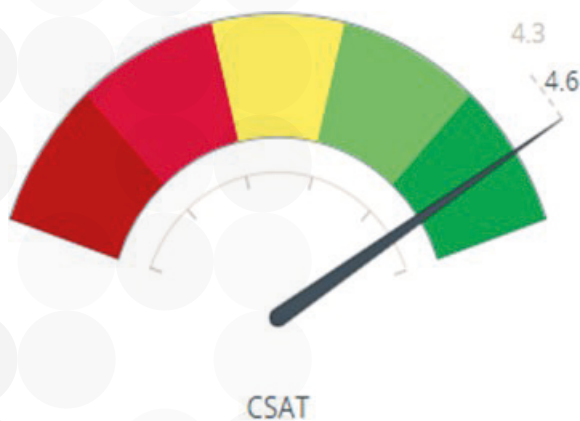


C10 – How does North Wales Housing measure Resident Satisfaction and how has Resident Satisfaction changed over the last three years?

We measure resident satisfaction through a number of transactional and perception surveys. Our largest sample survey is our STAR survey we carry out with all of our residents. We last conducted this survey in November 2022 to the required sample and method specified by Housemark, the sector's largest benchmarking club. 810 surveys were completed. Satisfaction levels were higher or stable across all indicators compared to last years results, with the overall satisfaction rate up 5 points to 83% of residents happy with our service, and 80% satisfied with the neighbourhood where they live, up 2 points from the previous year.

We carry out transactional analysis of our Customer Service Contacts and our Repairs Service via a system called Rant and Rave. This allows customers to voice any concerns and for both individual issues and trends to be identified promptly and responded to. This is reported to the Residents panel.

Customer Service Score YTD:

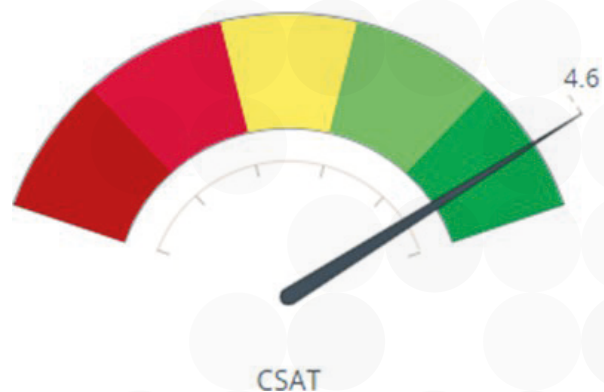


Residents who have had a repair carried out, or have been in contact with our customer service department, receive a survey focusing on overall satisfaction with the process, as well as open-ended question to enable residents to share their views. These are reported to the Senior Leadership Team once a month and trends are identified so that steps can be put in place if needs be. Consultation told us that residents did not understand their service charge sheets and wanted to know more about what services they were paying for and what they should expect as a service from us. Consequently, a service charge review is currently being undertaken during 2023/24, the service charge sheets are being redesigned as a direct result of the feedback received.

Transactional Repairs Satisfaction was 93% for 22/23

Transactional Satisfaction with Customer Contact was 87% for 22/23

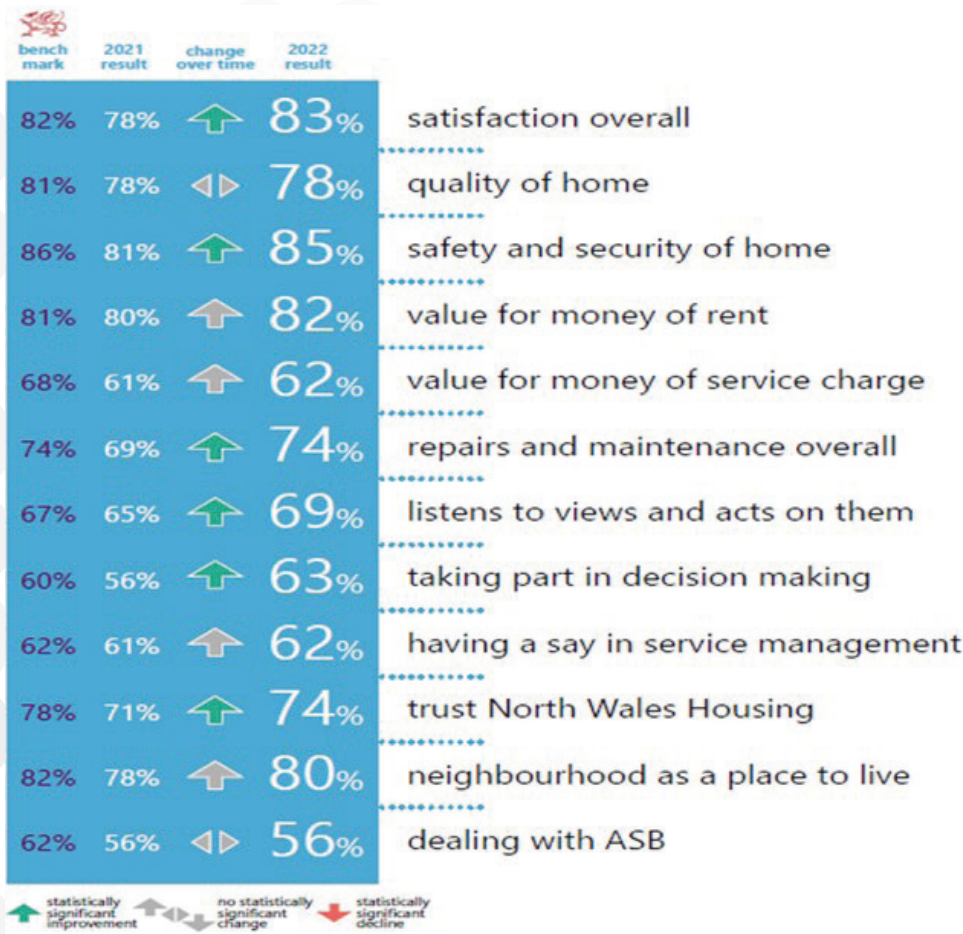
Repairs and Maintenance Score YTD:



Social



Our 2022 STAR Survey results and direction of travel across the different satisfaction areas are summarised in the table below. Satisfaction levels increased in all but one area and stayed the same in that one. Large improvements were seen in overall satisfaction, repairs and maintenance, taking part and decision making and listens to views and acts on them:



C11 – In the last 12 months, how many complaints have been upheld by the Ombudsman. How have these complaints (or others) resulted in change of practice within North Wales Housing?

NWH have had no complaints upheld by the Ombudsman in the last 12 months.

Social

T4 - Resident Support



C12 – What support services does North Wales Housing offer to its residents. How successful are these services in improving outcomes?

We have 3 main service areas. Older Persons Housing (including Extra Care), Supported Housing and General Needs Housing.

General Needs:

In General Needs we can refer to Floating Support from our own Supported Housing team. We offer mediation via professional mediators for appropriate Antisocial Behaviour cases. We also resource, refer in to or provide direct support for; Financial Inclusion; Energy Wardens; Hoarding Service; Actif North Wales; and advocacy services. Additionally, we work closely in partnership with stakeholders to help ensure joined up service provision with the likes of Police, Local Authority, Social Services etc. Where identified, we carry out physical adaptation works so that our residents can live safer and longer in their homes. During 2022/23, we carried out 26 such works, the satisfaction of which stood at 96.2%.

We have many budgets within our housing teams set up to improve our communities, achieve tenancy sustainment, enhance the works carried out at voids, and provide furniture through a local partner.

As a result of all of the above, we help people to sustain their tenancies which has contributed towards achieving a low annual resident turnover of 6%.

Older Persons:

Support Services offered to residents in the Older Persons Service are extensive and include housing advice, promoting independence, health and well-being, community alarms, keeping safe and secure, welfare benefits and forms completion, Blue Badge applications, equipment and adaptations, digital inclusion, checks for safeguarding and hoarding, Home Fire Safety referrals, Falls Prevention, Energy Advice, building/maintaining relationships and support to maintain tenancies.

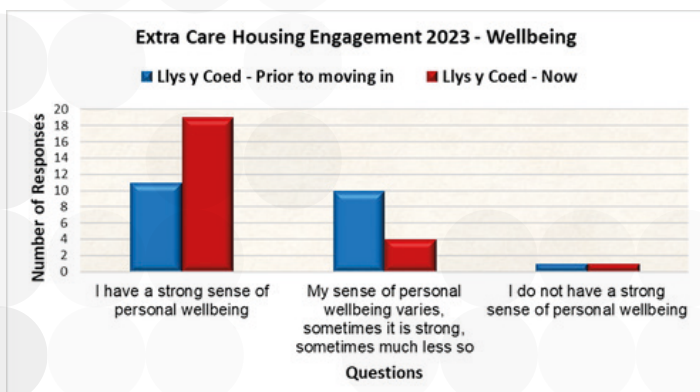
In the Older Persons Department, housing support services are provided formally through the Housing Support Programme for our three extra care schemes. The recorded Outcomes of these are measured by completion of 6 monthly returns to the Local Authorities and reported to Welsh Government.

In the other two schemes that do not receive Housing Support Grant the Outcomes are measured informally through Survey responses.

In addition, Well-Being Visits are carried out to General Needs Tenants over the age of 55; these have provided additional positive outcomes for residents which are reported to our Residents Panel and Board of Management on a 6 monthly basis.

The services provided are very successful in improving outcomes as evidenced in the organisation's STAR Survey and our own Quality of Life Surveys.

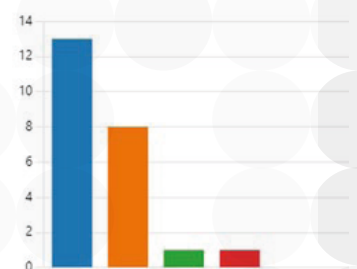
The following is a sample of the data gathered from our Quality of Life Surveys measuring the success of improving Outcomes:



11. Rwy'n teimlo'n saff a diogel Byw yng Nghae Gareddd / I feel safe & secure Living in Cae Gareddd

[More Details](#) [Insights](#)

- Cytuno yn gryf / Strongly agree 13
- Cytuno / Agree 8
- Nixtral / Neutral 1
- Anghytuno / Disagree 1
- Anghytuno yn gryf / Strongly di... 0
- Gwell gennyf peidio ateb / Prefe... 0



Social



Supported Housing:

NWH provides over 360 shared and self-contained supported housing units for vulnerable people including the homeless, people with drug and alcohol problems, mental health issues, ex-offenders, people with learning disabilities, young offenders and young people leaving care.

We also deliver floating support for NWH general needs customers and outreach and resettlement services for rough sleepers and people living in emergency temporary accommodation. We work to help our Local Authority partners prevent and resolve homelessness and we always aim to achieve sustainable positive outcomes with our customers.

Most of our accommodation and support services are focused in Conwy and Gwynedd, and we also provide supported accommodation through a range of managing agents in Denbighshire and Ynys Mon.

We also help Local Authorities meet their responsibilities under the Social Care and Wellbeing Act, by providing accommodation for over 100 people with learning disabilities.

We supported more than 700 people during 2022-23. 68 of these were young people 16-21 years old, and the majority of those over 21 were aged under 55. 24% were women and 76% were men.

Our current services include:

3 x 24/7 staffed homeless hostels (Directly Managed) 21 units in Bangor, 13 units in Colwyn Bay

Self-contained hostel move on accommodation (Directly Managed) 2 units in Bangor, 8 units in Colwyn Bay

Shared supported accommodation for young people LGBTQ+ (Agency Managed – Llamau) 3 units in Denbighshire

Self-contained supported accommodation for ex-offenders (Agency Managed–NACRO) 4 units in Conwy, 2 units in Gwynedd

Shared accommodation to support mental health and wellbeing (Directly Managed) 16 units in Conwy

Self-contained dispersed supported accommodation (Directly Managed) 30 units in Conwy, 42 units in Gwynedd

Shared supported accommodation for people with learning difficulties or personality disorders (Agency Managed – Social Services) 63 units in Conwy, 7 units in Denbighshire, 7 units in Gwynedd, 6 units in Isle of Anglesey

Self-contained Housing First supported accommodation for former rough sleepers, 2 units in Isle of Anglesey

Floating Support – 10 units supporting NWH general needs residents in Conwy

2 x Women's refuges (Agency Managed – Gorwel and ADAS) 5 units in Gwynedd, 5 units in Conwy

Shared supported accommodation for care leavers (Directly Managed) 3 units in Bangor

Self-contained supported accommodation for people recovering from substance misuse (Agency Managed – Adfeiriad and the Wallich) 6 units in Conwy, 6 units in Gwynedd

Gwynedd Rough Sleeper Outreach and Resettlement Service–supported 281 people between April and October 2021

Social



Outcomes of Support

We fully involve people in their support plans and provide activities to enable people we support to:

- ✓ have positive and healthy relationships with people in their life,
- ✓ feel safe in their homes and communities,
- ✓ have independence and control of their day to day lives,
- ✓ be engaged in something meaningful to them,
- ✓ have good physical health,
- ✓ manage the impact of any substances dependency,
- ✓ have good mental health and wellbeing,

Money Advice and Financial Inclusion services:

All of our Income officers are trained to deliver money advice to our residents. We also have expanded the team to also include two specialist Money Advice and Income Officers who will deal with the more complex cases and manage our Hardship Fund.

These services are delivered to all tenure types and are often our residents who are in the most need. The work done here by the team is steered through our Anti-Poverty and Financial Inclusion Strategy that was approved during the year. The results of this service for 2022/23 were as follows:

✓ **100 residents received formal money advice and financial inclusion services**

✓ **Helped 47 Households to claim £25,000 of unclaimed Social Security Benefits**

✓ **£2,100 was achieved in the form of Discretionary Housing Payments**

✓ **Assisted 56 households receive Welsh Water's Social Water Assist / Water Sure Tariff**

✓ **£5,000 of assistance was received from the Fuel Bank Foundation**

✓ **Over £600k of Financial Gains recorded by households that received Money Advice from the Income Team**

Social

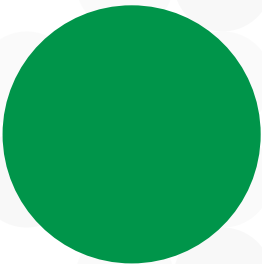
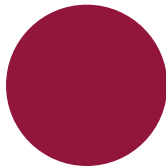
T5 - Placemaking

C13 – Provide examples or case studies of where North Wales Housing has been engaged in placemaking or placeshaping activities.

All our new build schemes go through Welsh Government's Technical Scrutiny where much emphasis is placed upon placemaking. Our schemes are always, therefore, designed to take into account people, the community, movement, identity and the public realm.

However, this is limited for already developed schemes at present but we have just launched our first iteration of our Neighbourhood Plans which seek to tailor the services delivered in each of our identified Neighbourhoods. This has included collating our knowledge of fixed and community assets for each Neighbourhood.

A communal garden on one of our estates in Llandudno has been fully renovated with wild flower areas, benches and play equipment. This has been funded through social value commitments from one of our contractors in collaboration with our Grounds Maintenance Team.



Environmental

T6 – Climate Change



C14 – Distribution of EPC ratings of existing homes (those completed before the last financial year).

As of 31st of March, 2023:

EPC Rating	Number	%
A	16	1%
B	372	15%
C	1716	69%
D	350	14%
E	23	1%
F-G	0	0%

C15 – Distribution of EPC ratings of new homes (those completed in the last financial year).

Of the 20 units completed in 2022/23, their EPC ratings are as follows:

EPC Rating	Number	%
A	16	80%
B	4	20%

Environmental



C16 – Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions.

The carbon footprint for North Wales Housing for the financial year 2019/20 was calculated to be 6,118 tCO₂e. We completed scope 1 and 2 carbon footprint.

The Scope 1 emissions (direct combustion of fossil fuels) accounted for 62% of the overall footprint, with Scope 2 emissions (purchased electricity) accounting for the remaining 38%. 94.1% of these emissions arose from our housing stock. We continue to carry out works to improve the footprint of our properties.

We have worked with the Carbon Trust to progress against our decarbonisation strategy and will be further developing this in 2023/24 to include actions to reduce our emissions, support residents, adopt sustainable approaches to the way we work operations, and work towards a decarbonised future - this include considering scope 3 emissions.

C17 – What energy efficiency actions has North Wales Housing undertaken in the last 12 months?

We successfully secured grant funding from the Welsh Government's Optimised Retrofit Programme (ORP) to carry out Decarbonisation during 2022/23. We also separately funded further works. In total, Decarbonisation works were carried out on 97 properties with the lowest energy and carbon performance, the works ranging from installing internal/external wall insulation, loft and roof insulation, air source heat pumps, heat retaining storage heaters and Solar Panels.

Since work began in 2020, we have carried out Decarbonisation works on a total of 359 of our homes. We are on-site at a further 17 homes and works are planned for 147 more homes during 2023/24.

C18 – How is North Wales Housing mitigating the following climate risks: Increased flood risk & Increased risk of homes overheating.

Further work is required to assess climate risk for our existing stock.

However, with new developments, we undertake an assessment of flood risk when we perform technical due diligence. National Resources Wales flood maps are reviewed as part of the development process and provide us with the category of the site and determine whether the development can go ahead.

We also undertake a full flood risk assessment as part of the planning process to show what mitigation measures are required for the scheme.

Building Regulations were updated in 2022 to also ensure that tenants are protected from overheating in their homes when moving into one of our new developments.

C19 – Does North Wales Housing give residents information about correct ventilation, heating, recycling etc? Please describe how this is done.

We have recently reviewed our damp and mould procedures. When a person reports any concerns around damp and mould a qualified surveyor will assess the property to establish cause and remedies.

Advice will be provided by the surveyor as well as a general advice leaflet. After 3 months, a Neighbourhood Officer will attempt to visit to see how things are going and reissue advice as needed.

Environmental



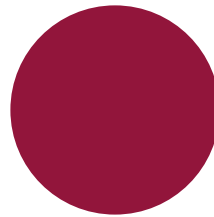
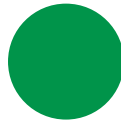
T7 – Ecology

C20 – How is North Wales Housing increasing Green Space and promoting Biodiversity on or near homes?

At North Wales Housing we are actively working on improving biodiversity on our schemes.

Collaborating with organisations like PlantLife and Local Places For Nature who have provided valuable expertise and resources to help fund our plans to create:

- ✓ A fruit orchard
- ✓ Wildflower areas on 4 of our scheme Information boards
- ✓ Bee and insect boxes
- ✓ Bird Boxes



We are planning on setting up a trail camera on one of our older persons schemes. This will allow tenants to see nature on their doorsteps and also understand the importance of biodiversity and its role in supporting wildlife by seeing what habitats have been created for birds, insects and hedgehogs from the wildflower meadows.

Our in-house grounds maintenance team have been attending conferences and workshops specialising in biodiversity to further increase their skills and knowledge.

These have given the team valuable insights into various aspects of ecological management, native plant identification, wildlife habitat creation and sustainable landscaping practices. These events have also created networking opportunities with local experts, ecologists and professionals in the field of biodiversity which will enable us to develop this area further.

C21 – Does North Wales Housing have a strategy to actively manage and reduce all pollutants? If so, how does North Wales Housing target and measure performance?

At present, we do not have any immediate plans to completely stop using glyphosate-based herbicides. However, we recognise the importance of minimising their usage and are actively working on ways to reduce their application across our schemes. This approach aims to strike a balance between effective weed control and our commitment to environmental sustainability.

We have examined the Cardiff Council project report, which evaluated three different methods for killing weeds, including glyphosate-based herbicides. The report concluded that glyphosate was found to be most efficient and cost-effective in comparison to the alternative methods tested.

While we continue to utilise glyphosate-based herbicides, we are actively exploring alternative methods for weed control. This includes looking into other forms of environmentally friendly herbicides and exploring mechanical and manual weed control methods.

Environmental

T8 – Resource Management



C22 – Does North Wales Housing have a strategy to use or increase the use of responsibly sourced materials for all building works? If so, how does North Wales Housing target and measure performance?

Currently, North Wales Housing does not have a strategy in place however there is an emphasis to use locally sourced materials. Our Growth Strategy includes use of Modern Methods of Construction and off-site manufacturing techniques to speed up construction and in turn will encourage the use of more sustainable construction materials.

Going forward, we plan to enhance our work in this area, determine specific targets and measure our performance for both Development construction as well as ongoing Maintenance of properties.

C23 – Does North Wales Housing have a strategy for waste management incorporating building materials? If so, how does North Wales Housing target and measure performance?

No strategy for the above in place currently. In terms of Developments, waste resulting from a new build project would be the responsibility of the Main Contractor.

C24 – Does North Wales Housing have a strategy for good water management? If so, how does the North Wales Housing target and measure performance?

No strategy or data at present.

Governance

T9 – Structure & Governance



C25 – Is North Wales Housing registered with the national regulator of social housing?

North Wales Housing is registered with, and regulated by, the Welsh Government.

Our registration number is 18922R.

C26 – What is the most recent regulatory grading/status?

The most recent regulatory grading received from Welsh Government in January 2023 for 2021/2022 confirmed our status as “compliant” for both Governance (including service delivery) and Financial Viability.

This is the highest status that can be awarded.

C27 – Which Code of Governance does North Wales Housing follow, if any?

North Wales Housing has adopted the Community Housing Cymru Code of Governance.

C28 – Is North Wales Housing Not-For-Profit? If not, who is the largest shareholder, what is their % of economic ownership and what % of voting rights do they control?

Established in 1974, North Wales Housing Association is a registered charity under the Co-operative and Community Benefits Societies Act 2014 and is a Not-For-Profit organisation.

C29 – Explain how North Wales Housing’s board manages organisational risks.

North Wales Housing has an overarching Risk Assurance Framework, with an established Risk Management Strategy, a detailed and comprehensive Risk Register and a high-level Risk Appetite Statement.

The Strategy sets out North Wales Housing’s standardised approach to the management of risk.

The Risk Register is reviewed and updated regularly, to gain assurance that controls continue to be effective, actions are delivered on time, responses are effective, and to enable the identification of when further action is necessary.

The Risk Appetite conveys the Board’s appetite for risk in various areas of the business and is updated annually to reflect corporate responsibilities and the current operating environments.

Based on NWH’s Corporate Plan and our operational processes, the following categories of risk have been identified:



Customer
Colleagues
Resources
Growth
Governance and Legislation

Risk management at NWH is built upon the following principles:

- Ultimate responsibility for managing risk and setting/applying the risk appetite lies with the Board.
- The Audit and Risk Committee provides assurance to the Board that there is a sufficient and systematic review of the risk management arrangements throughout the organisation.
- Responsibility for oversight of the implementation of this strategy rests with the Finance and Resources Director and the Senior Leadership Team.
- Day to day risk management involves all Board members and staff.

The organisation’s approach to Risk Management is also reported as part of the annual accounts reporting.

Governance



C30 – Has North Wales Housing been subject to any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months (data protection breaches, bribery, money laundering, HSE breaches etc) –that resulted in enforcement or other equivalent action?

North Wales Housing has not been subject to any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months.

T10 – Board and Trustees

C31 – What are the demographics of the board? And how does this compare to the demographics of North Wales Housing’s residents?

The Board currently has seven members, all of whom are non-executive directors. As of October 2022, North Wales Housing’s Board was made up as follows:

- 57% Women; 43% men
- 14% with a disability
- 0% of Board members are BAME
- The average age of a Board member is 56
- The average length of service of our current Board membership is 5 years

This compares to our tenants as follows:

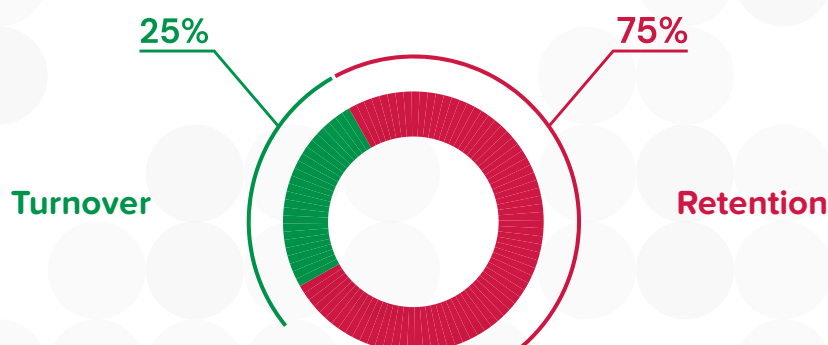
- 47.14 women; 52.84% men
- 15% have reported that they have a disability. However, please note that we do not hold this data for 50% of our resident base or they prefer not to share this information with us.
- 0.81% are BAME. We do not hold this data for 33.5% of our tenant base or they prefer not to share this information with us.

Increasing Board diversity is a priority for North Wales Housing and the Board is committed to ensuring that it is representative of the communities in which it works.

C32 – What % of the board AND management team have turned over in the last two years?

- Board turnover over the last two years is 25%.
- Management Team turnover over the last two years is 25%.

Management and Board turnover over the last two years



Governance



C33 – Is there a maximum tenure for a board member? If so, what is it?

The maximum tenure for a Board member is nine years.

This comprises three terms of three years.

C34 – What % of the board are non-executive directors?

100% of the Board are non-executive directors.

C35 – Number of board members on the Audit Committee with recent and relevant financial experience

There is one Board member on the Audit & Risk Committee with recent and relevant financial experience. The Chair of the Committee, joined the Board and the Audit & Risk Committee in 2018. He is currently Head of Financial Accounting at Bangor University and has a wide range of financial and management accounting skills.

He also has extensive external and internal audit management experience along with practical experience of complying with regulatory systems and governance having previously worked at PricewaterhouseCoopers and Waterford Wedgwood and trained with District Audit in North Wales. He has a degree in European Finance and Accounting and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

C36 – Are there any current executives on the Remuneration Committee?

North Wales Housing has a Governance Committee and remuneration is included in this Committee's terms of reference.

100% of the members on the Governance Committee are non-executive directors.

C37 – Has a succession plan been provided to the board in the last 12 months?

The Board Recruitment, Selection and Succession Policy was recently reviewed by the Governance Committee.

A succession Plan, based on the tenure of Board members, is presented to the Board annually in July.

C38 – For how many years has North Wales Housing's current external audit partner been responsible for auditing the accounts?

Our external auditors were appointed for 5 years, with the option to extend by a further 2 years following a tendering exercise in October 2020.

At 31st of March 2023, they have therefore been our external audit provider for two and a half years.

C39 – When was the last independently-run, board-effectiveness review?

A full independent governance review was carried out by Campbell Tickell during the spring and summer of 2022, culminating in the presentation of the review's findings to the Board in October 2022.

C40 – Are the roles of the chair of the board and CEO held by two different people?

Yes.

C41 – How does North Wales Housing handle conflicts of interest at the board?

The Board has a Conflict of Interests register. All Board meetings have a standard agenda item dealing with declarations of interest, which are called for by the Chair.

On the rare occasions of any interest being declared, the Board member would remove themselves from the discussion, decision, or any voting on the matter.

Governance

T11 – Staff Wellbeing



C42 – Does North Wales Housing pay the Real Living Wage?

The organisation pays all staff except Apprentices (who are paid at the National Minimum Wage for their age), the Real Living Wage or above.

C43 – What is the median gender pay gap?

The gender pay gap at North Wales Housing as at 31st March 2023 is: median **-2.37%** and mean **-12.42%**

C44 – What is the CEO: median-worker pay ratio?

For 2022/23 NWA's ratio of CEO to median worker pay was 4.65.

C45 – How does North Wales Housing support the physical and mental health of their staff?

NWH has branded its Health and Wellbeing programme as CALON. The annual CALON programme details health promotion and initiatives that NWH's enthusiastic CALON champions focus on during the year.



CALON actively shares and promotes information, resources and signposting around the 5 ways to wellbeing through the Staff Intranet, Workplace and Teams communication channels. In 2020 NWH signed the Time to Change Wales Pledge (TtCW), pledging to do what we can to end mental health stigma and discrimination in the workplace. Our People Partner is an accredited trainer with i-act and has delivered the i-act Managing and Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing in the workplace training to all our Leaders and it is hoped all frontline workers will be trained in Understanding and Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing in the workplace by the end of 2023.

Action for Happiness Calendars are shared to Workplace/Email each month. Employees are encouraged to pick out daily actions to help improve both physical and mental health. Workplace posts around themes are made throughout the month.

CALON provides a regular newsletter rounding up everything that has been shared, reminding employees of the support available to them and how to access this support.

CALON also shares the organisation's EAP CARE First weekly calendars providing staff with access to webinars and guidance around specific Health & Wellbeing themes and awareness days. The EAP also provides 24/7 confidential counselling and assistance to colleagues, including fast access to critical incident support.

We have a Gold standard Cash Plan offer for all contracted staff enabling them to claim money back on everyday health care and fast track access to scans and GP/consultant appointments.

CALON has organised mindfulness, habit building, reflexology and yoga sessions which have been attended by a cross section of employees. Other wellbeing initiatives include pumpkin decorating and best dressed Christmas tree / workspace competition. NWH also provides free tea, coffee and fruit at all offices and schemes.

Health and wellbeing is included in all Inductions and discussed at one to ones. Wellness Action plans are encouraged for both physical and mental wellbeing concerns and are included in our Attendance Support process.

Health Screening for Night and Trade workers are carried out regularly via Occupational Health and we have good links with Able Futures, Access to Work and RCS Wales where employees can self-refer for any physical or mental health concern they may have.

We take the physical and mental wellbeing of our people very seriously and have invested significant resources to improve in this area. At the forefront of everything we do is making North Wales Housing 'a great place to work'.

This culminated in us achieving a two-star rating under the Best Companies to work for accreditation scheme in March 2023. We are extremely proud of this achievement which saw our score increasing by a huge 62.2 points with a placing in the top 5 housing associations in the UK. This was achieved through a high participation rate of 84% of our people which makes it even more special.



Governance

T12 – Supply Chain



C46 – What is the average number of sick days (long term and short term) taken by each employee?

- 8.9% (short term and long term absences).

C47 – How is Social Value creation considered when procuring goods and services?

We have developed a Procurement strategy that is currently in draft. One of the aims of the strategy is to:

Enhance Community Benefits through Procurement.

This will be done:

- To achieve the best value whilst supporting local communities. Community Benefits promote additional opportunities within procurement contracts that lead to positive, tangible results that improve communities.
- To ensure social return on investment is achieved via wide ranging social benefits including accessible SME opportunities for local suppliers, job opportunities or training for local people, support for community initiatives and much more.
- To provide excellent services to our residents, enhancing their satisfaction with us as a quality North Wales Housing.

It is an area in which we recognise that we are developing. It is expected that this will improve once the strategy is approved and embedded into our practices.

C48 – How is Environmental impact considered when procuring goods and services?

We have developed a Procurement strategy that is currently in draft.

One of the aims of the strategy is to:

Achieve Sustainable Procurement

This will be done:

- To ensure that procurement is conducted that supports value for money on a lifetime basis, with regards to producing benefits to society and the economy and reducing the damage to the environment.
- To consider the environment, the economic and social impacts of the process, the use of renewable materials, the production methods, transfer of services and options to recycle to name only a few considerations.
- To ensure that NWH staff members are expected to seek to deliver sustainable procurement whatever the value of the contract.
- To support the foundational economy.