



Environmental, Social and Governance Report

March 2022



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Introduction

Our goal is to improve lives through sustainable homes and places.

We offer more than just a home, we help improve the lives of our people living in our communities. We work hard to make sure homes are high quality, sustainable and adaptable, while meeting current and future aspirations. We offer support that helps people into work, and training that increases their financial confidence and stability.

Our business strategy is called “Plan A”. The ambitious objectives within Plan A focus on supporting sustainable places including upgrading our properties to be more energy efficient, reducing carbon emissions and saving customers money on their bills. Planet A is our strategy map

to a greener future for generations to come with customers thriving in low energy homes and greener places.

We recognise the part we can play in decarbonisation and sustainability to create a better future for us all.

In December 2021 we worked with one of our funders to amend an existing loan agreement and create our first sustainability linked loan, further enhancing our focus on sustainability.

This is our second Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Report, in line with the Sustainability Reporting Standard (SRS) for Social Housing and, as with last year's report, we follow the SRS layout as we believe this is the most useful approach.



Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing

SRS was developed to enable social housing organisations to report their ESG performance in a transparent, consistent and comparable way.

This allows investors to consider ESG performance as part of their credit process.

Our strength in sustainability is key to us attracting new investors who will deliver new finance and therefore help deliver our strategic objectives, particularly building and acquiring sustainable homes and providing quality sustainable homes.

Affordable housing is recognised as a major contributor to communities and helps in delivering Sustainable Development Goals.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

SDG's were adopted by all UN member states in 2015 and provide common goals that are recognised as necessary for Investors, Governments, businesses and general society to do more to end poverty

and protect the planet. Supporting our customers and communities is embedded in our strategy and links to several of the SDG's below:



Social housing
contributes
to several of
these SDG's in
particular:



Report Structure

Our report is aligned to the different themes contained within the SRS for Social Housing. These themes, and their link to SDG's are;

ESG Area	Theme no.	Theme Name	Description	UN SDG
Social	T1	Affordability and security	This theme seeks to assess the extent to which the housing provider provides long term homes that are genuinely affordable to those on low incomes. The theme is made up of five criteria including the tenure mix of new and existing properties, the security of tenure and fuel poverty.	1, 10, 11
	T2	Building safety and quality	This theme seeks to assess how effective the housing provider is at meeting its legal responsibilities to protect residents and keep buildings safe. The theme is made up of three criteria; disclosing gas safety checks, fire risk assessments and meeting Decent Homes Standards.	11
	T3	Resident voice	This theme seeks to assess how effective the housing provider is at listening to and empowering residents. The theme is made up of three themes that cover board scrutiny, complaint handling and resident satisfaction.	11
	T4	Resident support	This theme seeks to assess the effectiveness of the initiatives that the housing provider runs to support individual residents. The theme is made up of two criteria that cover what support is provided and how successful it is.	11
	T5	Placemaking	This theme seeks to highlight the wider set of activities that housing providers undertake to create well-designed homes and places that meet local needs and provide great places for people to live and enjoy. The theme is made up of one criterion; a space for the housing provider to give examples of their placemaking or placeshaping work.	11

ESG Area	Theme no.	Theme Name	Description	UN SDG
Environmental	T6	Climate change	This theme seeks to assess how the activities of the housing provider are impacting on climate change and how they are mitigating the physical risks of climate change. This theme considers current practice, as well as the changes being made to improve performance in the future. This theme is made up of six criteria, including the distribution of Energy Performance Certificate ratings, emissions data, climate risk mitigation plan and environmental strategy.	7, 9, 13
	T7	Ecology	This theme seeks to assess how the housing provider is protecting the local environment and ecology. The theme is made up of two criteria around managing pollutants and increasing biodiversity.	15
	T8	Resource management	This theme seeks to identify the extent to which the housing provider has a sustainable approach to materials in both the construction and management of properties. The theme is made up of three themes that cover sourcing materials, water management and waste management.	11, 13
Governance	T9	Structure and governance	This theme seeks to assess the housing provider's overall structure and approach to governance. The theme is made up of six criteria covering the regulator, code of governance, risk management and ownership.	16
	T10	Board and trustees	This theme seeks to assess the quality, suitability and performance of the board and trustees. The theme is made up of eleven criteria including demographics of the board and the experience and independence of the board.	16
	T11	Staff wellbeing	This theme seeks to assess how staff are supported and how their wellbeing is considered. The theme is made up of five criteria including salary information, additional support for staff and average sick days.	8, 16
	T12	Supply chain management	This theme seeks to assess if the housing provider procures responsibly. The theme is made up of two criteria assessing how social value and environmental impact are considered.	11, 13

Social

Affordability and Security

C1 – Affordability and Security



We compare our average social and affordable rents to private rental market data. Our average rents are disclosed to the Regulator of Social Housing in our annual Statistical Data Return (at 31 March 2022) and the market rent data is obtained from The Office for National Statistics Private Rental Market Summary Statistics in England (April 2021 to March 2022 dataset).

Our main area of operations is County Durham where our rents are on average 72% of the median market rent. In Darlington and Stockton on Tees the properties we own are mostly new build houses with an affordable rent set at 80% of the market rent at the time of letting. As these homes are new build properties the rent set is closer to the median market rent shown below. This is because the median rent includes older privately rented homes with lower market rents.

Local Authority Area	Number of houses	Livin's Median Rent	Median Market Rent	% of Market rent
County Durham	8,551	£79.24	£110.58	72%
Darlington	59	£101.47	£113.28	90%
Stockton on Tees	16	£109.27	£128.73	85%

C2 – Share of homes (by tenure)

Affordability is a major part of the key objective of supporting sustainable tenancies. Our tenancies are mostly let at social and affordable rents as shown below:

Tenancy type	2022		2021	
	Number of units	%	Number of units	%
General needs (social rent)	7,032	81.38%	7,058	83.3%
Affordable rent	1,570	18.17%	1,370	16.2%
Intermediate rent	24	0.28%	30	0.35%
Shared ownership	15	0.17%	16	0.15%
Total	8,641	100%	8,474	100%

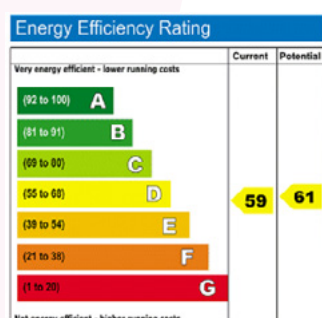
C3 – Share of new homes (by tenure)

Building and Acquiring Sustainable Homes is a fundamental part of Plan A. After reduced development in 2020/21, a result of material and labour shortages due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to exceed our target of new homes delivered in 2021/22. We invested £20.253m in new properties including homes under construction at the financial year end.

Tenancy type	Number of units	%
General needs (Social rent)	2	1.0%
Affordable rent	204	99.0%

C4 – How are we trying to reduce the impact of fuel poverty on residents?

We recognise that other costs, such as heating, impact on the affordability of homes. We address this by referring customers to local authorities' warm homes teams that can help with arranging winter fuel support, securing better tariffs and getting fuel debt reduced or in some circumstances written off.



Our target is to achieve an average SAP rating of 73.5 for our homes by 2025 with 97% of properties at a minimum band C by March 2025. At March 2022 we were well on the way to achieving this target with 66.49% (2021 61.81%) of our housing stock already at, or above, EPC band C and an average SAP score of 70.6 (2021 69) across our homes. We have undertaken works to our properties to make them more energy efficient such as heating upgrades, loft insulation, double glazing window replacement adding external wall insulation thereby reducing heating costs for customers.

We plan to continue investing in our homes to improve their energy efficiency and were successful in our bid for funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (wave 1). This will assist in funding works in 2022/23 that focus on a “fabric first” approach.

C5 – Percentage of Homes with a 3 year fixed term tenancy or longer

At 31 March 2022 0.7% or 57 tenancies (2021 1.1%, 98 tenancies) were on a fixed term tenancy with less than 3 years remaining. We now only offer assured (lifetime) tenancies and are engaging with our existing customers to move anyone currently on a fixed term tenancy onto an assured tenancy; this will give customers added tenancy security.

Building and Safety Quality

C6 – Percentage of homes with an in date accredited gas safety check.

The safety of our customers in their homes is a top priority and we take our regulatory obligations very seriously. We use approved contractors to perform repairs and servicing with compliance reported to Board quarterly.

We had 99.93% (2021 99.98%) of properties with a valid gas certificate. Six homes at year end did not have a valid certificate due to problems in achieving access to the properties. Safety checks for these properties were completed shortly after March 2022.



C7 – What percentage of buildings have an in-date fire risk assessment?

100% (2021 100%) of relevant buildings had an in-date Fire Risk Assessment, which are completed annually.

C8 - What percentage of homes meet Decent Homes Standard?

100% (2021 100%) of our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Resident Voice

C9 - What arrangements are in place to enable residents to hold management to account?

Our values include trust and respect, which helps us build relationships with our customers.



We provide an accessible service enabling us to listen to customers' views and resolve issues quickly. We make sure our customers voices are heard and constantly analyse transactional data to identify customer led service improvements. This includes reviewing trends in service use, complaints and satisfaction surveys.

Customers are invited to co-design scrutiny programmes each year based on our performance. Scrutiny panels of customers are formed to have a closer look at services.

We received feedback and opinions from more than 5,000 customers which helped us improve our services especially in the areas of:

- Environmental sustainability
- Mould management
- Fire door customisation, and
- Maintaining trees

We adopt the “Together with Tenants Charter”, “Charter of Social Housing Residents” and “National Housing Federation Code of Governance”, all of which advocate accountability, transparency and demonstrates our commitment to listening to the voice of our customers and acting upon it.

Our Annual Report to Tenants has been co-designed with customers to include the performance data they wish to see and is agreed by customers and published on our website. Quarterly performance is available to tenants on our web pages and “we listened, we acted” informs customers where their feedback and involvement has improved services.

C10 – How do we measure resident satisfaction and how has resident satisfaction changed over the last 3 years?

We measure resident satisfaction through a number of performance measures that are reported to board. These include:

	2022	2021
Percentage of complainants satisfied with the way their complaint is handled	95%	98%
Percentage of tenants satisfied that their views are being listened to and acted upon	100%	100%
Percentage of customers satisfied with the overall customer experience	92%	92%
Net promoter score (how likely customers are to recommend us)	52	55

We continue to listen to our customers to improve customer satisfaction. We use 25 performance measures to support the four measures below and these customer satisfaction measures continue to achieve target as they have done for the past three years.

Our existing satisfaction measures cover many of the proposed Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) with nine new measures being introduced in 2022/23. This will enable us to continue our strong performance in this area and take the necessary actions to improve services further and increase satisfaction.

Our Annual Report to Tenants, shows our achievements and areas for improvement in satisfaction.

C11 – In the last 12 months how many complaints have been upheld by the Ombudsman?

We had no complaints upheld by the Ombudsman between April 2021 and March 2022.

Resident Support

C12 – What support do we offer to residents?

We offer a variety of support to our residents following our Community Investment strategy which is aligned to our “Plan A”. Support is identified through community plans (housing and community data) and customer voice. Key areas of support include financial wellbeing, health and wellbeing and carbon reduction through Greener Living.

We offer a specialised benefits advice service to help customers increase their income. We set ourselves ambitious targets to maximise welfare benefit income and support tenants into work to help with the ongoing cost of living challenges. During the year we helped customers to claim an extra £1.4m in benefits.

We operate our own employability scheme (Livin Futures) to help residents to gain employment. Livin Futures helps to remove barriers to employment and supports customers in their search for work. We deliver an annual jobs fair, carry out personal development sessions including mock interviews within local secondary schools. We also arranged employer/factory visits for customers to gain an insight into working practices and job

opportunities. During the year to March 2022 we achieved:

- 453 tenants supported
- 201 jobs secured
- £4.4m social value created

We operate a community grant funding scheme which our communities and partners can access to tackle issues specific to those communities.

We use a targeted approach to support residents to sustain tenancies, mitigating the risk of tenancy failure and enabling older and vulnerable tenants to live independently.

During 2021/22 we installed adaptations to 459 homes and 98.08% of customers that received our tenancy sustainability support told us that their health and wellbeing had improved following our support or intervention.

Placemaking

C13 – Examples of our engagement in placemaking or placeshaping activities.

We provide more than just a home and are proud to help our customers and communities. We have many examples of our successes on our website www.livin.co.uk/support



The Courts, Shildon, County Durham

The 2021 report No Place Left Behind highlighted that the UK had many areas that suffer from deprivation and a lack of social infrastructure. One such area was identified in an earlier report by the Local Trust called Left behind? Understanding communities on the edge. This report concluded that the North East of England had left behind areas, particularly in towns in former mining communities or on the periphery of larger towns in the area. Shildon in County Durham was named in this report and is a town where we own approx. 1,120 properties.

An ambitious regeneration plan was created to support the delivery of a key strategic objective - "supporting sustainable places." We engaged with the local community at The Courts, Shildon and identified the need to increase the

housing mix, improve energy efficiency and change the estate layout.

Working with our construction partner Mears plc we are:

- Converting difficult to let flats into popular 3 and 4 bed roomed houses
- Using rendering and cladding to reduce carbon emissions
- Using solar PV, batteries, triple glazing and insulation top up, improves energy efficiency
- Creating a demonstrator home where energy-saving and sustainability tips can be seen
- Remodelling roads and paths and introducing in-curtilage parking, green garden space and biodiversity

This work is ongoing and expected to be completed in July 2023. Some of our successes to date can be seen [here](#).

Ladder Centre "Hub with a heart", Ferryhill, County Durham

We work with the Ladder Centre which is a community partner delivering services to the Lakes estate in Ferryhill from two of our properties converted into a community hub. They provide a variety of support services for every age group including early years to youth work, employability and financial wellbeing services.

During 2022 our focus with the Ladder Centre was on the cost of living and supporting families and assisting vulnerable and older tenants. During the school holidays we enabled the delivery of several 'fun and food' sessions which

supported 30 families, this included a breakfast club and provided regular positive activities and healthy food. For parents and carers the service provided access to a credit union and financial support. We invested in the development of the centres 'Hub with a Heart' programme which utilised the expertise of this grass roots organisation to deliver bespoke support to tenants who are less likely to engage with us or 'silent copers'. The hub delivered 500 hours of support to 25 of our tenants over a 10-month period. This achieving nearly £500,000 of social value and by referring onto and working with us £143,000 in additional benefits, which improved their financial comfort and health and wellbeing.

Environmental

Climate Change

C14 – Distribution of EPC (existing homes)

EPC rating for existing homes is as follows:

EPC rating	2022		2021	
	%	Number of homes	%	Number of homes
% Homes rated A	0%	0	0%	0
% Homes rated B	8.2%	710	6.64%	563
% Homes rated C	58.3%	5,035	55.17%	4,674
% Homes rated D	33.4%	2,889	37.84%	3,207
% Homes rated E or worse	0.1%	7	0.35%	30

C15 – Distribution of EPC ratings (new homes)

EPC rating	%	Number of homes
% Homes rated B	100	206

C16 – Scope 1,2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions

This is our second attempt to record emission data. We use “SmartCarbon” software to calculate our emissions data and through this we have developed a new carbon reporting methodology aligned to Green House Gas Protocol and Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting requirements.

- Scope 1 emissions 205.3 tonnes of CO₂ (excluding f-gases)
- Scope 2 emissions 93.1 tonnes of CO₂

C17 – What energy efficiency actions have we taken in the last 12 months?

We performed a variety of energy efficiency works in 2021/22 including:

- Insulated cladding and double glazing installed to 53 homes
- Loft insulation top up to 105 homes
- Solar panels installed with battery back up to 37 homes
- Installation of energy efficient LED bulbs to 265 homes

In addition to the LED bulbs installed to customers’ homes, all lighting in our head office was replaced with LED lights and motion sensors for areas with intermittent usage to reduce electricity costs.

We were successful in our bid for grant through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) (Wave 1) which will enable us to perform energy efficiency upgrades to 107 homes including:

- External wall insulation
- Loft insulation top ups
- New double glazed windows

The works will increase the average SAP score for these properties from 65 to 73 (D to C).

Further funding has been accessed through the Local Authority Delivery scheme which will allow us to install solar panels (with battery backup) to 61 properties improving their SAP banding from D to C and in some cases even up to a B rating.

C18 – How are we mitigating against risks (i.e. flood risk and risk of homes overheating)?

The majority of our homes (97.26%) are located in low risk flood areas and 98.0% of our homes are protected from overheating.

Our Planet A strategy includes commitments to ensure our homes and properties are fit for the future. We aim to create climate resilient places and natural environments that include wide biodiversity plans to enhance nature and provide resilience to extreme weather events.

We are investing in solutions to ensure new and existing homes are fit for the future and reduce the risk of overheating.

C19 – Do we give residents information about correct ventilation, heating and recycling etc?

Every new tenant receives a new homes demonstration visit which includes advice on ventilation, use of heating systems including bleeding radiators, use of thermostatic radiator valves, boiler controls and boiler pressure.

We publish a guide on our website on how to keep homes free from damp and mould. We encourage customers to report damp and mould issues so we can fix them.

An objective of our “Planet A” strategy is to support tenants to live more efficiently.

During the year a review was carried out on how reports of damp and mould were treated and concluded there were no systemic issue with damp and mould across our homes.

However, we are committed to proactively contacting all tenants to encourage them to report any damp and mould issues and following up on any cases especially those that did not relate to an obvious building defect.

Customers who have reported damp or mould issues receive a follow up visit to ensure that any remedial measures we have put in place have successfully resolved the problem to their satisfaction.



Ecology

C20 – How are we increasing green space and promoting biodiversity?

We have approximately 45 hectares of greenspace.

Through our Planet A objective of “Create climate resilient places and natural environments” we will shape how sustainability is embedded in place-based projects, maximising impact and guide the delivery of a range of learning and training opportunities to enhance residents’ knowledge of climate change. We will support the enhancement of biodiversity across our open spaces and identify areas that will allow rewilding.

Planning is underway to ensure our new development sites will align with the Environment Act 2021 and future 10% biodiversity net gain targets. Three development sites are due to have Biodiversity Net Gain surveys completed which will allow for the development of biodiversity recommendations for each site to achieve the 10% increase.

C21 – Do we have a strategy to actively manage and reduce pollutants?

We currently adhere to all required HSE and environmental legislation with processes in place to ensure our contractors and partners adhere to these requirements.

We have developed an Environmental Management System (EMS). As part of our carbon reporting, we measure pollutants and have set targets to reduce these. The EMS Action Plan will help us to understand our wider environmental impact through our tenant activities, maintenance and repairs, retrofit and development activities. We have developed key resource use targets; these are embedded in Planet A and our CO2 and waste reduction plan.

Resource management

C22 – Do we have a strategy to use or increase the use of responsibly sourced materials for all building works?

We currently ensure responsibly sourced materials are used where legislation requires and for timber in new build homes and repairs and maintenance work. We are reviewing and updating our procurement policy to align with our Planet A strategy. This will enable us to increase the volume of sustainably sourced materials we use in all our building works.

C23 – Do we have a strategy for waste management incorporating building materials?

We have an internal waste management procedure which outlines the priorities for dealing with waste for the benefit of sustainability and environmental protection. The procedure is underpinned by a commitment to the Waste Hierarchy Principles and aligns with requirements set out in the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Our main contractor for repairs and maintenance, and by far the greatest source of our waste generation, is Mears plc who are ISO14001 accredited. They have strong waste management systems in place and work to ensure there is a high level of recycling.

We undertake an annual waste audit on our HQ office and are measuring performance against a 10% reduction target in overall waste for the year.

C24 – Do we have strategy for good water management?

This is an area on which we need to improve as there is currently no policy around good water management. One of our Planet A objectives relates to adapting our day-to-day operations to reduce their environmental impact and this includes good water management.

Resource monitoring and management is required in order to carry out emissions reporting. Continuous improvement through the delivery of our EMS requires targets and actions to reduce resource use, including water (scope 3) across our sites. We set annual targets for reduction, these are monitored through our performance framework and the use of SmartCarbon for CO2 calculations.



Governance

Structure and Governance

C25 – Are we registered with the Regulator of Social Housing?

Yes

C26 – What is our most recent viability and governance rating?

The Regulator of Social Housing reviewed our grading in November 2022 and stated we were compliant with a G1 V2 judgement.

C27 – Which Code of Governance do we follow?

NHF Code of Governance: promoting excellence in Governance (2020 edition)

C28 – Are we Not for Profit?

Yes

C29 – How do we manage organisational risks?

Our Board retains ultimate responsibility for ensuring an effective risk management framework is in place. Strategic risks are considered quarterly by our Audit & Risk Committee before Board receives an update on the risk register, including additional information on a strategic risk selected by the committee.

C30 – Have we been subject to adverse regulatory findings in last 12 months?

No, - However due to the economic environment and current levels of high inflation we were one of many providers that were regraded from V1 to V2 in November 2022.

Board and Trustees

C31 – What are the demographics of the Board compared to our customers

The demographics of our Board compared to our customers (lead and joint tenants) is:

Board Diversity	Customer profile 2022	2022	2021
Gender (% female)	55%	33%	50%
Ethnicity (% BAME)	1%	0%	0%
Average Tenure	N/A	4 years 4 months	4 years 3 months

C32 - What percentage of Board and management team have turned over in the last 2 years?

Three board members retired in the last two years to 31 March 2022 and the former chief executive retired in September 2021.

C33 – Is there a maximum tenure for a Board member (what is it)?

For current board members, nine years is their tenure unless agreed by the board that a longer appointment is in the best interests of the organisation. As of 31 March 2022 all Board members had served less than nine years.

We have adopted the NHF Code of Governance 2020 with transitional arrangements in place for Board members already in their second three year term. These Board members will be allowed to complete one more three year term, whilst new Board members, or those members serving their first three year term, will complete six years' service.

C34 – What percentage of Board are non-executive directors?

As at 31 March 2022, 78% of the Board were made up of non-executive directors.

C35 – Number of Board members on Audit & Risk Committee with relevant financial experience

Our Audit & Risk Committee has 4 members all of whom are also Board members. They draw on a broad range of skills from local government, the private and third sector. The Chair of the Committee is a qualified accountant with over 25 years' experience of running a successful management consultancy business.

C36 – Are any current executives on the Remuneration Committee?

No.

C37 – Has a succession plan been provided to Board?

Yes – A three-year rolling succession plan is approved annually by Board.

C38 – How many years has our external audit partner been responsible for our audit?

Beever and Struthers have been responsible for external audit for five years.

C39 – When was the last independently run board effectiveness review?

An independent review of board and committee effectiveness commenced after the year end and completed in December 2022 by external consultants.

C40 – Are the roles of chair of the Board and CEO held by 2 different people?

Yes

C41 – How do we handle conflicts of interest at board level?

Board members are required to complete an annual declaration of interest and inform Livin if there are any changes to their interests during the year in line with the Code of Conduct. In line with our Probity Policy, all meeting participants are required to declare any conflicts of interest at the start of the meeting and are required to declare any further interests that become apparent during discussions. The presumption is that the conflicted individual will withdraw from the meeting for the conflicted item. However, at the discretion of the Board, and depending on the nature and severity of the identified conflict, conflicted parties may be invited to remain in the meeting but not participate/vote on the decision.

In the event of a fundamental or ongoing material conflict being proven, the Board may consider whether the person concerned should continue to be a Board member.

Staff Wellbeing

C42 – Do we pay the Real Living Wage?

Yes, we have been doing this since 2016

C43 – What is the gender pay gap?

Our gender pay gap was 6.9% (2021 9.76%). We continue to work to support female employees and ensure that diversity and inclusion is embedded in our organisation.

C44 – What is the CEO – worker pay ratio

Using the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy methodology our CEO to median worker pay ratio is 4.6 : 1 (2021 4.6 : 1)



C45 – How do we support the physical and mental health of our staff

We know that employees are key to successfully delivering Plan A and we adopt a “work together” ethos to ensure we all pull in the same direction.

We offer support through a confidential 24 hour employee assistance programme helpline. This helpline allows employees and their families to access qualified and experienced counsellors that can give both practical and emotional support to deal with personal problems that might adversely impact on health and wellbeing.

We also offer a wide range of other benefits that support employees with physical and mental health issues such as occupational health assessments, stress risk assessments and a range of employee benefits such as reduced rate gym membership, discounts at health food shops and the cycle to work scheme. During the year we continued to work with local Credit Unions to offer financial wellbeing advice to employees.

C46 – Average number of sick days per employee

For 2021/22 the average was 6.4 days (2021 4.58 days).

Supply chain

C47 – How is social value creation considered when we procure goods and services?

As part of our procurement process we ask several due diligence questions to ensure we appoint a supplier that aligns to our needs. This includes questions on health and safety arrangements, equality and diversity, modern slavery and people trafficking.

We are founder members of the County Durham Pound project, a new initiative to increase social value in County Durham through procurement. We now use the projects agreed TOMS (Themes, Outcomes, Measure's) framework to assess social value in tenders.

C48 – How is environmental impact considered when procuring goods and services?

As part of our procurement process we also perform due diligence on suppliers' environmental obligations.

This is an area we expect our suppliers to improve in as our focus on environmental issues and decarbonisation increases.

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