

thirteen



Environmental, Social and Governance Report 2023/24

Who we are and what we do

Thirteen Group provides housing and support services across England's North East, Yorkshire and Humber regions.

Today we own and manage over 36,000 homes, with over 1,600 colleagues providing services for around 100,000 customers.

Our vision is to be the most trusted housing association, with happy customers.

We keep our homes safe, secure and well-maintained and we have an excellent track record of building high-quality new homes for rent and shared ownership too (we're a strategic partner in Homes England's Affordable Homes Programme).

In 2023/24 we invested £133.8million to deliver 543 affordable new homes, and a further £109.2million to maintain our existing homes.

All three of those figures represent record highs for Thirteen.

We also increased our net surplus from £24.4million to £29million.

But we don't just manage and build homes.

We help people into work and training.

We deliver services to prevent homelessness and support people affected by domestic abuse.

And we continue to take decisive steps towards net zero, as we reduce our impact on the environment.

The Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) agenda is at the very heart of so much of what we do.

In this report, we'll set out how we're making a difference.



United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Thirteen was an early adopter of the Sustainability Reporting Standard, which provides a framework for consistent, comparable and transparent reporting by housing providers on their ESG performance.

This report is the fourth summary of our performance against the standard. We've structured it to respond to the criteria within the standard.

We continue to align our ESG reporting to the UN Sustainable Development Goals too. These goals helped to form the standard.

UN Sustainable Development Goals (key)



How we've structured our report

This report outlines our work in line with the themes in the sustainability reporting standard for social housing, taking each area in turn and showcasing our achievements in line with each theme.

ESG Area	Theme	Theme Name	Theme Description
Environmental	T1	Climate change	Prevents and mitigates the risk of climate change
	T2	Ecology	Promotes ecological sustainability
	T3	Resource management	Sustainable management of natural resources
Social	T4	Affordability and security	Provides affordable and secure housing
	T5	Building safety and quality	Resident safety and building quality are well managed
	T6	Resident voice	Listens to residents' voice
	T7	Resident support	Supports residents and the local community
	T8	Placemaking	Supports residents and the wider local community through placemaking
Governance	T9	Structure and governance	Legal structure of the organisation and its approach to governance
	T10	Board and trustees	High-quality board and trustees
	T11	Staff wellbeing	Supports employees
	T12	Supply chain management	Procures responsibly

You can find our detailed data tables in a dedicated section at the end of this report.



Environmental



We've committed to reaching net zero on direct business emissions by 2035 and we're taking decisive steps to become a much greener organisation. Improving our approach to the environment and sustainability cuts across everything we do.

In this chapter

Theme 1: Climate change

Theme 2: Ecology

Theme 3: Resource management

Theme 1: Climate change

This theme assesses how our activities impact climate change and how we are mitigating the physical risks of climate change. This theme considers the current practice and the changes being made to improve performance in the future.

EPC ratings in our homes

We are improving the energy efficiency of our homes and hundreds of our customers are already benefitting from green, cost-effective heating systems, with renewable air source heat pumps being used to fuel heating and provide hot water instead of traditional boilers.

We use Parity Projects Portfolio to collate our EPC data in a specialist analytical programme. This gives us data confidence, enabling us to profile our stock and model potential improvements towards EPC improvements and net zero.

Table 1 details the EPC ratings of our existing homes or those completed before the start of the previous financial year. As at 31 March 2024, 70.09% of our homes are rated EPC C or above (31 March 2023: 65.07%).



SAP ratings in our homes

We continue to enhance the data we collect in order to report on the key energy efficiency measures of our homes. In 2023/24 we recorded an average SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) rating of 71 for our existing homes and 84 for our new homes. Average energy intensity usage is 149.63 kWh/m²/yr for our existing homes and 93.54 kWh/m²/yr for our new homes. We also increased our SAP confidence score from 7.1/10 to 7.4/10 in 2023/24 and started regular uploads of live investment data to Parity Projects Portfolio to increase RdSAP scores.

In 2023/24 we:

- insulated cavity walls in **280** homes
- insulated lofts in **3,394** homes
- installed **5** air source heat pumps
- completed **2,200** new EPC surveys
- renewed **700** expired EPCs

Table 2 details the EPC ratings of our new homes completed in the last financial year. We are committed to ensuring that our new homes have the best possible energy efficiency ratings and in 2023/24, all 318 of our new of our new properties were rated at energy rating B.

Theme 1: Climate change

Greenhouse gas emissions

We are committed to ensuring all our homes achieve a minimum rating of EPC C by 2030 and net zero by 2050. We understand the targeted investment works needed to get 100% of our homes to EPC C or better. Through regional partnerships, we are actively engaging with other social landlords to find innovative and sustainable ways to invest in our homes for the future and understand the opportunities we have to work together on decarbonisation.

Alongside this, we've committed to reaching net zero on direct business emissions by 2035. We established our approach to reducing our environmental impacts and working towards net zero in 2020. We scoped out and measured the baseline position for the organisation in 2019/20 and set our goal to reach net zero on our direct business emissions by 2035.

Taking control

Our Take Control campaign sets out how colleagues, customers and partners can play their part in helping us achieve our goals and become a much greener organisation.

Take Control



PV power generation

In 2023/24, the solar PV systems across our properties generated 969 megawatts, preventing the emission of 20,060 tCO₂e into the atmosphere. We also added a large new PV array on our offices at Hudson Quay, directly reducing the energy use for that building. The development of our approach to reducing our environmental impacts and carbon footprint will set the direction for further energy efficiency measures.



Theme 1: Climate change

Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions explained

We measure and report emissions annually in line with our Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR). We do so on a voluntary basis as it provides us with a robust and recognised approach which gives us a clear picture of how we are performing and the impacts being delivered.

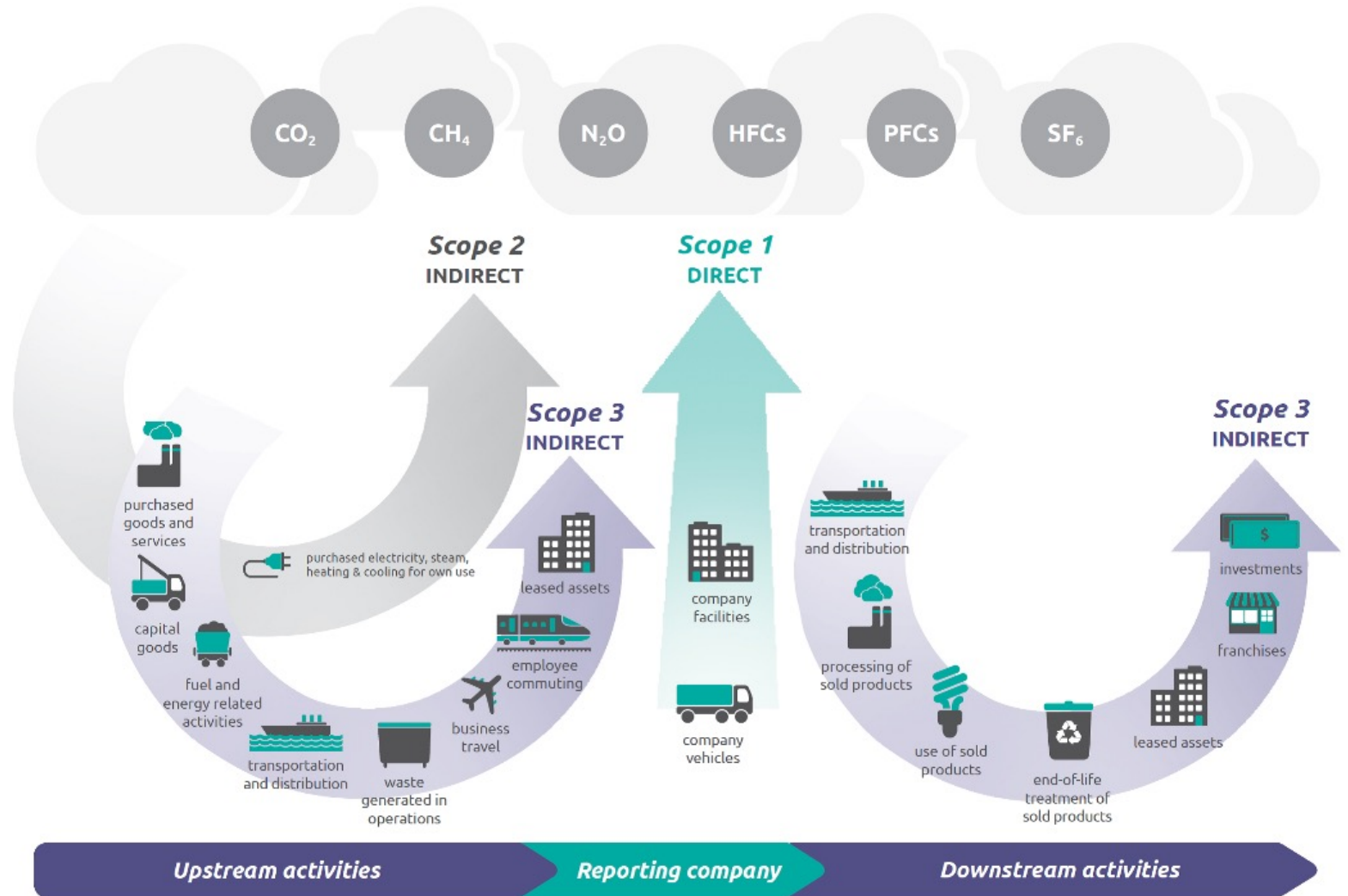
Measuring our emissions

We use the tCO₂e measure – tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent – to calculate and express greenhouse gas emissions. We also use the intensity ratio of tonnes of CO₂ equivalent over £Million Turnover (tCO₂e/£MT) to track emissions against the growth of the business.

In 2023/24, we emitted 4,202 tCO₂e Scope 1 or 2 emissions, with an intensity indicator of 20.395 tCO₂e/£MT. Adding Scope 3 emissions brings the total to 6,103 tCO₂e with an intensity indicator of 29.623 tCO₂e/£MT.

These measurements are detailed in **Table 3** and **Table 3a**.

Between 2019/20 and 2023/24 our Scope 1 and 2 emissions have fallen by 17.3%. When we factor in the Scope 3 emissions this results in an overall 18.3% reduction in emissions.



Scope 1 emissions = direct emissions from sources we own or control

Scope 2 emissions = indirect emissions from purchased energy

Scope 3 emissions = all other indirect emissions that occur at sources we neither own nor control

Theme 1: Climate change

Managing environmental risks

Climate change exposes housing stocks to increased risk of flooding, overheating and subsidence. By evaluating these risks to our properties, we can be proactive in safeguarding our customers from the full impact of climate change and make stable, long-term plans to protect the sustainability of our assets.

As part of our high-level strategic risk management, we're developing a climate change risk and adaptation plan. As this work progresses, we will map the results in our environmental management system and risk management framework developed in line with our Asset Management Strategy and future investment plans.

Flooding

We have used extensive data mapping to build an understanding of flood risk to our properties. We also understand how this may be affected by climate change, which will bring more extreme weather patterns and increase the extent and severity of flooding across our operating areas.

We are investing in measures to minimise the impact on our homes, customers, and communities. All of our properties are assigned a flood risk score, which reflects a combination of the likelihood, severity, and frequency of flooding. A future flood risk score is also calculated under low, medium, and high emissions scenarios across set periods of time.

By mapping the locations of these properties, we can target preventative measures in areas with a higher flood risk, while maintaining awareness of areas that may be susceptible to flooding in future. This insight also informs our long-term planning to mitigate flood risk, protect properties and safeguard our customers.

Overheating

Overheating is an emerging risk associated with climate change. Increased internal temperatures can negatively affect the

structure and technical performance of our properties and make it difficult for our customers to get a good night's sleep, which impacts on their health and productivity.

We're developing an internal scoring system to identify properties where there is an elevated risk of overheating. The system, which highlights customer qualities, geographical and site characteristics, and dwelling designs, will help us target retrofit measures to minimise that risk.



Theme 1: Climate change

Subsidence

Subsidence is one of the most prolific hazards to housing stock across the country, costing an estimated £500million a year. It damages homes, foundations and structures, devalues properties, increases insurance premiums, and can impact the long-term sustainability of our assets.

While acknowledging the links between subsidence, flooding and overheating, we're also investigating:

- underlying geology – to identify clay soils where shrink and heave are more extreme
- historic mining areas – where instabilities may exist from former works
- tree location and impacts – understanding the effects of/ relationships with trees

We have conducted some exciting research, which has enabled us to map a subsidence risk zone around trees, specific to species, to identify properties within these zones where root growth may undermine foundations and slabs. This information can also help us plan future tree planting in a way that avoids creating these risks.



Theme 2: Ecology

This theme assesses how we protect the local environment and ecology. The theme is made up of two criteria around managing pollutants and increasing biodiversity.

We aim to provide beautiful green spaces for our residents to enjoy, as well as creating healthy habitats that can support wildlife, sequester carbon dioxide and create a healthier atmosphere for everyone.

Our trees

We care for **14,247** trees, over **2,000** of which we have planted in the past four years. Collectively, these trees absorb a total of **940** tonnes of carbon per year.

In a pioneering move for a housing association, we've developed a tree database to help us make better informed decisions about how we care for and plant our trees. That has seen us record information about their dimensions (height, diameter, and canopy size), as well as their native status, any diseases they may be prone to, and their average carbon sequestration rates at each stage of growth. This information will enable us to strategically reforest our areas in a way that maximises carbon uptake, reduces subsidence and flood risk, and creates healthy habitats. This also enables us to put a carbon value on our land, giving the environment a stronger voice than ever in development decisions.



Theme 2: Ecology

Biodiversity Audits

We're leading projects that are having a positive impact on biodiversity through teams of volunteers – champions, customers and colleagues – working together to protect their local environment.

In Middlesbrough, we've left the grass to grow on selected sites within our back lands, while planting trees and wildflowers to open up a whole new habitat. Biodiversity audits have identified an increase in species and numbers of butterflies, moths and insects that rely on long grasses to survive.

We will be looking at the types of plants within the grasses including stinging nettles, which butterflies thrive on. We're seeing bees and insects buzzing from one flower to the next, collecting pollen. An increased number of insects means an increased food source for birds and bats too

Increased bird calls can be heard and there are sightings of blackbirds, thrushes, tree sparrows, blue tits and goldfinches flittering through the hedge lines, accompanied by robins and dunnocks.

The newly planted trees are doing very well, with some of the faster growing ash reaching a few feet already. The grass around them has been left long – this encourages the trees to grow and also protects them from harm during their first year on site. Those long grasses will die back in the winter, giving us the opportunity to carry out a thorough inspection of the trees while we can see them more clearly.



Theme 2: Ecology

Environmental management system

We have implemented an environmental management system to mitigate environmental risk within every area of business activity. The system begins with our environmental policy, which sets out how we will address risk through our environmental manual. It identifies risk within our risk register and sets out operational controls and assurance processes.

The system also ensures that we are legally compliant with environmental legislation. We are always looking to improve it and reduce our negative impact on the environment wherever possible. Thirteen is now the greenest it has ever been, and we will continue to strive for improvement year on year.

We are proud to say that this system has been externally audited and certified to ISO 14001:2015 standard.

“ This achievement is fantastic and testament to our commitment to making a positive impact on the environment. This is about continual improvement, and we'll be working together to get better year on year. ”

Matt Forrest,
CEO of Thirteen Housing Group

Take Control training and environmental champions

More than 800 members of staff have received environmental training to help us reduce our impact on the planet. All have set themselves individual eco goals. Uptake in the past year has been higher than the previous three years combined, demonstrating increased commitment from the business.

As a result of this training, 62 people have moved on to become environmental champions, acting as our spokespeople for the environment, pushing eco-friendly initiatives and sharing knowledge and tips with colleagues to help us on our way to net zero.

Initiatives piloted by the group include the adoption of new, larger capacity recycling bins and use of informative signage to reduce ambiguity in waste disposal systems across all of our commercial properties. Group members have also participated in consultations relating to Middlesbrough Council's transport networks and Thirteen's green transport incentives. They are currently advocating for improved access to volunteering opportunities.

Great Big Green Week

As part of nationwide Great Big Green Week, 14 of our staff, customers and volunteers joined our environmental specialist, John Woods, for a beekeeper experience day. The group enjoyed an introductory lecture, where they learnt about bee biology, behaviour and the basics of bee keeping before getting suited up in the necessary protective equipment and meeting Thirteen's very own bees.

In Hudson Quay, office staff took part in both book and plant swaps. Over 70 items were exchanged, and all surplus donations were passed on to local charities within the Middlesbrough and Stockton communities.

Managing and reducing pollutants

Our environmental management system identifies where environmental risk sits within our activity and how that risk can be mitigated. This includes the risk of polluting the natural environment we work in. The system is audited annually to ensure continual improvement is evidenced and that we continue to reduce the risk of any contaminants escaping our control.



Theme 3: Resource management

This theme identifies the extent to which we have a sustainable approach to materials in the construction and management of properties. The theme is made up of three criteria that cover sourcing materials, water management and waste management.



Our strategy for responsibly sourced materials

By working more closely with partners and using greater interrogation, we now have a deeper understanding of the environmental credentials of our materials suppliers and the sustainability of the materials themselves.

As part of our review of our Environmental Strategy, we will also be looking at how we expect our suppliers and partners to help to increase the use of responsibly sourced materials. At present, environmental considerations and carbon reduction will be a factor in most, if not all, contracts. It is expected that in the majority of cases, there will be an environmental element to the tender.

Examples include:

- contracts which have a direct impact on the environment
- contracts which require the use of buildings by staff engaged in the delivery of the contract
- contracts which require the transportation of goods or people
- contracts which require the use of natural resources

We will be updating all of our documentation ready for the Procurement Act 2023 go live in February 2025 and it is expected that our revised Environmental Strategy will be completed by March 2025.

Theme 3: Resource management

Our strategy for waste management

Our state-of-the-art environmental centre in Billingham gives us control over how we manage and process our waste. The centre is unique in the region and the housing sector.

Since opening the centre in 2020, we have gained control over the waste generated in day-to-day housing management. Waste generated through planned maintenance work, repairs, environmental improvements, and getting homes ready for the next customer is all now redirected through the centre. This has significantly reduced the amount of waste going to landfill. In the first year of operations, 99% of all waste was diverted from landfill, which exceeded our original goal. Further work is now ongoing to maximise waste reduction, reuse and recycling.

We are developing our environmental management system to provide a clear reporting mechanism for our performance on waste, providing assurance via the Aspects, Legal and Risk Register that all legal and waste management controls are in place.

The Tees Valley and the wider North East region have a well-established, high-quality waste management industry. We have made a conscious decision to partner with the industry where possible to ensure our waste is managed locally and to support the development of a circular economy. We successfully recycled over 30 tonnes of UPVC window frames from our investment works in 2023/24. These were broken down, reprocessed, and the UPVC waste was reused to manufacture new window frames.

Materials ranging from wood and mattresses to flo tubes and plate glass are recycled. A full list is shown in **Table 4**.



Theme 3: Resource management

Our upcycling and re-use project

We launched our furniture upcycling workshop and warehouse project at the Thirteen Recycling Centre in February 2022. This scheme has two huge benefits. It helps customers facing severe financial challenges to furnish their homes with clean, restored, attractive furniture. It also prevents hundreds of tonnes of unwanted furniture going to landfill.

The UK currently discards around 1.6 million tonnes of furniture and bulky waste, most of which goes to landfill. People often leave items behind in our empty properties when they move on, and some of it is ideal for recycling.

It is estimated that 400,000 children in the UK do not have their own beds, and beds and wardrobes are the most requested items. The upcycling team is creating 'starter packs' for customers, providing essential items to support those who need them and help get their tenancies started comfortably from day one.



We provide beds, cooking equipment, sofas, chairs, dressers, and things that may be considered non-essential, like mirrors, soft furnishings and pictures – things that make a house a home. This project will support our customers and has the added benefit of reducing our waste in landfills.

In 2023/24, we supported 110 customers and their families with upcycled furniture.

Water management

We are working to improve our understanding of the quality and availability of this data to develop our approach to water management. We will measure and report on the environmental impacts of our water management as part of our environmental management system. This will allow us to target improvement and report on performance against our targets.

Targets for our Thirteen Recycling Centre (TRC):

- **Achieve a 95% diversion of waste to landfill** – currently the TRC diverts an average of 97.3% of waste from landfill, hitting our targets month on month, which is ahead of the target initially set for 2025
- **Achieve greater efficiencies and environmental performance through improved separation and reclamation of waste materials** – the TRC has increased recycling rates from 18% (external provider) to an average of 40%, and re-use to around 2%
- **Reclaim and upcycle furniture and household items from our empty homes and provide them to our most vulnerable customers to sustain tenancies** – more than 100 tonnes of furniture items have been reclaimed and upcycled to provide 'furniture packs' to over 230 customers and their families, with an associated social value of £1,488,560 and savings of up to £30,000 in waste disposal costs
- **Increase the awareness of waste and environment throughout the business and our communities** – the team has developed the site as an environmental education resource and delivered educational sessions to around 200 adults and children from schools, colleges, and community groups

Social



We are a caring landlord and housing developer. We're here for anyone who needs a home and maybe a little help to get it. We're about investing in neighbourhoods and communities across the Tees Valley, North East, Yorkshire and Humber regions.

In this chapter

- Theme 4: Affordability and security
- Theme 5: Building safety and quality
- Theme 6: Resident voice
- Theme 7: Resident support
- Theme 8: Placemaking

Theme 4: Affordability and security

This theme seeks to assess the extent to which we provide long-term homes that are genuinely affordable to those on low incomes. The theme comprises five criteria, including the tenure mix of new and existing properties, the security of tenure, and fuel poverty.



Providing affordable housing is a core purpose of regulated housing providers. They exist to help provide safe, high-quality homes to people who cannot afford to rent or buy in the open market. Standardised measures to demonstrate affordability are difficult to define and vary depending on local market housing costs.

The Sustainability Reporting Framework (SRF) suggests two metrics – rent levels compared to private market rents, or compared to Local Housing Allowance (LHA). In the first two SRF reports, we compared rents against the private rented sector due to the difficulties in calculating the LHA across a broad geographical area.

It has now been possible to compare against LHA rates. LHA rates are used to calculate Housing Benefit for tenants renting from private landlords. They are decided by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and are based on private market rents being

paid by tenants in a Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA). This is the area within which a person might reasonably be expected to live.

Our rents are lower than the LHA. Thirteen customers living in general needs and housing for older people accommodation pay approximately £3.8million per week (social and affordable rents). If they were paying LHA rent levels then this figure would be approximately £4.1million. Thirteen rents are around 93% of the LHA.

As people move through life, they want more choices, so as well as homes for rent, we provide homes for shared ownership. Shared ownership is another way to buy a home. The customer buys a percentage and pays rent on the rest. Buying a percentage means a smaller deposit and a smaller mortgage. It's a quicker and less daunting first step on the ladder for many people, and customers can carry on buying shares until they own their home outright.

Theme 4: Affordability and security

Our homes

We own and manage over 36,000 homes and 96% are provided at social rent or affordable rent. **Table 5** provides a detailed breakdown of our homes by tenure type.

We place enormous importance on building new homes. If we don't build, we don't grow and, in the long run, we lose our reason for being. As part of our strategic plan, we intend to invest in new builds, including for affordable rent and low-cost home ownership, to ensure that we have the right mix and quality of homes to meet the expectations of our tenants now and in the future.

In 2023/24 we invested over £133million in building 543 properties (2022/23: £72.2million and 455) all of them for either social rent, affordable rent or low-cost home ownership. **Table 6** provides a detailed breakdown of our new homes by tenure type.

In terms of losses and gains our stock increased by 358 properties – total losses were 185 with gains of 543. **Table 7** provides a full breakdown.

We also recognise our wider impact. With a turnover of £207million the Gross Value Added (GVA) impact of our activities is £194million in the North East and £258million in the UK. By building 543 homes (social rent, affordable rent, and low-cost home ownership) we contributed £58million of GVA to the North East and £65million to the UK.

The Home Builders Federation estimates that in building 543 homes, we:

- supported the employment of **1,680** people
- provided **18** apprentices, graduates or trainees
- increased open space community sport and leisure spending by **£436,960** – which could provide 24 five-a-side football pitches
- generated **£436,960** towards education spending, which could provide 205 classroom spaces
- generated **£6,532,726** in tax revenue, including **£612,167** in council tax revenue



Theme 4: Affordability and security



How we reduce the effects of fuel poverty on our customers

We recognise the impact of fuel costs on our customers and are taking proactive steps to maximise the energy efficiency of our homes. We take a forward-thinking, whole property approach to retrofitting properties to increase their thermal efficiency as we work towards our sustainability goals. We have already completed small-scale pilots on individual properties. The learning from these initial pilot projects will be applied across the rest of our homes.

Our rolling investment programme helps reduce customers' energy bills and includes replacing windows, doors, roofs and heating systems. Wherever possible, we also upgrade loft insulation and cavity wall insulation. This year:

280 homes and cavity wall insulation	3,394 homes had their lofts insulated	5 homes had air source heat pumps installed
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In addition, we completed works at 1,306 properties in response to issues causing damp and mould and worked on decarbonisation initiatives in 58 properties.

Comparison with previous years is shown in **Table 8**.

Theme 4: Affordability and security

Security of tenure

Security of tenure, or how long someone stays in their home, is a key differentiator between social housing and the private rented sector. Evidence suggests this security makes a huge difference to people's lives and ability to find work, access informal and formal local support networks and services, and build family lives. Offering long-term tenancies to general needs residents where possible is considered good practice in the housing sector.

Because we want to provide a home for life, we only offer secure (or lifetime) tenancies for new customers moving into general needs accommodation. Before 2019 we offered fixed-term tenancies. We are working closely with those customers to extend their tenancy agreements into secure tenancies, provided they are happy with the change and do not have any issues that prevent this.

We have never made use of a Section 21 'no-fault eviction' to recover possession of a property.

We have around 1,000 assured shorthold tenancies (2022/23: 1,050) that are usually for a fixed term. This represents around 2.77% of our tenancies (2022/23: 3.80%). It should be noted that there are several reasons why a tenancy may be included in this category. For instance:

- properties designated for a particular specialist need (e.g. properties with floating support, move on temporary accommodation)
- privately-owned properties
- student accommodation
- properties used to assist the local authority with interim accommodation for homeless households

- customers living in a home where Thirteen is the leaseholder
- buildings where we are not the owner but leaseholder
- where the buildings use may have been repurposed

Table 9 provides a breakdown of the type of fixed term tenancies.



Theme 5: Building safety

This theme comprises three criteria, disclosing gas safety checks, fire risk assessments and meeting the Decent Homes Standard.

The safety and wellbeing of our customers are our absolute priority, and our ongoing commitment to building safety is rigorous and thorough. We take our regulatory obligations, compliance, and associated risk management seriously.



What percentage of our homes with gas appliances have an in-date, accredited gas safety check?

We have 100% gas appliance compliance. We have achieved this by using a live data dashboard which flags up anniversary dates for gas safety checks. This information is supplemented by a daily update from our gas manager showing a breakdown of:

- the total number of properties that have expired certification
- the number of no access properties that have been forwarded to our legal team
- the number of properties that could expire in the next 30 days

As a landlord we need to be sure that we have taken all reasonable steps to gain access to our properties to meet our legal obligations and responsibilities. The dashboard and associated actions have helped us to reach 100% compliance.

What percentage of buildings have an in-date and compliant Fire Risk Assessment (FRA)?

We have a carefully planned programme of fire risk assessment (FRA) inspections, with the frequency of inspections being determined by our higher-risk buildings (HRB) matrix. All inspections are completed within legislative timeframes and our standard inspection cycle is over and above the recommendations in the Local Government Association (LGA) guidance, meaning we are going above and beyond to ensure our buildings are kept as safe as possible.

Our approach is underpinned by a complex buildings risk matrix, which includes assessing customer vulnerabilities as well as the height and layout of our buildings.

As part of the Building Safety Act, we have implemented a programme to inspect fire doors annually and communal doors every quarter. These inspections help us identify any fire hazards and determine what improvements can be made, looking at multiple aspects of how the building is managed and maintained. Our building safety team works with colleagues across the business to reduce the likelihood of a fire occurring and to keep customers and homes safe.

Through our regular visits we quickly identify and record defects along with the actions or repairs undertaken to keep our customers safe. More importantly, we have ensured 99.70% of post inspections were also completed on time, ensuring that works have been carried out safely and efficiently. In 2023/24 over 650 Fire Risk Assessments were carried out. Further details are shown in **Table 10**.

We organise and promote a year-round programme of building safety events in high rise buildings to update customers on our building safety activities and answer any questions they may have. We publish our **calendar of building safety events** on our website and for full transparency, we also publish all of our **fire risk assessments**.

Theme 5: Building safety

Electrical safety

All domestic and commercial electrical installation condition (EICR) reports are 100% within the agreed 10-year target.

Legionella risk assessments

Although the risk is low for domestic properties and regular risk assessments are not required, we have committed to completing around 2,000 domestic legionella risk assessments each year.

Communal passenger lift safety

We have carried out Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) inspections of 100% of our communal passenger lifts to ensure their continued safety. The frequency of lifts being serviced is based on a survey of their condition.

What percentage of homes meet the Decent Homes Standard?

The Decent Homes Standard (DHS) is a government-agreed technical definition of the statutory minimum requirement for a home to be classed as 'decent'. We maintain an excellent record on Decent Homes compliance at 99.9%, with only 30 properties not meeting the standard in 2023/24. We have a plan to deal with these on an individual basis.

In 2023/24, we invested a record £109.2million in maintaining our existing homes. Examples of the work carried out are detailed in **Table 11**.

Our investment programme is set to improve the quality of thousands more homes in the coming year. We're continuing to invest because we know it's vital to our existing customers and our prospects of attracting the customers we want in the future.

Read our **Investment Plan 2023/24** on our website.



Theme 5: Building safety

Damp and mould

We take our responsibility to help customers with damp or mould very seriously and have produced information to help them understand why it happens, how they can prevent it, and how they can report any issues.

To ensure that we respond effectively to any reports we have:

- a dedicated Damp and Mould Team supported by a system that enables us to log and follow all appointments
- trained more colleagues, including technical officers and surveyors, to increase their knowledge of the problem and the solutions available
- put a new contractor framework in place to help us to respond to the works that are needed
- agreed new timescales, including a matrix to help diagnose issues accurately
- initiated monthly progress meetings with all contractors to ensure progress and quality monitoring
- ensured 'call backs' to customers are carried out after two months to ensure the issue is resolved
- maintained contact with customers through Voicescape, a system that texts customers awaiting works, to check how they are doing and to make sure they are around when we need access to the property
- carried out post inspections of the remedial work in 100% of cases



Theme 6: Resident voice

This theme is made up of three themes that cover board scrutiny, complaint handling and resident satisfaction.

We listen carefully to our customers because we need to know what's important to them and whether our services meet their expectations. We involve our customers in developing our services and welcome their ideas and views on where we can improve our performance. Our customers are at the heart of everything we do.



Our Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

Feedback from our customers is important to everyone at Thirteen. It's important that we gather their views so that we know what we're doing right, what we're getting wrong and where we can improve.

In April 2023 the Regulator of Social Housing introduced performance measures, known as Tenant Satisfaction Measures. These measures aim to hold housing providers to account for their actions and give customers greater visibility of their performance.

There are 22 measures in total and all social housing providers must report on them. The measures are split into two parts:

- **Customer perception survey measures** – these are collected through surveying customers directly and are detailed in **Table 12**.
- **Performance measures** – these are collected through management performance information and are detailed in **Table 13**.

Theme 6: Resident voice

What does involvement look like?

We are committed to consulting on policy and strategy development, ensuring compliance with the regulatory consumer standards, ahead of their introduction in April 2024 and involving customers in the scrutiny of our services and performance to hold us to account.

Our customer involvement framework, which we call BRICKS, provides a flexible, adaptable, value for money approach designed to support the delivery of our strategic plan and the objectives that sit within it.

BRICKS stands for build, review, interact, consult, knowledge and share. Our framework is based on the following principles:

- customer involvement is embedded in the organisation and integral to our culture and development
- customers are supported and trained to participate in activities based on their interests and skills
- customers are at the heart of our decision-making
- we provide a wide range of flexible opportunities for customers to be involved so that we can reach more customers and engage with hard-to-reach groups to influence and shape the services they receive
- involved customers are overseeing our community investment fund, supporting tenancy and community sustainability
- we maximise and report on the effectiveness of our customer involvement activities
- ensuring we meet regulatory requirements concerning customer involvement
- we develop and maintain a sense of ownership and responsibility with our customers, specifically for building safety and regulatory compliance

We have developed a database of customers who want to be involved; giving the time they can and in the area they choose. The projects are mapped out in a series of work streams, with a customer taking on the stream lead role, keeping projects on track. The work streams include:

- **Compliance with consumer standards** - reviewing the requirements of each of the standards and testing the organisation's compliance to provide assurance to the board.
- **Performance monitoring** - reviewing operational and financial performance, complaints and the customer involvement recommendations tracker.
- **Policy consultation** - all policies are developed in consultation with customers before being signed off by the board.
- **Strategic and service reviews** - getting involved in reviewing, developing and shaping services.
- **Building safety and property compliance** - involved customers living in high-rise or complex residential buildings will review recommendations and support the implementation of the building safety standards recommended by the building safety regulator, with the support of a stream lead.
- **Community Fund** - we have a Community Fund dedicated to supporting local initiatives and groups to add value to local areas.

We invite customers to open days twice a year to promote the work that our involved customers have been doing and encourage more people to share their views with us. Our involved customers play a big role in organising the open days in our communities across the North East and Yorkshire.

The customer voice is very much heard and well received by the Thirteen board - stream leads provide video updates on their activities and impacts, in-person presentations of their consumer standards and performance stream reports, and the chair of the involvement framework attends every board meeting and takes an active part in discussions.

To ensure customers know about discussions happening at the board, a member provides video feedback after each meeting, which is then cascaded to involved customers and uploaded to the website and social media for customer comments and queries.



Theme 6: Resident voice

In 2023/24 the involved customers:

- gave assurance to Customer Committee and board that we are compliant with the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard, Home Standard, Neighbourhood and Community Standard, and Tenancy Standard
- helped to shape and create the **Customer Annual Report**
- sat on interview panels for customer facing staff including the chief information officer and housing services coordinators
- picked the winner of the Good Neighbour of the Year award
- helped our estate services team in setting key performance indicators for service standards to ensure our neighbourhoods are kept clean and tidy
- provided recommendations on how customers should be notified of their annual rent increase
- held open days to promote the work involved customers have done and to allow customers the opportunity to speak to colleagues
- reviewed performance and complaints data and made recommendations to improve services

Thirteen Community Fund

We offer grants of up to £600 from our Community Fund to support groups and partner agencies that positively contribute to wellbeing and sustainability in our neighbourhoods.

We encourage applications from groups and organisations working in our communities, including community groups, local and national charities, residents' associations, voluntary organisations, public sector bodies, local authorities and our own service teams.

During 2023/24, we received 94 applications, 92 of which were approved by customers, with 89 different groups benefiting from funding totalling £46,961.39. Working with these grants, community groups were able to obtain match funding totalling £277,030.



Theme 6: Resident voice

Complaints and how we deal with them

We pride ourselves on how we deal with complaints and believe the manner and timeliness with which we respond to and resolve customer complaints is an important indicator of the standard of service we provide.



We are proud to hold the Customer Services Excellence Award, and on several visits, the assessor has noted that:

“There is a very clear commitment to deal with problems fully. Staff have carried out customer journey mapping of their processes to ensure they are efficient, effective and speedy. There is an escalation process for informal complaints that cannot be resolved at the first point of contact. Staff responding to informal complaints work to the maxim of ‘own it and fix it.’”

“The speed of resolution shows that Thirteen takes complaints very seriously and recognises the value of speedy resolution. The very quick average resolution time merits Compliance Plus.”

In 2023/24 we received 1,634 Stage 1 complaints (2022/23: 986). This is 43.4 per thousand homes. We responded to and resolved 92% of these within our target of five working days (2022/23: 94%). In 2023/24 we received 160 Stage 2 complaints (2022/23: 54).

Our customer feedback log captures all learning from complaints and is used to improve our services.

As is standard across the housing sector, if we cannot resolve a complaint to the customer’s satisfaction, they have the option to refer it to the Housing Ombudsman. In 2023/24, five complaints were classed as maladministration by the Ombudsman, which highlighted record keeping as the main reason for the findings. In response to this we have launched a campaign to ensure all staff are capturing notes via our customer relations management (CRM) system.

Theme 7: Resident support



This theme assesses the effectiveness of our initiatives to support individual residents. The theme comprises two criteria covering what support is provided and how successful it is.

We go beyond bricks and mortar to develop targeted help and support. Our ever-growing range of services includes support to get into work or training, help for young people leaving care and homeless support.

Here's a summary of our services (**Table 14** provides more detail on the impact our services have):

1. Support for young people

We help young people – including care leavers and those at risk of being homeless – to live independently. We work closely with them to develop a personal support plan, which can include help with budgeting, managing money and accessing training and employment. We also provide support relating to mental and sexual health, addiction and diet issues.

2. Support for families

We work with families as part of national schemes, including troubled families and family intervention projects. Each family receives tailored support to meet its needs. With our help, families can get back on the right path. We also support young parents.

3. Support for ex-offenders

We work with partners in the criminal justice system, including the police, prisons, the National Probation Service, community rehabilitation organisations and offender management services. We work with ex-offenders to offer a range of support, including accommodation and help for people in crisis.



Theme 7: Resident support

4. Support for customers

We offer tailored support to customers whose tenancy could otherwise be at risk. We work closely with them for three to six months to ensure they get the help they need to stay at home. As part of the package, we also refer customers to longer-term services to give them the support they need in future.

5. Domestic abuse support

We know that domestic abuse can happen to anyone. We support people in their homes or our specialist accommodation, offering tailor-made programmes that recognise and respond to the unique needs of people who have experienced domestic violence.

6. Support for vulnerable and older people

We offer specialist support to help older, disabled and more vulnerable people to live independently for longer, with a helping hand if it's needed. Whatever their circumstances, we have a range of affordable housing options including extra care schemes, sheltered housing and housing to cater for complex needs.

7. Support for refugees

Our Resettlement Service supports vulnerable refugees to settle in the Redcar and Cleveland area. We provide a range of support for families or individuals arriving in the country under the UK Resettlement Scheme to help them integrate into the UK and live independently here.

8. Employment support

We offer a range of employability services for our customers and the wider public across the Tees Valley. We're here to help them achieve their career goals and hit personal targets. Our employability service supports people who are not in employment, education or training, as well as anyone looking to change career or find a new job.



Theme 7: Resident support

How do we measure success?

Last financial year, we reviewed how we deliver our support services, including looking at how we measure the success of the services we offer.

We have historically focused on measuring our outputs. Although this is useful, it only tells us part of the story so we're working to better understand the difference we are making by digging deeper into the stories our customers tell us.

We are getting better at putting a value on the difference we are making i.e. quantifying social value within the activities we deliver directly, such as our care and support service and the benefits expected within our procurement framework.

For example, by helping 303 people into employment, 42 people into volunteering in the community, and supporting a further 1,159 residents, our employability services have created £5.5million in social value.



Theme 8: Placemaking

This theme highlights the wider set of activities we undertake to create well-designed homes and places that meet local needs and provide great places for people to live and enjoy. The theme is made up of one criterion – a space for the housing provider to give examples of its placemaking or place-shaping work.



We aim to create engaged, thriving, empowered places where people want to live. More than just designing spaces, placemaking brings together diverse people to improve a community's cultural, economic, social and ecological situation.

Our ambition is outlined in our **Community Resilience Strategy 2022-27**. This is our five-year commitment to demonstrate how we engage, support and collaborate with others. The strategy sets out a path to help us create quality places and sustainable communities in which our customers are proud to live. The approach is underpinned by six key principles:

- our work will be targeted and evidence-based
- interventions will be sustainable and community-led
- we'll work in partnership to address community needs
- we'll address inequalities through our projects
- interventions will help people to live and age well
- we'll embrace our role as an anchor institution

Locality planning

Underpinned by the Community Resilience Strategy, locality planning is our new approach to delivering social regeneration alongside our major development and investment programmes.

We create sustainable communities by ensuring our customers and the wider community are at the heart of everything we do. We are targeting six key areas and have brought together colleagues, partners and customers to develop a shared vision and five-year delivery plan for each area.

This work is guided by a toolkit that includes:

- estate ranking – giving us our areas of focus
- community resilience map – assets, issues and opportunities
- community intervention tracker – holistic view of the challenges that our communities face
- community consultation in each locality plan area – find out what our communities think

Theme 8: Placemaking

This has helped us to identify our six locality areas:

Grove Hill
Middlesbrough

Pallister Park
Middlesbrough

Gresham
Middlesbrough

Dyke House
Hartlepool

Primrose Hill
Stockton

Owton Manor
Hartlepool

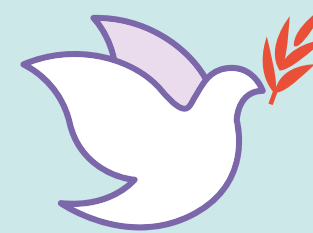
Robust consultation across all six areas has been carried out. Each community has told us what they value about where they live and what social, environmental and economic improvements they would like to see.

Each plan is being delivered alongside colleagues from across the organisation and through a locality community forum with representation from people who live, work or are interested in the area.

You can see the progress we have made on our website in our **Quality places, thriving neighbourhoods – Year 2 delivery and outcomes 2023/2024** report.



Governance



Thirteen is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. We are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing, ensuring we meet the standards they set to protect the interests of our customers.

In this chapter

- Theme 9: Structure and governance
- Theme 10: Board and trustees
- Theme 11: Staff wellbeing
- Theme 12: Supply chain management

Theme 9: Structure and governance

This theme assesses our overall structure and approach to governance. The theme comprises six criteria covering the regulator, code of governance, risk management and ownership.

We are a community benefit society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority and under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act. Thirteen Housing Group is the parent organisation and landlord of the group and owns all the group's assets.

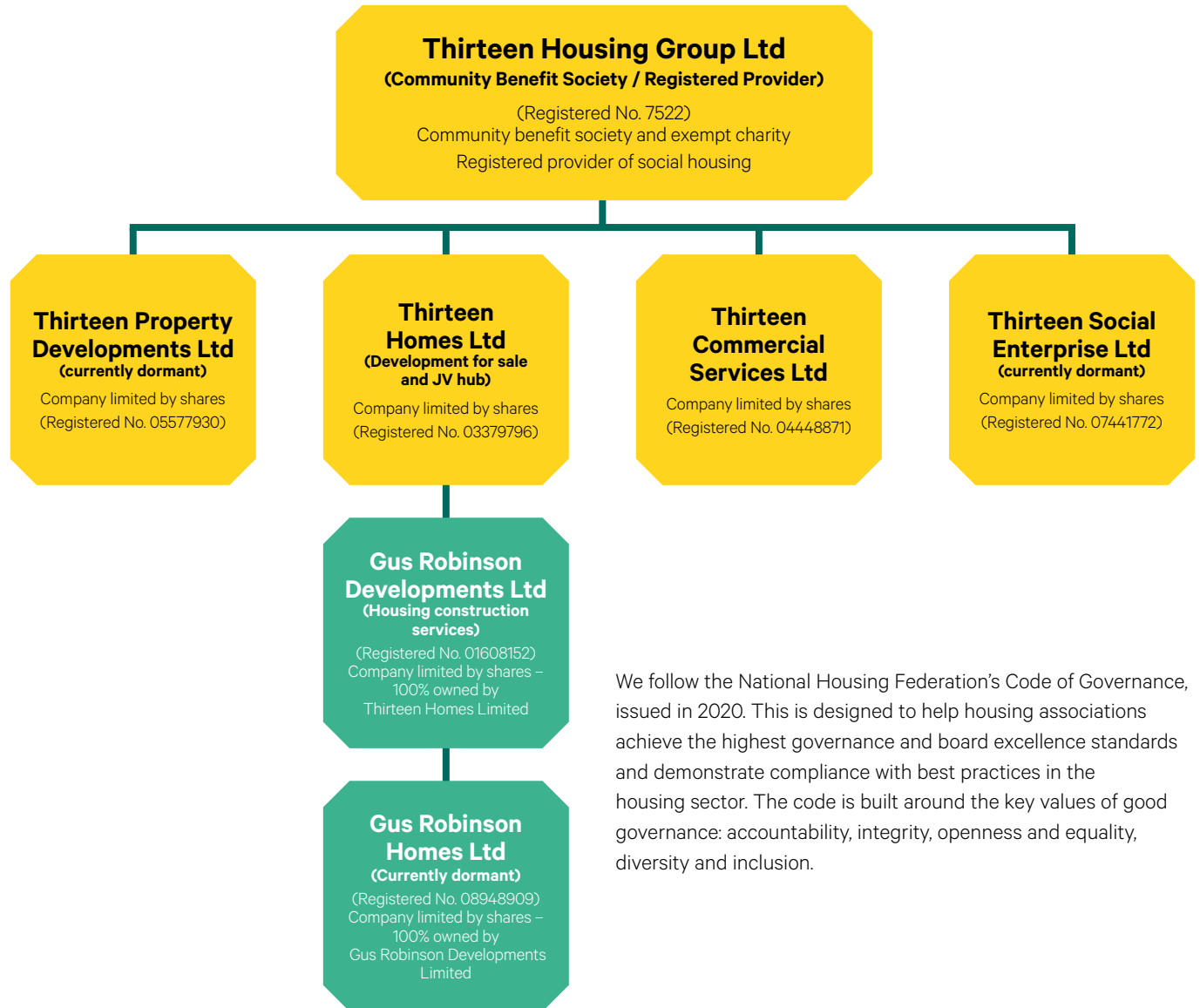
Our principal activities are:

- the management of social housing
- developing affordable homes
- housing-related support and employability services

We have the highest achievable regulatory rating for governance and viability. In January 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing confirmed that the governance and financial viability grades and straplines for Thirteen are:

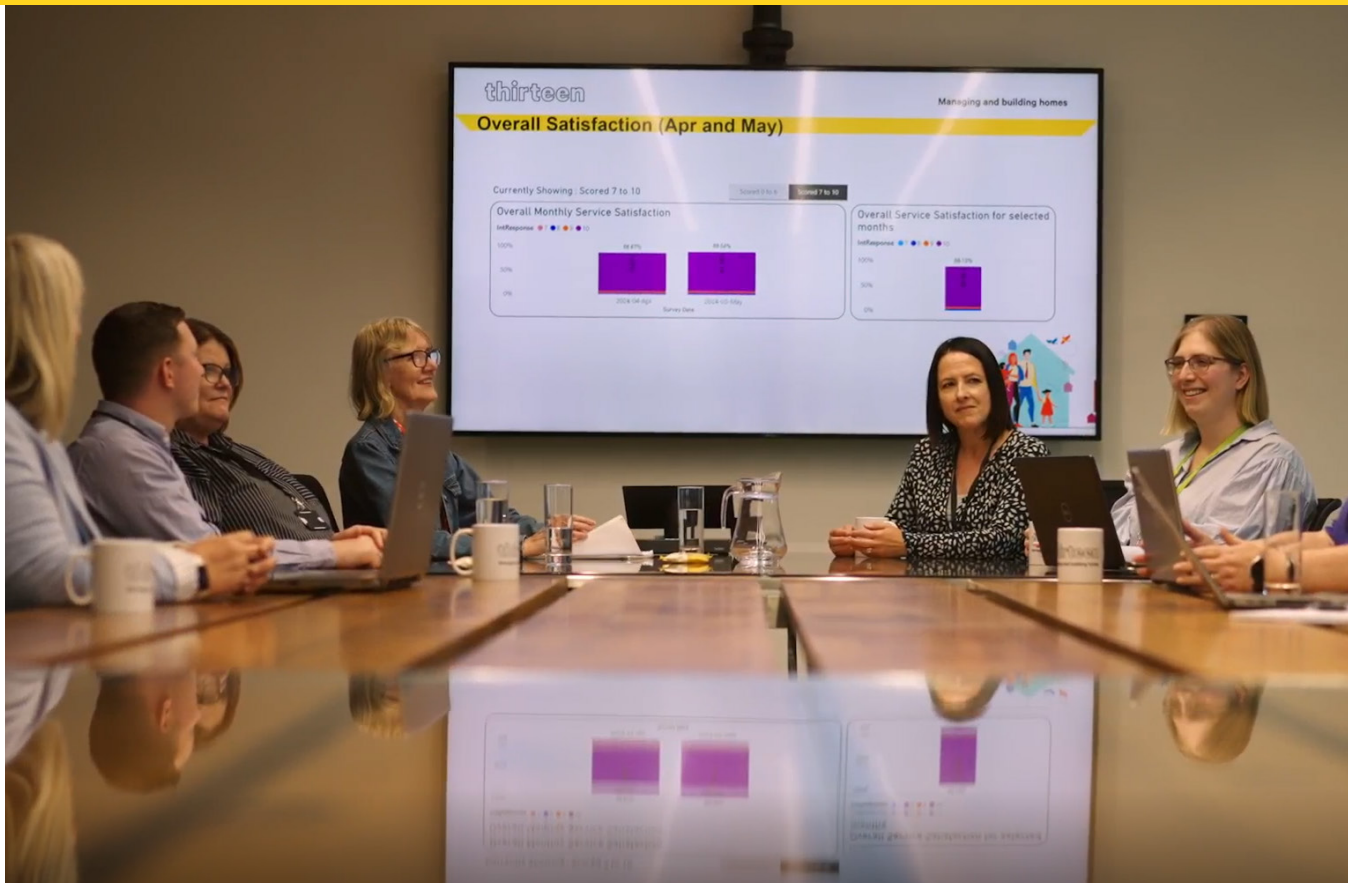
- G1 - the provider meets our governance requirements.
- V1 - the provider meets our viability requirements and has the financial capacity to deal with a wide range of adverse scenarios.

Group structure¹



We follow the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance, issued in 2020. This is designed to help housing associations achieve the highest governance and board excellence standards and demonstrate compliance with best practices in the housing sector. The code is built around the key values of good governance: accountability, integrity, openness and equality, diversity and inclusion.

Theme 9: Structure and governance



Our strategic assurance framework consolidates our approach to assurance. It identifies the critical components of an effective assurance framework, including risk management, stress testing, internal controls, business continuity, internal audit, insurance and governance.

The framework enables our board and committee members, as well as our leadership team and service directors, to better understand, manage and review assurance arrangements. It ensures that the outcomes of our assurance activity are used to inform strategic decisions and protect and improve the business.

Regarding strategic risk management, the board agrees on a set of strategic risks at least once a year, considering any risks that could result in us being unable to deliver our strategic ambitions or deliver its core business.

The Thirteen board reviews the status of these risks each time it meets. It consciously seeks assurance to understand the wider strategic impacts, inform decision-making, demonstrate effective governance and maintain our reputation.

The board ensures appropriate and effective assurance and risk management arrangements are in place.

The board has delegated authority to the Audit and Risk Committee to scrutinise risk controls and mitigating actions. We operate a 'three lines of defence' approach to assurance, which incorporates:

- management controls and oversight
- assurance and performance reporting, independently scrutinised by an appropriate body, board or committee
- external, independent assessments, including internal and external audit and consultant reports where appropriate

Risk management is embedded across all projects and functions. We have a set of key risk indicators and financial golden rules to act as early warning indicators, triggering an appropriate response.

Thirteen has not been subject to any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months that resulted in enforcement or other equivalent action (this would include data protection breaches, bribery, money laundering, HSE breaches or notices).

ESG is managed through the three specific themes:

- **Environmental** – through our Environmental Strategy and ISO 14001
- **Social** – as a housing provider our business strategy is centred on our social purpose and we work within the regulatory framework and the consumer standards
- **Governance** – through the Board Framework and People Strategy

This ensures that ESG risks are incorporated into our overall risk register and overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee.

Theme 10: Board and trustees

This theme assesses the board and trustees' quality, suitability and performance. The theme is made up of 11 criteria, including the board's demographics, experience and independence.

We have developed our governance and customer involvement frameworks to ensure a diverse range of people have input into our governance processes. This ensures that we consider resident voice at board and senior management level.

Board and trustees

The group is governed by a board of 11 non-executive directors and one executive director (the chief executive), supported by one subsidiary board (Thirteen Homes) and five committees – Customer, Remuneration, Audit and Risk, Finance, Development and Investment – with day-to-day management delegated to the executive team.

The chairs of each of the five committees hold positions as non-executive directors on the Thirteen board, with six independent non-executive directors, including the chair of Thirteen.

Non-executive board directors are appointed for a fixed term of three years, subject to a satisfactory annual performance review unless the board determines a different fixed period before the appointment. Non-executive board directors appointed under this article retire at the end of their fixed term but may be reappointed by the board up to a maximum term of nine years in exceptional circumstances. Terms of office can be extended where the board agrees that circumstances exist where it would be in the best interests of Thirteen for a board member to serve for a longer period. Examples include skills gaps as a result of a board member leaving or an inability to recruit relevant skills.

Two people hold the roles of the chair of the board and the chief executive.

The average length of the board members' service is 3.4 years and for the two-year period 2022 to 2024, turnover was 25% with three board members leaving at the end of their term of office. During the same period two of the seven members of the executive management team left.

The Audit and Risk Committee assures the board that we comply with our statutory duties. One of the board members on the Audit and Risk Committee has recent and relevant financial experience. Further information can be found on the **Committee Members page** of our website.

There are no current executives on the remuneration committee.

All board directors have been appointed with the support of an external consultant to achieve a complementary blend of skills and experience to ensure that the board possesses the necessary competencies to carry out its duties. This is supported by a board succession and performance review programme, as well as board induction, development and training. Details of this were last reported to the board in July 2024.

KPMG was appointed as Thirteen Group auditor in 2021 following a competitive tender exercise. We carry out internal board reviews annually and conduct independent reviews every three years.

The process for handling conflicts of interest is detailed within the Transparency Policy and Code of Conduct for board members. All board members must complete a declaration of interest form and update it annually or whenever their circumstances change.

Declarations of interest are requested at the start of each meeting. Members are required to declare any conflicts relating to matters to be discussed. They are also expected to declare throughout the meeting should a matter of conflict arise. The nature of the conflict will determine whether they can still participate in discussions or need to be excluded from the further discussions or the meeting.

Our Register of Board and Committee Member Interests is published on the **Board directors page** of our website.

Theme 10: Board and trustees

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

The board is committed to improving its diversity profile, focusing initially on women, young people and people from minority ethnic communities. At the end of the reporting period (31st March 2024) there were three female members and the average age of the board members was 53. Other key facts:

- 64% of the board is male, compared with 49% of the operating population
- 90% of members are aged 45 - 65+, compared with 43% of the operating population
- No members report having a disability, compared with 22% of operating population
- 100% of members are heterosexual, compared with 97% of the operating population
- 91% of board members are white, which is representative of the operating population, which is 94.33%
- 55% of members are Christian, compared with 67% of the operating population

Board succession planning considers the diversity of the board, and recruitment is focused on areas of under representation including diversity characteristics and skills.

As part of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework the board has accepted the National Housing Federation's 'Chairs Challenge' that sets a number of objectives including:

- understanding the current make-up of Thirteen's workforce, including all staff executives and board members, and to measure future success

- running a workshop with the board to co-create a vision
- prioritising diversity in succession planning
- applying the inclusive recruitment toolkit
- considering an associate board member programme
- holding the chair to account via annual appraisals of progress in creating a culture of inclusion and encouraging a more diverse and equal board
- monitoring progress through annual reporting and utilising the NHF EDI data tool to assess how representative our board is of the communities where we have homes

The Customer Committee

The Customer Committee was launched in 2022. It brings together a group of customers and to have a bigger say in how we deliver services at Thirteen.

Our customer committee includes five of our customers, as well as a board member and a member of Thirteen's Audit and Risk Committee. As part of their role, the committee looks at recent feedback and performance information collated by our involved customers to give their perspective on the services and business decisions that impact customers. The committee also reviews reports from our involved customers so they can give feedback to the Thirteen board about the standards that housing associations need to meet.



Theme 10: Board and trustees

The Thirteen Customer Involvement Framework

Our Customer Involvement Framework sets out how we consult customers about our services and how they hold us to account. The customers involved ensure that our consultation and scrutiny activities encompass the views of a diverse range of people.

Customers who lead on scrutiny attend the Customer Committee to report their findings. This includes making recommendations for service improvements, scrutinising complaints and reporting on consumer standards to either confirm our compliance or make recommendations about mitigating actions we can implement.

Reports to leadership team and board detail the customer involvement and consultation that has taken place and confirmation that equality, diversity and inclusion assessments have been completed, identifying any barriers to access and mitigating actions taken.



Theme 11: Staff wellbeing

This theme assesses how colleagues are supported and how their wellbeing is considered by Thirteen. The theme is made up of five criteria, including salary information, additional support for colleagues and the average number of sick days.

We want all our colleagues to feel part of Team Thirteen and have great days at work. Our colleague promise pledge is: "Be the best you can be at Thirteen, and we'll do our best to create great days at work, working with you to create an experience that helps you feel proud, valued, energised and challenged as well as connected and informed."

We are committed to ensuring all our colleagues are fairly rewarded for their work. In developing our pay offer, we benchmark our salaries against other housing providers and major local and national employers, considering pay trends to ensure we can attract and retain the best talent in our business.

Living Wage and median gender pay gap

While we're not an accredited Living Wage Employer, we match the Living Wage Foundation (LWF) rate. In our last two pay settlements, we matched our entry-level salary point to the LWF rate, ensuring all our staff are fairly rewarded for their work.

The median full-time salary is **£31,579** a year in Middlesbrough. Thirteen's median salary is **£32,492**.

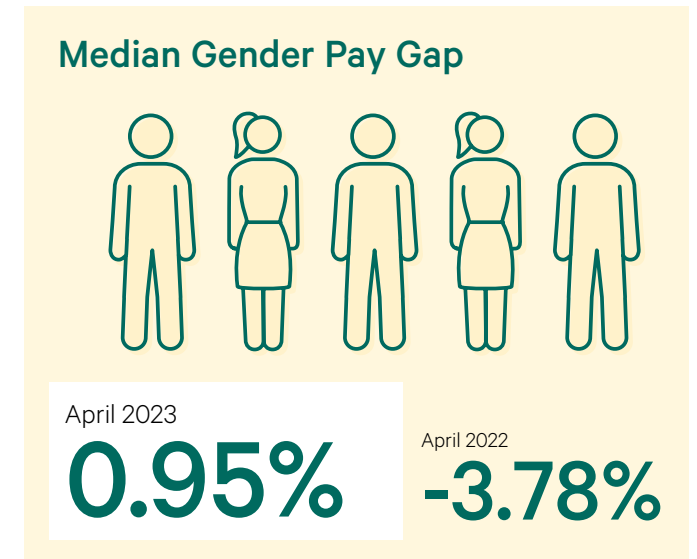
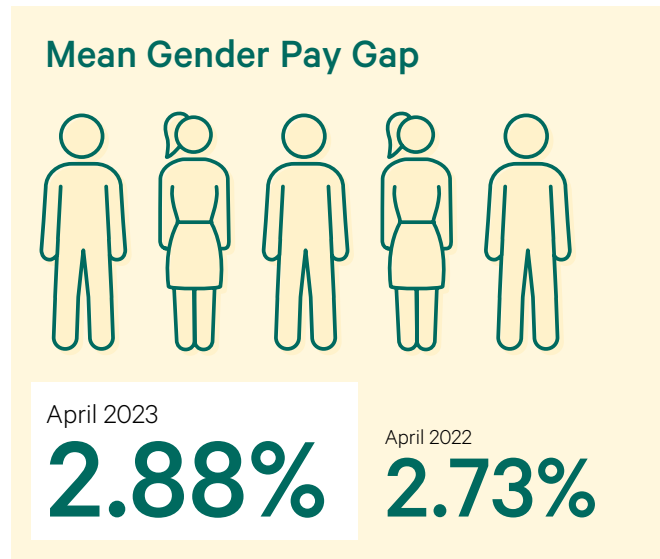
The gender pay gap shows the difference between male and female employees' mean and median earnings. This is represented as a percentage of male earnings.

Thirteen female colleagues earn 2.88% less than their male colleagues on average (mean). The midpoint (median) earnings of male and female colleagues differ by 0.95%, which indicates that

the median female salary in the organisation is slightly lower than that of the median male salary when expressed as a percentage of median male pay.

We publish our annual **Gender pay gap report** on our website.

The graphics below illustrate the breakdown of gender percentages by quartile pay band over the last two years. This shows the percentage of male and female colleagues at each pay quartile within the organisation.



Theme 11: Staff wellbeing

CEO salary

The CEO-worker pay ratio demonstrates a housing provider's pay dispersion between the CEO and the organisation's median earner. A recent Inbucon Executive Reward survey of 278 housing associations suggests the average pay ratio between CEO and employee is 3.97:1. At Thirteen it is 6.5:1.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

We have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and are committed to achieving equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and promoting an inclusive culture for everyone. This policy is supported by a framework and agreed objectives, delivered through a more detailed action plan. This policy is driven by our strong commitment to be a caring landlord and employer, with the ability to attract and retain a highly skilled and motivated workforce to join us on our journey as we invest and contribute to the regeneration of the neighbourhoods we serve.

Early in 2023 we revisited our long term 'Road Map' so that at Thirteen:

- equality, diversity and inclusion will be an organisational value not simply a project.
- equality, diversity and inclusion will be embedded into company culture and policies.
- initiatives relating to equality, diversity and inclusion are systematic and for the long term.
- we will understand the impact or the difference we are making.

Our approach to embedding an inclusive work culture has been recognised with a Bronze TIDE (Talent, Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation) Award. It looks at a range of measures, including:

- inclusive leadership
- strategy and planning
- diversity data
- training and development
- inclusive recruitment and attraction
- employee voice and engagement

This award reflects our commitment to creating a more inclusive and diverse organisation for both colleagues and customers.

Over the last year, we have set a number of priorities to help measure progress around equality, diversity and inclusion more effectively. These include:

- improving the diversity of our workforce to enable us to become more representative of the communities we serve
- increasing the number of females in construction roles, including trade operatives
- improving the quality of our workforce diversity data
- developing, promoting and supporting colleague led diversity groups
- developing the organisation's awareness and response on neurodiversity
- understanding the difference our training offer makes in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion



Theme 11: Staff wellbeing

Health and wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of colleagues remains a priority. We use colleague data and are mindful of factors in the external environment so that we can respond to the changing needs of our workforce.

In our latest employee engagement survey in February 2024 we asked colleagues if they are aware of the health and wellbeing support we offer. The question scored an average of 7.8/10 versus a score of 8.3/10 when we asked the same question in September 2022.

Leavers gave a 4/5 score in relation to the support offered around mental health and wellbeing, citing the organisation as being supportive, and many colleagues reported having an excellent experience with us.

In 2023/24 we launched a colleague-led multicultural group and started to promote a number of different events to raise awareness and educate colleagues about our offer. We also celebrated Neurodiversity Week, with colleagues sharing their stories.

Men's mental health

The North East and Humber has the highest suicide rate in England - it is the biggest killer of men under 50. Approximately 52% of our workforce is male, and we feel it's vitally important that we continue to support our men's mental health campaign. We run the campaign with Man Health, a community interest company which provides support to men suffering with mental health issues. We've delivered a 'Brains, Brawn & Balls' health intervention, where colleagues learn about the top five preventable mental and physical killers of men in the UK. The sessions continue to be well received by attendees and colleagues are reaching out to their GP as a result.

Mental health advocates

We trained some colleagues to become mental health advocates and they continue with their work to help colleagues, signposting them to support services and running campaigns to tackle the stigma of mental health. Alongside this we've also refreshed our line manager mental health training.

Support with trauma

In April 2023 we introduced our TRiM (trauma risk incident management) Service. It's a proactive colleague-led service offered to colleagues who experience a potentially traumatic incident in the workplace. Affected colleagues meet with a specially trained practitioner and talk through the event. The practitioner is trained to spot potential issues and signpost on to appropriate services. Normally only seen in the blue light services and armed forces, we are proud to offer this service.

Dealing with sickness absence

Our HR business partners offer support and coaching to managers to deal with sickness absence proactively. They've delivered absence training to managers to enhance their understanding of the process, their role in managing sickness absence, the support we offer and how, in cases of long-term absence, an earlier return to work can be facilitated.

Non-work related stress, hospitalisation/surgery/recovery and musculoskeletal conditions continue to be our main reasons for absence. The average days lost to sickness per employee in 2023/24 was 11.92. While this was within our target of 13, we want to reduce this further and support our colleagues with improved health. We're reviewing our absence process to ensure it provides the right level of support and is robust enough to support the business to deliver a great service to customers.

Supporting professional development

Where a professional qualification/continuous professional development is essential to a role, we will support colleagues in these roles to maintain this expectation in terms of cost and time. We will also reimburse any professional fees identified.

Where colleagues aspire to develop both personally and professionally, but qualifications/professional development are not essential to their role, we will consider supporting where they link to either localised workforce plans or our broader strategic workforce planning activities, and in a way that fills current/future skills gaps.

In 2023/24 we provided funding for four colleagues to study either a professional qualification or a course relevant or essential to their role. We also continued to fund all of our trainee qualifications, which is part of their development pathway. We have seven in total.

We have also introduced a range of online training that is available to everyone. Course topics range from time management to understanding emotional intelligence. All of the training includes knowledge assessments, which can help to identify further training or development needs.

Theme 12: Supply chain management

This theme assesses whether we procure responsibly. The theme is made up of two criteria assessing how social value and environmental impact are considered.

As a major purchaser of goods and services, we recognise the part we can play in supporting the local economy.

Over £116million (66%) of our total spend through procurement is spent locally and within the 'asset and repairs and maintenance category spend'. This accounts for 89% (c£29million) of the total.

In our procurement activity, social value accounts for at least 10% of the overall score. We regularly review our social value framework to ensure we can deliver on our six key principles.

Thirteen's six key principles of social value

1: Employing local

We recognise that training and employment provide significant opportunities to create a resilient and innovative local economy, so we will create training, employment and development opportunities, focusing on local priorities wherever possible.

2: Buying local

We understand the social, environmental and economic value of buying local. We support local organisations and encourage our partners and suppliers to do the same.

3: Creating more resilient communities

We recognise we can drive community wealth through our business activities, share resources with local communities and encourage partners to do the same.

4: Protecting the environment

We are committed to decarbonising and safeguarding our world and encouraging others to share this commitment.

5: Supporting good employers

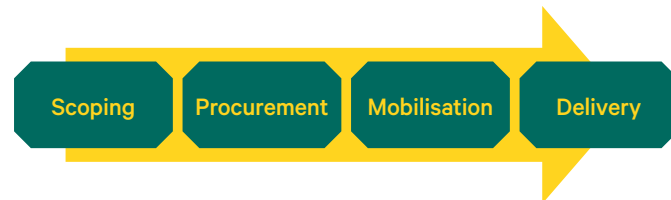
We value the wellbeing of our colleagues and will work with our partners and suppliers to do the same.

6: Involving customers

We are committed to involving customers and ensuring that others are also committed to this.

Theme 12: Supply chain management

We recognise that clear objectives and early engagement with potential partners are essential to delivering maximum value. The framework requires social value to be considered within the four key stages shown in the diagram below:



We have also adopted the national themes, outcomes and measures (TOMs) to allow us to frame our ambition in clearly stated outcomes and measures relating to:

- employment
- environment
- supporting regional business
- promoting social innovation
- safer and more resilient communities

In 2023/24 we were able to build this work into our 'Big 3' programmes – development, regeneration and investment – and by working within the framework, we contributed over £6million of social and local economic value comprising of:

- **112** FTE staff employed
- **656** apprenticeship weeks delivered
- **8** engagement activities
- **50** staff benefited from mental health training and support
- **£5,000** for mental health campaigns
- **125** volunteer hours
- **£12,268** in donations to community groups



Tables

Table 1.
EPC ratings in our homes – existing homes

The table below details the EPC ratings of our existing homes or those completed before the start of the previous financial year.

EPC rating	2022/23 %	2022/23 Number	2023/24 %	2023/24 Number
A	0.53%	179	0.53%	178
B	10.90%	3,653	11.81%	3,955
C	53.64%	17,982	57.75%	19,337
D	33.03%	11,073	28.41%	9,513
E	1.88%	631	1.49%	498
F	0.01%	3	0.01%	2
G	0.003%	1	0.00%	0
Total	100.00%	33,522	100.00%	33,483

Table 2.
EPC rating in our homes – new builds

EPC rating	2022/23 %	2022/23 Number	2023/24 %	2023/24 Number
A	0.23%	1	0.00%	0
B	95.17%	414	100.00%	318
C	4.60%	20	0.00%	0
Total	100.00%	435	100.00%	318



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Table 3.
Details of our streamlined Carbon and Emissions Reporting (tCO2e only)

		2021/22 Emissions in tCO2e	2022/23 Emissions in tCO2e	2023/24 Emissions in tCO2e	Change 2022/23 – 2023/24
Scope 1 emissions	Gas	1,173	968	1,001	3.4%
	Fleet fuel	1,417	1,340	1,491	11.3%
	F-gas	0	129	318	146.5% *
Scope 2 emissions	Purchased Electricity	1,514	1,489	1,391	-6.6%
Total direct emissions		4,104	3,926	4,201	7.0%
Scope 3 emissions	Business mileage	103	148	173	16.9%
	Amenity gas	1,678	1,683	1,628	-3.3%
	Amenity electric	69	133	100	-24.8%
Total indirect emissions		1,850	1,964	1,901	-3.2%
Total emissions		5,954	5,890	6,102	3.6%

* A technical issue led to the release of some F-Gas from our air conditioning units. We are planning to upgrade the units in 2025/26.

Table 3a. Intensity indicators

The table below tracks the intensity ratio (tCO2e/£MT) and change between 2022/23 and 2023/24.

	2022/23 Emissions in tCO2e/£MT	2023/24 Emissions in tCO2e/£MT	Change 2022/23 – 2023/24
Scope 1 & 2 emissions	19.831	20.395	2.8%
Scope 3 emissions	9.924	9.228	-7.0%
Total emissions	29.755	29.623	-0.4%

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Table 4.
The following materials were managed at the Thirteen Recycling Centre between April 2021 and March 2024.

Category	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Unit
General waste	699.75	853.02	843.46	tonnes
Wood	416.58	517.08	526.62	tonnes
Scrap metal	72.23	79.74	96.79	tonnes
Tyres	2.06	1.76	2.08	tonnes
Fridges	40.72	36.16	38.72	tonnes
TV monitors	21.55	17.00	24.20	tonnes
Flo tubes	0.22	0.06	0.11	tonnes
Soil and rubble	299.54	410.18	843.46	tonnes
Mattresses	18.50	11.70	127.40	tonnes
Plasterboard	4.82	6.52	9.56	tonnes
Paint tins	1,662	909	1,729	tins
Plate glass	39.64	16.66	58.7	tonnes
Cardboard	10.19	13.46	9.90	tonnes



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Table 5.
Our homes by tenure type

Homes under management	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Social rent	25,876	73.07%	25,785	72.28%	25,798	71.70%
Affordable rent	4,751	13.42%	5,044	14.14%	5,257	14.61%
Housing for older people (social rent)	2,360	6.66%	2,377	6.66%	2,312	6.43%
Low-cost home ownership	1,006	2.84%	1,117	3.13%	1,309	3.64%
Social leasehold	716	2.02%	726	2.04%	727	2.02%
Supported social rent	286	0.81%	282	0.79%	250	0.69%
Non-social rental	209	0.59%	179	0.50%	180	0.50%
Intermediate market rent	123	0.35%	90	0.25%	57	0.16%
Non-social leased	87	0.25%	72	0.20%	89	0.25%
Total	35,414	100.00%	35,672	100.00%	35,979	100%

Table 6.
Our homes by tenure type - new homes built

Product	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Social rent	0	19	53
Affordable rent	349	278	277
Shared ownership	70	139	213
Private sale	18	19	0
Total	437	455	543

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Table 7
Stock losses and gains

	Units developed or newly built	Units sold/ demolished	Transfers and acquisitions	Total
Social rent – general needs (exc. affordable rent)	53	110	0	-57
Affordable rent – general needs	277	32	0	245
Social rent – supported housing and housing for older people	0	26	0	-26
Affordable rent – supported housing and housing for older people	0	0	0	0
Low-cost home ownership	213	17	0	196
Care homes	0	0	0	0
Other social housing	0	0	0	0
Total	543	185	0	358

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Table 8.
Reducing energy bills by energy efficiency works

Work	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Air source heat pumps	43	26	14	5
Loft insulation	0	125	140	3,394
Cavity wall insulation	0	48	250	280

Table 9.
Security of tenure - fixed term tenancies

Tenure	2022/23 Number	2022/23 %	2023/24 Number	2023/24 %
Assured	27,062	77.84%	28,711	78.98%
Starter Tenancy	4,207	12.10%	3,911	10.76%
Assured Shorthold	1,050*	3.02%	1,009*	2.78%
Equitable	3	0.01%	7	0.02%
Licence	207	0.60%	227	0.62%
Secure	200	0.58%	175	0.48%
Student (Fixed)	89	0.26%	95	0.26%
Shared Owner	927	2.67%	1,190	3.27%
LSE (Leasehold Elderly)	144	0.41%	143	0.39%
RTB Freehold	48	0.14%	49	0.13%
RTB Leasehold	829	2.38%	833	2.29%
Total	34,765	100.00%	36,350	100.00%

* For the purposes of this report considered to have no security of tenure.

Table 10.
Fire risk assessment and other work

Action	2022/23	2023/24
Number of fire risk assessments carried out	361	656
Number of fire door checks or inspections	2,060	2,468
% of post inspections completed on time	99.4%	99.70%



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Table 11.
Improvements we've carried out to help meet the Decent Homes Standard

Component	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Windows: provided/renewed double glazing and front doors	830	1,832	648
Front door: provided/renewed double glazing and front doors	1,255	768	423
Boilers: includes investment, one-off boilers and empty properties	1,414	1,281	626
Kitchens	0	1,603	866
Roofs	488	0	490
Bathrooms	N/A	1,264	170
Number of rewires	N/A	N/A	422
Sum spent on eradicating serious health risks	N/A	N/A	£3.3 million
Number of properties benefiting from damp and mould works	N/A	N/A	1,306
Sum invested in decarbonising properties	N/A	N/A	£2.4 million
Total number of homes benefiting from investment works	N/A	N/A	1,815



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Table 12.
Tenant Satisfaction Measures – perception measures

Tenant Perception Measures (TSMs)	Rental properties	Low-cost home ownership
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord	77.3%	64.7%
Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the overall repairs service	79.6%	N/A
Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair	72.5%	N/A
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is well maintained	78.0%	N/A
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is safe	82.7%	81.8%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	67.3%	57.3%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them	72.9%	65.8%
Proportion of respondents who report that they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect	80.6%	70.7%
Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling	35.1%	21.0%
Proportion of respondents with communal areas who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	72.8%	58.0%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood	66.9%	54.3%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	62.3%	50.8%

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Table 13.
Tenant Satisfaction Measures – management performance information

Tenant Perception Measures (TSMs)	Rental properties	Low-cost home ownership	Combined
Complaints			
Number of Stage 1 complaints received per 1,000 homes	43.4	24.4	N/A
Number of Stage 2 complaints received per 1,000 homes	3.6	6.8	N/A
Proportion of Stage 1 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales	92.0%	81.2%	N/A
Proportion of Stage 2 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales	95.1%	100.0%	N/A
Anti-social behaviour			
Number of anti-social behaviour cases opened per 1,000 homes	N/A	N/A	74.4
Number of anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents opened per 1,000 homes	N/A	N/A	1.1
Building safety			
Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out	N/A	N/A	99.9%
Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out	N/A	N/A	100.0%
Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out	N/A	N/A	100.0%
Proportion of homes for which all required Legionella risk assessments have been carried out	N/A	N/A	100.0%
Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out	N/A	N/A	100.0%
Decent Homes Standard and repairs			
Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	0.0%	N/A	N/A
Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale	68.7%	N/A	N/A
Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale	93.9%	N/A	N/A

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Table 14.
Impact of our support services

Service	2022/23	2023/24
Employability services	562 helped into employment	1,159 customers supported 303 moved into employment 8 moved into education 244 moved into training 42 moved into community groups/ volunteering
Sheltered housing, extra care and older people	2,723 customers supported	3,025 customers supported 91.27% said they'd recommend us to family and friends
Homelessness prevention (Key Steps) Customers provided with accommodation and intense support for move on	52	78
Homelessness prevention (in Sunderland) Number of customers residing and supported in Rough Sleeping Accommodation Support accommodation	47	30
Domestic abuse support * Floating support decommissioned in November 2023	1,342	24*
Refugee resettlement support Number of customers supported by Resettlement Team	22	262
Support for young people and parents Number of customers supported living in young parents accommodation or accessing floating support * Rose House facility decommissioned in October 2023	154	88*
Financial impact of tenancy support interventions Payments direct to customers or onto rent account	NA	£0.8million
Hardship Fund and discretionary housing support Hardship awards made to customers/payments to rent accounts from Landlord Discretionary Housing Fund (LDHF)	NA	£1.2million
Care and support services Total number of people helped by care and support services	11,733	10,281

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Table 14.
Impact of our support services (continued)

Service	2022/23	2023/24
Tenancy support A customer service aiming to sustain tenancies and retain customers. Number of people supported	1,591	1,717
Ministry of Justice service Supporting male offenders in custody and the community with accommodation related issues across the North East - addressing accommodation barriers, independent living, sourcing, sustaining and relinquishing accommodation Number of people supported	4,490	4,384
Ministry of Justice PWB Personal Wellbeing Wellbeing, lifestyle, social inclusion and relationships support for male offenders in custody and the community in Cleveland Number of people supported	187	212
Future Steps Tenancy support service for males and females with offending backgrounds - can be long-term if needed to assist tenancy sustainment and support independent living Number of people supported	106	223