



Environmental **Social** **Governance** **Report 2023/24**

Welcome

I am pleased to introduce our latest Environmental Social Governance (ESG) report under the Sustainable Reporting Standard (SRS) for Social Housing. This report is published alongside our 2024 Impact Report, our Diversity and Inclusion report and Customer Report, all of which highlight in more detail the work we do to deliver social value to our customers and communities. You can find copies of these reports via our website.



Look Ahead is a provider of care and support services, building better lives through social care and housing in local communities. We own and manage 1094 properties, providing support to over 3800 people in the last year.

Our approach to ESG aims to go further and look at the wider impact of our operations on the environment and the areas in which we operate. This continues to be a gradual approach across all areas of the organisation, which includes new systems, processes, contracts and opportunities to support our customers and develop our staff.

I am encouraged by the progress we have made over the last twelve months as detailed in this report, particularly with the limited resources we operate under in this sector.

This report is a positive step forward in our commitment to the SRS standard, and we are looking forward to building on this in the year ahead.

Julie Blair

Executive Director of Corporate Services

Climate Change

C1: Distribution of EPC ratings of existing home (those completed before the last financial year).

Average SAP rating of existing homes (those completed before the last financial year).

EPC - A	0.0%
EPC - B	10%
EPC - C	47.2%
EPC - D	14.4%
EPC - E	8.4%
EPC - F	0%
EPC - G	0%
EPC - not known	0.2%
EPC - not required	19.9%

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

Average SAP rating of new homes (those completed in the last financial year).

Energy use intensity [Kwh/m²/yr] of new homes

We did not complete any new homes in this financial year.

C3: Does the housing provider have a Net Zero target and strategy? If so, what is it and when does the housing provider intend to be Net Zero by?

Is the housing provider's net zero commitment in line with the Science Based Target (SBT) initiative?

No

Does the housing provider have a costed transition plan? No

Look Ahead are developing processes and procedures by use of our Asset Management System (Asprey), Energy performance data and using the Sava intelligent energy module to assist with planning for zero carbon. These systems will assist Look Ahead to develop an action plan which will be supported by suitably qualified consultancy services to help develop Look Ahead's road map to zero carbon.

We are in the infancy of fully implementing the AMS system though all relevant staff have received training on both the AMS and Sava module to assist with planning of both Carbon zero works and budget planning to achieve the targets for zero net carbon by 2025.

C4: What retrofit activities has the housing provider undertaken in the last 12 months in relation to its housing stock? How do these activities align with, and contribute towards, performance against the housing provider's Net Zero strategy and target?

We have introduced a new Asset Management system and are now able to collect RdSAP data in our stock survey programmes. This improvement in the energy data we collect and record will allow us to utilise the energy function of the Asset Management system, allowing us to target limited resources to those works which will provide the most benefit.

It will also allow us to model using more accurate data so that where components are renewed with more energy efficient replacements that may not, in themselves, change the EPC rating, their impact will be captured in the overall SAP rating.

C5: Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 Green House Gas emissions. Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 Green House Gas emissions per home

If unable to report emissions data, please state when the housing provider is expected to be able to do so.

N/A

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

How is the housing provider mitigating these risks?

The following remains in place (we are also looking at undertaking ecology assessments in the future):

Increased flood risk

We worked with our insurance company to review flood risk in our properties. As part of this work, we

provided Zurich with a list of our properties. This list is monitored against a new system Zurich has which alerts us if there are any flood warnings associated with our homes.

The majority of our properties are monitored and managed locally, many 24/7, so we are alerted by staff about any potential issues. In addition, we undertake property and estate-based inspections and where issues are identified we undertake ground works. We are currently managing a potential flood issue in one of our East London estates.

Increased risk of homes overheating

We review overheating risk along with our property and living standard inspections that are conducted by staff in our supported living properties.

In addition, we have external specialists advising on venting solutions to aid the air flow in properties. Where we have experienced overheating in properties, we have developed bespoke solutions such as adding air conditioning units, air extraction or heat deflection techniques such as insulation and blinds. Where we are reviewing new build proposals we will include thermal modelling as part of our decision making.

Ecology

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

Ecology assessments to be undertaken in the future.

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

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

- Environmental Policy in line with the UK Environment Act 2021 and local authorities.
- Legionella Policy.
- COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health).
- Asbestos surveyd & risk assessments.
- Awaabs Law to address Damp & Mould.

Resource

Management

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

Within our planned and repair works we specify sustainable materials and also advise all materials are to be new unless otherwise specified and procured from sustainable sources wherever possible.

Within our quarterly PESTEL risk meeting we call over environmental risks covering:

- Change in Waste management regulations
- Failure to install sustainable components
- Increased environmental targets required by legislation
- Placing an unnecessary carbon footprint on the environment

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

Extracts from our contract documents - 3.43.6 The Contractor shall comply with the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and exercise the duty of care required under Section 34. In addition, the Contractor shall comply, as appropriate, with the Control of Pollution (Amendments) Act 1989, the Controlled Waste (Regulations of Carriers and Seizure of Vehicles) Regulations 1991 and the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations.

The Contractor is to provide consignment notes in respect of the disposal of all hazardous materials as required by the Environment Agency. The cost of providing these consignment notes is deemed included in the Contractor's rate. We do not currently KPI this though in discussions with our contractors. As noted in C9 Look Ahead monitor waste management in our quarterly Planned works and repair works risk meetings.

C11: Does the housing provider have a strategy for water management?

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

Water policy and management plan.

Affordability and Security

C12: For properties that are subject to the rent regulation regime, report against one or more Affordability Metric:

1) Rent compared to median private rental sector (PRS) rent across the relevant Local Authority

2) Rent compared to the relevant Local Housing Allowance (LHA)

Report against both Affordability Metrics.

95.14%

C13: Share, and number, of existing homes (owned and/or managed) completed before the last financial year allocated to:

- General needs (social rent)
- Intermediate rent
- Affordable rent
- Supported Housing
- Housing for older people
- Low-cost home ownership
- Care homes
- Private Rented Sector
- Other

Type	Directly Managed	Managed by another org.	Total	% of total
Supported Housing	1038	59	1097	90.3%
Care Homes	29	6	35	2.9%
Intermediate	26		26	2.1%
Non-Social	36	4	40	3.3%
Market Rent	17		17	1.4%

C14: Share, and number, of new homes (owned and/or managed) that were completed in the last financial year, allocated to:

- General needs (social rent)
- Intermediate rent
- Affordable rent
- Supported Housing
- Housing for older people
- Low-cost home ownership
- Care homes
- Private Rented Sector
- Other

Number homes disposed of in the last 12 months, by tenure type. Number of homes acquired in the last 12 months, by tenure type.

No new build properties in 2023/24.

New Acquisitions:

Type	Total Gained	% of total
Supported Housing	7	63.6%
Non-social	4	36.4%
Total	11	100%

Zero disposals.

C15: How is the housing provider trying to reduce the effect of high energy costs on its residents?

- We report annually on our carbon footprint, in addition to ESG reporting.
- We work with an energy broker and go out to tender every 2 years to secure the best rates available on the markets.
- We have access to management portals which gives clear visibility of both consumption and cost values
- Within our asset management system we are working with an external provider to have an Intelligent Energy function within it. Once operational the energy data will give us more detailed information about energy efficiencies and what improvements etc can be made.

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

At Look Ahead, we do not offer general needs accommodation. All our social housing stock is classed as temporary and specialist housing. We are a specialist social care provider, providing supported housing and social care services for people with a range of needs in local communities. We provide integrated housing, support and care services for four main groups: individuals with mental health needs, learning disabilities, young people and people who have experienced homelessness, including those who face multiple disadvantages, a history of rough sleeping, and survivors of domestic abuse.

Building Safety and Quality

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

% of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out - **100%**

% of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out - **100%**

% of homes for which all required electrical safety checks have been carried out - **100%**

C18: What % of homes meet the national housing quality standard? Of those which fail, what is the housing provider doing to address these failings?

What % of homes meet the national housing quality standard? - **98.9% (of 12254 properties)**

C19: How do you manage and mitigate the risk of damp and mould for your residents?

Damp and mould cases are reported via our Housing Management System, Contractor reports, and Stock Condition Surveys. They are raised as work orders for completion by our repairs team and they are monitored using an internal tracker

The following outputs are auto-populated from the tracker's backing data:

1. Number of damp and mould cases raised
2. Current number of Ongoing Cases
3. % of technical inspection completed
4. Number requiring wash downs
5. % of washdowns completed
6. Missed or late appointments in relation to damp and mould
7. Number of reportable HHSRS

Resident Voice

C20: What are the results of the housing provider's most recent tenant satisfaction survey?

How has the housing provider acted on these results?

Date of survey 4th December 2023 - 7th March 2024. Each survey listed the different options for how tenants could return the survey. These included:

- By freepost envelope
- By handing their survey to their support worker or housing officer
- Over the phone with our customer contact centre
- Online via the Look Ahead website

Percentage of residents responded was 29%. We had 331 survey responses which qualifies as an adequate sample size for a population of 1124. Our results were weighted slightly to ensure appropriate coverage across geographical area and specialism (i.e. mental health services, learning and disability services).

"Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by your landlord," = **77.5%**

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

Our 'Tenant and Landlord Panel' provides a safe forum for tenants to provide constructive feedback to help review and challenge organisational performance in relation to Property, Landlord, Housing Management, neighbourhood services and agency partnerships. The panel functions to offer an effective and challenging governance and scrutiny framework for tenants. It seeks to provide a safe and responsive environment for tenants to help identify options for service improvements and efficiencies related to Property, Landlord, and Housing Management and neighbourhood services.

Group membership is comprised of tenant representatives, a Board Chair, Executive lead, Operational lead, customer support staff, and departmental leads by invitation as required. The Tenant and Landlord Panel reports to the Executive and Board through the Panel's Board Chair and Executive lead to ensure a direct line of feedback between tenants and senior leadership. The group aims to meet quarterly.

The panel is responsible for scrutinising performance in relation to:

- Repairs
- Voids
- Compliance
- ASB
- Rental income collection

As well as satisfaction in relation to repairs and maintenance, property, housing, and landlord complaints. Topics of discussion for each meeting are chosen by tenant representatives within these areas of focus.

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

We have had a nil return in the last 12 months

Resident Support

C21: What are the key support services that the housing provider offers to its residents? How successful are these services in improving outcomes?

Look Ahead offer a range of diverse engagement opportunities for all its current and former customers whether they were in supported accommodation, unsupported or floating support services. Some of our initiatives include Quality Checking in which customers join a member of Quality and Audit team out in services to conduct internal QA's. The role of the customer as a Quality Checker is to interview both staff and customers that reside in the service and feedback relevant information to the QA staff member. This also includes any observations or further input they believe would be useful for the QA team to know about.

Feedback directly from some of our Quality Checkers has been overwhelmingly positive with QCs stating they have seen an increase in their confidence and mental health, becoming proactive and being able to be apart of something on an organisational level. As a result of getting involved as a Quality Checker, many of our customers have gone on to branch into our other opportunities such as Customer Voice Panels and supporting various departments at head office with hiring interviews and much more.

Look Ahead also offers bespoke and personalised Support Plans in which Support Workers sit down with their customer and plan out what the customer would like to achieve during their time in services and with the aid of the Support Plan template which is a part of our Positive Pathways – this process has been created to ensure the experience for customers is seamless and ties in with the support needs of the customer. Support Plans are reviewed every 3 months but updated whenever there have been any relevant changes and the simplicity of the Support Plan allows customers to break down their goals into smaller achievable steps. This document also evidences the customers journey and engagement within the service.

The Peer Volunteering Programme. In order to partake and enrol, residents are trained in 18 core competency modules, including mandatory Child and Adult Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Fire Training, GDPR and Professional Boundaries. They are DBS vetted and checked. This is a free service we provide for volunteers and as our DBS checks are the most stringent there are, i.e. they are Enhanced for Adults and Children, residents are able to utilise this for external volunteering opportunities too. They can also register their DBS on the update service for free, meaning it doesn't need to be manually renewed every three years, it does so automatically.

Once they are enrolled, residents are provided a local induction for the service and get to understand the inner workings of each specific service, i.e. move on and referral routes and criteria. They are introduced to external partner agencies we work with, such as social services, courts, drug and alcohol workers, NHS mental health specialists, GP, community support groups, community groups focusing on hobbies and interests, advocacy agencies such as CAB etc.

They are supervised by a trained allocated supervisor who monitors and charts the residents progression within the placement. They are given bespoke and tailored support according to their abilities, wants, needs and interests and are given more responsibility in the areas of high competency and more support in the areas of less. Over a six month period, they are able to clearly see their developmental arch and journey, demonstrating their growth and mastery of new skills and knowledge.

Tasks the residents carry out include advocacy and teaching/ supporting with life skills, such as cooking, laundry and personal hygiene. They can facilitate, co-facilitate and design activities for residents. This can involve applying for external funding, creating posters and advertising opportunities and holding consultations with residents in order to identify what will logistically work, what is needed and desired. They are also able to partake in and assist with the day to day tasks support workers complete in services. This includes room checks, H&S checks, handover and team meetings, reflective practice, admin tasks such as filing, photocopying, basic reporting and reception duties as well as shadowing keywork sessions and external agency meetings.

There is a direct progression route for peer volunteers into bank support work with Look Ahead. Having competently completed all the task over a six month period, committing to a minimum of eight hours per week, volunteers can be nominated by the contract manager and senior volunteer officer to enrol as BSW. This is a particularly popular option due to the ability to retain receipt of benefits and accept shift work only to the amount that the permitted working hours allow. This allows flexibility in managing responsibilities in the volunteers lives and recovery as well as allowing them to earn over £604.00pcm (this number is based on the previous 16 hours permitted pcm, I believe this has been increased to 20 hours pcm as of August 2024, needs to be reference checked with DWP)

Recognising not all peer volunteers wish to enter employment or BSW employment, the placements and supervision mentoring is tailored towards building up transferrable skills and practical experience of whatever they wish to achieve most, whether becoming a chef, gardener, handyman, administrator or anything else.

The Central Service Volunteering Programme. This programme follows the same enrolment steps as outlined in a). Here residents can take on placements in our head office departments and are able to specialise in industry exposure such as IT, finance, HR, contact centre support and head office reception duties. This leads to building up the residents CV in order to show practical experience and commitment over a long period of time and has led to employment within industries outside of H&SC.

All volunteers are offered extensive support around their finances, physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and tenancy support. This list is by no means extensive, we tailor our support to the needs of the individual to ensure they have as successful a placement as can be and we work closely with their support network as well and signposting and identifying external support for them.

Description of the service

As above, the Peer Volunteering and Central Service Programme.

How many residents have directly benefitted from the service? (and how representative this is of total resident population?)

At any one time we have around 40 active volunteers with several hundred supported historically. Since 2018 around 70 have moved into employment with Look Ahead and externally, ranging up to becoming service contract managers.

At any one time we have around 40 active volunteers with several hundred supported historically. Since 2018 around 70 have moved into employment with Look Ahead and externally, ranging up to becoming service contract managers.

90% + report benefits from imbedding routine and commitment into their lives and an increased sense of self worth, confidence and purpose derived from the experience.

KPIs used to measure success

All outcomes are measured on an annual bases and we assess the need to target

1. specific vulnerabilities
2. areas/communities and any other demographics where we identify shortfalls, issues or weaknesses. We have 26 contract commitments to volunteers across some of our services and prioritise meeting these first and then have many placements outside of these commitments too, including the head office placements.

Placemaking

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

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

We work closely with Islington partners to drive local recruitment and job pathways, for example, aligning with the North London Mental Health Partnership Strategy regarding working with/engaging ex-service users/foster care leavers/local education sector.

Joint working with RESET attending our mental health team meetings in Tower Hamlets helps us to provide substance misuse support to enable service users to reduce usage or sustain abstinence through information and skills sharing. In addition, we have a fully integrated approach to working with clinical mental health partners including NMHTs, GPs, and psychiatrists supported by joint working protocols and information sharing agreements. We hold quarterly liaison meetings to deliver shared objectives and provide a rapid response to issues around treatment compliance and mental health relapse risk factors.

Our Tower Hamlets managers are well established and attend multiple forums across the borough including THCVS Health and Wellbeing Forum, Safeguarding and Mental Health Task Group. We also work in close partnership with the East London Foundation Trust and LBTH Housing forming a panel to tackle barriers to safe housing identified by the panel, facilitate bidding workshops and liaise on housing application progress.

Board and Trustees

C31: How does the housing provider ensure it gets input from a diverse range of people, into the governance processes? Does the housing provider consider resident voice at the board and senior management level? Does the housing provider have policies that incorporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into the recruitment and selection of board members and senior management?

50% of the Board are women 10% are BAME.

Residents are not represented on the board because it is difficult for our board to have fair representation of their specific supported housing need. We have a Tenant and Landlord Panel which reports directly to the Board. We also have a quality and safety committee, which will be looking to recruit at least one committee member with lived experience.

C32: What % of the housing provider's Board have turned over in the last two years?

What % of the housing provider's Senior Management Team have turned over in the last two years?

20% of board have turned over in the last two years.

42% of SLT have turned over in the last two years.

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

Three

C34: What % of the housing provider's board are non-executive directors?

90%

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

Yes

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

Two

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

June 2000. Currently undertaking a review.

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

Conflicts of interest policy. Annual declaration of interest in register, which I reported to every board and committee meeting, plus standing agenda item on each board and committee meeting. Board are expected to inform the Chair and Director of Governance of an new conflicts of interest in-year.

Staff Wellbeing

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

Yes all staff and bank workers are paid as a minimum the Real Living Wage

C40: What is the housing provider's median gender pay gap?

-2.2%

C41: What is the housing provider's CEO: median-worker pay ratio?

The CEO is paid 6.3 times the median of workers or 1:6.3

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

We have four network groups - Cultural Diversity, DisAbility, Gender Equality and LGBTQ+ who are led by staff and who work closely with the Director of People to address Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) issues and raise awareness. We release an annual Diversity Brochure detailing our gender pay gap, cultural diversity pay gap and CEO multiplier as well as detailing the work we have done that year and plan to do. We have awareness raising events and competitions. We have a board lead for D&I who meets with D and I leads on SLT at least twice a year to review D&I strategic issues. We have a D&I policy and action plan and we also ask staff for their feedback on D&I as part of our six monthly staff pulse survey.

C43: How does the housing provider support the physical and mental health of its staff?

We have 24/7 counselling available for all staff for free via our EAP provider. We have an area on our intranet dedicated to health and wellbeing. We offer Health cash back plan for free to all staff to help them if they need to get medical treatment, this provider also provides health and wellbeing advice on their website to staff.

We have a staff discount scheme via Reward Gateway which enables staff to get discounts on gym membership. We carry out Best Companies staff survey every two years to ask staff their feedback on various levels of engagement including wellbeing and feedback is considered as part of the corporate action plans.

If there is a serious incident in one of our services staff are also given access to specialist group therapy specialising in serious incidences. We have an Occupational Health provider who staff are referred to if they have health issues impacting their day to day work and need advice and support and where needed we make reasonable adjustments.

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

We had 55 people enrolled on apprenticeship qualifications relevant to their job role last year, ILM Level 2 Looking Ahead to Management – 19 participants, ILM Level 5 Certificate in Leadership & Management – 13 participants, CPCAB Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Skills - 15 participants. In addition we ran 444 training courses for staff, 87% of promotions go to internal candidates. Completing ILM or accredited courses - 55 people enrolled onto apprenticeship qualifications via Apprenticeship Levy.

Supply Chain

C45: How is social value creation considered when procuring goods and services? What measures are in place to monitor the delivery of this Social Value?

With contracts of large value that we procure (for example repairs and maintenance), contracts are scored against social value and investment in additional value-added support for our customers. For smaller value contracts, we do not consider social value at this stage.

For contracts we hold with local authorities we commit to certain social value measures. This may include for example the employment of apprentices, investment in staff training or other measures aimed at creating social value in a local area.

C46: How is sustainability considered when procuring goods and services? What measures are in place to monitor the sustainability of your supply chain when procuring goods and services?

We require suppliers/contractors to evidence their environmental policies & targets during the tender process.

As part of the the tender process, a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) is used to assess the suitability of providers who wish to be considered for being awarded contracts.

For further information on ESG at Look Ahead, contact:

communications@lookahead.org.uk

lookahead.org.uk

or follow us on social media



@LookAheadFB



@LookAheadTweets



@LookAheadIG



Look Ahead
Care and Support



Look Ahead
CARE, SUPPORT AND HOUSING