



Making an Impact

**Our Sustainability Report
2023-2024**



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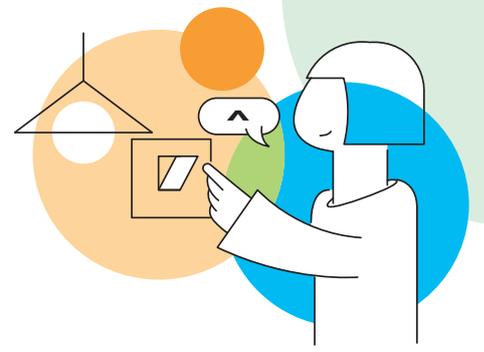
Executive Summary

We are pleased to share our Sustainability Report, which shares some of the key achievements and aspirations we have to help tackle climate change, be a leader on social initiatives and maintain excellent governance.

It's been a year since our last report and the outlook for the local, national and global landscape continues to be challenging. Political and economic headwinds persist and our people, places and business continue to be affected by climate change, ecological demands and social pressures. As a registered provider of affordable housing, we have an important role to play in addressing these challenges. Our purpose at Platform is to deliver a customer-first housing experience for a better future. This can be seen in our Corporate Strategy, which was reviewed in the year and retained sustainability as central to our objectives. Supporting this strategy is our Sustainability and ESG Strategy, which seeks to integrate and broaden our initiatives to help us develop the resources, create the culture, and map out our pathway to achieve our vision as a leading sustainable housing association.

The table below summarises our performance against the key metrics within the Sustainability Reporting Standard (the Standard) as at 31 March 2024 and a detailed account against all metrics within the Standard can be seen in the sections below (see page 8 onwards).

Theme	Indicator	Target	2024	2023
Affordability	Average rents/average market rent	≤65%	64%	63%
Affordability	Proportion of affordable tenures - at start of year	≥95%	99%	99%
Affordability	Proportion of affordable tenures - developed in year	≥90%	100%	100%
Building safety	Proportion of homes in compliance with gas safety	100%	99.97%	99.97%
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%	75%	71%
Resident voice	Complaints found to be maladministration by the Housing Ombudsman		26	-
Climate change	Scope 1/2 carbon emissions tCO ₂ e per home		0.23	0.22
Climate change	Scope 3 carbon emissions tCO ₂ e per home		4.09	3.77
Climate change	Homes with an EPC rating of C and above - start of year	100%	76%	75%
Climate change	Developed homes with EPC ratings of B and above	100%	99.92%	100%
Governance	Registration with the Regulator of Social Housing	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	5	4
Governance	Proportion of non-executive directors on Group Board	≥90%	90%	90%
Governance	Length of service of external auditors (years)	≤10	4	3
Staff wellbeing	Real Living Wage paid	Yes	Yes	Yes
Staff wellbeing	Gender pay gap	≥-5% ≤5%	-4.2%	-3.3%



Climate Change

Platform will move all homes to an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C or better by 2030 and net zero by 2050

We remain committed to improving the energy efficiency of our homes in order to reduce our carbon footprint and help make energy costs more affordable for customers. Our goal is to transition all homes to EPC C or better by 2030 and net zero by 2050, which will be guided through the development of Science Based Targets. A summary of EPCs held at the start of the year is shown below.

Rating	Homes ¹	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
A (92+)	190	0.5%	0%
B (81-91)	8,804	21.9%	22.4%
C (69-80)	21,541	53.6%	76%
D (55-68)	8,897	22.2%	98.2%
E (39-54)	658	1.6%	99.8%
F (21-38)	71	0.2%	100%
G (1-20)	3	-	100%
	40,164	100%	100%

¹There were 2,561 homes without an EPC at March 2023 (Mar-22: 3,943).

We continue to track energy efficiency improvements to our homes as we invest in capital and retrofit programmes, noting further increases in the average SAP scores for homes that existed at March 2022:

	Average SAP
March 2023	73.08
March 2024	73.23

It is our objective to develop homes that have an EPC rating of B and above and this was achieved for virtually all of our homes in the year. A total of 1,202 new homes were developed, of which all except one had an EPC rating of B and above, with an average SAP score of 84 (Mar-23: 84):

Rating	New homes	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
A (92+)	16	1%	2%
B (81-91)	1,185	99%	100%
C (71-80)	1	-	100%
	1,202	100%	100%

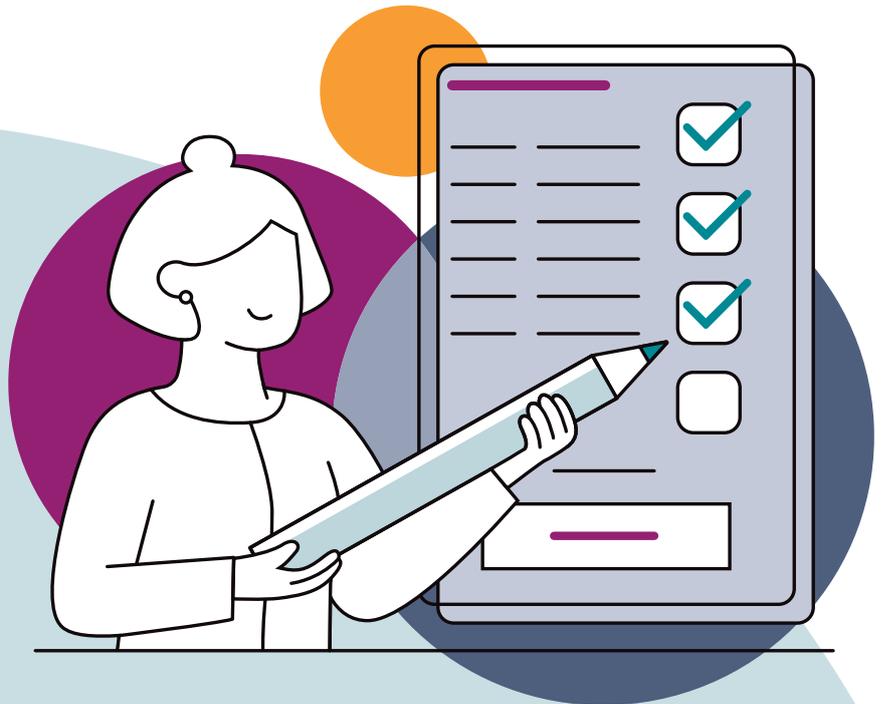
Affordability, Safety & Accountability

We provide our customers with secure, affordable and safe homes to help them thrive as part of our communities.

The provision and maintenance of quality, affordable and safe housing remains at the core of our social purpose. At March 2024 99% (March 2023: 99%) of homes owned were let for a social purpose and all of the homes we developed in the year to March 2024 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 64% of PRS rents at March 2024 (March 2023: 63%).

In response to cost-of-living challenges facing our customers we continue to operate our wellbeing fund, which supports those most in need. During the year the fund helped approximately 3,500 customers, providing a total of £1.1m towards essential items such as food, clothing and heating. On top of the fund our Successful Tenancies Team, who provide help and advice to customers who are experiencing financial difficulties, dealt with c6,500 cases in the year, recording £3.2m in financial outcomes for customers through unclaimed welfare benefit claims, appeals and backdated payments.





Looking after our Customers

Building Safety

The safety of our customers is our number one objective. As at March 2024 100% of our homes had an in-date Fire Risk Assessment (March 2023: 100%), gas compliance was 99.97% (March 2023: 99.97%) and all of our eligible homes met the Decent Homes Standard (March 2023: 100%).

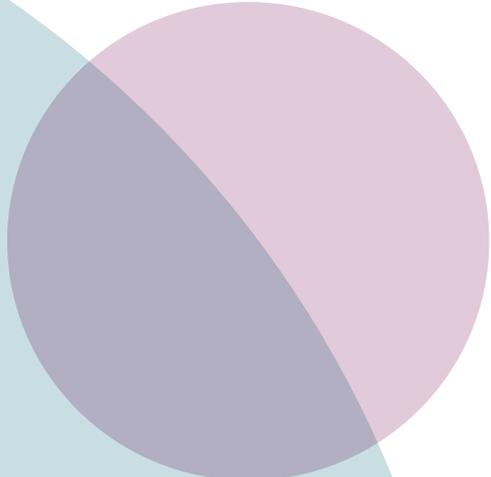
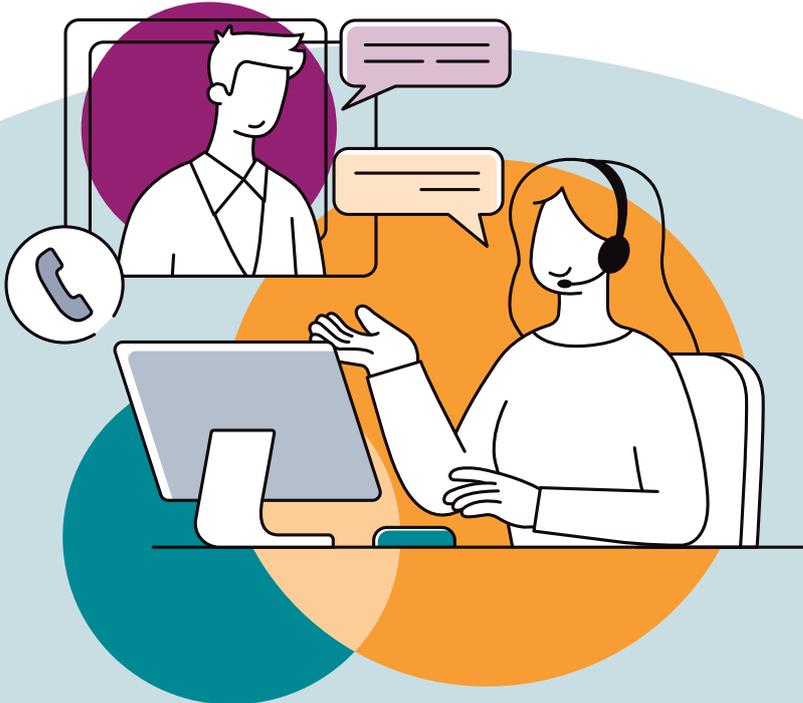
We continue to robustly deal with all cases of damp and condensation mould (DCM), ensuring issues reported are tracked to resolution in a timely manner. During the year we recruited an additional ten surveyors to help manage DCM cases. The surveyors will work cross-functionally with frontline teams to identify and deal with cases in the most expedient way possible. We are also exploring the creation of our own in-house mould-clean team to support the delivery of this service.

Resident Voice

The customer voice has been strengthened during the year, giving Platform customers greater influence and exposure to the Group Board. The former Customer Experience Panel has become the Customer Voice Panel (CVP) and is now chaired by a member of the Group Board. The panel is supported by two new sub panels for 'Customer' and 'Assets and Sustainability' to provide a specific focus in these areas.

We are committed to providing excellent service and encourage our customers to challenge us if they aren't receiving the service they expect. Satisfaction increased to 76% (2023: 71%), which is a considerable achievement in what has been a very challenging year, and demonstrates our commitment to continuously improving services to customers.

Year	Satisfaction	Target
To March 22	70%	75%
To March 23	71%	75%
To March 24	76%	75%



Governance

Platform is committed to maintaining the highest standards of governance.

During the year the Regulator of Social Housing conducted a scheduled 'In-depth Assessment' of Platform's Governance and Financial Viability. Following the assessment the regulator affirmed the highest ratings of governance and financial viability for Platform (G1 and V1). On top of this Platform's credit ratings were also affirmed in the year at A+/A+ with S&P and Fitch, both with a 'stable outlook'.

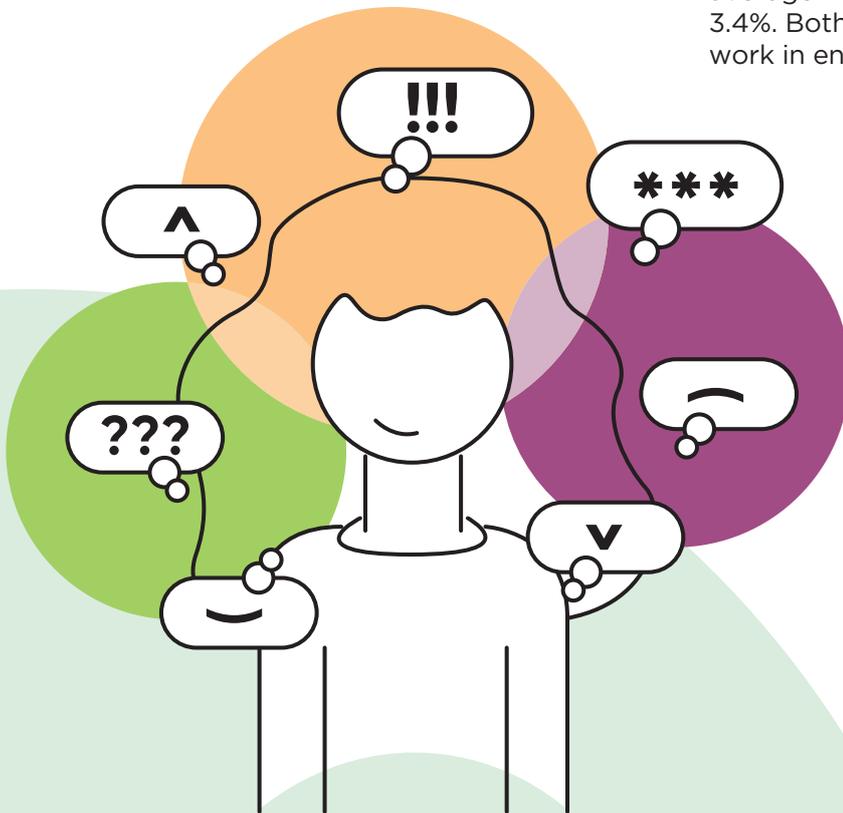
Staff wellbeing

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.

We recognise that our people are our biggest asset and offer training, both internal and external to support personal development. During the year around 10% of all employees undertook a qualification and at the end of the year 4.2% of all employees were enrolled in apprenticeships.

We pay at a minimum the Real Living Wage for our employees, including all apprentices.

During the year Platform published its first gender and ethnicity pay gap report (previously this had just been a gender pay gap report). The report shows that Platform's gender pay gap continues to be negative (4.2%), with women being paid on average more than men and the ethnicity gap is 3.4%. Both measures highlight Platform's ongoing work in ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion.



Section 1

Climate Change

C1: 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, starting with a fabric first approach. A summary of EPCs held at the start

of the year is shown below. There were 76% of homes with a rating of C and above and less than 2% below a D rating.

Rating	Homes	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
A (92+)	190	0.5%	0%
B (81-91)	8,804	21.9%	22.4%
C (69-80)	21,541	53.6%	76%
D (55-68)	8,897	22.2%	98.2%
E (39-54)	658	1.6%	99.8%
F (21-38)	71	0.2%	100%
G (1-20)	3	-	100%
	40,164	100%	100%

The EPC ratings above are based on certificates for homes that are less than ten years old. For homes older than ten years old, we continue to work with Parity Projects to model the energy efficiency of our homes (because at this age Parity estimates are considered to be more accurate as EPC methodology transitions from full to reduced standard assessment procedure (SAP)). Parity estimates EPC ratings using a number of sources, including stock condition surveys, EPC information and recent planned works. There were 2,561 homes without an EPC certificate at March 2023.

We continue to track energy efficiency improvements to our homes as we invest in capital and retrofit programmes, noting further increases in the average SAP scores for homes that existed at March 2022:

	Average SAP
March 2023	73.08
March 2024	73.23



C2: 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 virtually all of our homes in the year. A total

of 1,202 new homes were developed, of which all except one had an EPC rating of B and above, with an average SAP score of 84 (Mar-23: 84):

Rating	New homes	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
A (92+)	16	2%	1%
B (81-91)	1,185	98%	100%
C (71-80)	1	-	100%
	1,202	100%	100%

C3: Does the housing provider have a Net Zero target and strategy?

Housing plays a significant role in contributing to climate change, with up to 40% of the UK’s carbon emission coming from households, according to the UK Governments Climate Change Committee. New regulations and government policies are impacting on the affordable housing sector with the Clean Growth Strategy, Heat and Buildings Strategy, Net Zero Strategy, Energy Security Strategy, and the Future Homes Standard all playing a part.

With this regulatory background in mind and the growing awareness of human impact on the

environment, Platform has made a commitment to create a Platform Standard that will improve the quality of the homes we build and manage, ensuring they are fit for the future and move us forward on the journey to net zero carbon, which we are committed to achieving by 2050 not only for our homes but for all of our operations.

This year we will complete a Retrofit Strategy that complements our Sustainability Strategy and contains a road map to improving the energy efficiency of our homes through retrofit.

C4: Retrofit activities

What 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?

Scope 1 - Fuel and gas

We have introduced a fuel-efficient driving optimisation technology that has supported our fleet drivers, saving 191 tCO2. In addition, a Building Management System has been introduced into seven of our supported housing schemes which will help improve the energy performance of the schemes’ communal heating plants. We have also carried out boiler upgrades on 6 supported housing schemes, replacing old inefficient boilers with new ones.

Scope 2 - Electricity from our buildings

We have installed 196 Automated Meter Reading devices in our communal electricity sites to help improve the quality and accuracy of our data, representing an increase of 148%.

We have developed plans to refurbish our least energy efficient supported housing schemes with lighting upgrades.



Scope 3 – Indirect emissions

We have increased the number of homes that have EPC certificates from 95 % to 96% to improve the overall confidence and reliability of our property and energy data. We have reduced the carbon emissions of our homes, with average CO2 emissions per home reduced from 1.81 tCO2/year to 1.78 tCO2/year which represents a total saving of 530 tCO2. To support our objective to move all homes to EPC C or better by 2030 we carried out 130 retrofit energy improvement measures in the year, including 101 ground and air source heat pumps, 14 solar PV systems and 15 external wall insulation (EWI) fittings. These works have helped improve the homes affected from an average SAP score of 52 (EPC E) to 82 (EPC B), saving around 150tCO2. This has helped our customers save an average of approximately £300/year off their energy bills.

	2024	2023
ASHP	101	211
PV panels	14	273
EWI	15	1
Other renewables	-	32
	130	517

Although the overall number of retrofits has decreased on the prior year, expenditures have increased by approximately 50% to £8m as we gear up to deliver an increased number of retrofits going forwards. These will be more focused on fabric-related improvements, followed in time with energy efficient heating systems and solar PV panels.

Our planned works programme complements these retrofits and we have carried out 1,245 boiler replacements, 1,322 loft and cavity insulation upgrades and 136 window replacements, all of which will help to reduce carbon emissions.

C5: 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 report 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 2023/24 our emissions per home were 0.23 tCO2e for scope one and two emissions (2023: 0.22 tCO2e) and 4.09 tCO2e for total scope three emissions, which have increased due to higher investment into building new sustainable housing and improving the energy efficiency of existing housing. Scope three emissions relating to the running of existing housing has decreased from 1.81 tCO2 per home/year to 1.78 tCO2 per home/year.

The majority of our emissions are classified within scope 3, coming from our leased homes and buildings (72,677 tCO2/41%) and purchased goods and services (91,033 tCO2/52%).

Total emissions were up year-on-year by 10%, an increase driven by scope 3 emissions relating to purchased goods and services, which were up by 19%. Increased expenditure was largely due to greater capital investment into building new homes, which was up by c£65m/25% and existing homes, which was up by £15m/62%.

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

Energy Consumption

Energy Consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)

	2023-24	2022-23
Gas	20,418,561	20,441,819
Electricity	9,690,992	8,966,970
Transport Fuel in Fleet Vehicles (Diesel)	11,277,217	10,608,002
Transport Fuel in Fleet Vehicles (Petrol)	142,493	94,006

Carbon Emissions (Scope 1 and 2)

		2023-24	2022-23
Emissions from gas (tCO ₂ e)	Scope 1	3,735	3,743
Emissions from transport fuel for fleet cars (tCO ₂ e)	Scope 1	2,728	2,567
Emissions from business travel in rental cars or business mileage claims (tCO ₂ e)	Scope 1	731	591
Emissions from refrigerants (tCO ₂ e)	Scope 1	62	62
Emissions from electricity (tCO ₂ e)	Scope 2	2,007	1,734
	Total (tCO₂e)	9,263	8,789

Carbon Intensity Ratios (Scope 1 and 2)

	Homes/Turnover	2023-24	2022-23
Tons of CO ₂ e per home managed ¹	40,747	0.23	0.22
Tons of CO ₂ e per £ million turnover	337	27.5	29.3

Carbon Emissions (Scope 3)

		2023-24	2022-23
Emissions from generation of electricity that is lost in transmission and distribution (tCO ₂ e)	Transmission and distribution losses (Including T&D losses for EV charging)	156	160
Emissions from commuting (tCO ₂ e)	Figures based on 21/22 year.	152	152
Emissions from leased assets, franchises, and outsourced activities (tCO ₂ e)	Regulated emissions from homes	72,677	72,472
Emissions from fuel and energy related activity (tCO ₂ e)	Well-To-Tank Emissions from Gas, Electricity Generation and Transmission & Distribution, Fleet Vehicles and Business Travel	1,909	1,885
Emissions from Homeworking (tCO ₂ e)		554	560
Emissions from purchased goods and services (tCO ₂ e)		91,033	76,206
	Total (tCO₂e)	166,481	151,435

Summary

Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	Scope 1 & 2	9,263	8,789
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	Scope 3	166,481	151,435
Total Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	Scope 1, 2 and 3 excluding homeworking	175,744	160,224

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

C6: Climate risk mitigations

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?

- Increased flood risk
- Increased risk of homes overheating

We continue to model the risks associated with flooding and over-heating in order to help identify any areas of high risk. At present this is done by analysing homes by address post code and over time we plan to refine this by looking at higher risk areas on a property-by-property basis.

The desk-top post code analysis indicates that Platform’s homes have a very low exposure to the risk of flooding, 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.

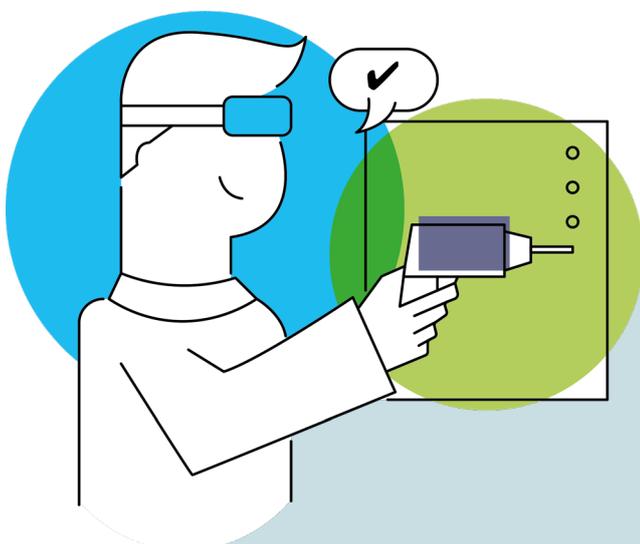
The risk profile for over-heating is similarly low, with fewer than 100 homes identified as being a high risk.

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 is addressed through use of mechanical ventilation and shading devices in our new build homes to help control internal property temperature levels. In addition, we give careful consideration to ceiling heights, the recessing and projection of glazing as well as the integration of thermal mass in designing new homes.

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



Section 2

Ecology & Resource Management

C7: Green space and biodiversity

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

We want our customers to thrive in the places they live and are committed to working closely with all of our customers to co-design community plans based on shared visions.

As part of our Sustainability Strategy we will maximise our land and green spaces, helping to support wildlife. This will involve carrying out audits of our natural assets in our neighbourhoods and estates, developing a biodiversity action plan that sets out a strategic approach for managing our land and green spaces.

When entering into new development schemes we will review designs and where possible include measures to encourage biodiversity and help reverse habitat decline. This includes measures such as bat boxes, hedgehog highways and the planting of trees and shrubs.



C8 – C11: Strategies for pollutants, materials, waste and water

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

Platform has active and developing strategies for these areas which are specific to different areas of the business, such as development and maintenance activities.

Our maintenance subsidiary, Platform Property Care (PPC), was subject to an external audit in the year and recertified to ISO 14001 for a further 3 years. 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 and 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 465 tonnes (prior year: 475 tonnes), of which 7.1% went to landfill (prior year: 6.9%). In addition, PPC has engaged a number of suppliers to repair components (as part of a circular economy agenda) rather than dispose and replace with new. For example, windows have been targeted for repair instead of replacing them and as a result we have repaired on average 70% of double glazed windows instead of replacing them, saving c50 tons of waste glass in the year.

On top of maintenance activities we do, through our 'Platform Standard', commit to a number of objectives to improve the sustainability of our development programme:

- We use sustainable components to ensure the reduction of pollutants in the new homes we build. This includes specification of low VOC/ VOC free paints and copper or plastic pipes
- We require any timber frames to come from renewable sources, for example Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) or Pan European Forest Certification (PEFC) or similar schemes
- We take a fittings approach to developments in accordance with Building Regulations, ensuring that the potential consumption of water per person per day is less than 125 litres



Section 3

Affordability and Security

C12: 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 64% 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	6,489	96	132	73%
Worcester	Worcestershire	5,132	100	178	56%
Malvern Hills	Worcestershire	4,164	113	181	63%
Wychavon	Worcestershire	3,810	111	181	61%
Derbyshire Dales	Derbyshire	3,300	105	155	68%
Harborough	Leicestershire	2,420	104	178	58%
Birmingham	West Midlands	2,085	112	204	55%
Herefordshire	Herefordshire	1,706	113	162	70%
Leicester	Leicestershire	1,026	84	151	56%
Other	n/a	10,062	119	163	73%
Total		40,194	108	170	64%

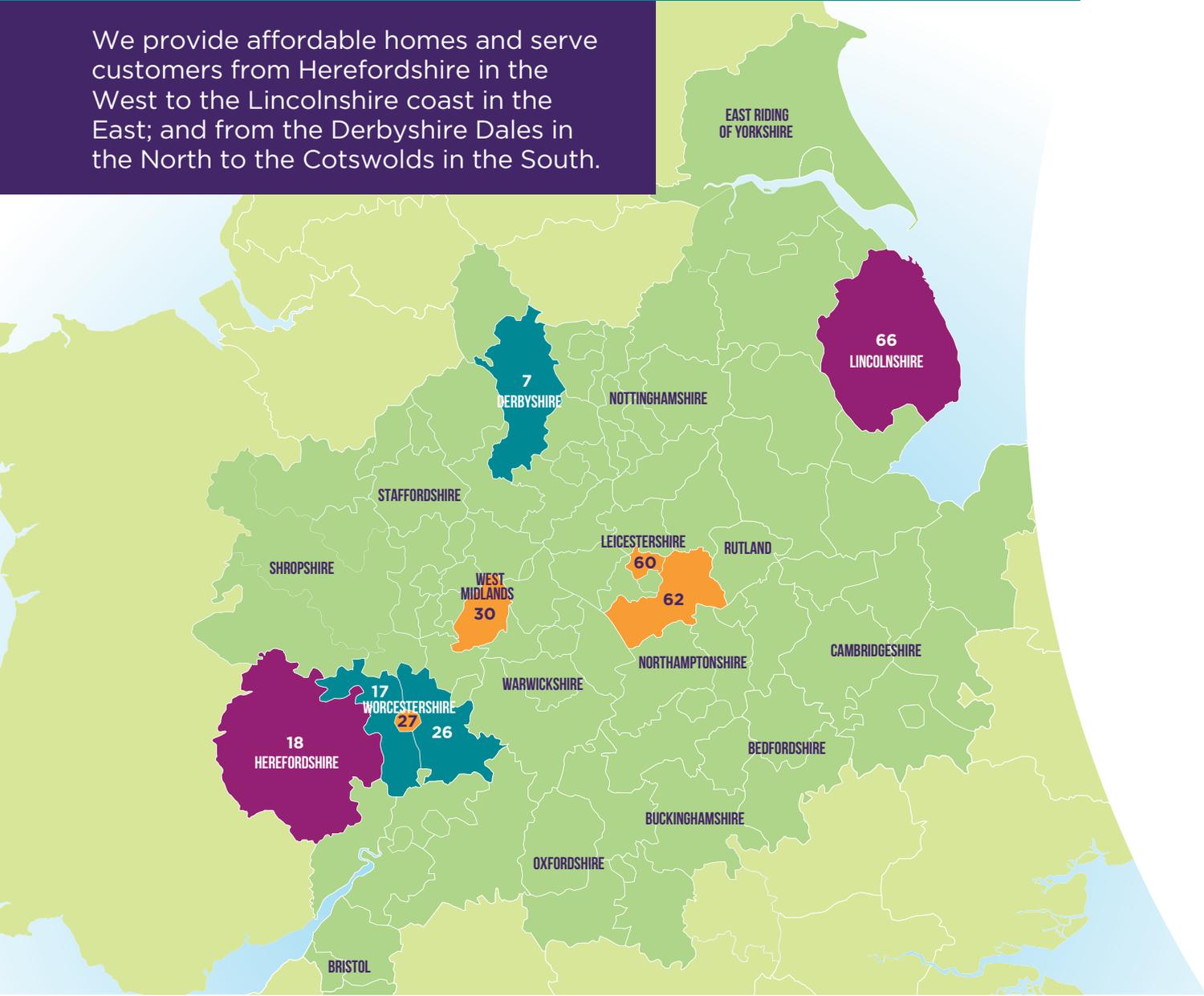
¹Homes include social rent, affordable rent, intermediate rent and housing for older people. Shared ownership homes are excluded because rents are not comparable with open market (rent relates to the remaining equity owned). Supported housing is also excluded because it is specialised accommodation and 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

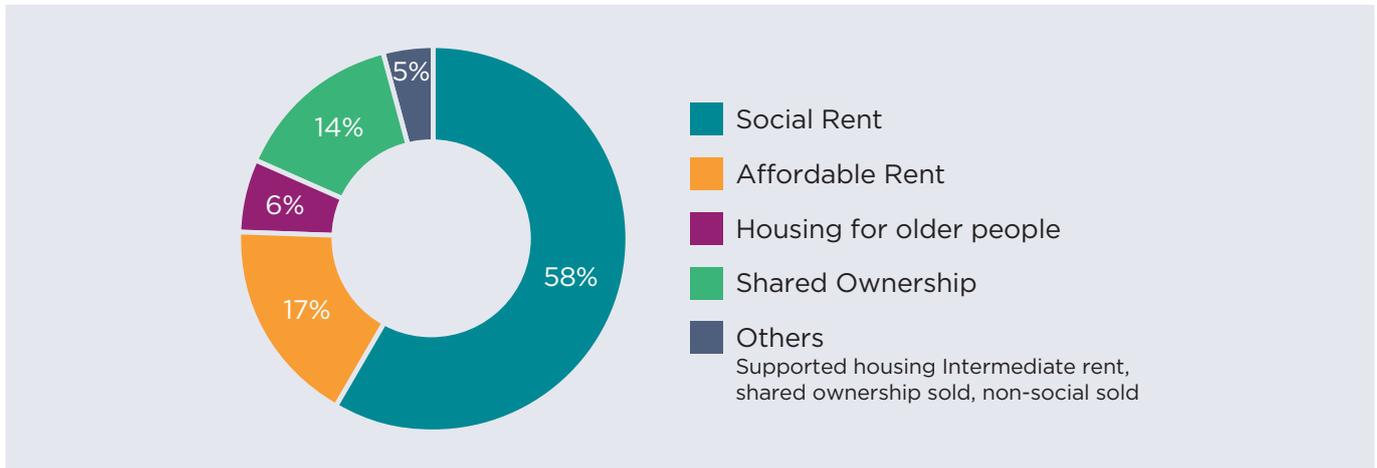
- 50-59%
- 60-69%
- 70%+

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

C13-C14: Affordability indicator:

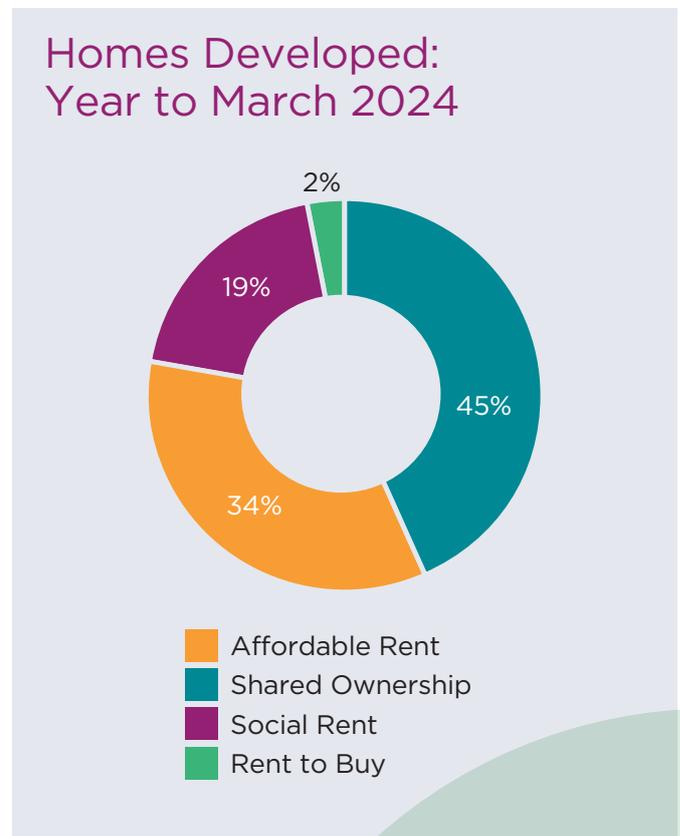
Share and number of existing homes before the start of the previous financial year and completions for the current year.

Platform is committed to managing and developing homes that are affordable to those in the areas in which we operate. At March 2023 99% of the homes we owned were let for a social purpose.



		Share
Social Rent	28,755	58%
Affordable Rent	8,248	17%
Supported housing	618	1%
Housing for older people	2,706	6%
Intermediate rent	482	1%
Shared ownership ¹	6,688	14%
Shared ownership sold ²	1,148	2%
Homes with a social purpose	48,645	99%
Non-social rented	111	0%
Non-social sold ²	425	1%
Total Homes owned	49,181	100%

During the year all of our homes were built for a social purpose, with 225 (19%) built for social rent, 408 (34%) for affordable rent, 544 (45%) for shared ownership and 25 for rent-to-buy (2%) (no homes were built for outright sale).



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.



C15: Affordability indicator:

How is the housing provider trying to reduce the effect of high energy costs on its residents?

We recognise that energy costs make up a material part of our customers essential bills and strive to ensure that every Platform tenant is able to adequately heat and power their home. Our primary focus in this area is to improve the energy efficiency of our homes. On top of this we help customers minimise their bills by providing advice and third party support and in some cases, by providing help directly to those most in need through our Wellbeing Fund.

Platform remain committed to moving all homes to an EPC rating of C or better by 2030. Our Retrofit Team oversaw the installation of 130 energy efficient heating systems and PV panels in the year. We have taken a whole house retrofit approach in the year, upgrading 58 homes. These homes have benefitted from new windows, doors, insulation to lofts and walls, followed by installation of air source heat pumps, solar panels and mechanical ventilation. This resulted in SAP improvements from an average of 52(E) to 82(B) and saved customers approximately £300 a year per home through reduced 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. We continue to work 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

We continued to provide a Wellbeing Fund in the year, with £1.1m being placed to those most in need. Allocations from the fund continue to help with energy costs, albeit we have seen proportionately less being used in this area as costs have come down over the last year. In addition, our Successful Tenancies Team helped secure a further £54,000 in energy grants and schemes for customers to assist with the ongoing costs of energy.



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

C16: Security indicator

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

All of our tenancy agreements are provided on a lifetime basis in order to give customers the peace of mind that the home they live in is secure going into the future. On top of this we have now phased out virtually all historical tenancies that had a term of under three years.

Section 4

Building Safety and Quality

C17 – C18: Safety and quality indicators:

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

The safety of our customers remains our number one priority. As at March 2024 100% of our homes had an in-date Fire Risk Assessment (March 2023: 100%), gas safety compliance was 99.97% (March 2022: 99.97%), electrical safety compliance was 99.2% and all of our eligible homes complied with the Decent Homes Standard (March 2023: 100%).

Gas compliance continues to be affected by a small number of instances where access is denied, 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.

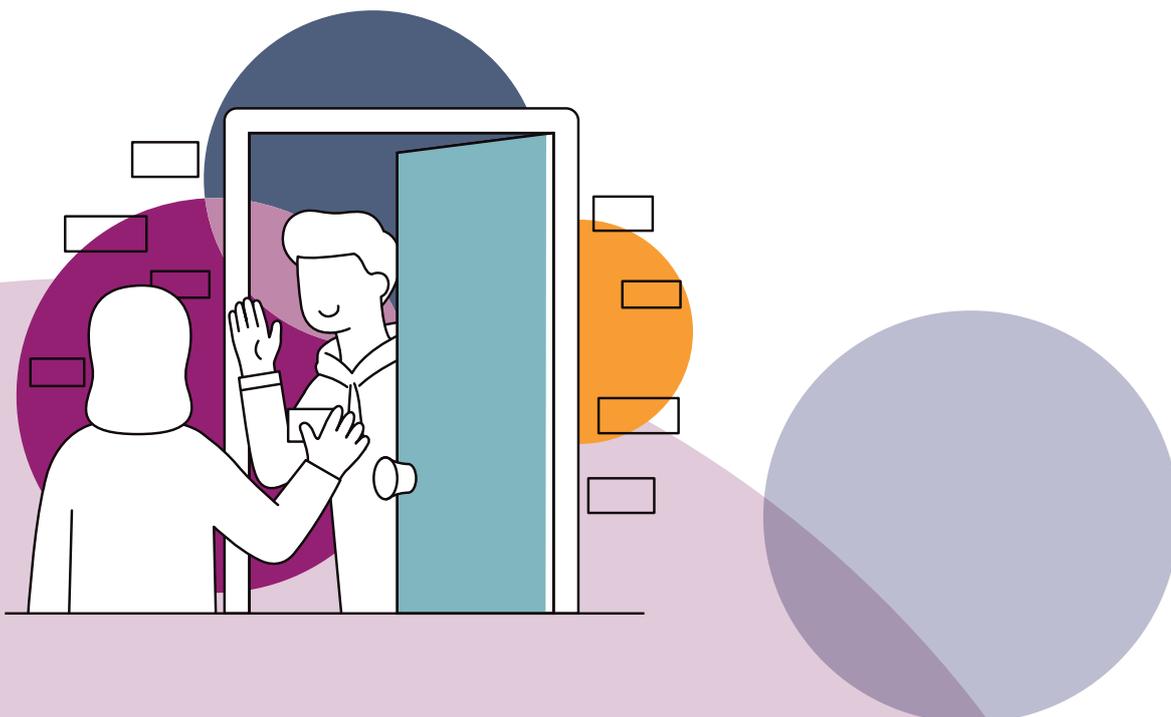
Electrical compliance is marginally below 100% because similar to gas compliance, there are a small number of cases where access is denied.

In addition, many of the homes without an electrical certificate were either awaiting demolition or newly built homes that have yet to be occupied.

In addition to these safety checks, we are pleased to report the following in relation to asbestos, legionella and communal lifts:

Asbestos management surveys or re-inspections carried out	100%
Legionella risk assessments carried out	100%
Communal passenger lift safety checks carried out	100%

To date we have found no cases of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in our homes.



C19: Safety indicator:

How do you manage and mitigate the risk of damp and mould for your residents?

We are acutely aware of the danger that damp and condensation mould (DCM) can present to our customers. We have a robust and clear process for dealing with cases of DCM, to ensure all cases reported are tracked to resolution. During the year these were strengthened to incorporate all aspects of the Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight on Mould Report. All of our customer facing literature and internal processes are reviewed by our Customer Sounding Board, who ensure that it remains both comprehensive and user-friendly.

Over the last year we have seen a reduction in the number of DCM cases received, as we have strived to both work through active cases and work with customers in how to prevent condensation mould occurring.

We have taken part in the consultation for the UK Governments 'Awaab's Law', which focuses specifically on timescales for landlords to respond to complaints of DCM as well as the 29 health and safety hazards set out by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). We have already recruited an additional ten surveyors and will be

looking to work cross-functionally with frontline teams to identify and deal with cases in the most expedient way possible. We are also exploring the creation of our own in-house mould clean team to support the delivery of this service which is largely outsourced at the moment.

On top of this we continue to utilise front line services and smart technologies to identify cases of DCM before they escalate into a serious issue. This includes training front line operatives to look out for signs of DCM and carrying out 'Tenancy Healthchecks' to keep in touch with the people living in our homes. As part of the health checks we are continuing with our Switchee pilot project, which involves installing smart technology that will help monitor retrofit properties, looking at the risk of DCM, as well as fuel poverty, heat stroke, the heat loss rate and time taken to heat the property. An additional 900 Switchee smart thermostat devices were purchased in November 2023 and will be used for homes identified for retrofit measures under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund 'Wave 2'.



Section 5

Resident Voice

C20: Customer satisfaction

What are the results of the housing provider’s most recent tenant satisfaction survey? How has the housing provider acted on these results?

We are committed to providing excellent service and encourage our customers to challenge us if they aren’t receiving the service they expect. Our Customer Experience Team collect and analyse feedback using surveys, in addition to our complaints and compliments processes. This information is used to implement changes that improve our offering.

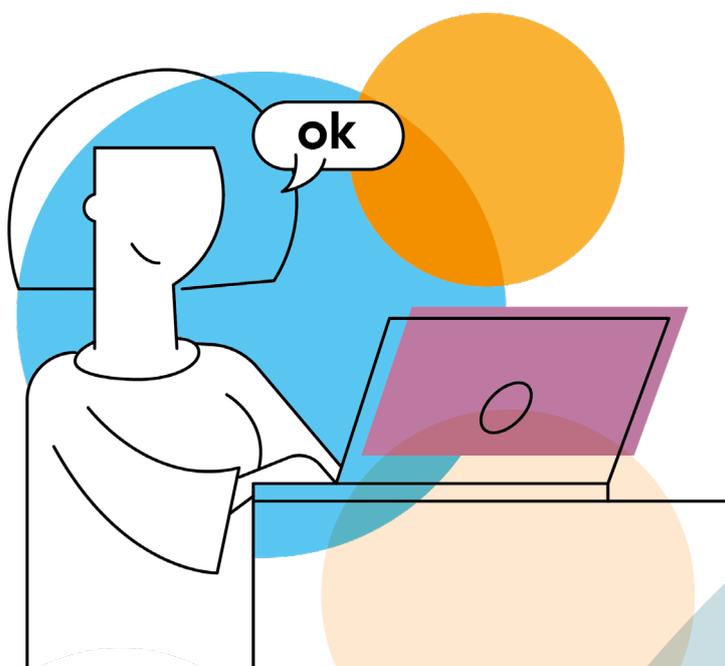
The satisfaction figure for the year was made up of over 32,000 responses from ten transactional surveys, which combined to give our overall satisfaction rating. Satisfaction increased to 76% (2023: 71%), which is a considerable achievement in what has been a very challenging year, and demonstrates our commitment to continuously improving services to customers.

Time Period	Satisfaction	Target
Year to Mar 22	70%	75%
Year to Mar 23	71%	75%
Year to Mar 24	76%	75%

Improvements in customer satisfaction have been supported by new technologies to enhance the customer experience. In February 2024 we completed the installation of Microsoft Dynamics, which means that all customer interactions are now managed using the same system.

In addition, we have increased focus on the quality of newly developed homes that are handed over to customers. We have a dedicated team focusing on quality and have seen satisfaction rates over 80% and defects 40% lower than the previous year.

On top of our transactional surveys we have started collecting satisfaction scores from perception surveys as part of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). The TSMs are required to be collected as part of new Consumer Standards introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing in the year. We have commissioned IFF Research (IFF) to carry out our surveys. IFF is an independent research agency with extensive experience in gathering robust customer feedback for a wide range of sectors. IFF conduct monthly surveys on our behalf so that we can monitor, measure and report performance against the measures. In comparison to our baseline survey scores, which were based on the year to March 2023, it is pleasing to note that we have shown improvement in 10 of the 12 measures, with the remaining two showing no change. However, we are aware that we have much to improve and are investing in our services to ensure that these improvements are realised.



C21: Accountability

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



CVP Chair: Lou Zonato

Ensuring our customers are at the heart of what we do is central to achieving our strategic goals. In readiness for the introduction of new Consumer Standards a review was completed in the Summer of 2023 to ensure customers had greater opportunity to have their voice heard at Board and Senior Management level. As a result of this review the former Customer Experience Panel has been enhanced and renamed to the Customer Voice Panel (CVP). The CVP has been strengthened in a number of ways, including:

- The minimum number of customers sat on the panel has been increased to twelve to ensure a broader representation
- Customer Scrutiny Panel members now join CVP meetings to align their work. Together they have become a powerful, knowledgeable cohort with the ability to challenge processes and ideas
- Two new sub panels for 'Customer' and 'Assets and Sustainability' have been created to have a specific focus in these areas and both are chaired by customers

The panel is now chaired by Group Board member, Lou Zonato, who ensures there is a direct, unfiltered line of reporting to the Board. The panel meets every quarter with members of the Group Board and senior leaders to review service provision and to challenge and discuss areas for improvement. The panel reviews policies 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.



C22: Housing Ombudsman

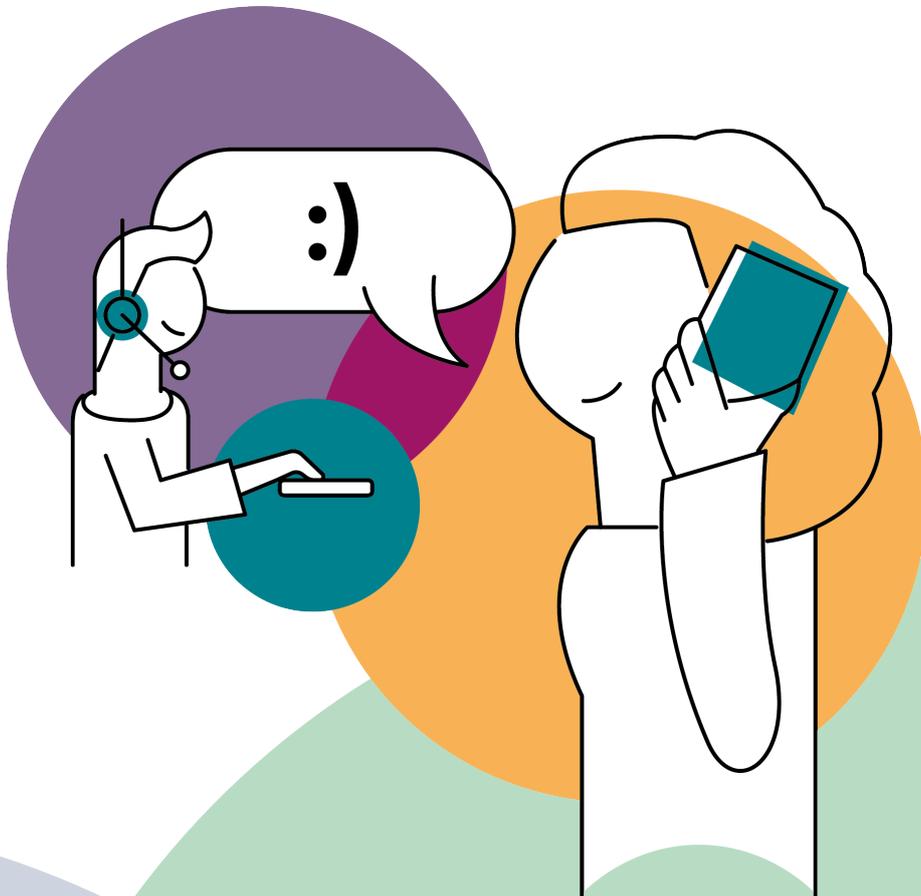
In the last 12 months, in how many complaints has the national Ombudsman determined that maladministration took place? How have these complaints (or others) resulted in change of practice within the housing provider?

We take all complaints extremely seriously and 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.

As has been seen across the sector, the number of complaints we have received has significantly increased during the year. There were 27 cases where the Housing Ombudsman made determinations in the year. These determinations included 26 instances of maladministration (of which five were serious maladministration) relating to 16 cases (March 2023: nil).

We are currently working through the findings of these cases and will form an action plan to address all areas for improvement. Some of the areas being worked on immediately include:

- Setting up a dedicated Complaints Aftercare Team, which will strengthen communication with customers after complaints have been through triage and initial resolution
- Review the way in which we monitor and manage the work of external contractors, ensuring they operate within a robust framework
- Enhancing training for customer facing colleagues by introducing refresher courses more frequently



Section 6

Resident Support



C23: Support services

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

We offer a suite of services that ensure our customers are supported to achieve the best outcomes available. These include checking that we keep in touch with customers, help with employment, debt advice and welfare benefits through to direct support from our Wellbeing Fund.

Tenancy Healthchecks

Tenancy Healthchecks continue to be operated for customers, helping us to keep in touch with the people living in our homes. This includes scheduled visits for maintenance activities, piloting smart devices in homes that help to identify those at greater risk of developing damp and condensation mould, as well as using artificial intelligence to identify 'silent customers' who have not interacted with us for 12 months, ensuring that contact is made and in some instances, a visit organised to check they are safe and well. Our work in this area was recognised during the year at the Digital Housing Awards, winning in the category of Resident Welfare.

Working with Customers

Our Successful Tenancies Team provide help and advice to customers who are experiencing financial difficulties. The advisers work with customers:

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

This year the service received 6,463 (2023: 6,316) referrals and recorded £3.2m (2023: £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 to measuring the success of its support provided to customers. The team is measured using the Housing Associations Charitable Trust's (HACT) Social Value Calculator and generated a social value of £7.2m (2023: £5.5m) in the year.

On top of the Successful Tenancies Team we also provide helpful information and tools on our website to enable customers to self-serve with things like budgeting and benefits calculations, navigating Universal Credit, cost of living support and general energy advice.

We renewed our partnership with Stay Nimble, a certified social enterprise that delivers award-winning career development support via an always-on digital platform. The programme is free to our customers across our operating area. Through Stay Nimble customers have support from a qualified career coach to help build confidence, inspire them to explore future career goals and access to a range of easy-to-use online tools. In the year the service generated £105,000 in social value relating to HACT categories of employment, wellness and financial outlook.

The Platform Wellbeing Fund

Our Wellbeing Fund helps us target those customers who are most in need with essentials such as food, clothing and white goods. The fund, which was originally established during the Covid-19 pandemic, was maintained for the third year in a row, allocating £1.1m to help approximately 3,500 customers. The Fund also supported community initiatives across our operating area, allocating £70,000 to warm hubs, foodbanks and donations to other charitable organisations who work to support customers living in Platform communities.

Section 7

Placemaking and Community

C24: Placemaking and community activities

Describe community investment activities and how they contribute to positive neighbourhood outcomes. Provide examples of where the housing provider has been engaged in placemaking or placeshaping activities.

Social Value

We are committed to being both a landlord and a developer of places that provide social value to our customers. During the year we took part in the Value of a Social Tenancy Project, which is aimed at allowing housing associations to understand the social value impact of the different tenancy types they offer across the geographic regions of the UK, alongside the benefits of the annual spending on building and maintaining these properties. The findings from the project will not only allow us to report the positive impact that our homes have on local communities, but also enable us to strategically plan our development and regeneration programmes to deliver the most beneficial types of tenancies based on the needs of a particular area.

Communities

Our work in community engagement and investment was recently recognised by winning in the Community Impact category at the 2024 Building Communities Awards. The award recognises professionalism, excellence and innovation within housing and construction and our entry focused on the positive impact we've had on our communities and the notable benefits for local people and their surrounding environments. These included:

- Our Communities Connected initiative, which includes a range of community events, neighbourhood clear-ups, fitness activities, environmental initiatives, community safety promotion and digital inclusion sessions
- Our Community Chest Fund, which supports charitable organisations, voluntary groups and clubs to make a difference in their community. The fund supported 107 organisations with £160,000 of funding in the year
- Working in partnership with the local authority in Worcester on a project to plant trees in deprived neighbourhoods
- Our Christmas Kindness campaign, which provided funding to community groups who support those in need over the Christmas period supported 114 groups with over £65,000 in funding
- Working in partnership with Tutors United to provide educational support in english and maths to children aged 8-11 years old using funding from our Wellbeing Fund. The initiative helps support children to improve their numeracy and literacy by attending weekly sessions and has seen notable improvements
- Supplying two 'Community Builders' who help build better communities through initiatives such as working with Ukrainian refugees to help develop a range of events in their areas, which have helped them to feel part of a safe and inclusive local community



Digital Inclusion

We continue to deliver a range of digital inclusion activities for customers across our localities, working in partnership with external partners such as Local Authorities, Age UK and the NHS. Our digital inclusion sessions, either led by Platform or by partners using equipment provided by us, are well attended across our localities and 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. These sessions are complemented by sourcing low-cost, high performance refurbished laptops for our customers at half the cost of new, similar products.

During the year we participated in the national Technology for an Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation Project. Funded by the Dunhill Medical Trust, customers at a Retirement Village were engaged in trialling technology designed to improve safety, independence and connectivity within their home and wider community. The project was a great success, with a third of participants reporting an increase in feelings of both safety and independence. The learning taken from the project will inform Platform's strategy for using technology to sustain tenancies and improve digital literacy amongst our older customers.



Section 8

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 (RP) 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 and financial viability. The Regulator of Social Housing performed a scheduled In-depth Assessment of the Group in the fourth quarter of the year to look at both governance and viability. Following the assessment the regulator affirmed the highest governance and viability ratings of 'G1/V1'.

In addition to regulatory assessments, we are rated by both S&P Global and Fitch Ratings.

Our A+ (stable outlook) rating was affirmed by S&P following an annual review in January 2024 and our Fitch rating of A+ (negative outlook) was affirmed earlier in the year (October 2023). In April 2024 the outlook with Fitch was improved to 'stable', which followed a similar move to the UK Sovereign rating outlook (due to the expected support given by the UK Government to distressed organisations in the UK social housing sector, both the outlook and ratings are affected by the UK Sovereign rating).

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

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 Environmental, Social and Governance risks. Are ESG risks incorporated into the housing provider's risk register?

Risks that prevent the Group achieving its objectives, including those related to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), 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 one. 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. In addition, the Group operates the following groups whose remit specifically covers

sustainability related activities, including any associated risks:

- Assets and Sustainability Committee: comprised of executive and non-executive directors, the committee meets at least four times a year and has risk identification as a standing item on its agenda
- Sustainability Forum: comprised of senior members of the leadership team and other operational experts, the forum meets at least four times a year and reviews on-going and emerging projects and risk areas

During the year a specific risk was added to the Group's risk register covering the effects of climate change and human rights and there are also governance and environment related risks included in the register. All risks on the register highlight the Group's actions and plans to help mitigate the probability of risks materialising and impact should it do so.

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 findings in the last 12 months from the Regulator of Social Housing in England. There have similarly been no data protection or other data related breaches. There was one HSE breach reported during the financial year which resulted in a notification of contravention from HSE. Following review of the case the HSE were satisfied with the actions taken and the case was closed.

Section 9

Board and Trustees

C31: Diversity in Governance

How does the housing provider ensure it gets input from a diverse range of people into the governance processes? Does the housing provider have policies that incorporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into the recruitment and selection of board members and senior management?

During the year two new members joined the Platform Group Board. Jane Wynne was appointed to replace David Clark in April 2023 and Ian Ailles was appointed a board member and chair of the Group Audit and Risk Committee, replacing Sebastian Bull. Jane has previous experience as a non-executive director in the affordable housing sector and has worked in public, private and housing sectors, particularly in the areas of regeneration and sustainable development. Ian was Chief Executive at Thomas Cook for a number of years and held the position of the first Director General of the House of Commons. He now works as a non-executive director for a number of organisations, mainly in the third sector across health, education and housing.

The Group has a Diversity Strategy and associated policies in place which help to ensure that diversity is embedded into our culture. Diversity in the board is encouraged through our innovative Trainee Board Programme, for which the first cohort of recruits have now graduated and three were appointed Associate Committee Members on our committees. The next two-year stage of the programme is now underway for the Associate Committee Members, after which it is hoped that there may be an option to join the Group Board. A second cohort of five trainees were recruited during the year as we continue with the programme.

The demographics of the Board in comparison to our customers can be seen below (following these two new appointments).

	Our board	Our customers
Proportion of women	50%	62%
Proportion of BAME	10%	10%
Proportion disabled	-	8%
Average Age	58	51
Average tenure	4	



C32: Board and management turnover

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

As mentioned above two board members left and were replaced during the year. These two members represented 20% of the board. There has been no turnover of the seven members of the Executive

Team in the last two financial years. 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: Financial experience on Audit Committee

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

The Group Audit and Risk Committee has a number of Board members with extensive financial experience, including:

Ian Ailles (Committee Chair): Ian has a wealth of experience both in the UK and abroad. Having initially trained as a chartered accountant and working in investment banking, he moved to work within the travel and tourist industry.

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.



Ian Ailles



Elizabeth Froude

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 nine non-executive directors and one executive director.

C35: 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 during the year and subsequently to the Group Board. Two new board members started during the year following two departures and a further member is due to retire from the board during the year to March 2025.



C36: External audit

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

KPMG are the Group's external audit provider, with the year to March 2024 being the fourth year

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

C37: Board effectiveness

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

Platform appointed the Housing Quality Network 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 an Action Plan developed, which was approved by Group Boards in July 2023. The majority of actions have been addressed or are ongoing in nature. Progress is reported to the People and Governance Committee and Boards.

C38: 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 10

Staff Wellbeing



C39: The Real Living Wage

Does the housing provider pay the Real Living Wage?

Platform pays at least the Real Living Wage to all employees including our apprentices, regardless of their age.

This continues to demonstrate our commitment to fair pay, and investment in future skills within all areas of our business.

Through the monitoring of key metrics and regular employee engagement and wellbeing surveys, we believe our approach to pay is supporting high engagement and wellbeing, minimising attrition (with voluntary turnover for 2024 at a historic low of 10%), and maximising attraction by presenting Platform Housing Group as an employer of choice both within our sector and the wider labour market.

C40: The gender pay gap

What is the gender pay gap?

Platform continues its proud record on pay equality, with a narrow gender pay gap of -4.2%, meaning women earn more than men on average. This commitment to pay equality is also visible in our narrow Ethnicity Pay Gap of 3.4%, which was published for the first time this year.

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, and to promote opportunities in all roles to remove unconscious bias, 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 2023 ¹
Gender pay gap	-3.2%	7.7%

¹Source: Office for National Statistics: ‘Gender pay gap in the UK: 2023’: median gap for those in full-time employment

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

	2023	2022	2021	2020
Mean gender pay gap	-4.2%	-3.3%	1.2%	-3.9%

C41: 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
2024	A	11.40:1	9.68:1	8.26:1
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

¹https://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

C42: Equality, diversity and inclusion

How is the housing provider ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is promoted across its staff?

The oversight of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in our organisation sits with a corporate steering group called Platform Together, whose purpose is to ensure that the Group delivers on its commitment to integrate the principles of EDI in

our day-to-day business activities and strategic planning and introduce accountability across all areas of business to deliver this. Platform Together reports to our People and Governance Committee, a sub-committee of the Group Board.



Platform Together meets on a quarterly basis to review and monitor on the delivery of the following:

- Priorities set out annually by the Group Board
- The business- as-usual action plan which ensures EDI is embedded in practice across all aspects of our organisation and which corresponds to our corporate objectives
- Ad hoc task and finish groups which are set up in response to legal, regulatory or operational challenges in the context of EDI

During the year we successfully:

- Launched a Customer Insight Group, which aims to improve the breadth and depth of customer data, enabling services to be more tailored to the characteristics of our customers
- Established a report outlining how we can ensure a positive customer experience in relation to properties earmarked for retrofit, by conducting a deep dive into the characteristics of the homes and customers involved

C43: Supporting employees

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 promote all aspects of wellbeing within our workforce. The team deliver Platform's Wellbeing Strategy, based on the following five pillars of wellbeing:

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

Working in collaboration with the Health & Safety Team and Payroll & Benefits Team, colleagues 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.

C44: Supporting employees

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

We recognise that we will only achieve our potential and our purpose if we inspire others. We strive to create a great place to work that attracts and retains the most talented people and inspires the great colleagues we already have to continue their journey with us. During the year we supported over 150 of our colleagues to undertake qualifications, representing approximately 10% of the workforce.

Our Learning and Development Strategy outlines some of the key ways in which we encourage all of our colleagues to bring their best, centred around three themes:

- Building our learning and development values: structuring our teams around business partners who will work across our organisation to ensure that learning becomes an everyday activity

- Building our people and talent: we will provide training to all of our colleagues, ensuring that they are enabled to carry out their jobs in a safe, compliant manner and continuously extend and add to their skills
- Building our journey and futures: this includes providing coaching, job shadowing and recognising that everyone is different, so tailoring our approach in order to help them thrive

This strategy is supported by our Apprenticeships Strategy, which aims to encourage and enable more of our employees to undertake apprenticeships. In support of this objective we pay all apprentices at least the Real Living Wage, regardless of age. At the end of the year 4.2% of all employees were undertaking apprenticeships.



Section 11

Supply Chain

C45: 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, creating 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.



C46: 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 endeavour 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. However, it will also allow us to configure our sourcing requirements, to take account of Environmental, Social and Governance requirements, including Social Value.



