



# Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Report

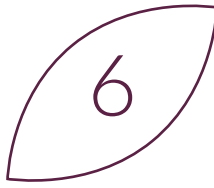
2023/2024



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# Our ESG performance in numbers

**11,780**



properties owned and managed<sup>1</sup> – 82.3% at social and affordable rent

2022/2023: 11,522

**62%**



average rents as percent of Local Housing Allowance

2022/2023: 66%

**252**



new homes provided with our partners

2022/2023: 409

**74%**



of homes with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C+

2022/2023: 70%

**100%**



of new homes with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C+

2022/2023: 100%

**2.53**



tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) per home managed

**100%**



fire compliance<sup>3</sup>

2022/2023: 100%

**99.47%**



of homes comply with the Decent Homes Standard

2022/2023: 99.98%

**G1/V2**



regulatory ratings

2022/2023: G1/V2

**0%**



gender pay gap

2022/2023: 8.4%

**46%**



women on Group Board

2022/2023: 60%

**0%**



of office waste goes to landfill

2022/2023: 0%

Provided over

**£234,000**



in grants to help customers experiencing financial hardship through our support fund

2022/2023: £166,000

**£1.3m**



of additional benefits<sup>2</sup>, Universal Credit, and other payments for customers through our welfare benefit support services

2022/2023: £415,000

<sup>1</sup>Figure includes homes, shops, or other commercial units and garages.

<sup>2</sup>Figure includes backdates that we secured for customers receiving Housing Benefit and Universal Credit that we previously didn't record within this figure.

<sup>3</sup>Homes with an in-date and compliant fire risk assessment



Brierley Paddocks, West Mersea

# Foreword from our CEO

Welcome to our fourth annual Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Report.

This report details our ESG strategy and performance over the past financial year, highlighting our commitment to sustainability and social value for our more than 27,000 customers.

Our goal is to transform the lives of our customers today, without compromising our ability to do the same in the future. Achieving this requires a careful balance of our role as a landlord, developer of new homes, and sustainable organisation.

“We have made significant strides in our objectives, focusing on improving environmental performance, delivering social value, and maintaining strong governance amid a challenging political and economic landscape.”

Operationally, we continue to decarbonise our vehicle fleet and emphasise social value in our supply chains. Our governance processes continue to ensure robust and effective management of customer feedback and complaints.

As a social landlord, our focus remains on enhancing the warmth, safety, and environmental sustainability of the homes we provide. We have increased our

support fund for customers experiencing financial hardship and have expanded our community investment initiatives to help customers and the local community.

As a developer of new homes, we continue to adopt modern methods of construction and we prioritise the installation of air source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels in new builds wherever feasible. We have also significantly increased the number of ‘zero-carbon ready’ homes delivered compared to previous years.

We diligently track our carbon emissions to measure our progress against established targets. This includes both our scope one and scope two emissions, reported in accordance with our Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) obligations, as well as indicative calculations for our scope three emissions.

Our commitment to transparent reporting is driven by our Sustainable Financing Framework, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the latest iteration of the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing. These frameworks help us communicate effectively with stakeholders and demonstrate meaningful progress towards our goals.



**Paul Edwards**  
Chief Executive





Customers visiting RHS Hyde Hall

## About us

Our core purpose is to help meet the local housing shortage in the eastern region of England and provide customers with a warm, safe, and well-maintained home.

Furthermore, we exist to make a difference, and we want to help transform our customers' lives and the communities they live in.

As a not-for-profit registered provider of social housing based in Essex, we own and manage more than 11,780 properties and provide services to over 27,000 customers. Our aim is to provide 500 new homes a year with our partners as part of our three-year Corporate Strategy, some of which use modern methods of construction.

We are a community-based organisation and try to provide support wherever it is needed. We help customers who are struggling financially with personal welfare benefits support. We offer advice and training to people wanting to upskill or find employment. And we support customers experiencing anti-social behaviour (ASB), hate crime, domestic abuse, or those in need of safeguarding.

We are also on a mission to become a more sustainable organisation. We are mindful of the impact building new homes can have on the environment, as well as the work needed to make our existing homes more energy efficient.

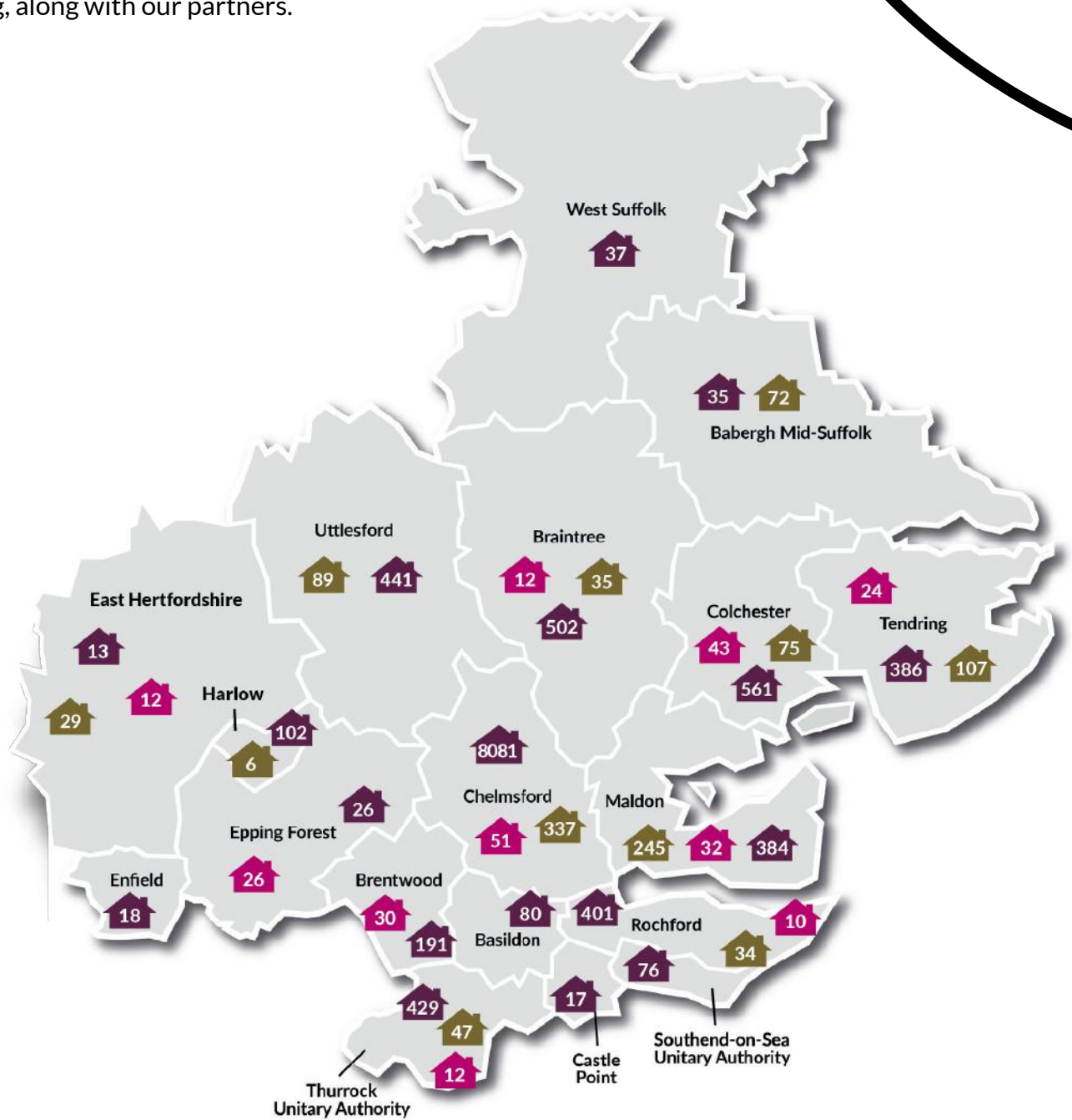



Connecting CHP event



# Our operational area

This map shows how many properties we own or manage in each area. It shows how many homes have been built this year, and homes we'll be building, along with our partners.



 Total number of properties owned or managed

 Homes built this year

 Homes we'll be building

# Our ESG approach

We see ESG as an opportunity to demonstrate our performance and progress to our key stakeholders in an evidence-based way. This means greater transparency for our customers and employees, investors, and delivery partners, so they can hold us to account over what we do and what we say we will do.

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a set of overarching commitments for us and other responsible businesses.

The Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRS) facilitates consistent and transparent sustainability reporting at a sector level. We are reporting our performance in line with version 2.0 of the SRS.

Our Sustainable Finance Framework (SFF) commits our future financing to sustainable purposes and outcomes, and links directly to the SRS.

The combination of these interrelated frameworks strengthens the way we can demonstrate how sustainability is embedded throughout our organisation. From how we secure our finance, to the services we deliver to our customers, and our role in contributing to a sustainable future for all.



Plants in the Hub garden

# Sustainable Development Goals



The SDGs provide a globally recognised framework for a more sustainable future. The 17 goals and indicators help organisations like ours show how our purpose aligns with wider global challenges. For example, addressing poverty, investing in sustainable communities, promoting decent work and economic growth, and taking climate action.

The SDGs are intrinsically linked to our other frameworks – the SRS and the SFF. They are also aligned with our current Environmental Sustainability Strategy, which was formed using these goals as a framework.



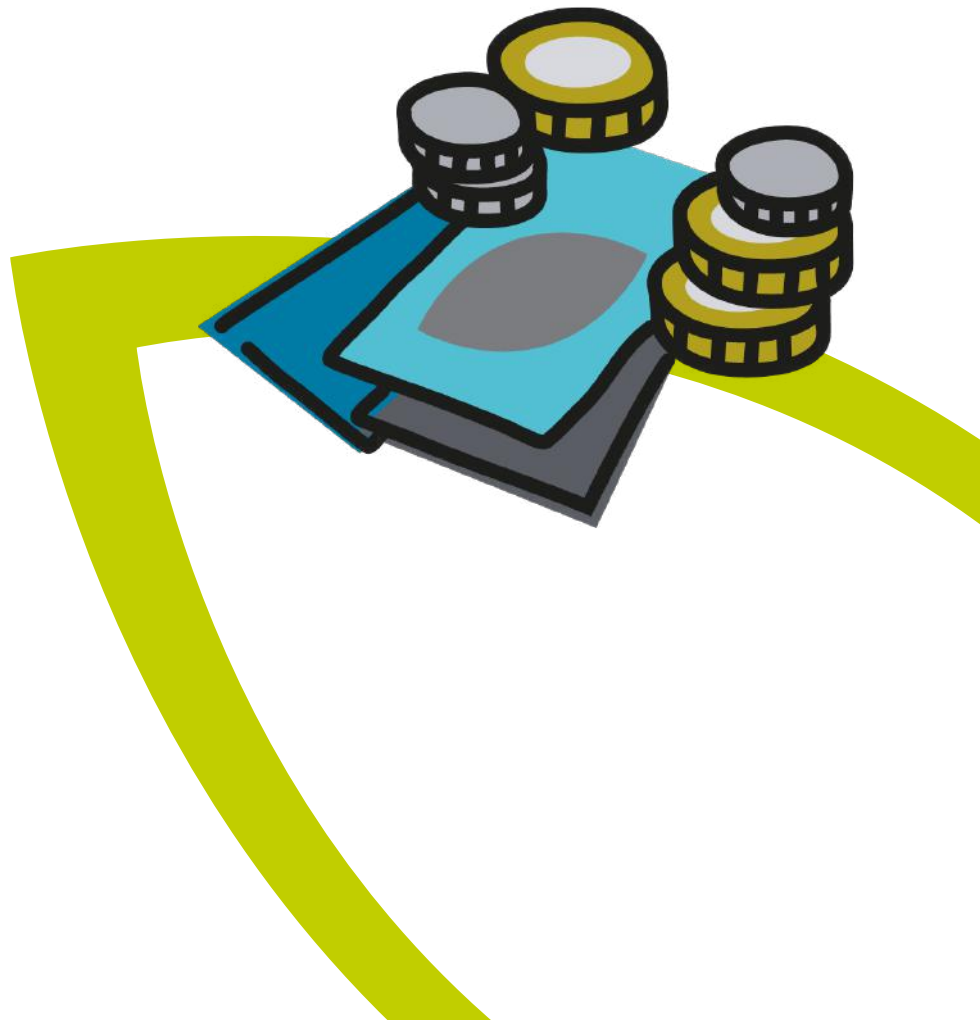
# Sustainability Reporting Standard criteria summary

ESG area	Theme #	Criteria	Theme name	Description
Environmental	T1	C1-C6	Climate change	Prevents and mitigates the risk of climate change
	T2	C7-C8	Ecology	Promotes ecological sustainability
	T3	C9-C11	Resource management	Sustainable management of natural resources
Social	T4	C12-C16	Affordability and security	Provides affordable and secure housing
	T5	C17-C19	Building safety and quality	Resident safety and building quality are well managed
	T6	C20-C22	Resident voice	Listens to residents' voices
	T7	C23	Resident support	Supports residents and the local community
	T8	C24	Placemaking	Supports residents and the wider local community through placemaking
Governance	T9	C25-C30	Structure and governance	Legal structure of the organisation and its approach to governance
	T10	C31-C38	Board and trustees	High quality Board of trustees
	T11	C39-C44	Staff wellbeing	Supports employees
	T12	C45-C46	Supply chain management	Procures responsibly

The criteria outlined above are covered in detail throughout this report.

## Our commitment to ESG through our funding agreements

We have agreed with our main traditional lenders to insert elements into our existing loan facilities which embrace our ESG strategy. This allows us to recognise expenditure on 'decarbonisation' works and ringfence these from calculation of our interest cover covenant, which in turn allows us to continue to focus on committing capital to this important area.



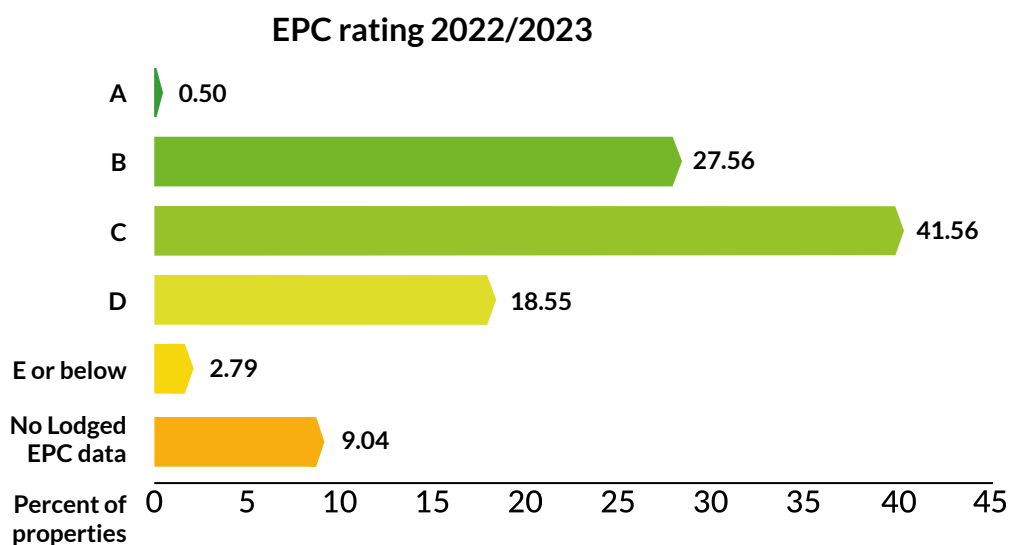
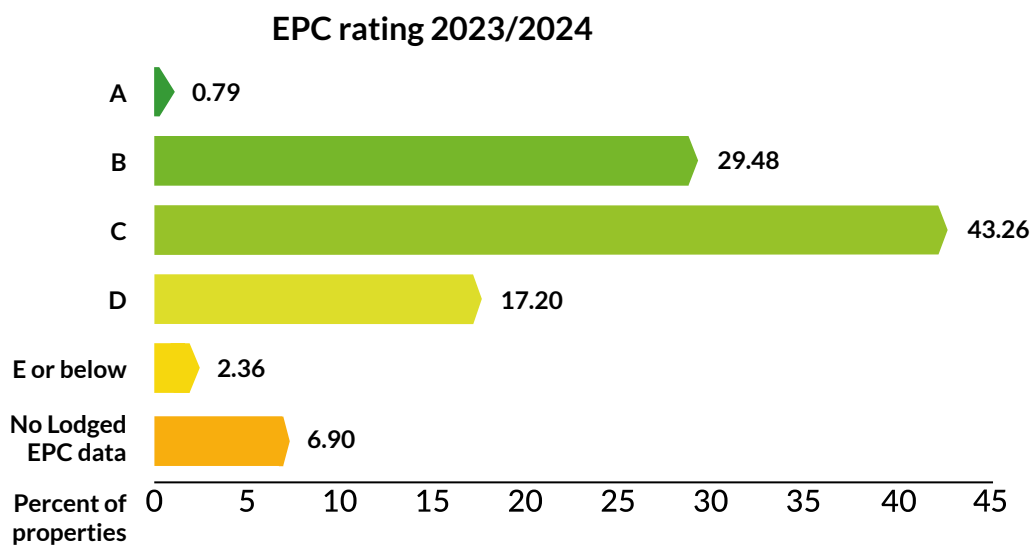


# Environmental criteria

# Environmental criteria

## C1. Distribution of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings for our existing homes

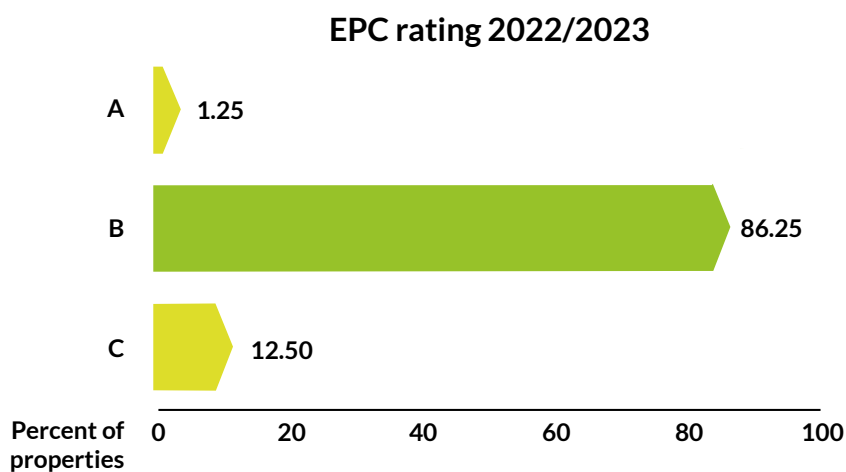
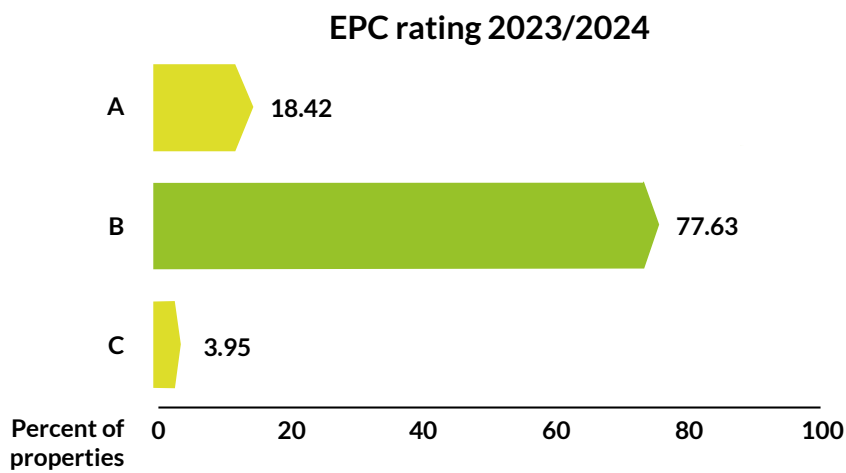
Following further works, we have been able to reduce the number of homes without a lodged EPC by 17 percent since last year. This has increased our actionable data for retrofit purposes.





## C2. Distribution of EPC ratings for our new homes

We have improved the efficiency of the new build properties we have developed during the year, with a significant increase in the delivery of EPC A, zero-carbon ready homes.



## C3. Our Net Zero strategy

Our Asset Management Strategy is still committed to improving all the homes we provide to EPC band C by 2030. We have completed further analysis of our EPC dataset with Sero Life, experts on Net Zero carbon homes, to confirm validity and build a pathway to the decarbonisation of the homes we provide.

Our operations have re-committed to using only green energy tariffs with our office and communal landlord supplies as well as zero waste sent to landfill. Our operations fleet of electric vans stands at nine strong, with plans to expand this as range and charging facilities improve.

## C4. Retrofit activities we have undertaken in the last 12 months and its alignment with our Net Zero strategy

We completed a £200k loft insulation programme of works to improve the thermal efficiency of over 250 homes below an EPC C. We installed Switchee smart thermostats in almost 500 homes in 2023/2024 and entered into a further contract to expand the project to install 1,700 more. We are selecting homes based on archetype, age, type of heating

system, as well as history of damp and mould within the property. We were also successful in applying for the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.2 this year. The grant will help co-fund a £1.2m contract to improve the EPC rating and thermal efficiency of a further 100 homes.



## C5. Our scope one, scope two, and scope three greenhouse gas emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions rating	2023/2024	2022/2023
	tCO <sub>2</sub> e	tCO <sub>2</sub> e
Scope one	1,082.7	995
Scope two	445.10	462
tCO <sub>2</sub> e per home managed	2.53	No data

### Scoping carbon emissions from the homes we provide

We have continued our approach in calculating our scope three emissions from our owned and managed properties. This year, due to a more complete dataset, we calculated total scope three emissions of 24,329.82 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (2022/2023: 16,949 tCO<sub>2</sub>e).

## C6. Mitigation of flooding, drought, and overheating in our homes

Our geographical information system is best suited to mapping flood and heat risk areas. With the expansion of Switchee smart thermostat installs we can further understand which homes are at high risk of over-heating and can offer practical solutions to customers.

## C7. Increasing green space and promoting biodiversity in our communities

We have a commitment in our Design and Construction brief for new homes to include the provision of animal havens such as bug hotels and bird boxes. We also specify the use of native planting to gardens and communal areas. Our Grounds Maintenance Team prioritise the use of physical weed removal over chemical. Additionally, we avoid tree cutting where possible during nesting season and various grass

areas are left uncut. We supported the initiative 'No Mow May' and paused mowing for the month in our communal garden spaces where practical, to support biodiversity and habitat sustainment. Plus, all green waste is recycled at our head office into mulch for use on our shrub beds and gardens to control weed growth and promote healthy soils.

### C8. Actively managing and reducing pollutants from our operations

Our Health and Safety Framework ensures Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessments are conducted for all stocked products, with all employees appropriately trained. All products are stored within a COSHH specific storage facility. All potential pollutant waste is managed in accordance with appropriate regulations. All homes with oil fired heating will be equipped with bunded tanks to mitigate the risk of leaks.

### C9. Using responsibly sourced materials in our building and repair works

All materials used in our building and repairs service are sustainably sourced and our procurement processes explicitly require the use of such materials where practical.



Solar panels on a property

### C10. Managing our waste from operations and building works

Our waste contractor is commissioned based on zero waste being directed to landfill. All waste is sorted locally and selected for either recycling or used for refuse-derived fuel.

### C11. Managing our water usage

We don't currently have a water management policy; however, it is expected that all new build sites incorporate sustainable drainage systems as part of their development.



# Social criteria

# Social criteria

## C12. Our rents compared to the relevant Local Housing Allowances (LHA)

	2023/2024	2022/2023
Our rents compared to LHA (%)	61.54	66.17

## C13. Share, and number, of existing homes (owned and/or managed) completed before the last financial year

Property type	2023/2024		2022/2023	
	Number	%	Number	%
General needs (social rent)	7,484	70	7,470*	70
Intermediate rent	132	1	132	1
Affordable rent	2,212	20	2,072	19
Supported housing	0	0	28	0
Housing for older people	0	0	0	0
Low-cost home ownership	1,017	9	942	9
Care homes	0	0	0	0
Private rented sector	42	0	42	0
Other	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,925**</b>		<b>10,686*</b>	

\*Additional nine social rent homes not previously included in last year's report at the time of publishing (Drakes Lane).

\*\*This number is not inclusive of leasehold properties (776) and commercial units (79).

## C14. Share, and number, of existing homes (owned and/or managed) completed during the last financial year

Property type	2023/2024		2022/2023	
	Number	%	Number	%
General needs (social rent)	14	5	11*	0
Intermediate rent	0	0	0	0
Affordable rent	150	60	278	70
Supported housing	0	0	0	0
Housing for older people	0	0	0	0
Low-cost home ownership	88	35	120	30
Care homes	0	0	0	0
Private rented sector	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>252</b>		<b>409*</b>	

\*Additional nine social rent homes not previously included in last year's report at the time of publishing (Drakes Lane).

## C15. Helping to reduce the effect of high energy costs on our customers

We completed the install of almost 500 Switchee smart thermostats during 2023/2024, helping customers to save on energy usage by managing their heating more efficiently. To combat heat loss, we completed an insulation project improving the efficiency of over 250 homes.

## C16. Providing security of tenure for our customers

We offer assured tenancies for our new customers, and we continue to move our existing customers from fixed term assured shorthold tenancies to assured tenancies.

## C17. The condition of our homes

Property type	2023/2024	2022/2023
Percentage of homes with a gas appliance that has an in-date accredited gas safety check	99.80	99.99
Percentage of homes with an in-date and compliant fire risk assessment	100.00	100.00
Percentage of homes that meet our Electrical Safety Policy	99.80	99.51
Percentage of homes that meet our Asbestos Management Policy	100.00	99.98
Percentage of homes with Legionella risk assessments	99.30*	98.98
Percentage of lifts that have been examined in the last six months, per LOLER (Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations)	98.80*	99.10

\*Although the required risk assessments had been carried out, the evidence for seven homes in a block of flats not owned by CHP had not been received.





## C18. Percentage of our homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard

99.47 percent of homes met the Decent Homes Standard at the end of 2023/2024.

Our performance is below 100 percent because we have 35 homes that didn't meet the standard this year and are now either being repaired or scheduled for replacement.

## C19. Our response to damp and mould

In 2023/2024, we evolved our approach to damp and mould by implementing a dedicated team of in-house damp and mould operatives. This has enabled us to provide quicker home visits, complete diagnostics and remedial repairs during the initial visit, and refer more complex cases to in-house surveyors. We continued the approach of assigning dedicated planners to maintain high customer contact on appointments, further works, and post inspection surveys. During the year, 1,068 cases (11.12 percent of total stock) were reported and resolved with further lessons learnt being added to in-house team training and external communications with customers.



Start Hill, Great Hallingbury

## C20. Results from our most recent tenant satisfaction survey

In 2023/2024 our customer satisfaction score was 90 percent; this is inclusive of responses to surveys from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. We received a total of 8,229 responses, at a response rate of around 14 percent. We measure customer satisfaction through surveys that are sent to customers after a service or interaction with us. This primarily occurs when repairs are completed or when customers have called into our Customer Resolution Centre or spoken with our Income Team. Several other areas are also surveyed including grounds maintenance, estate cleaning, moving in, planned works, damp, mould, and condensation, and anti-social behaviour.

### C21 & C22. Acting on complaints upheld by the Housing Ombudsman

Since April 2023, we have received 10 determinations from the Housing Ombudsman following their investigations. In all but two cases, the Ombudsman found that there had been maladministration or service failings and upheld the complaint in favour of the customer.

The eight complaints the Ombudsman found either maladministration or service failings for related to several different matters including our handling of defects, adaptations, ASB, complaints, repairs, and customer communication preferences. In each individual case, the Ombudsman required us to provide evidence of our compliance with their orders. We responded and demonstrated compliance with the expected deadline every time. Of the other two cases, the Ombudsman didn't find any maladministration and that reasonable redress was offered or the case was resolved through intervention.



Head of Neighbourhoods, Lee at an ASB feedback session

In each case, there were lessons learnt or amendments embedded into our service delivery. Here are several examples:

**Adaptations** - We made several improvements to our approach to adaptations, most notably by appointing a designated Project Manager to oversee our adaptations process. Creating this position has improved oversight of adaptation requests and ensured timely progression.

**ASB** - We created an ASB improvement plan which looked at several areas where improvements can be made. These included better policy implementation, team resources and working arrangements, training and development, case management systems, and the consumer standards.

**Complaints** - Additional training was completed to ensure timely responses to complaints and to emphasise the importance of addressing customer dissatisfaction promptly.

**Repairs** - As part of the rollout of a central actions log, we have greater oversight over actions that are raised as part of the complaints process, and to help minimise actions being unintentionally overlooked.

**Communication** - We completed a full review of our records to ensure that our systems were set up correctly and up to date if any customer had requested communication in a specific format. We also promoted the importance of making customer communications accessible throughout the organisation.



## C23. Support we offer to our customers

We helped customers claim £1.3 million worth of additional benefits this year. This increase includes backdates that we secured for customers receiving Housing Benefit and Universal Credit that we previously didn't record within this figure. The extra money customers got to cover the period before they applied is now included. We also worked hard this year to make sure customers knew about the welfare benefit support we offer to help them maximise their income.

We know there are lots of customers who are already receiving the maximum in benefits that they are entitled to, so we also offer support in other ways.

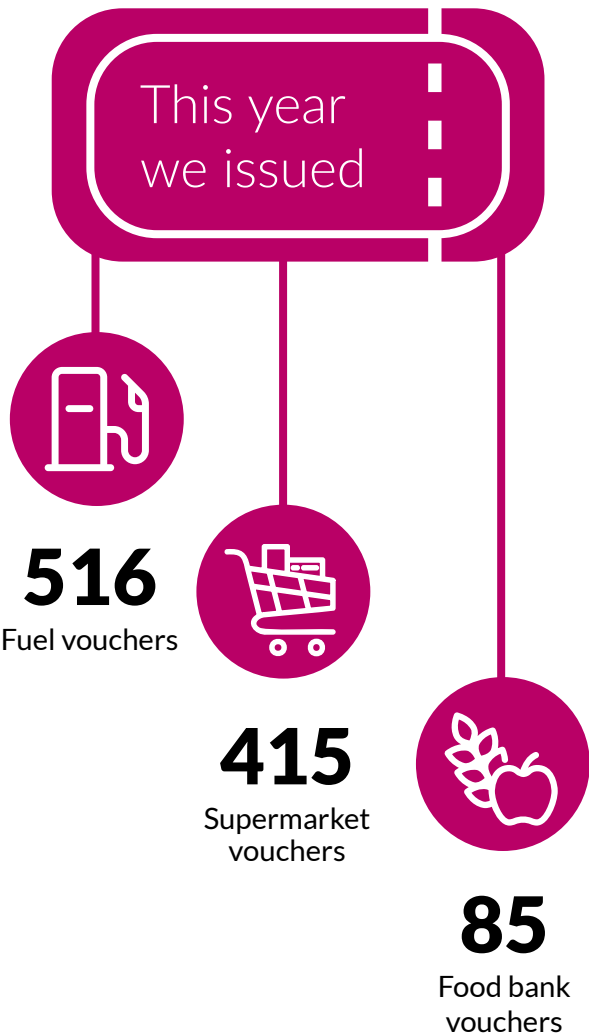
We can help customers get access to independent specialist support and advice. We do this by making referrals to a range of support agencies such as Peabody Floating Support, The Trussell Trust, Citizens Advice, StepChange, and the Essential Living Fund.

We also have our own support fund and provided over £234,000 in grants this year to help customers experiencing hardship.

Some examples of how we helped customers using these funds are below.

- We bought a bed for a vulnerable customer who was previously homeless so they wouldn't have to sleep on the floor.
- We helped a customer by buying and putting up curtains in their home because they were feeling cold and lacked privacy. The curtains helped make the customer feel safer and warmer, and also helped save energy in the home.
- We bought a pay-as-you-go phone, SIM card, and credit for a customer on a low income receiving Universal Credit. This enabled them to access their online journal with the Department for Work and Pensions and keep in contact with us about their tenancy.
- We paid for a customer to have dog behaviour therapy sessions for their pet who was causing nuisance to neighbours. The customer was in rent arrears and couldn't afford to do this themselves. This helped the customer get support to take care of her dog, and it made things better for her neighbours.

We also looked for other ways to support customers. We provided extra support for a local food bank to help families struggling to feed children over the six weeks of school holidays.





The Parkside Community Hub has continued to provide a variety of popular activities four days a week. Activities are discussed in the following 'Placemaking' section but have included additional activities such as children's cookery lessons, as well as work with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) to redesign the Hub garden.

This year we also delivered two open days at the Hub, one in the summer and one in the winter. Our summer event included external stakeholders such as the volunteering organisation, Chelmsford CVS, and the RHS, plus advice and support from some of our employees. We also offered fun activities for children such as face painting.

Our winter event supported vulnerable and isolated customers, by helping them to prepare for the cold weather. We gave them warm packs, advice on repairs, and offered Switchee smart thermostats to help them manage their heating.

## Social criteria

### C24. Examples of placemaking and placeshaping during the year

The Parkside Community Hub continues to deliver a varied programme of support, advice, and structured activities for the local community. Some of these services are delivered by partners providing support around health and wellbeing as well as targeted advice for people looking to get into work or access benefits.

During 2023/2024, 1,076 people visited the Hub to access our specialist tenant support from our advisors as well as Peabody, Citizen's Advice, and Hearing Help Essex. This amounted to £2,649,871.54 in social value as calculated through the Housing Association Charitable Trust (HACT) insight tool.

Our social events and activities at the Hub during 2023/2024 included gardening, sewing and Spanish classes, as well as seasonal activities relating to Easter and Christmas. We continued to deliver activities at our sheltered schemes and celebrated the Kings Coronation with a tea party. In total, 1,395 people got involved in social events and activities this year which equated to a social value of £769,568.56.

Our skills training courses delivered by partners continued to be popular and included English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and maths. We also offered workshops such as plan, shop and save. Over 700 learning opportunities were accessed in total and generated £697,404.92 in social value. Although we supported a similar number of customers last year, the value generated by the cookery classes and plan, shop, and save are valued higher on the HACT social value tool.



Parkside Community Hub

Our community fridge is well used by the local neighbourhood and this year has generated £534,225.18 in social value.

We continued to give out winter warm packs to vulnerable customers. These were tailored to individual's needs but included items such as blankets, hot water bottles, draft excluders, and supermarket vouchers.

The Community Engagement and Investment Team constantly look for ways to support both our customers and the local community. We regularly undertake satisfaction surveys with customers using our services to understand their needs and aspirations.

# Case study

## Redesigning the Hub garden

The garden at our Parkside Community Hub got a makeover this year after being awarded funding from the Royal Horticultural Society and NHS Property Services.

Members of our Gardening club helped shape the redesign by sharing their ideas and opinions to make sure it is accessible and sustainable.

The revamped garden, which is completely accessible for people in wheelchairs, has fruit trees, vegetables, flowers and plants, bug hotels, and a kids' den. The Gardening club will continue to maintain it, alongside our Grounds Maintenance Team. Any surplus food from the garden is available in the Hub community fridge.



Celebrating the Hub garden launch with the local community

# Case study

## Jean's story

The Hub is a great place to meet people, learn new skills, and take part in activities. One of our customers, Jean from Galleywood in Chelmsford, attended a free cooking workshop for adults at the Hub and now helps the tutor teach others. Jean is a full-time Mum and is studying nutrition at Level 2. She joined the class to learn more and meet new people.

“I enjoyed meeting people and getting to know them a little better. I heard that they were looking for someone that had food experience behind them and a family member mentioned me. I like teaching people how to cook on a budget as I know times are hard for everybody. I enjoyed it and I look forward to doing it again”, said Jean.







# Governance criteria

# Governance criteria



CHP employees and Community Voice members at the Parkside Community Hub

## C25. Registration with the regulator

We are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) in England.

## C26. Our most recent regulatory grading

We have been awarded a grading of G1 for governance and a regrading of V2 for financial viability, following an in-depth assessment (IDA) from the RSH. This grading was reaffirmed by the RSH in December 2023 via its annual Stability Check.

## C27. Our Code of Governance

We have adopted the National Housing Federation (NHF) Code of Governance 2020 to help us achieve the highest standards of governance and Board excellence.



## C28. Our not-for-profit status

We are a not-for-profit organisation.

## C29. How our Board manages ESG risks

ESG risks are addressed in several sections of CHP's Corporate Risk Register. Concerns regarding our environmental impact are mainly managed within the 'Decarbonisation (Net Zero)' corporate risk. This risk is defined as the potential "material impacts of costs to meet CHP's commitment to carbon net neutrality over and above amounts included in the financial business plan".

### C30. Our recent regulatory findings

We haven't had any adverse regulatory findings in the past 12 months.

### C31. Incorporating Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and the customer voice in our governance processes.

	2023/2024	2022/2023
Percentage of our Board that are women	46	60
Percentage of our Board that are BAME	8	10
Percentage of our Board that are customers	0	0
Percentage of our Board who have a disability	8	0
Percentage of our Board who identify as LGBTQ+	8	No data
Average age of the Board	55 years	55 years
Average tenure of the Board	4.75 years	2.75 years

We have a Governance Framework that pulls together the requirements of our Rules, Governing Policies, and Terms of reference, to include key provisions of our adopted Code of Governance.

Our Board/Committee/Subsidiary report template has been updated with sections that prompt for stakeholder feedback and how we have taken into account the diverse needs of people impacted by the topic.

We adopted a new customer engagement structure to improve our services and influence our decision-making. Our customers known as 'CHP Community Voices' focused on creating three groups: Community and Communication, our existing Customer Review Panel, and EDI. These groups report formally to our Customer

Experience Committee, which is a subgroup of our Board.

EDI is a key focus when we recruit, considered at Governance, Remuneration, and Nominations Committee (GRNC) and at Board, to ensure this is considered when refreshing our Non-Executive Directors.

We signed up to the National Housing Federation (NHF) Chairs' Challenge in 2023. This is a public commitment to take our Board on a journey to understand how diverse and inclusive we are and to develop a vision for the future. We are reviewing our process steps in line with the NHF guide to inclusive recruitment for future Non-Executive Director recruitment campaigns.



The CHP Board

### C32. Board and Executive Team turnover in the last two years

Two Board members ended their tenure during the last two years.

### C34. Percentage of our Board that are non-executive directors

83 percent of our Board (10 out of 12 members) are non-executive.

### C33. Number of Board members on our Audit Committee with recent and relevant financial experience

We have three Board members and one Independent Committee member that sits on our Audit & Risk Committee, all of whom have relevant financial experience.

### C35. Our Board succession plan

A Board succession plan has been presented to the Board in the last 12 months.





Parkside Court

### C36. How long we have worked with our external audit partner

Our external audit partner, KPMG, was appointed in December 2016 and has been our partner for seven years.

### C37. Our most recent independent Board-effectiveness review

The external Board-effectiveness review was carried out in October 2022 and spanned into February 2023.

### C38. How we handle conflicts of interest at Board

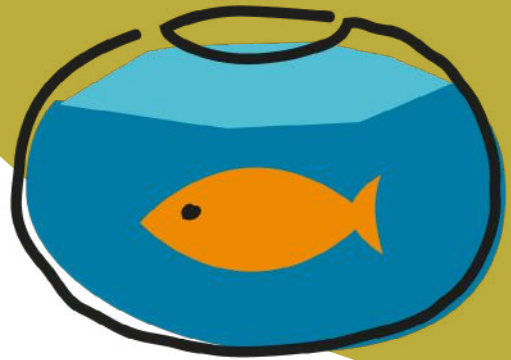
We explain responsibilities about disclosure of interests and conduct in the Agreement for Services. We require all Board members to complete a declaration of interest form when they join CHP.

Additionally, Board members must declare any interests they may have as part of an annual exercise. Even if a Board member has disclosed an interest through the annual process, they must still make an appropriate verbal disclosure at any meeting when a conflict of interest arises. We will record this in the minutes of the meeting. If the conflict is clear and substantial, the Board member may be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter giving rise to the conflict is under consideration. If the conflict is likely to reoccur frequently, they should offer to resign.

## Governance criteria

### C39. Paying the Real Living Wage

We are committed to paying our employees the Real Living Wage. Currently, this doesn't include year one apprentices, however they are paid the Real Living Wage by year two of their apprenticeships.



### C40. Our median gender pay gap

Our median gender pay gap is 0 percent. You can read about the steps we have taken to reduce our gender pay gap by reading our Gender Pay Gap Report 2022/2023 at [chp.org.uk/reports](http://chp.org.uk/reports).

We have a dedicated group of individuals that focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and drive this forward for our customers and employees. We have a specific EDI strategy and action plan that spans all directorates and activities. We run equality impact assessments on all our policies and procedures, have mandatory training for new starters, and refresher training on respect and behaviours for colleagues.

We also published our second Ethnicity Pay Gap Report this year which shows our ethnically diverse employees' median hourly rate is 9.7 percent higher than our white employees' hourly rate, so our median EPG is not typical and is the other way around. You can read more about this at [chp.org.uk/reports](http://chp.org.uk/reports).

### C41. Our CEO: median-worker pay ratio

Our ratio for this financial year is 5.1:1.



New homes at Shernbroke

## C42. Promoting equity, diversity and inclusion across our workforce

We are committed to delivering fair and equitable services that are accessible to people of any background. We aim to be as inclusive an employer as possible, and to deliver homes and services that meet the needs and priorities of our customers. Our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy sets out our commitment to EDI and explains how we will make sure this is embedded in all that we do. It explains the responsibilities of all people in achieving this.

We also consider EDI in every strategy and policy we produce, with the aim to improve inclusion and make sure that there's no chance of discriminatory effects against any person or group. A key example is our Respect at Work Policy, which identifies the values, behaviours, and conduct expected of employees, and that employees, customers, and members of the public should expect to receive.



All workforce-related policies and procedures reflect our values and commitments to EDI and our aims to recruit and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce. One way we do this is through our programme of equality impact assessments. We'll make reasonable adjustments where necessary to overcome any disadvantages due to disabilities.

Our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group is made up of employee volunteers with specific experience, expertise, or passion in matters of diversity and inclusion. It aims to raise awareness and knowledge of EDI issues and best practice in service delivery. Group members share ideas and good practice, contributing to the development and ongoing review of our approach to EDI.

We also have employee network groups for specific topics:

- Parents of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- CHPrize – supporting LGBTQ+ employees
- Neurodiverse employee group
- Dementia Friends Working Group

We work with a range of agencies and advisors to make sure we follow best practice and achieve our equality objectives. We will liaise with agencies to understand the housing needs of local communities and any groups facing discrimination, reviewing how we can contribute to meeting these needs. Some examples are:

- Dementia Friends
- Disability Confident
- Essex Pride
- Harry's Pledge - our commitment to supporting carers
- Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme
- Housing Diversity Network
- HouseProud
- Women's Trade Network

## Governance criteria

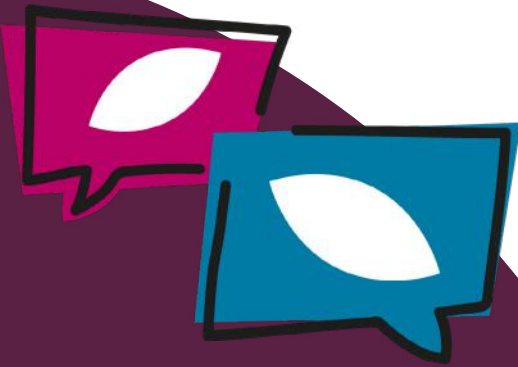
### C43. Supporting the physical and mental health of our team

Our Communications Team regularly work with employees and organisations to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion to employees and customers through the celebration of events, sharing of information and activities, and promoting training.

We produced our first EDI report this year which includes more information on the work we have been doing and our priorities for the future. Find out more on our website at [chp.org.uk/reports](http://chp.org.uk/reports).

We have a dedicated wellbeing group. This is a group of employees that continuously review and promote wellbeing opportunities. We have regular sporting clubs arranged by employees such as netball. We have a scheme called “wallet for wellbeing” where employees can bid for funds to contribute towards something wellbeing related that will benefit others. For example, we bought large parasols and garden games to encourage people to use our garden during breaks.

In addition to this, we have mental health first aiders, an employee assistance programme that offers counselling, and a ‘talk to us’ toolkit to help managers and employees spot the signs of stress. We train our managers on mental health in the workplace and support national campaigns such as Mental Health Awareness Week. We have walking wellbeing champions and regularly promote and discuss aspects of physical and mental health in our weekly newsletters, which includes employees sharing personal stories.





#### C44. Supporting the professional development of our team

17 percent of our organisation are either studying towards a professional qualification or have obtained a qualification since 2023. We ensure that professional qualifications are accessible to all employees. Six percent of those that have undertaken a qualification are from an ethnic minority background, eight percent are neurodivergent, and five percent consider themselves to have a disability. These figures are representative of our diversity overall at CHP.

13 of the qualifications studied relate to carbon literacy, retrofitting, and EPC. Our online learning platform has sustainability

training that was developed in-house by our previous graduate cohort. We now have nine employees who are trained in carbon literacy, and we are rolling this out to the rest of the organisation over the next 12 months. In our new starter employee induction, we have a section on sustainability which references our sustainability strategy and highlights our key objectives in this area.

In addition to qualifications, we also maintain the continuous professional development of our employees by investing in regular training. The training is based on the professional competencies required of their job role.





Grounds maintenance operative, Justin

### C45. How we create social value through our procurement process

We include a specific social value question for contractors to answer within the tender bid. The social value question will be weighted at a minimum of five percent of the overall evaluation criteria and a maximum of 20 percent, with teams able to apply higher weightings on a discretionary basis.

We have a social value toolkit that we share with contractors bidding to work with us. This outlines our expectations and areas where we are keen to see social value.

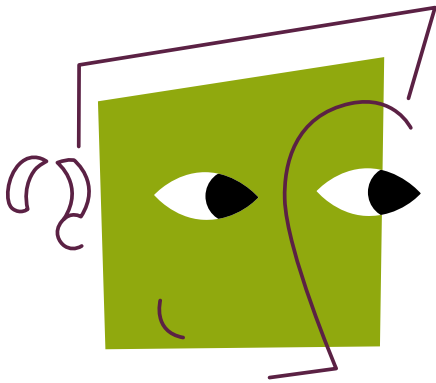
### C46. Consideration of the environment in our procurement process

Environmental impact and weighting are considered on a case-by-case basis in our procurement process and will usually relate to product specification, transport, and recycling, with no standard question in the invitation to tender. We consult with the sustainability manager when developing the criteria for evaluation to ensure we are including the right information to achieve the best results.



# Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Report

2023/2024



Please contact us if you would like a copy of this document in large print, on CD, or in another language.

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