

ESG report 2024/2025

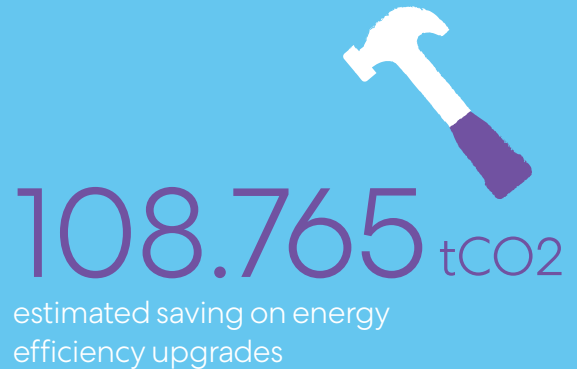
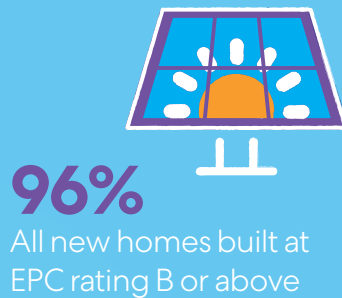
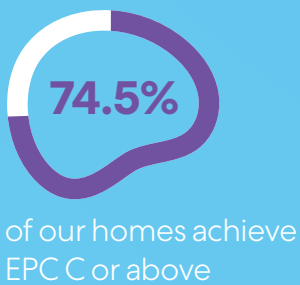


Our sustainability summary

Corporate

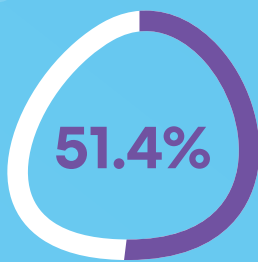


Environmental



Social

Our rents as an average of a typical market rented property across our region



Governance



Welcome to our ESG Report

Here at 54North Homes, our core purpose is, **'building homes, changing lives'**. This powerful social purpose drives all that we do and requires us to think carefully about how we can foster sustainability and be socially responsible in all our work. This is typically described as Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG). This report will illustrate the work and impact we have made in these ESG areas during 2024/25.



About 54North Homes

We provide a range of high-quality homes from one-bedroom apartments to four-bedroom houses, providing affordable rental options for single people, couples and families, as well as low-cost home ownership and housing with support. We also manage five almshouses – including 52 homes on behalf of the Harrison and Potter Trust.

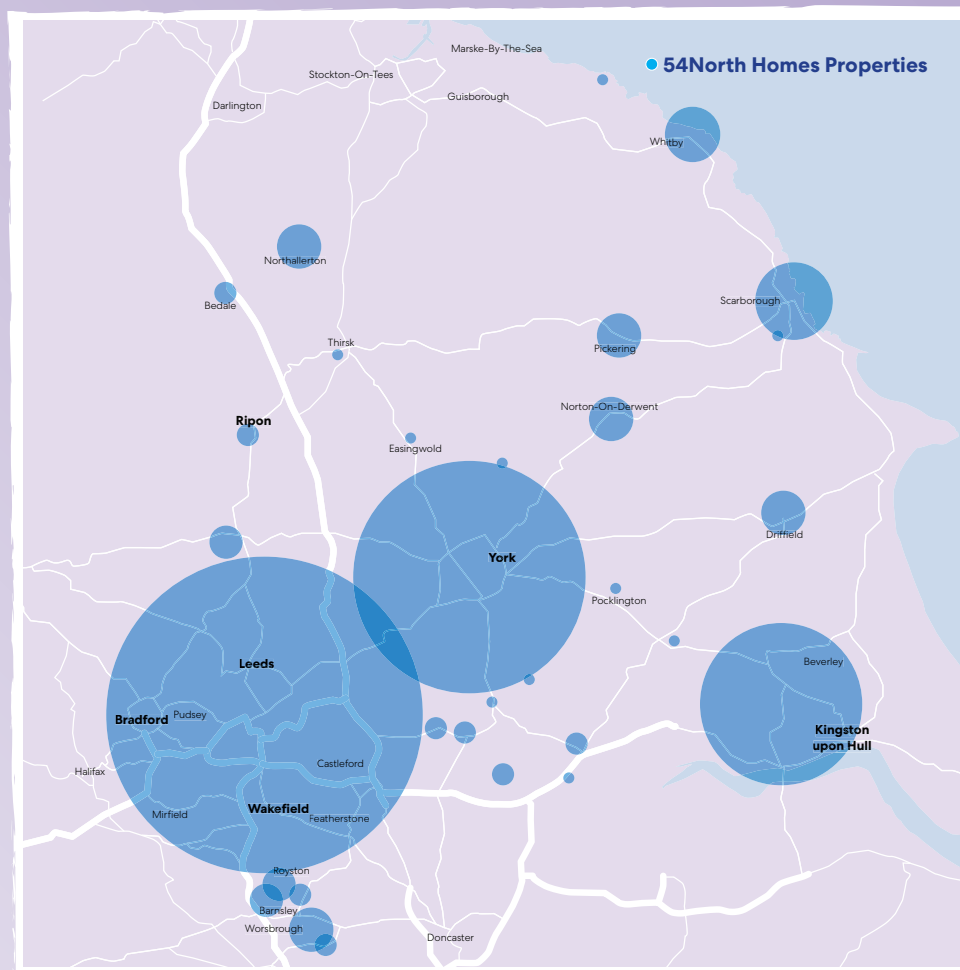
We are proud to be a subsidiary of the Karbon Group, which has a footprint covering the North East and Yorkshire regions, with around 34,000 homes across a range of tenures.

As a landlord, we believe in providing safe, warm and secure homes for our customers to live in. We put customers at the heart of everything we do and strive to provide an excellent level of service. We build strong foundations for over 7,000 people who live in our homes. This extends beyond the bricks and mortar of our homes,

we offer a range of services from training to financial support, community investment projects to extending the ways customers can get involved in helping to shape and improve our services.

All money that we receive through rent and service charges is reinvested to improve our homes and communities, building new homes and delivering services which provide sustainable outcomes for our customers and communities.

We always make the effort to really understand our customers. We believe that everyone deserves respect. Everyone's voice should be heard. And everyone deserves someone in their corner now and then. We are focused on delivering our three strategic aims – to provide as many good quality homes as we can, to deliver excellent service to our customers, and to shape strong, sustainable places for our communities.



Introduction

I am pleased to introduce this year's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Report which once again gives us the opportunity to showcase our environmental performance, our social impact and how well our organisation is run.

We are, of course, always striving to improve our performance and look for ways in which we can deliver value for money and high-quality homes and services for our customers and communities.

We continue to deliver hundreds of new affordable homes – 158 across Yorkshire in total last financial year for 54North Homes and 326 across Yorkshire as part of the wider Karbon development programme.

This year, our flagship £12m Leonora House development was completed and handed over. The scheme comprises 58 high-quality flats for social rent, increasing the choice of affordable housing provision in Leeds. Leonora House was designed and built to conform to EPC B rating. The building has solar panels on the roof and is connected to the award-winning Leeds PIPES' low-carbon district heating network to power the hot water. The district heating system utilises energy from non-recyclable household waste, helping to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels.

We also completed the retrofit of 98 one-bedroom flats at St Mary's Court and St Mary's Close in Chapeltown, and Wood Lane Court in Headingley. The homes have had new cost efficient heating and hot water systems fitted and new insulation installed to help prevent warmth escaping. Ventilation systems have also been upgraded to allow air to circulate, making the homes feel less damp – which can help prevent mould from occurring.

Our Good to Great (G2G) Programme is another good example of moving forward with purpose. While the aim of the project is to build on our existing customer service strengths taking us from 'good to great', the work will also help us identify where we can be more efficient which will help us stand strong for the future.

And at the same time, Karbon continues to grow in scale across the Yorkshire region. Just under 60% of Karbon's development programme this year was delivered in York, North Yorkshire, Wakefield and East Riding.

While we'll carry on looking forward to further growth in the future, we can't ignore the role we are already playing in people's lives right now. The group received an award from the North East Chamber of Commerce for Community Business of the Year and our work with the Housing Employability Network North East was recognised when HENNE won Northern Housing Partnership of the Year at the Northern Housing Awards. Both awards show the positive impact we continue to make in struggling communities.

It has been a challenging but rewarding year, and we hope you enjoy reading about our achievements, challenges and learnings.

Mark Pearson
Managing Director



UN Sustainable Development Goals

We are a social purpose business, with a rich heritage of providing decent, secure and affordable housing for the benefit of the community. We are passionate about the opportunity we have to make a difference and recognise the value that a good home can deliver – a strong foundation to get on with life. However, we own homes located in some of the most deprived areas in the country and many of our customers face diverse challenges in their ability to live well.

Our objectives, as with those of much of the social housing sector, are aligned with many of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The structure of this report is aligned to the specific themes outlined in The Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing¹. Within each theme, we have reported against each individual criteria. Our reporting is also aligned to

the UN SDGs and the table on the next page, gives the themes and the specific SDGs to which they relate.

Each theme contains a number of core and enhanced criteria. This report responds to all of the core, and many of the enhanced criteria included in the standard. It is the intention to refine and improve our reporting over time to be in a position to address all the criteria in the standard.

This report is a self-assessment of our work against each criteria. It is not audited or benchmarked and it is not exhaustive. This is our second Sustainability Report and is intended to present the reader with sufficient evidence to demonstrate our commitment to operating sustainably and to provide some examples of where we are on the sustainability journey.



¹ ESG Social Housing – Building a sector standard approach to ESG reporting

The Sustainability Reporting Standard

ESG area	Theme #	Theme name	Description	SDG Goal	
Environmental	T1	Climate change	Prevents and mitigates the risk of climate change	13	Climate Action
	T2	Ecology	Promotes ecological sustainability	15	Life on Land
	T3	Resource management	Sustainable management of natural resources	12	Responsible Consumption and Production
Social	T4	Affordability and security	Provides affordable and secure housing	11	Sustainable Cities and Communities
				10	Reduce Inequality
	T5	Building safety and quality	Resident safety and building quality are well managed	11	Sustainable Cities and Communities
	T6	Resident voice	Listens to residents' voice	11	Sustainable Cities and Communities
	T7	Resident support	Supports residents, and the local community		
	T8	Placemaking	Supports residents and the wider local community through placemaking		
Governance	T9	Structure and governance	Legal structure of the organisation and its approach to governance	16	Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
	T10	Board and trustees	High quality board of trustees		
	T11	Staff wellbeing	Supports employees	8	Decent Work and Economic Growth
	T12	Supply chain management	Procures responsibly	12	Responsible Consumption and Production

Environmental



Themes 1–3 address development goals 12, 13 and 15 and can be seen to relate to our work to address environmental issues.

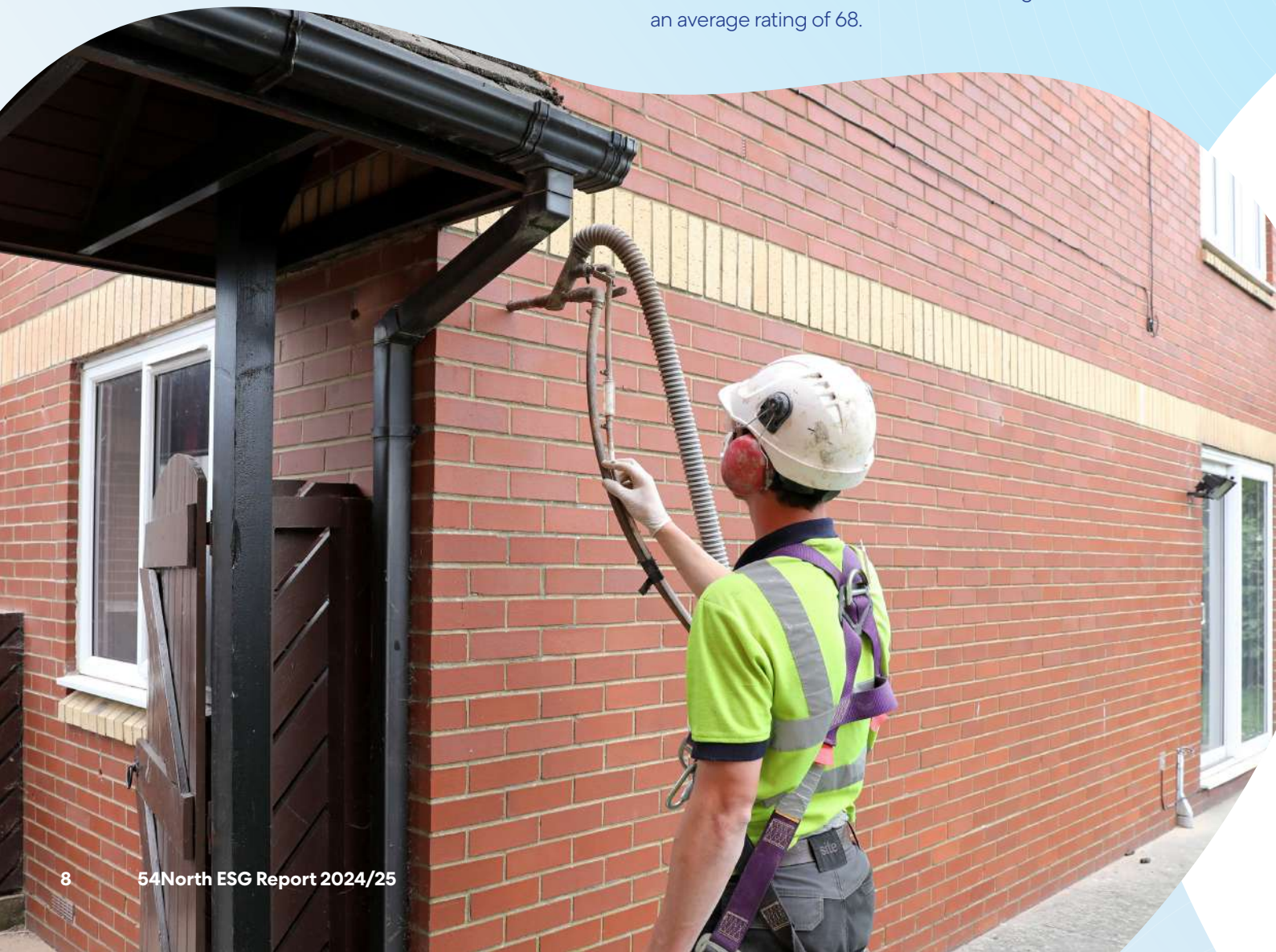
Theme 1: Climate change

This theme seeks to assess how the activities of the housing provider are impacting on climate change. It considers current practice, as well as the changes being made to improve performance in the future.

C1. Distribution of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings of existing homes (those completed before the last financial year)

EPC rating	% of homes
A	3.5%
B	48%
C	23%
D	9.5%
E+	4%

The average Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating of these homes is **77.3**. According to the Office for National Statistics, homes in England had an average rating of 68.



C2. Distribution of EPC ratings of new homes (those completed in the last financial year).

EPC rating	% of new homes
A	9%
B	87%
C	4%

The average SAP rating of these homes is **87**

C3. Does the housing provider have a net zero target and strategy?

If so, what is it and when does the housing provider intend to be net zero by?

At 54North, we recognise the importance of the climate and ecological crisis - one of the most pressing global challenges of our time. In response, we have developed a Sustainability

C4. What retrofit activities has the housing provider undertaken in the last 12 months in relation to its housing stock?

How do these activities align with, and contribute towards, performance against the housing provider's net zero strategy and target?

At 54North, we are committed to delivering both energy-efficient new homes which don't rely on fossil fuels, and adapting (retrofitting) our existing homes so they are energy efficient and affordable to run for our customers.

As part of the York and North Yorkshire Housing Partnership, we are one of 23 housing associations which have partnered to work together to scale up the delivery of affordable homes across the region including the drive to net zero.

This year, we completed the retrofit of 98 one bedroom flats at St Mary's Court and St Mary's Close in Chapeltown, and Wood Lane Court in Headingley.

This was delivered thanks to funding from the Department of Net Zero and Energy Security through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (Wave 2.1), a consortium bid through the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership.

Strategy, based on our strong commitment to tackling the associated issues so that people and planet can thrive. This strategy will complement our new build development projects, which are delivering homes powered by low-carbon solutions.

As part of the overall sustainability strategy, we will create a comprehensive retrofit strategy to ensure all our existing homes meet EPC C by 2030 and net zero by 2050.



The homes have had new cost efficient heating and hot water systems fitted and new insulation installed to help prevent warmth escaping.

Ventilation systems have also been upgraded to allow air to circulate, making the homes feel less damp – which can help prevent mould from occurring.

It's estimated that the project will reduce customers' energy bills by up to £400 per home annually, whilst yearly carbon emissions will be reduced by up to a tonne in each home. As a result of the improvements, EPC ratings in the flats have now increased to as high as a B, where some were previously rated as low as an E.

Our customers Janet Zealand and her husband Gordon have lived at St Mary's Court since 1976. Janet said: "The changes are already making a real difference to us in terms of our bills and it is lovely and warm all the time, we used to have more heaters on."

C5. Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions measured in “tonnes of carbon dioxide per year” or tCO2 and average emissions per home.

	Kg CO2 equivalent	Kg CO2 equivalent/home
Scope 1	141.22	0.05
Scope 2	105.44	0.04
Scope 3	5161.23	2.00
Total	5407.89	2.09

C6. How has the housing provider mapped and assessed the climate risks to its homes and supply chain, such as increased flood, drought and overheating risks?

How is the housing provider mitigating these risks?

We have worked with environmental consultancy SHIFT to assess the climate risks to its homes.

Looking at the risk of overheating, SHIFT has identified 2,244 (88.42%) homes at low risk and 294 (11.58%) homes at medium risk.

Various factors can raise a home’s risk of overheating:

- **Urban heat island** – High density urban areas may suffer from the ‘heat island effect’. This is caused by the increased heat retention by urban/artificial surfaces compared to rural surfaces. This is exacerbated at night, coinciding with security concerns that may prevent residents from opening windows for ventilation.
- **Single aspect** – homes with a single aspect (outward facing wall and openings on one side only) do not allow cross-ventilation. This prevents residents from doing night-time purges of heat to cool their homes
- **Build date** – homes built post-2000, are more likely to have high levels insulation and be inadequately ventilated

- **Services** – in particular, communal heating and hot water systems may cause excess heat to be discharged into communally heated properties due to the pipework which is routed throughout the building
- **Region** – regions at highest risk from extreme temperatures include the East Midlands, East of England, London, South-East, South-West, and West Midlands
- **Dwelling type** – flats tend to be at higher risk because they exhibit a combination of other risk factors

This assessment is considered a first pass overheating risk assessment. We will include overheating factors in our stock condition surveys in future to increase the climate resilience of our homes. New homes are built in compliance with Part O of the Building Regulations which took effect in June 2024, and aims to limit solar gains and remove excess heat from homes.

Considering flood risk, we have recently partnered with Zurich Insurance and will use their Previsco service which allows for automated email warnings of flood risks to our homes and customers.



Theme 2: Ecology

This theme looks to examine how the housing provider promotes ecological sustainability.

C7. Does the housing provider have a strategy to enhance green space and promote biodiversity on or near homes?

We have developed a Sustainability Strategy, which was launched early in 2024.

The strategy has two goals relating to ecology. Our first goal is to create and maintain sustainable and vibrant green spaces within our existing housing estates that promote biodiversity and enhance residents' wellbeing.

This will be achieved by:

- measuring baseline performance of estate team/contractors/procedures using relevant framework such as SWOT and business model canvas
- changing land management practices
- an initial pilot on three sites: our Elmetes, Spring Valley and St Ann's estates
- carrying out habitat surveys and other preparation work
- identifying areas for tree planting, bird/bat boxes, wild grassing and insect habitat piles
- conducting customer consultations.

Our second goal is to ensure that the communal areas of our new build estates are used to promote and enhance biodiversity.

This will be achieved by:

- introducing native plant species that support local wildlife and create diverse habitats
- installing birdhouses, bat boxes, or insect hotels to encourage diverse wildlife to inhabit the area – Scouts and Beavers from the 17th South West Leeds Scout Club have built three hedgehog shelters and two insect boxes, while students from Leeds College of Building have also designed and crafted two insect boxes which were handed over to our colleagues to be installed at our Wesley Road development.
- where there are large spaces, designating specific zones within communal spaces as protected areas to conserve biodiversity.

The benefits are:

- making the estates more aesthetically pleasing, potentially enhancing customers' wellbeing
- good for biodiversity, the climate and possibly flood prevention
- good corporate social responsibility
- well-designed biodiverse landscapes that can reduce maintenance costs over time
- demonstrating a commitment to environmental stewardship, enhancing our reputation
- contributing to climate resilience.

C8. Does the housing provider have a strategy to identify, manage and reduce pollutants that could cause material harm?

Our Sustainability Strategy also has a goal focussed on pollutant management.

The goal is to develop a pollutant management strategy aimed at reducing potential harm to the environment and public health. This will be done by:

- confirming what policies we already have in place to manage asbestos, mould, disposal of paints, PFAs, indoor air pollutants, water pipes containing lead
- creating policies for those pollutants we don't already manage.



Theme 3: Resource management

This theme investigates how the activities of the housing provider promote the sustainable management of natural resources.

C9. Does the housing provider have a strategy to use or increase the use of responsibly sourced materials for all building works?

If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

For our new build activity, we require that all timber will be Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)/ Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) accredited or equivalent, with clear Chain of Custody. A copy of the Chain of Custody Certificate or source documentation and copies of purchase orders/receipts must be provided. All internal finishes must be of softwood. All materials used in key building elements must be responsibly sourced.

However, we do not currently have a strategy to increase the use of responsibly sourced materials but it is our intention to develop a sustainable building procurement policy.

C10. Does the housing provider have a strategy for waste management incorporating building materials?

If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

Our Sustainability Strategy also has a goal focussed on waste management.

The goal is to develop a waste management plan that embraces circular economy principles before resorting to traditional recycling and disposal methods.

This will be achieved by:

- identifying the types and amounts of waste generated from maintenance, estate maintenance, IT and our offices
- analysing the 'products' lifecycle so that we can identify areas where waste can be reduced or eliminated
- seeking collaboration with businesses offering services aligned with the principles of the circular economy such as The Recycle Project in York
- identifying ways to reduce fly tipping
- collaborating with waste management companies with high environmental performance for waste we need to dispose of.

The benefits of this activity are:

- environmental protection
- public health improvements
- regulatory compliance and risk mitigation.



CT1. Does the housing provider have a strategy for good water management?

If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

Our Sustainability Strategy also has a goal focussed on water management.

The goal is to increase water efficiency in both our business operations and homes, for a more resource-conscious future.

This will be achieved by:

- collaborating with planned maintenance to ensure our kitchen and bathroom replacement programmes include installing more water efficient taps, toilets and showers

- installing showers over baths
- ensuring our offices are fitted with water efficiency measures
- undertaking detailed water efficiency calculations through SHIFT.

The benefits of this activity are considered to be:

- reducing strain on water supply demand – water is a finite resource
- energy savings
- happier customers as less water used = lower costs.



Social



Themes 4–8 address development goals 10 and 11 and can be seen to relate to our work to create social value in our communities.

Theme 4: Affordability and security

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

C12. Housing provider specific “Affordability” indicator

We assess the affordability of our homes when considering the level of annual rent increase to charge.

From this data, we can see that our rents are on average **51.4%** of market rents, as per the Office of National Statistics.

Compared with Local Housing Allowance, our rents are on average **85.3%** of LHA rates.

C13. Share, and number, of existing homes (homes completed before the start of the previous 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 Rental Sector.**

The following breakdown of stats are ‘owned’ General Needs only:

	Number of properties
Barnsley	12
East Riding of Yorkshire	41
Kirklees	7
Leeds	1,200
North Yorkshire	67
Wakefield	6
York	292
Total	1,625



C14. Share, and number, of new homes (homes that were completed in the previous 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 rental sector.

In 2024/2025, we completed 158 new homes, all of which were social housing:

	New homes	%
General needs	130	82.24
Rent to Buy	2	1.26
Low cost home ownership	26	16.5

As part of the wider Karbon development programme, during 2024/25, we spent £115.2m on completing 326 new homes across Yorkshire.

C15. How is the housing provider trying to reduce the effect of fuel poverty on its residents?

We take a strategic approach to reducing energy costs for residents. We try to protect those who face additional costs due to their homes being less energy efficient, by seeking to bring all our homes to at least an EPC C rating. Our stock condition surveys are vital in helping us find the homes where people may be most exposed to higher costs. We feed the data into our strategic asset management tools to help guide our efforts towards the homes we need to prioritise and to tailor different solutions to different house types. In cases where fuel poverty has taken hold, our Money Matters Team offers a range of support mechanisms including energy crisis vouchers and hardship loans (see C23).

C16. How does the housing provider provide security of tenure for residents?

We issue tenancies appropriate to the housing model (general needs, supported, sheltered etc.) but where possible we provide the highest security of tenure - assured lifetime tenancies.

Throughout the customer journey we look to embed security, either pre-emptively or in response to crisis. For example:

- Our Income Team undertook pre-tenancy assessments last year to make sure new customers have their incomes maximised and are given the financial advice and support they need to start their journey in the best possible way
- With all new customers, we attempt to make two visits in their first year, demonstrating our commitment to ensuring a positive experience.

Theme 5: Building safety and quality

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

We take a proactive approach towards the health and safety of our customers, staff, contractors and stakeholders to ensure it complies with our legislative and regulatory responsibilities. Over the course of the year, we maintained excellent levels of compliance across the 'big 6' compliance areas noted opposite.

C17. Describe the condition of the housing provider's portfolio, with reference to:

% of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out.

% of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out.

% of homes for which all required electrical safety checks have been carried out.

% of homes (with gas safety checks)	100.0%	% of homes (with asbestos checks)	100.0%
% of homes (with fire risk assessments)	100.0%	% of homes (with legionella assessments)	100.0%
% of homes (with electrical safety checks)	99.4%	% of homes (with lift safety checks)	100.0%

Just 23 homes were outside our policy of completing inspections of electrical circuits every five years. All homes are well within the current 10-year re-inspection timescale expected by law, although the new changes in May 2026 will move us to a statutory period of five years.

Pennington Choices found that: **“Overall, we have full assurance that 54North Homes is managing compliance effectively.”**

Pennington Choices - surveying and consultancy company



C18. What % of the housing provider's homes meet the national housing quality standard?

Just three homes failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. In each case, works had been identified and scheduled, but due to some complexities with delivery, or supply chain, the work had not been completed at the year-end date.



C19. How does the housing provider manage and mitigate the risk of damp and mould for its residents?

Tackling damp and mould and providing safe and secure homes for our customers remains a top priority at 54North.

We have robust systems and processes in place to ensure we proactively identify any damp and mould problems and promptly respond to any issues raised.

Performance in this area is also reported quarterly to our board.

Housing providers within the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership, of which we are a member, are also working together to create shared resources.

We provide a handy guide with lots more information on our website:

www.54northhomes.co.uk/media/16489/m0144025-healthyhome-booklet.pdf

Theme 6: Resident voice

This theme seeks to assess how effective the housing provider is at listening to and empowering residents. The theme is made up of three areas that cover resident scrutiny, complaint handling and resident satisfaction.

C20. What are the results of the housing provider’s most recent tenant satisfaction survey?

How has the housing provider acted on these results?

Feedback from our customers is very important to us. We need to know what we are doing right, what we’re getting wrong and where we can improve.













The Regulator for Social Housing requires housing providers like us to report on a set of performance measures called Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). These not only hold providers to account but give customers greater visibility of our performance.

There are 22 TSMs in total and all regulated housing providers must report on them. They cover areas such as customer perception measures, responsive repairs, neighbourhood management, complaints and building safety and responsive repairs.

We work with a research provider called Acuity who this year contacted 681 customers (including 20 customers who lived in almshouses) at random, to provide feedback on the 12 customer perception TSMs.

All social housing providers report their performance data to the Regulator of Social Housing and this information is available online.

The TSMs are reported at Group level however, we (54North) have seen improvements in some but not all measures.

	54North	Karbon Group		54North	Karbon Group
 Overall satisfaction	74.6%	81.5%	 Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	84.6%	89.8%
 Satisfaction with repairs	77.8%	84.1%	 Satisfaction with the landlord’s approach to handling complaints	33.6%	43.2%
 Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	72.7%	74.6%	 Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	67.9%	74.7%
 Satisfaction that the home is well maintained	80.7%	84.8%	 Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	67.5%	76.3%
 Satisfaction that the home is safe	86.5%	89.9%	 Satisfaction with the landlord’s approach to handling anti-social behaviour	57.2%	68.3%
 Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	59.6%	70.9%			
 Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them	81.3%	85.6%			

There are three areas where we are performing in the lower quartile in comparison to our peers. We have put in place a range of measures to address these including:

1. Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them

We undertook a deep dive into this TSM, commissioning a scrutiny review and consulting with customers to develop eight recommendations for service improvement including:

- We are working with Karbon to launch a new customer portal in 2025 that will improve the customer journey and enable customers to better track the journey of their service request.
- We have increased the amount of customer communications we produce with e-newsletters now going out bi-monthly, including 'you said, we did' articles and details of customer surgeries and drop ins happening in communities.
- We launched a new in-house repairs service in April 2025, with Karbon's Property Services Team now delivering day to day repairs in Yorkshire, with improved communication processes.
- We launched new customer service standards, following consultation. Our Customer Services Team will deal with emails more quickly and provide customers and colleagues with a clear timescale for a response if they are not able to deal with the query at the first point of contact. We will transfer more calls instead of advising the customer someone will call them back.
- We rolled out a programme of training to colleagues under the "Elevate" banner and including customer services training.

2. Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour (ASB)

We appointed a new Safer Communities Officer in 2024, providing additional specialist resource to manage escalated ASB cases and develop the service. We also recruited new Housing Officers and Housing Assistants who received training, coaching and support from the Safer Communities Officer.

3. Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints

We implemented a revised Complaints Policy in April 2024, in line with new Housing Ombudsman guidance, significantly increasing the number of complaints we manage through formal processes. Operational colleagues who are managing complaints are supported by our specialist Customer Experience Team which oversee complaint management and learning, which is addressed through regular workshops and reporting.

In 2025, we revised our procedures and recruited an additional specialist into the Customer Experience Team to respond to complaints.

C21. What arrangements are in place to enable the residents to hold management to account for provision of services?

Our Customer Experience Committee (CEC) is responsible for overseeing customer experience and customer engagement: ensuring that customers have their voices heard; that the needs and safety of customers are at the heart of the Board's decision making; and that our performance is monitored to strive for excellence across all our services.

The CEC holds us to account on customer-related matters and provides feedback and insight to ensure that services are developed in partnership with our customers.

We produce an Annual Report for customers that provides significant qualitative and quantitative information about service performance, both good and bad, that is sufficient for customers to understand the organisation's relative performance.

Effective engagement with our customers is vitally important to us and we have continued to extend the delivery of our Customer Engagement Policy, developed with Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS). We offer four tiers of involvement:

Be aware – We provide information in accessible formats for everyone

Chip-in – Customers can be consulted in formats and locations, and at times that are convenient to them

Co-create – Customers are formally engaged with us, regularly contributing through formal mechanisms, reviewing and designing services, and making recommendations

Lead – Customers form part of our governance framework, making decisions.

Key aspects of our offer include: gathering customer feedback via customer experience and perception surveys, focus groups, support for customer and community groups, pop-up events and a dedicated page on the website. Our Customer Experience Team recruit and engage with a group of customers who have expressed an interest in working more closely with us.



C22. In the last 12 months, how many complaints has the national Ombudsman determined that maladministration took place?

How have these complaints (or others) resulted in change of practice within the housing provider?

In 2024-25 the Housing Ombudsman made five determinations arising from customer complaints, which included a total of 18 findings and a maladministration rate of 75%, just above the national average of 71%.

- Two findings were considered outside jurisdiction
- Four were found with no maladministration
- Six findings of service failure
- Four were considered to be maladministration
- Two findings were considered to be severe maladministration

Five of the maladministration findings related to one complaint where we upheld and acknowledged the service failures and has put in place measures to improve the service in the future.

Every quarter, we report to the Customer Experience Committee on our complaints, compliments and suggestions performance and the insights gained from it. We also provide customers with information in a dedicated section of our website and in the annual customer report. We maintain a learning journal which tracks our learnings and common themes and trends, we share this with service areas to find solutions and ways to learn and improve services. In addition, for each complaint, where possible, we record lessons that we can learn from the complaints to ensure that they can be avoided in the future. We also publish these on our website.



Theme 7: Resident support

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

C23. What are the key support services that the housing provider offers to its residents?

How successful are these services in improving outcomes?

Money Matters

The cost-of-living crisis continues to be a challenge for us all. If our customers are experiencing money struggles, they can contact our Money Matters Team who will be able to help.

Money Matters is a confidential welfare benefits and money advice service. Our experienced advisors provide free and confidential money guidance and can help find other support that will make life easier.

During the year

176 customers accessed the Money Matters service, securing

£279,670 of additional income gains.

Customer Support Fund

Helping our customers to thrive in their homes and communities is really important to us, but we recognise that some of our customers struggle financially on a day-to-day basis and have limited reserves to fall back on when the unexpected occurs. We may be able to provide a small amount of support to customers who are suffering serious financial hardship due to unexpected/exceptional circumstances.

Last year, we helped 96 households through our Customer Support Fund, totalling £6.7k. This support helped customers who were either terminally ill or providing support to a family member in hospital and spending their small income on bus fares to and from hospital, food vouchers, energy vouchers, bus fares and mobile phone credit.



In other cases approved, we provided essential items upon fleeing domestic violence, two customers on maternity leave with reduced salary who were supported with a claim for Universal Credit and the subsequent five-week delay before payment, to manage with essential items and food until their claim was paid.

Other customers in hardship received essential white goods. For example, one customer has a severe health condition which required her to do laundry on a daily basis. We supported her to get a washing machine which helped her wellbeing.

Furniture Packages

Home Comforts is our furniture and appliance rental service where customers can choose from three levels of packs dependent on their needs for an affordable weekly payment. The three levels are: Home Start, Home Essentials and Home Essentials Plus. They are available when a customer might be starting from scratch and can choose from beds, appliances, and/or furniture.

Theme 8: Placemaking

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

C24. Describe the housing provider's community investment activities, and how the housing provider is contributing to positive neighbourhood outcomes for the communities in which its homes are located.

Provide examples or case studies of where the housing provider has been engaged in placemaking or placeshaping activities.

54North is a not-for-profit landlord.

As well as providing high-quality housing, we also want to help customers thrive in communities by offering targeted investment and support where it is most needed.

Here are some of the projects we've supported:

Positive Footprints

We have continued to provide funding to Positive Footprints to engage with local primary schools to raise aspirations. They create opportunities for children and young people to discover their potential, explore the world of work and develop the skills they need for the future.

Our funding has engaged eight schools this year.

In 2024/25, a total of

333

children and young people have been impacted. The schools rate the impact of the partnership and associated activity as very high.

90

hours of learning have been delivered with pupils engaging in an average of 10 hours of careers-led learning with different businesses and local organisations.

Our partnership has created

£64,808

of social value with the project.





Featherbank Forest

Pupils at Horsforth Featherbank Primary School in Leeds, have continued to use an outdoor 'forest classroom' where they learn in a natural, outdoor setting.

We developed the area in partnership with the school and local conservation volunteers so that the children could hold their classes in the forest.

St. Mary's Rooftop Garden

We've continued to work in collaboration with Hyde Park Source to deliver a weekly gardening group at our community roof-top garden on top of our St Mary's scheme in Chapeltown, Leeds. This is one of our longest-running and most successful community projects.

The friendly group, which runs every Friday afternoon 2.30pm-4.30pm, is open to our customers, members of the local community and people throughout Leeds.

The project provides lots of benefits to those attending in terms of reducing social isolation, learning new skills, improving self-esteem, connecting with nature in an urban setting and improving local green spaces.

There are 15 regular members (five of which are residents of St. Mary's) and they have grown grapes, beans, potatoes, garlic, onions, kale, carrots and asparagus this year. As well as seasonal veg growing, members have learnt about healthy recipes, healing herbs, fungi, soil health, insect and tree ID.

The beautiful mini native wildflower meadow continues to be a highlight with a huge range of insects such as bees and butterflies and many other pollinators using it.

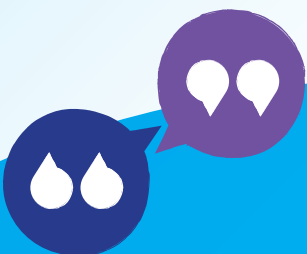




Talk, Listen, Change – FREE Counselling sessions for 54North customers

In partnership with Talk, Listen, Change (TLC), we offer free counselling sessions for our customers with fully qualified counsellors.

We know many people are experiencing tough times and talking to someone can make all the difference. We fund a course of 10 one-to-one sessions and these can take place via telephone or Zoom.



85

people have been referred since the project began.

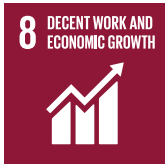
307

counselling sessions have been offered since the start of the project.

100%

said they were very satisfied or satisfied with their session experience.

Governance



Themes 9–12 address development goals 8, 12 and 16 and can be seen to relate to our Governance arrangements

Theme 9: Structure and governance

This theme seeks to assess the inherent characteristics of the organisation and any risks or benefits that may flow from this.

C25. Is the housing provider registered with a regulator of social housing?

Yes, registration number L1019.

C26. What is the most recent viability and governance regulatory grading?

G1/V1/C2 awarded to the Karbon Group in September 2025 following a Regulatory Inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing.

C27. Which Code of Governance does the housing provider follow, if any?

The National Housing Federation's Code of Governance 2020.

C28. Is the housing provider not-for-profit?

Yes.

C29. Explain how the housing provider's board manages ESG risks

On an annual basis, the Board considers and sets the risk appetite for all strategic risks. Embedding sound ESG principles is one of three strategic enablers in the Group Stronger Foundations Action Plan delivered by us, supporting the three core objectives of Place, Homes, Customers and Place, and so ESG risks are incorporated into the risk register.

As ESG risks emerge, whether through new legislation or new policy, they are built into our risk management framework. Our Group Audit and Risk Committee (GARC) is an important part of this approach. GARC oversees the risk management framework, scrutinises our risk register, manages our internal audit programme and reports assurances to 54North and Group Boards. GARC and our board receive detailed strategic risk reports on a quarterly basis, including risks that may be escalating or need a 'closer watch'.

C30. Has the housing provider been subject to any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months (e.g. data protection breaches, bribery, money laundering, HSE breaches or notices) – that resulted in enforcement or other equivalent action?

No.



Theme 10: Board and trustees

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

C31. How does the housing provider ensure it gets input from a diverse range of people into its governance processes?

Does the housing provider consider resident voice at the board and senior management level?

Does the housing provider have policies that incorporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into the recruitment and selection of board members and senior management?

Our board's Membership and Recruitment Policy ensures that there is a fair and balanced approach to recruitment. The policy is supported by our Code of Governance which states that the board should reflect the communities it serves.

Analysis of board data against customer data tells us how representative our board is, and we work proactively to improve the diversity of our board through succession planning when we know someone is due to step down. For example, we have tried to balance the age of our board by recruiting a younger demographic. We do this through a range of tactics including:

- employing different recruitment partners with access to different talent pools
- using alternative media to advertise the roles and diversify our reach
- our skilled and committed Customer Experience Committee provides an opportunity for customers to enter our governance structure and can be a springboard to full board membership (see C21).

44%
of board are women

25%
of board are from ethnic minority groups

9%
of board are residents

9%
of board have a disability

55
Average age of board members (years)

2.5
Average board tenure (years)

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

One of the 12 board members resigned in 2024/25 and the place is being held vacant to recruit a second customer board member in 2025/26.

One Executive Team member left the business in the same period and was not replaced.

C33. Number of board members on the housing provider's Audit Committee with recent and relevant financial experience.

Five out of the current six board members on the Group Audit and Risk Committee have recent and relevant financial experience. Two are qualified accountants or auditors.

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

82% (9 of 11) board members are non-executives, with the Managing Director of 54North and the Group CEO both holding board positions.

C35. Has a succession plan been provided to the housing provider's board in the last 12 months?

Yes. The board annually considers forthcoming retirements or re-appointments.

C36. For how many years has the housing provider's current external audit partner been responsible for auditing the accounts?

Beever and Struthers has been our external audit firm/partner for the last 11 years, although the specific Audit Partner (the individual who conducts the audit) changed in 2022.

C37. When was the last independently-run, board-effectiveness review?

The last board effectiveness review was carried out by Altair from September 2023 to February 2024. We also carry out internal effectiveness reviews of our Board and Committee every year, in line with governance best practice.

C38. How does the housing provider handle conflicts of interest at the board?

Board members complete an annual declaration of interests which informs us of any changes to their situation. At board and committee meetings, members raise any potential conflicts of interest for the business being discussed.

The member may then be asked not to contribute to the decision or to leave while the business is discussed.

Theme 11: Staff wellbeing

C39. Does the housing provider pay the Real Living Wage?

Yes.

C40. What is the gender pay gap?

The results show that the median female is paid £35,995 and the median male is paid £31,262. The 'pay gap' measured on median contractual full time equivalent pay for females and males showed a -15.1% pay gap.

C41. What is the CEO-worker pay ratio?

Our CEO to average pay ratio is 3.7, which compares well to the FTSE 100 where it is closer to 100:1.

25th Centile	Median	75th Centile
5.3	4.0	3.3

C42. How is the housing provider ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is promoted across its staff?

We are committed to fostering a culture of inclusion and belonging from the very beginning of a colleague's journey with us.

Inclusive recruitment practices

Our commitment starts at the interview stage. We provide all candidates with the interview questions in advance, helping to remove barriers for neurodivergent applicants and those with learning difficulties. This proactive approach ensures that candidates do not need to request adjustments, making the process more equitable and accessible.

Induction and training

Upon appointment, all new colleagues complete our mandatory inclusion and belonging training as part of their induction. Additionally, every colleague is required to confirm their understanding of our Inclusion and Belonging Policy annually, alongside their declaration of interests. This reinforces our shared responsibility for maintaining an inclusive workplace.

Listening to our people

Our Colleague Voice Forum provides a platform for colleagues to share ideas, raise concerns, and contribute to continuous improvement. Feedback is actively used to inform learning and drive positive change.

Strategic oversight and accountability

We operate under a Group-wide Inclusion and Belonging Strategy, and we implement a dedicated Action Plan. Progress against this plan is monitored and reported periodically to the board, ensuring accountability and sustained focus on EDI outcomes.

We're also undergoing accreditation with the National Centre for Diversity.

C43. How does the housing provider support the physical and mental health of their staff?

We take the wellbeing of our colleagues seriously and are committed to creating a supportive and healthy working environment. Our approach includes a range of proactive measures:

Enhanced mental health support

We have upgraded our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), allowing colleagues to self-refer for up to six face-to-face sessions with a fully qualified counsellor. This ensures timely, confidential support is available when it's needed most.

Empowering managers

Managers have received training in mental health awareness, equipping them to take a proactive role in supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of their teams. This helps foster a culture of openness and early intervention.

Wellbeing-centred performance management

Our refreshed performance management process-developed in collaboration with our Colleague Voice Forum-now begins with a focus on health and wellbeing. This ensures that wellbeing is a core part of how we support and develop our people.

Accessible resources

The Group's online Wellbeing Hub has been refreshed and relaunched, providing colleagues with easy access to tools, guidance, and support across a range of wellbeing topics.

Peer support network

We have trained Mental Health First Aiders across the organisation, offering peer-to-peer support and helping to create a psychologically safe workplace.



C44. How does the housing provider support the professional development of its staff?

We believe that professional development is key to delivering our strategic objectives and creating a workplace where everyone can thrive. Our People Strategy sets out how we support colleagues to keep their skills current, deepen their expertise and grow in their careers.

Personalised development conversations

Our annual **Be Your Best** conversations provide a dedicated space for colleagues to reflect on their personal and professional development goals, identify any skills gaps and explore opportunities for growth.

Strategic and inclusive approach to learning

We focus on development that supports both individual aspirations and organisational needs. We talk about the three Es of development:

- **Experience** – learning through doing
- **Exposure** – learning from others
- **Education** – formal learning opportunities

This framework encourages colleagues to share knowledge and learn from one another.

Wide range of development opportunities

Colleagues have access to a variety of support, including:

- one funded professional membership per employee
- training for current role and preparation for future roles
- qualification funding
- apprenticeship opportunities
- participation in the Housing Diversity Network's mentoring programme as a mentor or mentee
- a comprehensive Learning Management System accessible via desktop and mobile devices.

Leadership development

For colleagues aspiring to supervisory roles, we offer the **Aspire to Lead** programme, delivered by Karbon's Learning and Development Team. This supports the development of future leaders within our organisation.

Theme 12: Supply chain

C45. How is social value creation considered when procuring goods and services?

What measures are in place to monitor the delivery of this Social Value?

Social value is a key part of our procurement activity, using the returns we get from our contracts to create opportunities for our customers and communities.

Over the last year, Karbon Group has refined our approach to social value with a number of key activities:

- refreshed our Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMS) framework that we use in procurement, aligning them with our strategic approach and the needs of our communities
- placed greater emphasis on monitoring and evidence collection to ensure social value reflects the wider impact our spend has – particularly in relation to employment
- enhanced our social value offer in our development programme to start to capture social value across all contracts linked to our Strategic Partnership funding from Homes England.

This year, the Group has worked with 47 contractors to deliver over £2.8million of social value.

We hope the examples below show the variety of benefits that well-managed social value can offer:

- It's not just about monetary contributions, our contractors have provided over £29,400 of in-kind support including everything from providing fridge freezers to installing drains.
- Our materials supplier Jewson recruited a Karbon customer previously supported by the Group's Foundations for Life Team as a Social Value Apprentice to support our contract.
- Suppliers like Able Construction have delivered 155 hours of educational activities in schools and colleges bringing industry into the classroom.

- Two of our supply chain took on New Start placements in addition to their social value commitments.
- £160,000 in funding from the Group's Social Value Fund and RE:GEN Partnership Fund was donated to a variety of projects from breakfast clubs to community defibrillators.

C46. How is sustainability considered when the housing provider is procuring goods and services?

What measures are in place to monitor the sustainability of your supply chain when procuring goods and services?

Each contract we procure is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment, generating an awareness of how our activities as a buyer can impact our environment. When we go out to tender, we check that each supplier has an Environmental Policy and Strategy, and we ask the following question which is weighted according to the requirements of the tender:

"Demonstrate your organisation's approach to environmental sustainability. Include measures taken by your organisation to achieve environmental sustainability, and compliance with relevant regulations, legislation and standards."

We continue to roll out our Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) system ensuring that suppliers upload their key compliance documents including a mandatory Carbon Reduction Plan. All our higher risk (Tier 1 and 2) suppliers are on the system and are required to maintain up-to-date documentation.

Our procurement work is guided by an ongoing Maturity Assessment which looks at nine procurement pillars and how we perform against each, providing clear targets by which we can improve our activities. In the coming year, we'll strive to test the parameters of what sustainability can mean in procurement, whether that's more obvious angles such as environmental sustainability or what sustainability means to the local business sector and wider economy.

We recruited a formal Customer Procurement Panel in 2023 which advise us on the specifications of our procurements which often includes value for money and environmental priorities. The panel meets four times a year to scrutinise our work.





We would love to hear your feedback on the report, from the content to the way it has been designed, so we can understand if it works for you and how we might improve it in the future.

It's easy to get in touch with us:

Email: hello@54northhomes.co.uk

Tel: 0345 521 1993

Our phone lines are open 8.30am - 5pm weekdays

Website: www.54northhomes.co.uk

Or visit our social media pages



This report has been approved for publication and we've made a digital version available on our website.

We've created a plain text version to support those using accessibility tools such as translation, audio, changes to the size of text, ruler and screen mask.

We also aim to make our information and services more accessible by using plain English in our communication, and offering sign language and language interpreters where required.

If you would like this document in an alternative format or have any questions relating to the report, please contact: **hello@54northhomes.co.uk**

54North Homes is part of the Karbon Homes Group and is a charitable registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.