



Making an Impact

**Our Sustainability Report
2022-2023**

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Executive Summary

Platform Housing Group (Platform) are proud to report a year of strong and committed performance in the area of sustainability. Through our Corporate Strategy, which places sustainability as one of our core strategic themes, we continue to focus on supporting customers, improving our environmental impact and maintaining sector leading governance.

The table below summarises our performance against the key metrics within the Sustainability Reporting Standard (the Standard) as at 31 March 2023 and a detailed account against all metrics within the Standard can be seen in the sections below (see page 10 onwards). In addition to areas within the Standard, this report also contains a summary of performance against the Group's Sustainable Finance Framework, through which £250m of sustainable bonds have been issued to date.

| Theme | Indicator | Target | 2023 | 2022 |
|------------------|---|-------------|-------|-------|
| Affordability | Average rents/average market rent | ≤65% | 63% | 63% |
| Affordability | Proportion of affordable tenures – at start of year | ≥95% | 99% | 99% |
| Affordability | Proportion of affordable tenures – developed in year | ≥90% | 100% | 100% |
| Security | Proportion of homes with at least 3 year fixed tenancy | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Building safety | Proportion of homes in compliance with gas safety | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Building safety | Proportion of homes with Fire Risk Assessment | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Building quality | Proportion of homes that met the Decent Homes Standard | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Resident voice | Customer satisfaction | ≥75% | 71% | 70% |
| Resident voice | Complaints upheld by the Housing Ombudsman | | 6 | 6 |
| Climate change | Scope 1/2 carbon emissions tCO2e per home | | 0.22 | 0.20 |
| Climate change | Scope 3 carbon emissions tCO2e per home | | 3.21 | 3.25 |
| Climate change | Homes with an EPC rating of C and above – start of year | 100% | 69% | 68% |
| Climate change | Developed homes with an EPC ratings of B and above | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Governance | Registration with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Governance | Registered as a 'for profit' provider | No | No | No |
| Governance | Most recent viability and governance ratings from the Regulator of Social Housing | G1/V1 | G1/V1 | G1/V1 |
| Governance | Maximum tenure of Group Board Member (years) | ≤9 | 4 | 3 |
| Governance | Proportion of non-executive directors on Group Board | ≥90% | 90% | 90% |
| Governance | Length of service of external auditors (years) | ≤10 | 3 | 2 |
| Staff wellbeing | Real Living Wage paid | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Staff wellbeing | Gender pay gap | ≥-5% ≤5% | -3% | 1% |
| Staff wellbeing | Average number of sick days per employee | ≤7 | 8 | 9 |

Affordability and Security

As a social landlord we are committed to managing and developing secure and affordable homes to those in the areas in which we operate.

The provision and maintenance of quality, affordable and sustainable housing remains at the core of our social purpose. At March 2023 99% (March 2022: 99%) of homes owned were let for a social purpose and all of the homes we developed in the year to March 2023 were built for social rent, affordable rent and low cost home ownership.

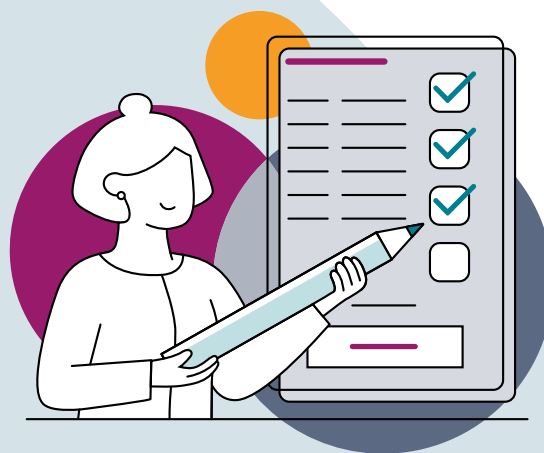
We set rents that are below the private rented sector (PRS) to help those who can't afford to rent on the open market. Overall our rents were on average 63% of PRS rents at March 2023 (March 2022: 63%).

In response to the cost of living crisis we continue to operate our wellbeing fund. During the year the fund helped over 6,000 customers acutely affected by the crisis, providing a total of £2m towards essential items such as food, clothing and heating. On top of that we have established a Cost of Living Working Group to look at ways in which we can better help our customers. One such way relates to an arrangement set up in the year with Local Energy Action Partnerships (LEAP), which provides customers access to specialist energy advice and support. LEAP can advocate on behalf of customers for utility bills, obtain fuel vouchers and seek out additional grants available with energy providers directly.

Security

Platform is committed to offering tenancy agreements that do not have a fixed term. All new tenancy agreements are lifetime tenancies. There are a number of legacy agreements that are still on fixed terms, which will be phased out over time. A summary of tenancies is shown below:

| | Tenancies | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 2022 | 2023 |
| < 3 years | 1 | 1 |
| > 3 years | 5,240 | 4,696 |
| No term | 34,302 | 35,505 |
| Total tenancies | 39,543 | 40,202 |



Looking after our Customers

Building Safety

The safety of our customers is our number one objective. As at March 2023 100% of our homes had an in-date Fire Risk Assessment (March 2022: 100%), gas safety compliance was 99.97% (March 2022: 99.96%) and all of our eligible homes met the Decent Homes Standard (March 2022: 100%).

Damp and condensation mould is an area that has always been robustly dealt with at Platform. We have a solid and clear process for dealing with cases of damp and mould, to ensure all cases reported are tracked to resolution. During the year these have been strengthened by re-running our damp and mould training with all colleagues, and enhancing the information available to customers to prevent and treat instances as they arise.

Resident Voice

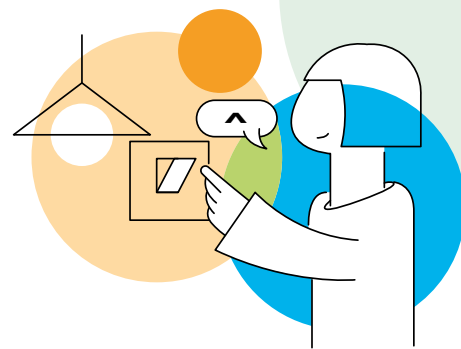
We continue to work closely with customers through our Customer Experience Panel. The panel is made up of customers and includes Group Board representation. The panel is heavily involved in looking at ways in which we can improve customer satisfaction.

During the year we extended the number of customer satisfaction surveys we circulate, with additional surveys now issued specifically to new customers, those having received void works and those involved in the viewing and sign-up experience. In the year we received c35,000 responses to surveys (2022: c16,000) and had an overall satisfaction of 71% (2022: 70%).

We had six complaints that were upheld by the Housing Ombudsman (2022: six)



Climate Change



Platform will move all existing homes to an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C or better by 2030.

We remain committed to improving the energy efficiency of our homes in spite of widespread cost inflation and labour shortages in the UK. A retrofit strategy will be completed in the coming year, which sets out in more detail how we progress all homes to EPC C by 2030 and then on to net zero carbon.

A summary of EPCs held at the start of the year is shown below. There were 69% of our homes that had a rating of C and above, which is up from 68% recorded for the previous year.

| Rating | Homes with certificate ¹ | Percentage | Cumulative percentage |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| A (92+) | 121 | 0% | 0% |
| B (81-91) | 10,235 | 28% | 29% |
| C (69-80) | 14,534 | 40% | 69% |
| D (55-68) | 8,902 | 25% | 94% |
| E (39-54) | 2,106 | 6% | 100% |
| F (21-38) | 119 | 0% | 100% |
| G (1-20) | 11 | 0% | 100% |
| | 36,028 | 100 | 100% |

¹There were 3,943 homes without an EPC at March 2022.

A further £12m was secured from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) (Wave 2) in the year which will support the retrofit of 995 homes between 2023 and 2025. These homes include our least energy efficient properties, those with EPC ratings of E, F and G. Retrofit works funded by the SHDF will compliment Platform's wider programme, which is focused on improving the fabric of our buildings, specifically external wall, cavity wall and loft insulation, in addition to replacing doors and windows. Fabric improvements will be followed by introducing ground and air source heat pumps (ASHP), replacing gas and solid fuel systems and installing photo-voltaic panels (PV panels) to our homes. During the year we retrofitted the following:

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|
| ASHP | 211 | 104 |
| PV panels | 273 | 153 |
| External Wall Insulation | 1 | - |
| Other renewables | 32 | - |
| | 517 | 257 |

As a result of energy efficiency works during the year the average SAP score at March 2023 for homes that existed at March 2022, had increased to over 73. For those homes retrofitted, energy efficiency improvements have saved customers over 50% of their energy bills.

A total of 962 new homes were developed in the year and a further 150 were added as part of a stock acquisition. All of these homes had an EPC rating of B and above, with an average SAP score of 84 for both the newly built (962) and acquired (150) homes:

| Rating | New homes | Percentage | Cumulative percentage |
|-----------|--------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| A (92+) | 17 | 2% | 2% |
| B (81-91) | 1,095 | 98% | 100% |
| | 1,112 ¹ | 100% | 100% |

¹A further 2 homes were added in the year as a result of buying back homes from customers. Of these, one had an EPC of B and the other had an EPC of C.



962

new homes were developed in the year



Governance

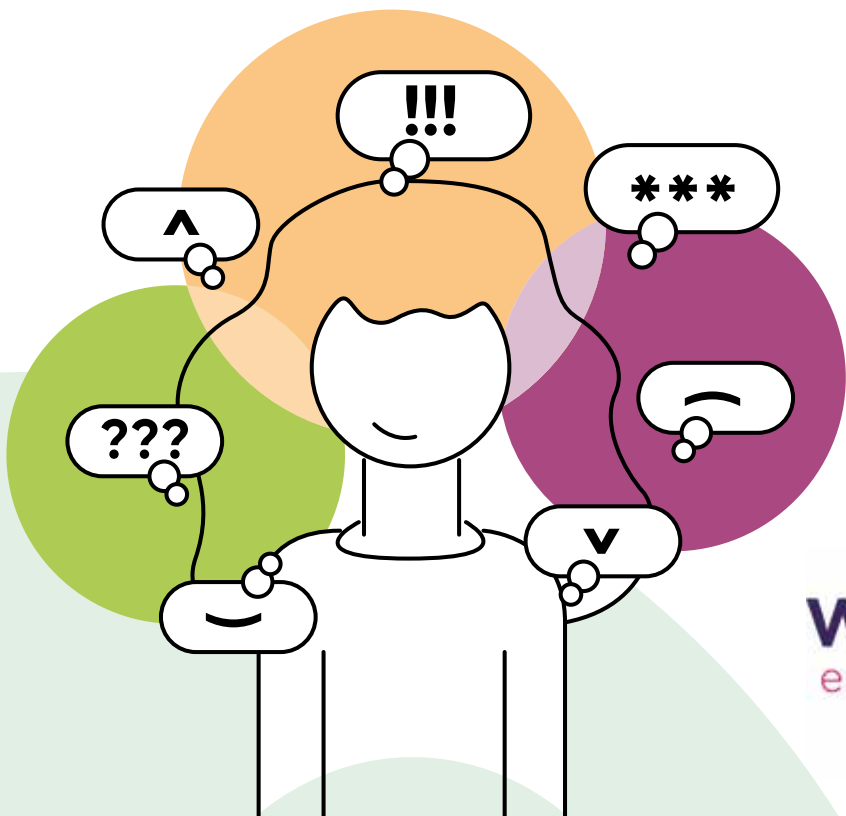
Platform is committed to maintaining the highest standards of governance.

During the year the Regulator of Social Housing affirmed the highest ratings of governance and financial viability for Platform (G1 and V1). In addition, A+ ratings were also affirmed by both S&P and Fitch.

Staff wellbeing

Platform continues to be committed to the wellbeing of its colleagues, having put in place a dedicated Wellbeing Team that is responsible for the implementation of its Wellbeing Strategy. The excellent work of the Wellbeing Team was recognised in the year, with the team reaching the finals at the Smarter Working Awards for the Wellbeing Strategy and associated initiatives.

The Group increased all apprenticeship pay to align with Real Living Wage rates in the year. Previously, apprentices were paid in line with the National Minimum Wage which is age related. This has been life-changing for some of our apprentices and will widen the recruitment pool when we are sourcing new talent.



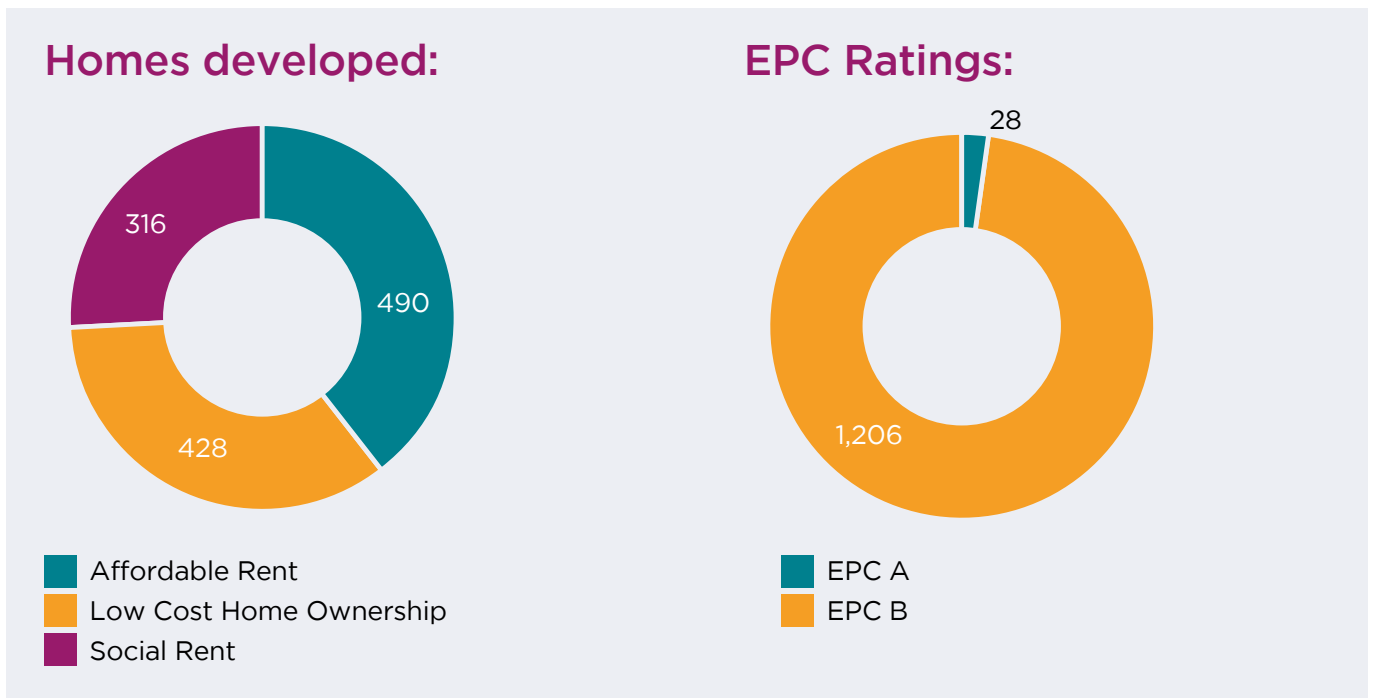
Sustainable Finance Framework

Proceeds support over 1,200 energy efficient homes.

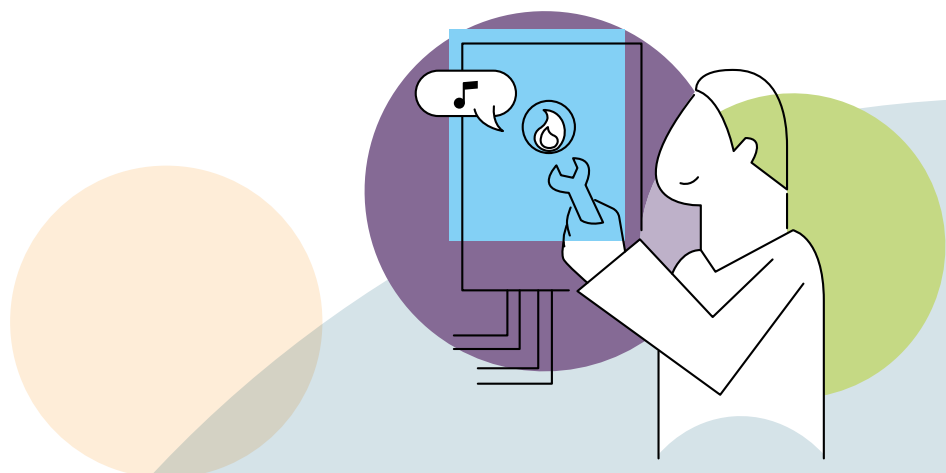
Platform established a Sustainable Finance Framework (the framework) in the prior year in order to help fund affordable and highly energy efficient housing developments. The framework is available to download and view on the investor center section of the Platform website.

During the year the £250m proceeds raised were fully allocated to eligible projects, helping to fund over 1,200 homes and house up to 3,000 customers from Local Authority waiting lists.

All of the homes developed were for an affordable tenure, either for rent or for low cost home ownership. In addition, all of the homes had an EPC rating of A or B.



The homes let for social or affordable rent have rents that are below open market rent levels in order to help support those that cannot afford to rent on the open market. The rent levels set on these homes was, on average, 73% of open market rent.



Section 1

Affordability and Security

C1: Affordability indicator:

Average private sector rent in comparison to average Platform rent.

As a social landlord one of our core objectives is the provision of housing that is genuinely affordable for our customers. By letting homes at rents that are below the private rented sector (PRS) we are able to help those who are unable to access the open market find a home.

The differential between our rents and the PRS is a key measure of affordability and reflects the discount provided to help those who cannot access the PRS.

This differential will vary depending on the area, with areas of higher open market rents subject to larger differences. Platform have rents that are on average 63% of PRS rents and the table below summarises the differences for those Local Authorities where we have in excess of 1,000 homes under management.

| Local Authority | County | Homes ¹ | Platform ^{1,2} | Market ³ | Rent as % of market |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| East Lindsey | Lincolnshire | 6,497 | 90 | 129 | 70% |
| Worcester | Worcestershire | 5,216 | 93 | 159 | 59% |
| Malvern Hills | Worcestershire | 4,185 | 106 | 167 | 63% |
| Wychavon | Worcestershire | 3,812 | 103 | 172 | 60% |
| Derbyshire Dales | Derbyshire | 3,297 | 98 | 164 | 59% |
| Harborough | Leicestershire | 2,438 | 96 | 162 | 59% |
| Birmingham | West Midlands | 2,072 | 104 | 184 | 57% |
| Herefordshire | Herefordshire | 1,783 | 105 | 154 | 68% |
| Leicester | Leicestershire | 1,044 | 79 | 139 | 57% |
| Other | n/a | 9,528 | 111 | 168 | 66% |
| Total | | 39,872 | 100 | 159 | 63% |

¹Homes include social rent, affordable rent, intermediate rent and housing for older people. Shared ownership homes are excluded because rents are not comparable with open market (rent relates to the remaining equity owned). Supported housing is also excluded because it is specialised accommodation and rents are not comparable with a typical home let at market rent. Homes include those where Platform has control over rent setting (homes owned and managed and those managed not owned).

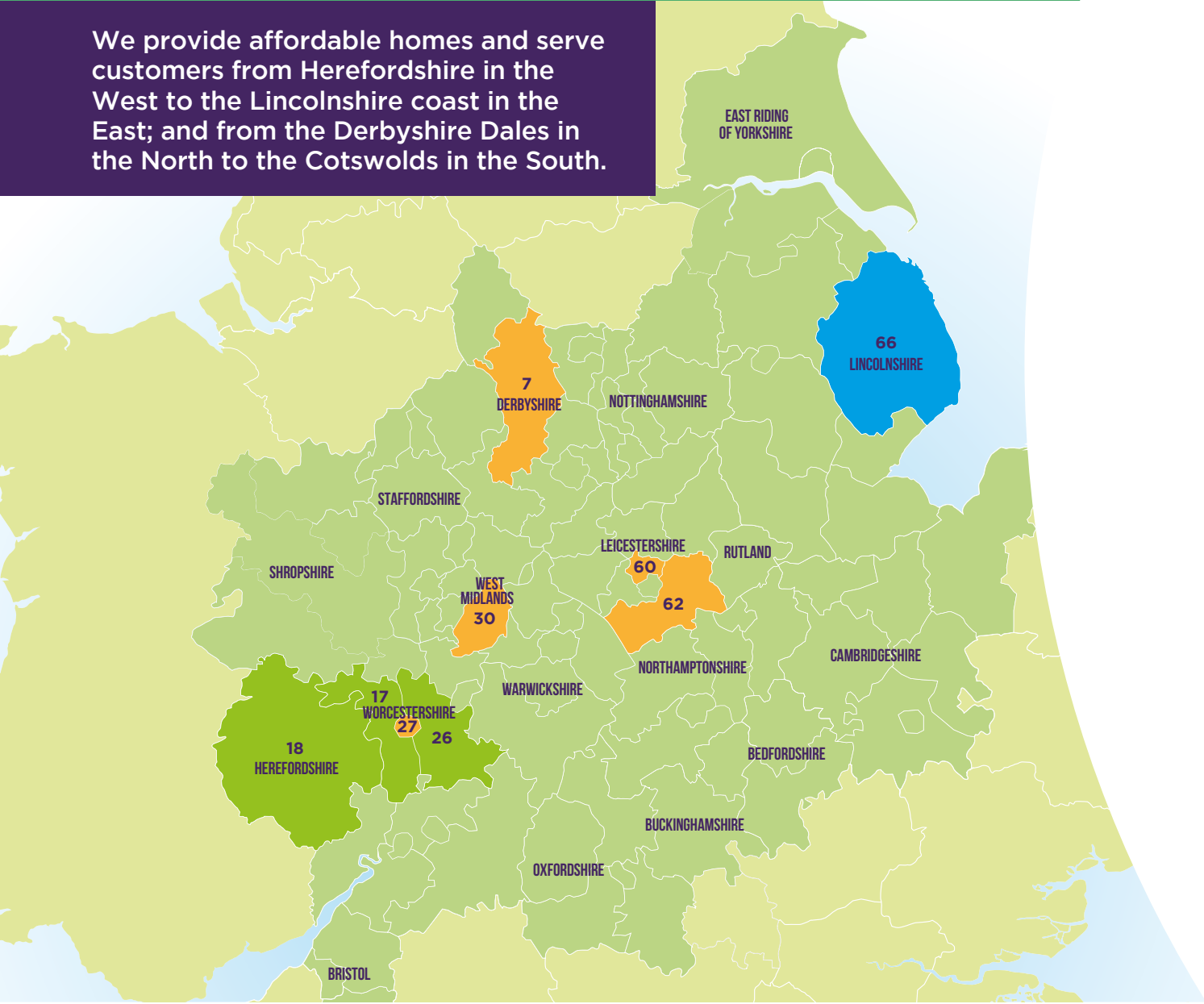
²Weekly rent for Platform's homes. On average these homes have just over 2 bedrooms per property.

³Source: Rents are taken from ONS private rental market data by local authority that have, on average, the same number of bedrooms as Platform's homes. (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/privaterentalmarketsummarystatisticsinengland>).



Our operating area

We provide affordable homes and serve customers from Herefordshire in the West to the Lincolnshire coast in the East; and from the Derbyshire Dales in the North to the Cotswolds in the South.



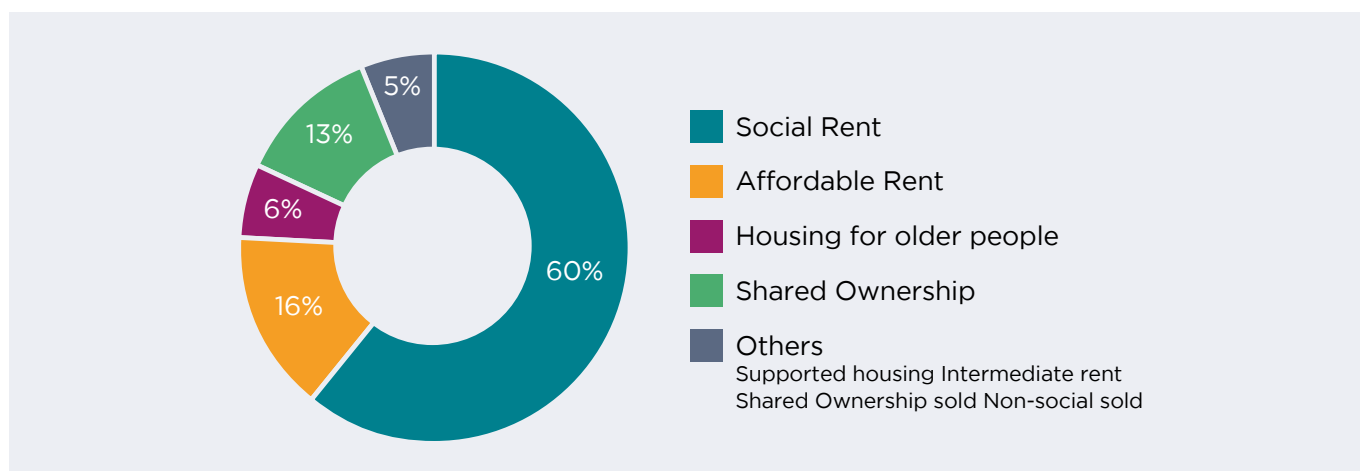
Rent as % of market

- 50-59%
- 60-69%
- 70%+

| LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 66 | East Lindsey |
| 27 | Worcester |
| 17 | Malvern Hills |
| 26 | Wychavon |
| 7 | Derbyshire Dales |
| 62 | Harborough |
| 30 | Birmingham |
| 18 | Herefordshire |
| 60 | Leicester |

C2/C3: Affordability indicator: Share and number of existing homes before the start of the previous financial year and completions for the current year.

Platform is committed to managing and developing homes that are affordable to those in the areas in which we operate. At March 2022 **99%** of the homes we owned were let for a social purpose.



| | | Share |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Social Rent | 28,416 | 60% |
| Affordable Rent | 7,359 | 16% |
| Supported housing | 335 | 1% |
| Housing for older people | 2,975 | 6% |
| Intermediate rent | 469 | 1% |
| Shared ownership ¹ | 5,905 | 13% |
| Shared ownership sold ² | 1,128 | 2% |
| Homes with a social purpose | 46,587 | 99% |
| Non-social rented | 111 | 0% |
| Non-social sold ² | 421 | 1% |
| Total Homes owned | 47,119 | 100% |

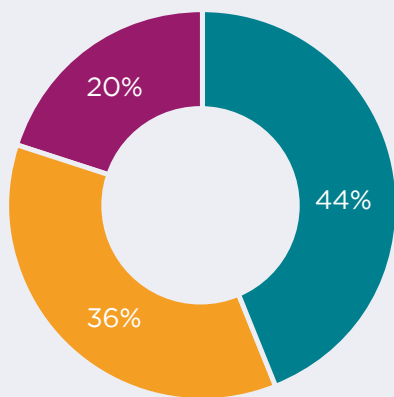
¹Homes where a proportion is sold to help people into home ownership. The unsold element is retained and rent applied on an affordable basis.

²This is where the customer has bought their property on a leasehold basis and Platform retains ownership of the freehold, for example in a block of flats.



During the year all of our homes were built for a social purpose, with 222 (20%) built for social rent, 486 (44%) for affordable rent and 404 (36%) for shared ownership (no homes were built for outright sale). A further 152 affordable homes (48 shared ownership, 103 affordable rent and 1 social rent) were taken on as part of stock acquisitions.

Homes Developed in the Year to March 2023

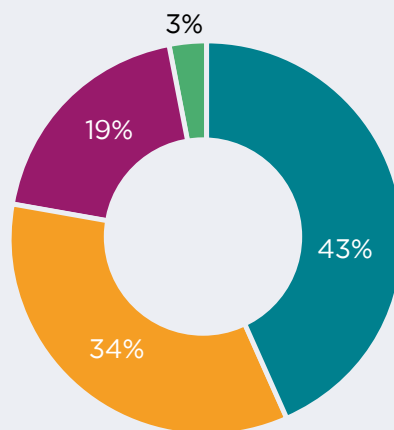


- Affordable Rent
- Shared Ownership
- Social Rent

During the year Platform's commitment to the quality of homes developed was enhanced, with additional resource deployed into the quality review process. This helped to raise the standard of homes taken into management.

We are committed to developing approximately 1,300 additional homes in the coming year, all for affordable tenures. In addition, this year will see the majority of new homes completed 'gas free', without gas powered heating systems (where Platform is in control of development).

Homes Development Target: Year to March 2023



- Affordable Rent
- Shared Ownership
- Social Rent
- Rent to Buy



C4: Security indicator:

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

Platform is committed to reducing the effects of fuel poverty on its customers. This is achieved by improving the energy efficiency of our homes, helping customers minimise their bills and providing direct support to those most acutely affected.

Platform remain committed to moving all homes to an EPC rating of C or better by 2030. Our Retrofit Team, which was established in the year, have overseen the installation of over 500 energy efficient heating systems and PV panels. Retrofit works have increased the average EPC grading for the homes affected from E to C and saved customers approximately £500 a year per home, which represents over 50% of their energy bills.

On top of making homes more energy efficient we continue to help customers manage their costs by providing advice and access to expert support. In the year we established an arrangement with Local Energy Action Partnerships (LEAP), which provides customers access to specialist energy advice and support. LEAP can advocate on behalf of customers for utility bills, obtain fuel vouchers and seek out additional grants with energy providers directly.

We will support those most in need

Platform extended its Wellbeing Fund by £0.25m to £2m during the year to support customers affected by hardship as a result of the cost of living crisis.

Allocations from the fund for energy costs more than tripled in the year to 3,800 as customers struggled to heat their homes. In total £1.4m (60%) of the fund was allocated to help customers with energy bills. In addition, our Successful Tenancies Team helped secure a further £106,000 in energy grants and schemes for customers to assist with the ongoing costs of energy.

Looking ahead

The Wellbeing fund has been renewed for another year, providing up to £1.75m for those who continue to struggle with essential items such as energy costs.

We will finalise our Retrofit Strategy in the coming year, which will provide greater granularity to plans for the decarbonisation of our homes. This will complement plans already in action to push ahead with further retrofits and improvements.



We will achieve EPC C for all of our homes by 2030.



C5: Security indicator:

What percentage of rental homes have a 3 year fixed tenancy agreement (or longer).

We are committed to offering our customers tenancy agreements that do not have a fixed term, with all new tenancy agreements provided on a lifetime basis.

Virtually all agreements have no term or a term in excess of than 3 years:

| | Tenancies | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 2022 | 2023 |
| < 3 years | 1 | 1 |
| > 3 years | 5,240 | 4,696 |
| No term | 34,302 | 35,505 |
| Total tenancies | 39,543 | 40,202 |



Section 2

Building Safety and Quality

C6 – C8: Safety indicators:

What percentage of homes have an in-date and compliant Fire Risk Assessment, meet the Decent Homes Standard and an in-date, accredited gas safety check?

The safety of our customers continues to be central to our core operations. As at March 2023 100% of our homes had an in-date Fire Risk Assessment (March 2022: 100%), gas safety compliance was 99.97% (March 2022: 99.96%) and all of our eligible homes complied with the Decent Homes Standard (March 2022: 100%).

Some customers denied access when a gas check was due, making 100% compliance challenging. We continue to work cross functionally in our business and with our customers to overcome these issues, and in extreme cases will take legal action to obtain access.

During the year we enhanced our safety team with several new surveyors added. The new recruits helped to support a review of mid and low rise buildings, with all EWS1's and internal inspections completed in the year, helping to provide assurance over the safety of these buildings. The surveys identified no material remedial works.

Similar to others across the sector we saw a big increase in customer calls in relation to damp and condensation mould in the year. This followed the tragic case of Awaab Ishak, a customer of Rochdale Housing, who died due to prolonged exposure to mould. We have a clear process for dealing with cases of damp and condensation mould to ensure all cases reported are tracked to resolution. During the year these have been strengthened by re-running our damp and condensation mould training with all colleagues and enhancing the information available to customers to prevent and treat instances as they arise. On top of this we launched an internet of things project in the year to pilot technology that will help identify and prevent damp and condensation mould. Over 100 homes have had devices installed, with a further c150 remaining.



Section 3

Resident Voice

C9: Accountability

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



Lou Zonato

Ensuring our customers are at the very heart of what we do is central to Platform's strategic goals. We have a dedicated Customer Experience Panel (CEP), chaired by a customer, which drives improvement and satisfaction. The CEP play a pivotal role in the governance of Platform, representing the customer voice at a strategic level. The panel meets every eight weeks with members of our Board and senior leaders to review the services we provide to all customers and to challenge and discuss areas of improvement.

Over the past year we have on-boarded new customer panel members who have broadened the range of customer representation on the panel.



CEP Chair: Shaolan Menzies

Platform Group Board member Lou Zonato, who champions the customer experience, continues to sit on the Panel and ensures the CEP have direct unfiltered access to the Board.

The panel has reviewed thirteen policies and strategies and members continue to take an active role in a range of projects to influence a broad range of services. The panel also meet to review and approve funding from Platform's Community Chest, to ensure that this funding is allocated to projects that deliver the biggest impact across Platform's communities.



C10: Customer satisfaction

How does the housing provider measure resident satisfaction and how has satisfaction changed over the last three years?

Platform set high standards for customer service and encourage our customers to challenge us if they aren't receiving the service they expect. Our Customer Experience Team collect and analyse customers feedback using surveys in addition to our complaints and compliments processes. This information is used to implement changes that improve our offering.

During the year we extended the number of customer satisfaction surveys we circulate, with additional surveys now issued specifically to new customers, those having received void works and those involved in the viewing and sign-up

experience. In the year we received c35,000 responses to surveys (2022: c16,000) and had an overall satisfaction of 71% (2022: 70%).

All feedback from customers is reviewed and acted on by our Customer Experience Team, who follow up issues within 24 hours of a survey response being submitted.

The table below shows the evolution of customer satisfaction for the last three years. As can be seen from the table, satisfaction has increased in the year, which is encouraging against a very challenging environment for both our customers and Platform.

| Time Period | Satisfaction | Survey responses | Target |
|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------|
| Year to March 21 | 63% | <6,000 | 75% |
| Year to March 22 | 70% | 16,436 | 75% |
| Year to March 23 | 71% | 34,980 | 75% |

Improvements in customer satisfaction have been supported by new technologies to enhance the customer experience. These included improvements to the booking of appointments, how customers are interacted with, including a video calling triage for some repairs cases and the development of a Chatbot system to make interactions more efficient.

Whilst satisfaction is improving it is still below our target of **75%**. We will continue to work at improving this and will add to our suite of satisfaction surveys during the coming year, in addition to launching the measurement of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) that will become a regulatory requirement for future years.



C11: Housing Ombudsman

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

Platform take all complaints extremely seriously and we have a dedicated team who are responsible for triaging complaints when received, ensuring they are reviewed and responded to in a timely and efficient manner.

We strengthened our Complaints Policy in September 2022, completing a self-assessment against the revised Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code.

Platform received 1,254 complaints during the year, which represents a significant increase on the previous year (875) and reflects increases being reported by the Institute of Customer Services (across all sectors) and the Housing Ombudsman Service (housing sector specific).

A common area of complaints relates to time taken to complete a repair, which has been adversely affected by the backlog of repairs post-pandemic and competition for sub-contractors across the sector, however, the successful clearance of the backlog of repairs during the year should hopefully help with volumes moving forwards.

There were six complaints referred to the HOS in the year where the complaint was upheld (March 2022: six).

As a result of these complaints a number of service improvements were implemented in the year, including:

- Creating a specialist Community Safety Team
- Specialist case management training for Neighbourhood Officers to promote best practice, led by a community safety expert
- Continuing work on our customer portal, expanding its capabilities to allow customers to view action plans for their cases, follow the progress and add incidents



Section 4

Resident Support

C12: Support services

What support services does the housing provider offer to its residents. How successful are these services in improving outcomes?

The Platform Wellbeing Fund

For the second year in a row Platform has utilised a wellbeing fund to support those most in need. The fund provided £2m to help approximately 6,500 customers with food, clothing and other essential items in the year. The fund also supported 12 community initiatives across our operating area, allocating £83,000 to warm hubs, foodbanks and donations to other charitable organisations who work to support customers living in Platform communities.

Working with Customers

Platform employs a team of Successful Tenancies Advisors who provide help and advice to customers who are experiencing financial difficulties. The advisor's work with the customer in the following ways:

- To help them better understand their incomes and expenditures and eligibility for welfare benefits
- By providing budgeting advice and helping to facilitate access to funds or grants where relevant
- By connecting customers with specialist debt advisors and other services where appropriate

This year, the service has received **6,317** referrals and recorded **£2.6m** in financial outcomes for customers through unclaimed welfare benefit claims, appeals and backdated payments.

Platform has identified social value measuring and reporting as a key way to measure the success of its support provided to customers. The team is measured using the HACT Social Value Calculator and generated a social value of £5.4m in the year.





Stay Nimble

Platform continues to work with social enterprise Stay Nimble. Stay Nimble offer customers access to an online platform that provides access to skills assessments, confidence building tools, CV writing, job search tools, a coaching call and a suite of courses. Each subscription also includes six hours of one to one career coaching. During the year a social value return of **£404,959** was generated through provision of the service, linked to employment outcomes, wellness and positive financial outlook.

Digital Inclusion

A range of digital inclusion activities for customers is provided across our localities. This has been achieved by using an innovative mixture of working with partners and volunteers and to date has delivered 278 sessions, attended by 641 customers. The sessions enable customers to access help with food bank vouchers, energy bills advice (including referrals to our Successful Tenancies Team) and seek employment, as well as the over-riding objective to help with IT basics. We have also commenced a laptop lending library to enable those customers who cannot afford to purchase equipment to embed their learning and access the benefits of being digitally engaged.

Working with our communities

In the year to March 2023 the Platform Community Chest funded 98 projects with a total investment of £150,000. Applications have been received from schools, charities, not-for-profit groups and groups of customers. The projects had wide ranging benefits, with 76 achieving a positive impact on health & wellbeing, 68 on community cohesion, 38 on skills and employability, 6 on community safety and 5 on digital inclusion. Of the total investment, £10,000 from Community Chest combined with an additional £10,000 of external grant funding and £10,000 from the Wellbeing Fund supported over 50 Warm Hub projects, where people can go to enjoy the company of others if feeling lonely or unable to heat their homes.

Tenancy Healthchecks

Tenancy Healthchecks (THC's) have been enhanced during the year for Platform customers by linking with policy in other areas to ensure that support provided to customers is optimised. For example, Platform currently has a pilot underway where smart devices in customer homes allow the temperature to be remotely monitored, and this data has enabled colder homes to be identified and customers referred for advice and in some cases to Platform's Wellbeing Fund for financial support with fuel bills. The enhanced THC's have been complimented by our 'silent customers' policy, which uses artificial intelligence to identify customers who have not interacted with Platform for 12 months, ensuring that contact is made and in some instances, a visit organised to ensure they are safe and well.



Section 5

Placemaking

C13: Placemaking activities

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

Platform is committed to being both a landlord and a developer of places where people want to live.

Through our Underused Garages and Land Initiative we aim to transform low demand garage sites into attractive areas. During the year a number of garage sites have been assessed for redevelopment, community gardens and car parking. A new approach to management and maintenance is being appraised.

Platform's dedicated Community Engagement Team have worked with residents on the Westlands Estate, Droitwich, to help give the estate a make-over. This included:

- new play equipment and surfacing for the play area

- volunteers from Platform and the community joining forces to repaint the fencing and benches in the estate
- a wildflower meadow being sown along the estate's grass verges.

Work completed in the year on the Tolladine Estate Regeneration Project in Worcester. Tolladine is an area which is in the 10% most deprived communities in England. Its scores are particularly affected by crime, employment, education, skills and training. A holistic approach to regenerating the estate was adopted, targeting both the physical environment and working with customers to better their prospects.

Highlights include:

- Community partners such as the City Council, local schools, community and children's groups were invited to work with Platform to map out community provision in the area and consider possible gaps, to ensure that support was provided where needed
- Front gardens were redesigned to include off road parking, footpaths were renewed, shared boundary fencing replaced, bin store enclosures were built and soft ground areas were landscaped with low level planting and trees
- Shops were redeveloped, removing hotspots for anti-social behaviour, building both new shops and energy efficient housing.





Community garden project



Tree planting in Lincolnshire



Community art project in Droitwich



Community improvement project



Refurbishment of Alexandra Court

Section 6

Climate Change

C14: Energy performance certificate (EPC) ratings

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

In the year we continued to improve the energy efficiency of our homes in spite of widespread cost inflation and labour shortages in the UK. A summary of EPCs held at the start of the year

is shown below. There were 69% of homes with a rating of C and above, which is up from 68% recorded for the previous year.

| Rating | Homes with certificate ¹ | Percentage | Cumulative percentage |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| A (92+) | 121 | 0% | 0% |
| B (81-91) | 10,235 | 29% | 29% |
| C (69-80) | 14,534 | 40% | 69% |
| D (55-68) | 8,902 | 25% | 94% |
| E (39-54) | 2,106 | 6% | 100% |
| F (21-38) | 119 | 0% | 100% |
| G (1-20) | 11 | 0% | 100% |
| | 36,028 | 100 | 100% |

¹There were 3,943 homes without an EPC at March 2022.

EPCs were completed for a further c7,500 homes in the year and are now available for 95% of all of our homes, as we continue to push ahead with plans to have full coverage. We have partnered with Parity Projects to implement Portfolio, a software tool that assesses the energy efficiency of our homes. Portfolio estimates live EPC ratings using historical assessments and subsequent

works, providing a more accurate picture of energy efficiency modelling than EPC's alone. In addition, Portfolio allows us to predict required interventions and model predictive EPC ratings as a consequence of retrofits. The Portfolio assessment highlights that Platform had over 75% of homes rated at least EPC C and over 98% rated at least D as at March 2023.

C15:

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

It is our objective to develop homes that have an EPC rating of B and above and this was achieved for 100% of our homes in the year. A total of 962 new homes were developed and a further 150

were added as part of a stock acquisition. All of these homes had an EPC rating of B and above, with an average SAP score of 84 for both the newly build (962) and acquired (150) homes:

| Rating | New homes | Percentage | Cumulative percentage |
|-----------|--------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| A (92+) | 17 | 2% | 2% |
| B (81-91) | 1,095 | 98% | 100% |
| | 1,112 ¹ | 100% | 100% |

¹A further 2 homes were added in the year as a result of buying back homes from customers. Of these, one had an EPC of B and the other had an EPC of C.

In the year ahead we plan to develop approximately 1,300 homes, all of which will have an EPC B or better.

C16: Carbon emissions

Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions. If you are not tracking Scope 1, 2, or 3 emissions, but plan to in the future, when are you aiming to report on these emissions?

Platform measure and track scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions and for the year ending March 2023 have adopted the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) requirements in our Statutory Accounts. Under SECR, organisations are required to report details of their energy usage, carbon emissions and actions taken to address energy efficiency.

For 2022/23 our emissions per home were 0.22 tCO₂e for scope one and two emissions (2022:

0.20 tCO₂e) and 3.21 tCO₂e for scope three (2022: 3.25 tCO₂e). Total emissions were up year on year by 1.1%, in comparison to a 1.6% increase in the number of our homes¹.

The majority of our emissions are classified within scope 3, coming from our leased homes and buildings (72,472 tCO₂ / 56%) and purchases of goods and services (54,342 tCO₂ / 42%).

The table below summarises our year on year energy consumption and carbon emissions:

Energy Consumption

Energy Consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)

| | 2022-23 | 2021 -22 |
|---|------------|------------|
| Gas | 21,013,445 | 20,507,833 |
| Electricity | 8,966,970 | 7,654,134 |
| Transport Fuel in Fleet Vehicles (Diesel) | 10,608,002 | 9,336,141 |
| Transport Fuel in Fleet Vehicles (Petrol) | 94,006 | 92,673 |

Carbon Emissions (Scope 1 and 2)

| | | 2022-23 | 2021-22 |
|--|----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Emissions from gas (tCO2e) | Scope 1 | 3,836 | 3,743 |
| Emissions from transport fuel for fleet cars (tCO2e) | Scope 1 | 2,567 | 2,262 |
| Emissions from business travel in rental cars or business mileage claims (tCO2e) | Scope 1 | 591 | 397 |
| Emissions from refrigerants (tCO2e) | Scope 1 | 62 | 62 |
| Emissions from electricity (tCO2e) | Scope 2 | 1,734 | 1,480 |
| | Total (tCO2e) | 8,789 | 7,944 |

Carbon Intensity Ratios (Scope 1 and 2)

| | Homes / Turnover in the current / (prior) year | 2022-23 | 2021-22 |
|--|--|---------|---------|
| Tons of CO2e per home managed ¹ | 40,140 (39,493) | 0.22 | 0.20 |
| Tons of CO2e per £ million turnover | 300.0 (296.9) | 29.3 | 26.8 |

Carbon Emissions (Scope 3)

| | | 2022-23 | 2021 -22 |
|--|---|----------------|----------------|
| Emissions from generation of electricity that is lost in transmission and distribution (tCO2e) | Transmission and distribution losses | 160 | 135 |
| Emissions from commuting (tCO2e) | Figures for 21/22 duplicated in place of 22/23 data ² | 152 | 152 |
| Emissions from leased assets, franchises, and outsourced activities (tCO2e) | Regulated emissions from homes | 72,472 | 71,783 |
| Emissions from fuel and energy related activity (tCO2e) | Well-To-Tank Emissions from Gas, Electricity Generation and Transmission & Distribution, Fleet Vehicles and Business Travel | 1,885 | 1,677 |
| Emissions from homeworking (tCO2e) | New addition to 2022-23 analytic scope | 560 | N/A |
| Emissions from purchased goods and services (tCO2e) | | 54,342 | 54,586 |
| | Total (tCO2e) excluding homeworking | 129,010 | 128,333 |
| | Total (tCO2e) including homeworking | 129,570 | - |

Summary

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---------|---------|
| Carbon Emissions (tCO2e) | Scope 1 & 2 | 8,789 | 7,944 |
| Carbon Emissions (tCO2e) | Scope 3 excluding homeworking | 129,010 | 128,333 |
| | Scope 3 including homeworking | 129,570 | - |
| Total Carbon Emissions (tCO2e) | Scope 1, 2 and 3 excluding homeworking | 137,799 | 136,277 |
| | Scope 1, 2 and 3 including homeworking | 138,359 | - |

¹Homes managed include rented affordable homes: general needs, affordable rent, housing for older people, supported housing and intermediate rent.

²Emissions from commuting are based on a survey undertaken in the 21/22 financial year and it is not intended to repeat the survey every year. The 21/22 figures are considered to be a reasonable estimate of the emissions during 22/23.

C17: Energy efficiency actions

What energy efficiency actions has the housing provider undertaken in the last 12 months?

Scope 1 – Fuel and gas

We have procured 40 electric vans for our fleet as our first step to reducing our transport related carbon emissions. Each electric vehicle will help us save around 4.8 tCO₂/year.

Our communal gas heating plants contribute 54% of our scope 1 emissions and a significant part of this comes from our supported housing schemes. We have carried out feasibility studies and designs on some of our least efficient schemes to upgrade the heating systems and identify further energy saving opportunities.

Scope 2 – Electricity from our buildings

We have carried out energy audits of some of our key supported housing schemes to identify energy saving opportunities such as low energy lighting and solar PV panels.

Scope 3 – Indirect emissions

By far the largest part of our carbon footprint relates to our scope 3 emissions and in particular the emissions from our homes. We are measuring the energy performance of our homes through EPCs and the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) that is used for measuring EPCs. We have increased the number of homes that have EPC certificates from 90 % to 95% to improve the overall confidence and reliability of our property and energy data. We have also loaded our property and EPC data onto Portfolio, a specialist energy modelling toolkit, to help improve our understanding of the current energy performance of our properties and the steps we need to take to improve them.

To support our objective to move all homes to EPC C or better by 2030 we have carried out over 500 retrofit energy improvement measures in the year, including 211 air source heat pumps and 273 solar PV systems. These works have helped improve the homes affected from an average SAP of 52 (EPC E) to 76 (EPC C), saving around 700 tCO₂. This has also helped our customers save an average of £500/year (approximately 50%) on their energy bills.

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|------------------|------|------|
| ASHP | 211 | 104 |
| PV panels | 273 | 153 |
| EWI | 1 | - |
| Other renewables | 32 | - |
| | 517 | 257 |

Our planned works programme complements these retrofits and we have carried out 1,479 boiler replacements, 310 heating upgrades and 104 window replacements, all of which will help to reduce carbon emissions.

A further £12m was secured from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) (Wave 2) in the year which will support the retrofit of 995 homes between 2023 and 2025. These homes include our least energy efficient properties, those with EPC ratings of E, F and G.

Retrofit works funded by the SHDF will add to Platform's wider programme, which is focused on improving the fabric of our buildings, specifically external wall, cavity wall and loft insulation, in addition to replacing doors and windows.



C18: Climate risk mitigations

How is the housing provider mitigating the following climate risks:

- Increased flood risk
- Increased risk of homes overheating

During the year we enhanced our understanding of the risks of flooding and overheating by analysing our property portfolio.

The analysis indicated that Platform's homes have a very low exposure to flood risks, with fewer than 200 homes identified as having a high risk of river and/or sea flooding and just over 100 homes having a high risk of surface water flooding. All of Platform's homes have insurance in place to cover flood risks.

Similarly for the risk of over-heating, fewer than 100 homes were identified as being a high risk.

Platform also considers the risks of flooding and overheating in developing new homes when appraising new development schemes. Flood risk is mitigated through extensive due diligence,

ensuring that the sites we buy are outside of the flood zone and further engineering solutions are utilised (such as raised plot and road levels) if additional assurance against flooding is required. Flood risk is mitigated during building through the integration of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems across all of our new developments which, through co-ordination with the Environment Agency and Local Lead Flood Authority, set levels of surface water attenuation to ensure that the development has sufficient storage capacity to manage the steady discharge of surface water.

Overheating has now been introduced into Building Regulations and the incorporation of mechanical ventilation and shading devices into our new build homes will help to control internal property temperature levels.

Risks relating to climate change are included on Platform's risk register and subject to regular review by the Group Board.

C19: Resident information

Does the housing provider give residents information about correct ventilation, heating, recycling etc. Please describe how this is done.

A dedicated section of the Platform website has been set up in the year in order to provide extensive advice on how to heat and ventilate homes in order to effectively manage damp and condensation mould (DCM). Any new customer and all customers who make contact in relation to these issues are provided this information.

In addition to information provided to customers we have refreshed training on DCM for colleagues to ensure that our people are able to support appropriately both when liaising with customers and when out at homes for repairs and other matters.

All reports of DCM are logged and thoroughly investigated by a technically trained member of staff. This has been supported by new technology, which enables a video triage of cases before physical inspections are carried out.

On top of this we have started a 'Switchee' pilot that places smart devices in customers' homes and allows us to identify colder homes that are at greater risk of developing DCM.



Section 7

Ecology

C20: Green space

How is the housing provider increasing green space and promoting biodiversity on or near homes.

As part of our Sustainability Strategy we are committed to carrying out audits of our natural assets in our neighbourhoods and estates, and develop a biodiversity action plan that sets out a strategic approach for managing our land and green spaces.

When entering into new development schemes, designs are reviewed and where possible inclusion of measures to encourage wildlife are included to help reverse habitat decline. This includes measures such as bat boxes, hedgehog highways and the planting of trees and shrubs.



Section 8

Resource Management

C21 – C24: Strategies for pollutants, materials, waste and water

Does the housing provider have a strategy to actively manage and reduce all pollutants, increase the use of responsibly sourced materials, waste management and good water management? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

Platform's Sustainability Strategy includes provision for the active management of pollutants, responsibly sourced materials, waste and water. In accordance with the strategy a number of reviews will be undertaken to cover:

- **waste** – exploring options for reducing waste to landfill, reducing the use of materials we use, designing out waste, promoting re-use and recycling and aiming to become a zero waste business
- **water** – reducing the amount of water used in our workplaces, through the use of water saving devices and colleague information campaigns
- **resource consumption** – assessing the sustainability of our materials and product supplies, and seeking to procure more sustainable alternatives wherever possible.

In addition, our homes will be built to a 'Platform Standard', which sets out an approach to the use of sustainable materials, water and waste management.

Our property maintenance subsidiary, Platform Property Care (PPC), maintains ISO 14001 accreditation. ISO 14001 is an internationally agreed standard that ensures high levels of environmental performance through more efficient use of resources and reduction of waste.

PPC has an established Environment, Health and Safety Committee where ideas for reducing pollutants are discussed and implemented. A major part of this relates to the initial purchasing of products. For example, the recent procurement of fire extinguishers for our fleet made from fully recyclable kevlar makes them both recyclable and reduces the need for servicing to once every ten years. PPC is also in the process of decarbonizing its fleet, with all diesel and petrol vans projected to be phased out by 2026.

PPC ensure that materials are responsibly sourced through review of contracts with suppliers. These suppliers are approved through a procurement process and improvements are noted through the ISO 14001 framework.

PPC monitor waste related KPIs on a monthly basis. Measurements are tracked for the proportion of raw materials sent to landfill, recycled and reused. In the year total waste from PPC was 475 tonnes (prior year: 504 tonnes), of which 6.9% went to landfill. Although 6.9% is up on the previous year (3.7%), it represents a downwards trajectory in comparison to pre-covid pandemic levels of over 12%.

Section 9

Structure and Governance

C25: Regulation

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

Platform Housing Group Limited is a Community Benefit Society, a charitable registered provider of social housing and is the parent undertaking of the Group. Platform's subsidiary companies include charities, registered providers of social housing, and limited companies, each with specific roles to support its charitable purpose:

- Platform Housing Limited is an asset-holding charitable Registered Provider and is a Community Benefit Society;
- Platform Property Care Limited is a company limited by shares and provides a full range of maintenance services to Platform as well as to partners Rooftop Housing Association Limited and Stonewater Limited as part of a Cost Sharing Group;
- Platform New Homes Limited is a company limited by shares and provides construction and development services to Platform Housing Limited;
- Platform HG Financing plc is public limited company and provides financing services to Platform Housing Limited;



Associated companies not included in the chart above are as follows:

- Waterloo Homes Limited is a dormant company 100% owned by Platform
- Platform Property Care Limited is part owned by Rooftop Housing Association Limited (3%) and Stonewater Limited (1%) as part of a cost sharing arrangement with PPC

C26: Regulatory grading

What is the most recent viability and governance regulatory grading?

The activities of the Group are supported by a commitment to the highest standards of Governance. We continue to have the highest governance and viability ratings from the Regulator of Social Housing in England (G1/V1). In addition, our A+ (stable outlook) rating was affirmed following S&P's annual review in January

2023. We were also rated A+ (negative outlook) by Fitch earlier in the year (October 2022), with the rating outlook amended to align to the UK Sovereign rating outlook, which was revised to negative following the UK's 'mini-budget' in September 2022.

C27: Governance code

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

Platform follow the National Housing Federation's (NHF) Code of Governance 2020. The code is designed to help housing associations achieve the highest standards of governance and board excellence, by ensuring that those adopting it:

- Keep the views and needs of their residents at the heart of their strategic decision-making
- Put measures in place to ensure that residents, other customers and staff are kept safe

- Maintain Board oversight of risk and thoroughly test the impact of potential risk scenarios on their organisations' future

An internal audit of Platform's self-assessment against the code was undertaken in March 2023, for which the highest level of assurance over procedures, controls and compliance was awarded.

C28: Not for profit

Is the housing provider Not-For-Profit? If not, who is the largest shareholder, what is their percentage of economic ownership and what percentage of voting rights do they control?

Platform is a charitable registered provider of social housing.





C29: Risk management

Explain how the housing provider's board manages organisational risks

Risks that prevent the Group achieving its objectives are considered and reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Team, Executive Risk Committee, Group Audit and Risk Committee (GARC) and Board. The risks are assessed in terms of their impact and probability.

The GARC has a monitoring role in relation to risk management and advises the Board on internal control matters.

The Board has a defined risk appetite statement which is reviewed annually. This sets out a framework for engaging with risk, supported by a scoring matrix, used to identify a target risk

score for each corporate risk. New and emerging risks are identified through strategic business planning days, sector briefings, horizon scanning and the process of stress testing the Long Term Financial Plan.

Training on risk is also provided for the Board, Executive Team and Senior Leadership Team when required.

The top risks (those with the most material impact on Platform) are considered monthly by the Senior Leadership Team and Executive Risk Committee, quarterly by the GARC and subsequently by the Board.

C30: Regulatory breaches

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?

Platform has not been subject to any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months.

Section 10

Board and Trustees

C31: Board demographics

What are the demographics of the board? And how does this compare to the demographics of the housing provider’s residents, and the area that they operate in?

There were no changes to the Board in the year, however, two new members have been appointed to commence in the coming year. Jane Wynne has been appointed to replace retiring Board Member David Clark in July 2023. Jane has previous experience as a Non-Executive Director at Sovereign Housing and has worked in public, private and housing sectors, particularly in the areas of regeneration and sustainable development. The Board have also approved the one-year appointment of a Co-opted Board Member, Abi Rushton, who will support the Board with her experience and knowledge of environmental, social and governance issues. The demographics of the Board in comparison to our customers can be seen below (following these two new appointments and retirement of David Clark).

The first cohort of Platform’s Trainee Board programme, which was established to help ensure the longer term diversity of the Group Board, graduated from the first phase of their four year programme just after the year end. All four Trainees were offered with Associate Committee Member roles on Platform’s Committees, with three of the four trainees taking up the offers.

The next two year stage of the programme will now commence for the Trainees, after which it is hoped that they will be able to join the Group Board as Associate Members.

The continuance of the Trainee Board programme has been approved and the Group will start the recruitment of the second cohort in September 2023.

| | Our board | Our customers |
|---------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Proportion of women | 55% | 61% |
| Proportion of BAME | 9% | 9% |
| Proportion disabled | - | 8% |
| Average Age | 58 | 51 |
| Average tenure | 3 | |

C32: Board and management turnover

What percentage of the board and management team have turned over in the last two years?

The Board and Executive Teams were significantly refreshed during the years to March 2020 and March 2021 following the creation of the Group, since which they have been stable. Group Chair John Weguelin was appointed for a further three years during the year. As mentioned above, Jane Wynne and Abi Rushton were appointed to start

in April 2023 and David Clark is due to retire from the Board in July 2023.

The Board and Executive Team members have substantial experience and skills and will help to ensure that our strategy is appropriately set and delivered.



C33: Maximum board tenure

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

The maximum tenure for Board members is targeted at six years with a maximum of nine.

C34: Non-executive directors

What percentage of the board are non-executive directors?

The Board is made up entirely of Non- Executive Directors with the exception of the Group Chief Executive. Overall there are eleven non-executive and one executive director (this will change to ten non-executives and one executive from July 2023).



C35: Financial experience on Audit Committee

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

A large number of Board members with extensive financial experience sit on the Audit and Risk Committee, including:



Sebastian Bull
(Committee Chair):

Sebastian has considerable experience in Property, Infrastructure and Transport, holding a number of high level finance roles.



Paula Smith:

Paula is a chartered accountant with extensive finance leadership and board experience gained within the energy and telecoms sectors. She currently works as Finance Director, Strategy and Financial Control of a major UK internet provider.



Elizabeth Froude:

Elizabeth has previously held Finance Director roles at other organisations within the social housing sector. She currently chairs an Audit & Risk Committee for another registered provider of social housing.

C36: Remuneration Committee

Are there any current executives on the Remuneration Committee?

The role of the remuneration committee is undertaken by the People and Governance Committee at Platform. None of the current Executive Team are members of this committee.

C37: Board succession

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

A succession plan was presented to the People and Governance Committee in April 2022. Two new board members have recently been recruited (to start in April 2023), one of whom is a fixed term board co-optee, with particular skills relating to sustainability. Three of our existing trainee board members have been appointed to the role of Associate Committee Members for two years to further develop their skills after which they may have the opportunity to join the Group Board as Associate Members.



C38: External audit

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

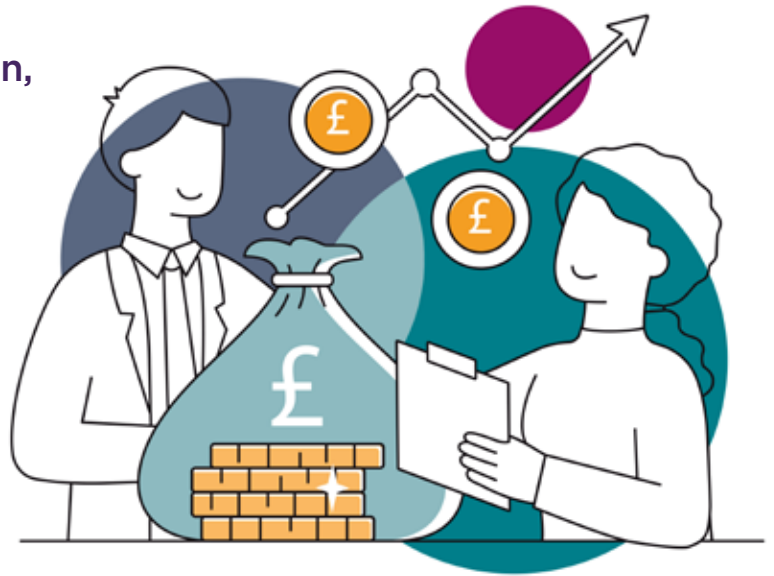
KPMG were appointed as external audit provider during the year to March 2021 and the year to March 2023 will be the third year of audit.

KPMG have a market leading reputation and track record for providing assurance services.

C39: Board effectiveness

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

Platform appointed the Housing Quality Network (HQN) to undertake an independent review of the Board’s performance during February/March 2023. The review identified that ‘Platform is a successful and high performing housing association, with a strong Board and Executive Team’. Some recommendations for improvements were made and these are due to be considered by the Group Board, with an action plan drafted in the coming months.



C40: Board Chair and CEO

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

Yes.

C41: Conflicts of interest

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

The Group has a comprehensive Code of Conduct for Board and Committee Members, plus a comprehensive Probity Policy. Both are reviewed at a maximum of two year intervals and were last reviewed in 2022 to reflect the Group’s adoption of the updated NHF Code of Conduct.

Declarations of interest are completed annually and in addition, there is the opportunity at the beginning of every Board/Committee meeting for members to declare an interest in any items on the agenda.

Section 11

Staff Wellbeing



C42: The Real Living Wage

Does the housing provider pay the Real Living Wage?

Platform pays at least the Real Living Wage to all employees. As part of a review during the year, pay for all employees in apprenticeships was aligned to Real Living Wage rates. Previously apprentices were paid in line with the National Minimum Wage, which is age related. This has been life-changing for some of our apprentices and will widen the recruitment pool when sourcing new apprentices.

Platform recognises that the economic climate not only has a significant impact on our customers, but also affects our colleagues.

As a responsible and caring employer, in addition to our ongoing work on colleague wellbeing, we have put in place other initiatives to support colleagues during the year. Basic food and hygiene goods have been provided in our main offices, which are free for colleagues to take at any time. Platform also provided a one-off payment to all colleagues (except for Executive and Senior Leadership Teams) of £500 (paid in five equal instalments of £100 a month between November 2022 and March 2023) to support them with high energy costs.

C43: The gender pay gap

What is the gender pay gap?

Platform reversed its gender pay gap in the year, with women now earning over 3% more than men on average.

We remain committed to doing everything we can to provide an inclusive environment that supports people to work and develop successfully.

We have implemented measures to ensure that colleagues receive a fair remuneration for the roles they undertake, including:

- Pay and benefits: a standard pay structure and job evaluation methodology to ensure equal and consistent pay
- Pay and benefits: annual reviews of pay and benefits against market benchmarks
- Diversity and Inclusion Strategy: challenging stereotypes associated with certain roles through initiatives such as International Women’s Day, Women in Construction/Try a Trade day

- Recruitment: Ensuring a non-discriminatory process that allows candidates to succeed based on merit and ability

The pay gap is shown below, alongside the average for the UK economy. The gap has been calculated based on average hourly pay.

| | Platform | UK in 2022 ¹ |
|----------------|----------|-------------------------|
| Gender pay gap | -3.3% | 8.3% |

¹Source: Office for National Statistics: ‘Gender pay gap in the UK: 2022’

Platform now has a consistent history of equitable mean pay rates across gender:

| | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 |
|---------------------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Mean gender pay gap | -3.3% | 1.2% | -3.9% | 3.3% |

C44: CEO-worker pay ratio

What is the CEO-worker pay ratio?

We report the CEO-worker pay ratio using the BEIS methodology, adopting 'Method A' as recommended'. The methodology applies a ranking from low to high of all permanent and fixed term employees, identifying a Single Total Figure of Remuneration (STFR values) at each of the 25th, 50th (median) and 75th percentiles.

The STFR has been derived from the total remuneration received, including:

- Salary
- Benefits in kind
- Pensions

| Year | Method | 25th percentile pay ratio | 50th percentile pay ratio | 75th percentile pay ratio |
|------|--------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2023 | A | 11.59:1 | 9.74:1 | 8.45:1 |
| 2022 | A | 12.6:1 | 10.25:1 | 8.64:1 |
| 2021 | A | 12.29:1 | 10.48:1 | 8.46:1 |

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755002/The_Companies_Miscellaneous_Reporting_Regulations_2018_QA_-_Publication_Version_2_1_.pdf

C45:

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

Platform have a dedicated Employee Relations and Wellbeing team, created to oversee the physical and mental wellbeing of colleagues. The team deliver Platform's Wellbeing Strategy, based on the following five pillars of wellbeing:

1. **Mental**
2. **Physical**
3. **Financial**
4. **Social**
5. **Occupational**

The team and the strategy was recognised in the year at the Smarter Working Awards, getting to the final two for an award.

Working in collaboration with the Health & Safety Team (H&S), physical and mental health are proactively supported through colleague and manager guidance, monitored through employee engagement and wellbeing surveys, sickness absence monitoring and H&S incident reporting. Monthly KPIs are reported to the Executive Team and Group Board.

The Team is complimented by a range of policies that outlay a number of wellbeing practices and support mechanisms, including:

- Comprehensive occupational health services
- Employee Assistance Programme provision
- Health care cash plans
- Mental health first aid training and coaching
- Mandatory health and safety training
- Leave arrangements, such as bereavement leave and urgent domestic leave
- Regular health checks for our workforce
- Opportunities for flexible working

We hold regular financial wellbeing seminars covering a range of issues such as mortgages and budgeting. Our online Learning and Development Academy hosts numerous wellbeing modules that cover subjects such as recognising the signs and symptoms of workplace related mental health concerns and how people can look after their own wellbeing.

In addition to the above, Platform holds regular wellbeing events throughout the year. All employees are encouraged to take part and activities include encouraging people to learn a new language, getting outside for a walk and sharing stories of how colleagues have been helping their local communities.

C46: Employee sickness

Average number of sick days taken per employee.

During the year to March 2023 the average number of sickness days taken per employee was 8.5 days (2021: 9.4), which was above our target of 7 days. Compared to the prior year it is positive to see an overall reduction in sickness absence.

Excluding long term sickness, the average days sickness absence was 4.4 days per colleague. Platform continued to see absence related to covid-19 in the early part of the financial year but this reduced quite significantly as the year progressed. Mental health related sickness made up 25% of the total absence, a figure that has grown over the past two years. The majority of mental health related sickness absence is not related directly to work.

The ONS reported a 2.6% increase in sickness absence in 2022 for the UK, a record increase since 2004, which highlights the challenges being faced nationwide. The number of days lost per worker reported by the ONS was 5.7 days.

In order to help improve sickness days the Employee Relations and Wellbeing Team launched a more robust Absence Management Policy in the summer of 2022 and the impact of this is now being realised. Platform has also launched a Leadership Development Programme which will provide managers with the tools to hold more effective absence management meetings.



Section 12

Supply Chain

C47: Procurement and Social Value creation

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

At Platform we continue to recognise the central role that procurement plays in creating a more social economy. Social value is always considered during the procurement process, where we strive to benefit the communities in which we operate.

Through our procurement for communal gas servicing, we generate sustainable employment opportunities through the creation of apprenticeships, accredited training, and work experience days. On top of this, most of our contracts have social value built in, for example requiring one apprenticeship placement to be delivered per £0.5m. Where we can, we work with local suppliers to ensure that economic benefits are retained within the local area, maximising our contribution to the communities in which we work in.

We have incorporated social value into our award criteria, establishing social value as a standard KPI in all of our procurements.

This will ensure that we work with suppliers who embed social value as their business as usual approach. Effective contract management is key to ensuring these KPIs are met and suppliers are held accountable. Through improving our supplier management, we intend to collaborate with suppliers to ensure that social value is being achieved, introducing consequences for non-delivery.

Social value must be designed for the people that we serve. Therefore, we strive to improve our relationship with our customer engagement team to understand exactly what our communities' need, feeding this back to suppliers to offer place-based social value outcomes that truly make a difference.



C48: Procurement and the environment

How is Environmental impact considered when procuring goods and services?

Considering our impact on the environment is central to protecting the health of our communities and their local areas and as we move towards a net zero carbon environment, we recognise that we must mobilise capital in a responsible way. We remain committed to minimising the impact on the environment as a consequence of our procurement activities.

We seek to engage with suppliers who address environmental issues through their corporate and management policies, demonstrating a clear commitment to addressing and mitigating their environmental and social impacts. We champion suppliers who find innovative ways of reducing their carbon footprint, such as implementing energy efficient solutions and managing their waste in a responsible manner.

We endeavor to ensure that our supplies are sourced from countries that are not associated with the Russian State or other embargoed regions.

We have embedded environmental standards within our award criteria, which will help monitor performance for the duration of the contract. These standards will ensure that we are working only with suppliers with responsible attitudes towards environmental issues and strive to achieve beyond best practice.

The onboarding of our new Source to Pay capability, which includes detailed sourcing, supplier relationship and contract management aspects, will standardise our processes. It will also allow us to configure our sourcing requirements, to take account of environmental, social and governance requirements, including social value.

Our plan for 2024 remains focused on moving all landlord electric contracts towards renewable energy sources wherever possible. Whilst this may come at a higher cost, this transition is central to our mission of 'building a better future' for our communities. However, we recognise the need to balance this objective against maintaining financial strength, particularly in light of escalating inflation.



