



Environmental, Social
and Governance Report
2021

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Delivering equality through homes, support and opportunity

We are Octavia. For over 150 years, we have stayed true to our social purpose to provide good quality, affordable homes, support and opportunity to enable people on lower incomes to live in central and west London.

We have built a unique offer that puts people and communities first, harnessing the skills and commitment of our colleagues, partners and stakeholders to build and sustain thriving and diverse communities that enrich the lives of everyone who lives in them.

With the pandemic prompting wider societal conversations about community, opportunity, housing and health – our offer is just as relevant today as it was when we were founded by Victorian philanthropist Octavia Hill in 1865.

We are very proud to be one of the early adopters of the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing and I am delighted to be able to share with you our first Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) report.

This report outlines our performance against our goals, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to sustainability and net zero carbon. It also highlights the positive impact of our work on residents and communities and our continued focus on robust and effective governance.

As a provider of homes, care and support operating in some of the most expensive parts of the capital, we take great pride in the active role we play in building safe, sustainable and affordable homes to ensure better lives for all, now and for generations to come.

Sandra Skeete
Chief Executive
Octavia





The Good Economy

Quality Assurance Statement

Overview

The Good Economy (TGE) have been appointed by Octavia to provide an independent review of the quality of reporting against the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRS). This quality assurance statement outlines our approach and opinion on Octavia’s SRS submission.

Octavia

Octavia is a not-for-profit organisation and a Registered Provider of Social Housing, building and managing affordable homes to thousands of people in west and central London for the last 150 years. Octavia owns more than 5000 properties, alongside providing care and support services for residents and community projects. Octavia has been accredited as a gold standard provider of sustainable homes by SHIFT for 3 years running, however has not reported against the SRS before.

TGE’s method

TGE conducted a criteria-level review of Octavia’s response to the SRS, assessing whether each criteria submission had been correctly interpreted and the recommended metrics used. TGE provided feedback and recommendations accordingly. Additional information and access to original data sets were provided to check the method and calculation.

Fidelity to the SRS criteria

Octavia responded to all 48 criteria required of the SRS, all which TGE found to be sufficient and appropriate.

Transparency

Octavia provided access to the data sets and methodology underpinning their criteria submissions. Where applicable, Octavia acknowledged gaps in their data and provided sufficient explanations for these limitations and outlined their commitment and plans to improving data collection for future SRS reporting needs.

Quality and reliability of the data

Overall, TGE is confident with Octavia’s responses to the SRS. TGE notes that Octavia used a third party to calculate the equivalent private rental sector (PRS) rate. This methodology is robust but different to that outlined in the SRS.

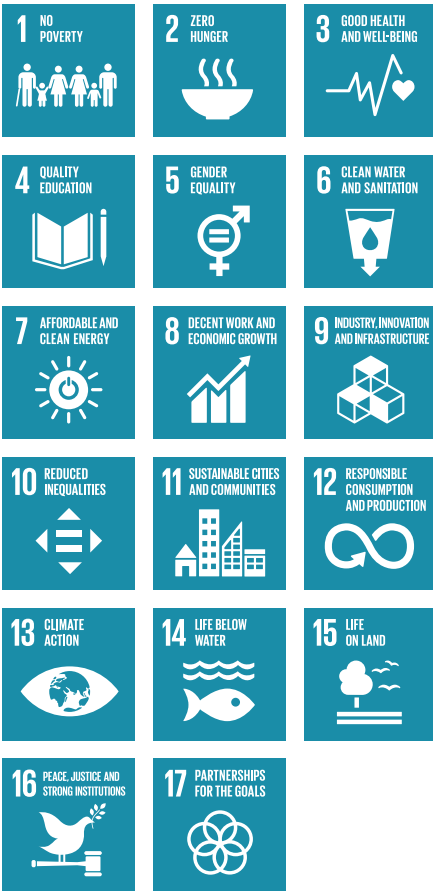
THE GOOD ECONOMY

Disclaimer: This Quality Assurance statement (the QA Statement) and the underlying review of Octavia Housing’s Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing submission (the Submission) has been made by TGE in good faith to Octavia Housing in accordance with TGE’s standard terms and conditions. TGE does not accept any liability, and makes no representations, warranties or guarantees, to any third parties for any statements made in this QA Statement and/or in respect of the Submission.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

Making a positive contribution to the communities in which we operate is embedded in our Corporate Strategy, *Better Lives for All 2021-24*. This is further evidenced through our community work including welfare assistance, training, employment, outreach and befriending, youth activities, mental wellness and resilience and volunteering opportunities.

This work, coupled with building and maintaining good quality homes across tenures, built to modern specifications that support sustainability and the journey to net zero, aligns to several UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



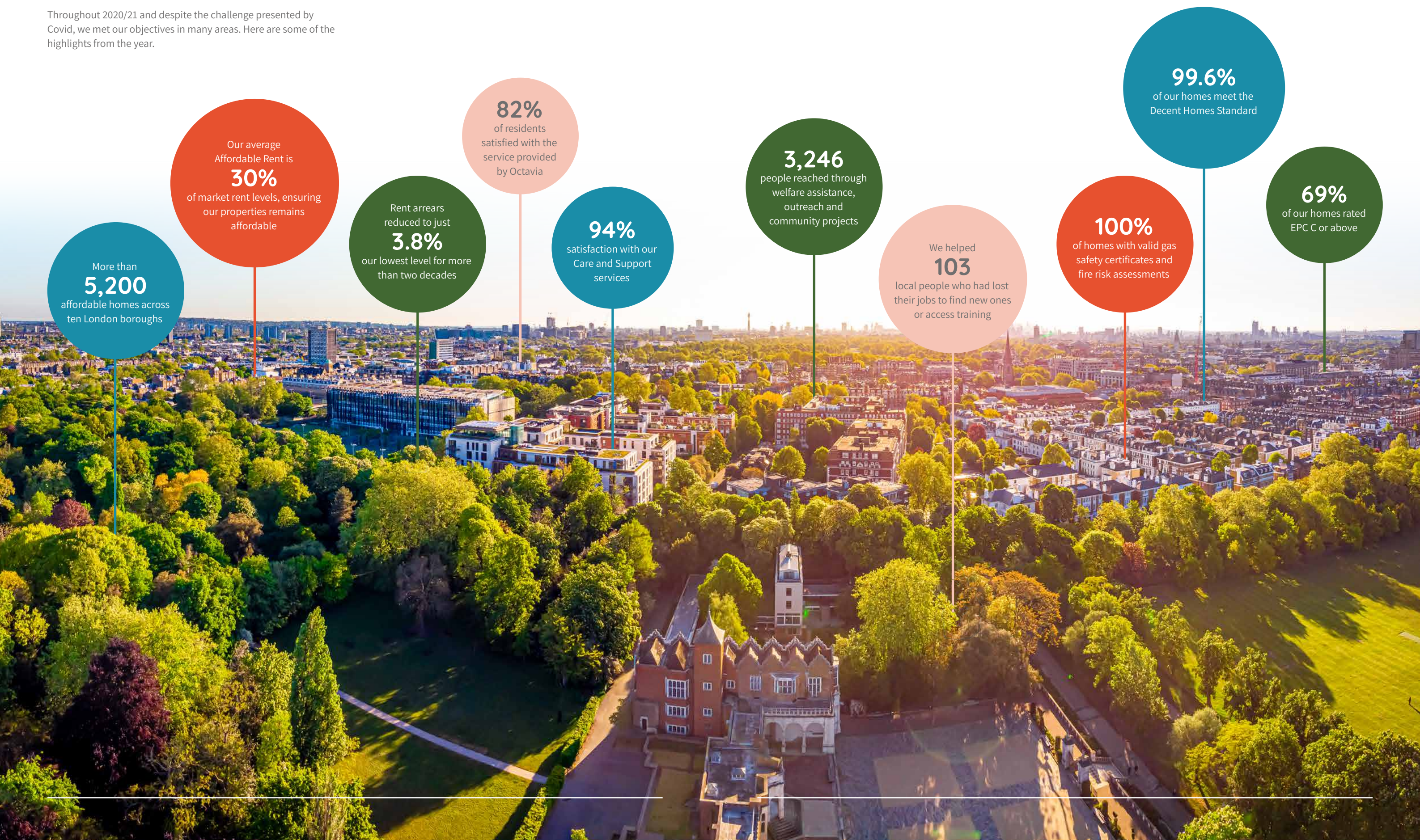
The structure of this report is aligned to the specific themes outlined in The Sustainability Reporting Standard (SRS) for Social Housing. Within each theme we have reported against individual criteria. The table below provides details of the themes and the specific SDGs to which they relate.

ESG	Theme	Description	UN SDG
Social	Affordability and security	Extent to which homes are genuinely affordable	1, 10, 11 No poverty, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities
	Building safety and quality	Meeting legal responsibilities to protect residents and keep buildings safe	3, 11 Good health & wellbeing, Sustainable Cities and Communities
	Resident voice	Listening to and empowering residents	11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
	Resident support	Initiatives to support individual residents	10, 11 Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities
Environmental	Climate change	Impact on climate change and risk mitigants	7, 11, 13 Affordable and Clean Energy, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Climate Action
	Ecology	Protection of the local environment and ecology	15 Life on land
	Resource management	Waste and water management and sustainably sourced materials	6, 11, 12 Clean water and sanitation, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption
Governance	Structure and governance	Structure and approach to governance	16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
	Board and trustees	Suitability and performance of the board and trustees	16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
	Staff wellbeing	Staff support and wellbeing	3, 8 Good health & wellbeing, Decent Work and Economic Growth
	Supply chain	Social value and environmental impact of procuring goods and services	8, 12, 13 Decent Work and Economic Growth, Responsible Consumption, Climate Action



Our year at a glance

Throughout 2020/21 and despite the challenge presented by Covid, we met our objectives in many areas. Here are some of the highlights from the year.





SOCIAL

SOCIAL

Affordability and security

C1. For properties that are subject to the rent regulation regime, report against one or more Affordability Metric?

Property Type	Average Passing Rent	Average LHA	Average Market Rent*	% of LHA	% of Market Rent*
Social Rent (General Needs)	£129.81	£349.15	£468.61	37.20%	27.7%
Affordable Rent	£147.29	£347.34	£507.23	42.40%	29.0%
Supported	£91.97	£299.40	£206.28	30.70%	44.6%

* Data analysis provided by Jones Long LaSalle (JLL) based upon data provided by Rightmove Data Services and interviews with local estate agencies

JLL estimate the market rental on our General Needs portfolio to be £90m per annum against the rents actually charged in the financial year of £25m. The difference of £65m represents the social value that the local community and government receive from Octavia's properties.

Octavia has been true to our social purpose for over 150 years. Under the Affordable Rent regime, rents can be charged at up to 80% of market rates but, given we operate in some

of the most expensive areas of the capital we ensure that rented property remains affordable to those in low paid employment. Our average Affordable Rent represents around 30% of market rent levels in the areas of London in which we operate.

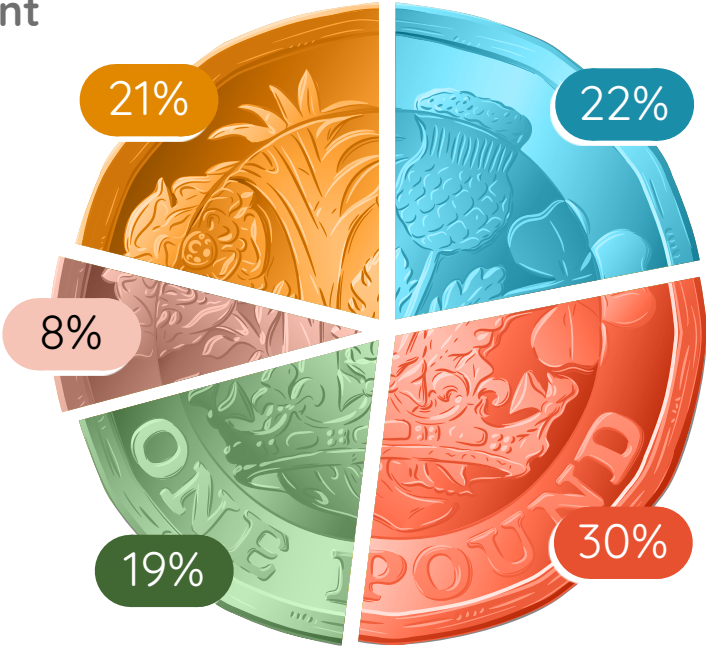
This has contributed to a reduction on rent arrears to just 3.8%, our lowest level for more than two decades and demonstrates that our housing remains genuinely affordable to those on the lowest incomes.

How social housing rent was spent

We aim to provide value for money in the services we provide to residents. In 2020/21, 82% of people asked said they were satisfied that their rent was value for money.

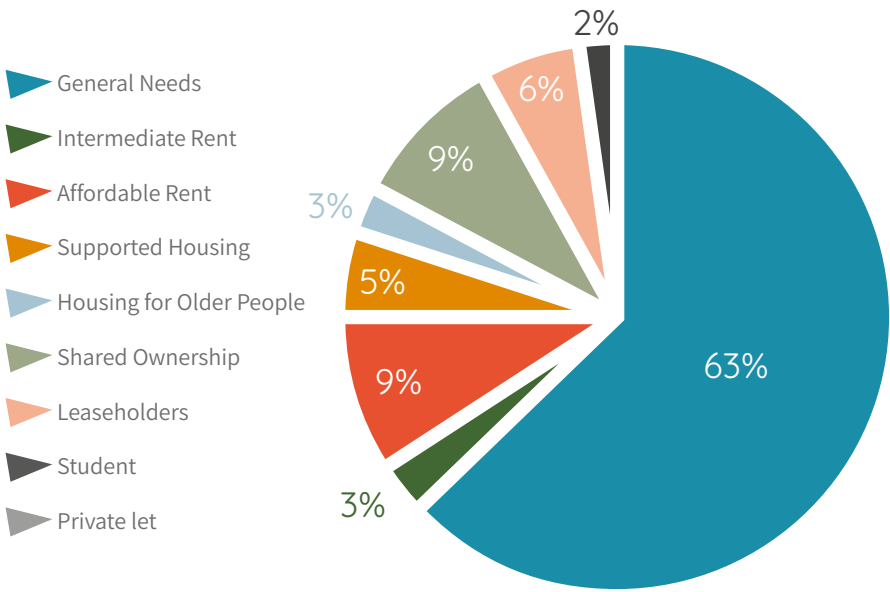
How every pound is spent

- Homes management
- Homes services (service charges)
- Routine maintenance
- Planned maintenance
- Homes depreciation allocation



C2. Share, and number, of existing homes (homes completed before the start of the previous 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 Rental Sector?

Octavia has more than 5,200 affordable homes for rent and shared ownership, enabling a diverse community of Londoners to live close to where they work and have social ties. These homes offer long term security to people on lower and middle incomes in an area that would otherwise be unaffordable to them.



Tenure	Ownership/ management	Number of homes
General Needs	Owned and managed by Octavia	3,284
	Owned by Octavia and managed by others	3
Intermediate Rent	Owned and managed by Octavia	167
Affordable Rent	Owned and managed by Octavia	469
Supported Housing	Owned and managed by Octavia	199
	Owned and managed by others	81
Housing for Older People	Owned and managed by Octavia	138
Shared Ownership	Sold	470
	Unsold	9
Leaseholders	Managed by Octavia	296
Student	Owned and managed by Octavia	125
Private let	Owned and managed by Octavia	6
Total		5,247

At the end of March 2021, we launched a new three-year Corporate Strategy, putting in place a plan to deliver 60 new homes a year, at least 40% of them for affordable rent. Octavia has received an allocation of over £55 million to deliver 450 much needed new affordable homes in partnership with the Greater London Authority (GLA), as part of the new London Affordable Homes Programme over a period from 2021 to 2026. Of the 450 homes to be built, 50% will be for social rent with the other 50% for affordable home ownership including shared ownership and London Living Rent tenures.



Affordable shared ownership

Our homes for shared ownership provide opportunity for people on lower incomes to buy an affordable home in some of the most high-cost areas of the country. We sold 22 new homes for shared ownership in 2020/21, across the boroughs of Ealing (2), Hounslow (6) and Westminster (14).

The average household income of people who bought our homes in 2020/21 was just over £55,800. Shared ownership homes sales for the year generated an income of £3.86m and surplus after costs was £1.42m. The average sales value of our homes was £696,000 for those sold in Westminster and £370,000 across the outer London boroughs of Hounslow and Ealing.

Our shared ownership model enabled purchase of two-bedroom homes in Westminster for a combined mortgage, rent and service charge of less than £2,000 per month, and £1,450 per month for two-bedroom homes in outer London - demonstrating affordability to those on lower incomes, when compared to outright purchase.

C3. Share, and number, of new homes (homes that were completed in the previous 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 Rental Sector?

2020/21 was the last year of our 2018/21 corporate strategy. We developed over 250 new homes during that three-year period. Given the considerable challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, we were still able to develop 24 new homes, 12 of them for Affordable Rent.

Completed 2020/2021	No. of properties	% of properties
Affordable rent	12	50%
Intermediate rent	8	33%
Shared ownership	4	17%
Total	24	100%

Homes				Tenure		
Local authority	Completed 2020/2021	Under construction at 31/3/2021	Contracts agreed but not signed at 31/3/2021	Affordable Rent	Shared Ownership	Intermediate Rent
Brent	-	131	22	81	72	-
Camden	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ealing	-	36	-	19	17	-
Hammersmith & Fulham	8	38	-	14	-	32
Harrow	-	80	-	60	20	-
Hounslow	-	19	-	8	11	-
Wandsworth	-	6	86	19	71	2
Westminster	16	15	-	12	4	15
Total	24	325	108	213	195	49



“By the end of March 2021, 325 new homes were in development, 60% of them for Affordable Rent.”

Insufficient affordable housing remains a challenge in London, contributing to the inequalities in our neighbourhoods and we continue to focus on providing more affordable homes to people who would otherwise be priced out of our communities.

We will continue build and maintain good quality homes across tenures, built to modern specifications that support sustainability and the journey to net zero. Our plan is to deliver 60 new homes each year for the next three years, 40% of which will be for affordable rent.

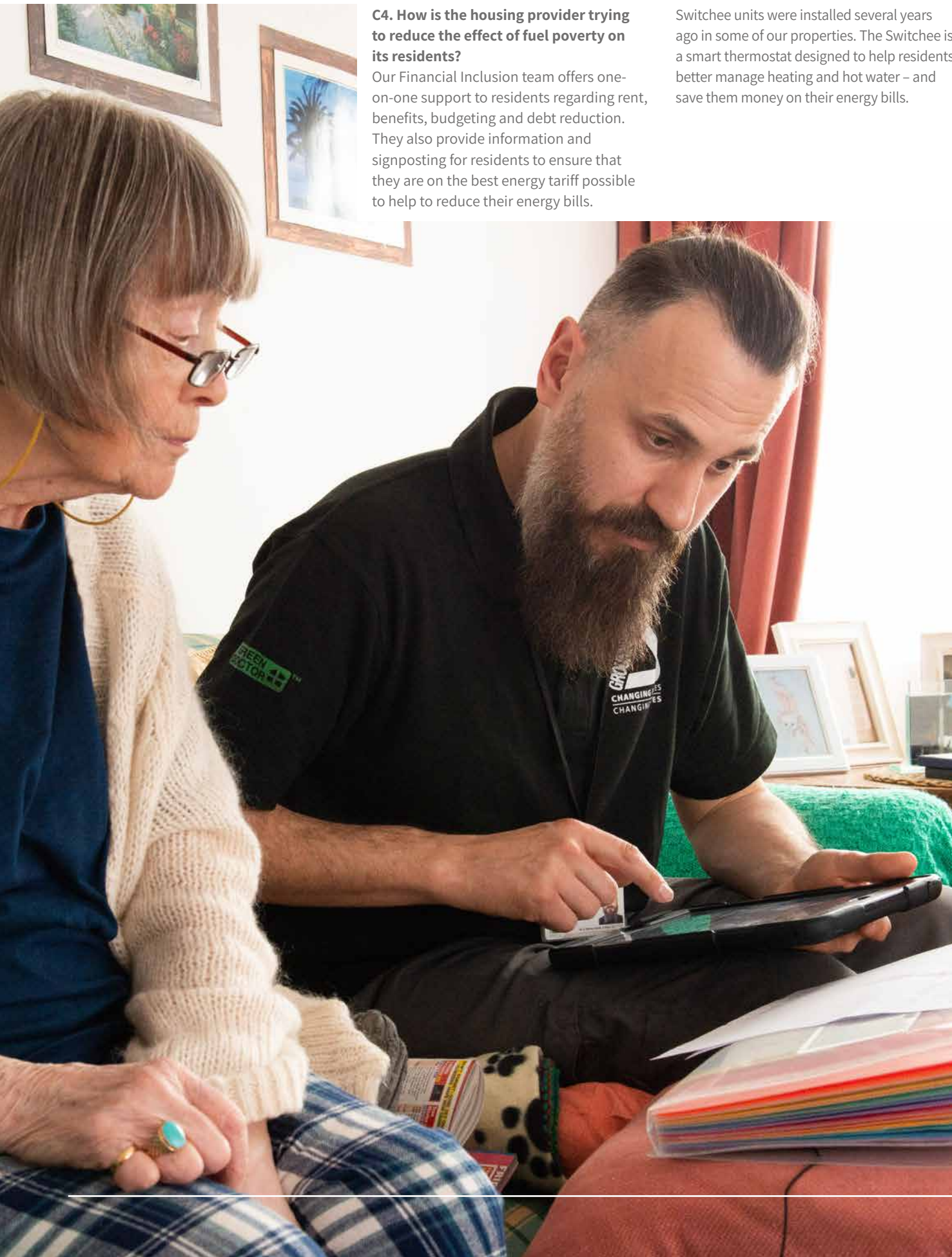
Developing in partnership

Our leadership of Connected Housing Partnership, a strategic development partner with the Greater London Authority which we operate with Shepherds Bush Housing Group and Origin Housing, continued and is on track to exceed its target to deliver just over 1,400 homes by 2023.

Through another partnership with Barratt Homes and the London Borough of Harrow, in 2021/22 we committed to develop an extra care housing scheme, delivering 60 quality rented homes with care for older people. We also committed to developing a further 20 shared ownership homes in the borough through our partnership with Harrow Churches Housing Association.

“This flat just feels like a dream. I never imagined I would get housed in this area. I feel so lucky.”

Octavia resident housed through our partnership with Solace and Standing Together



C4. How is the housing provider trying to reduce the effect of fuel poverty on its residents?

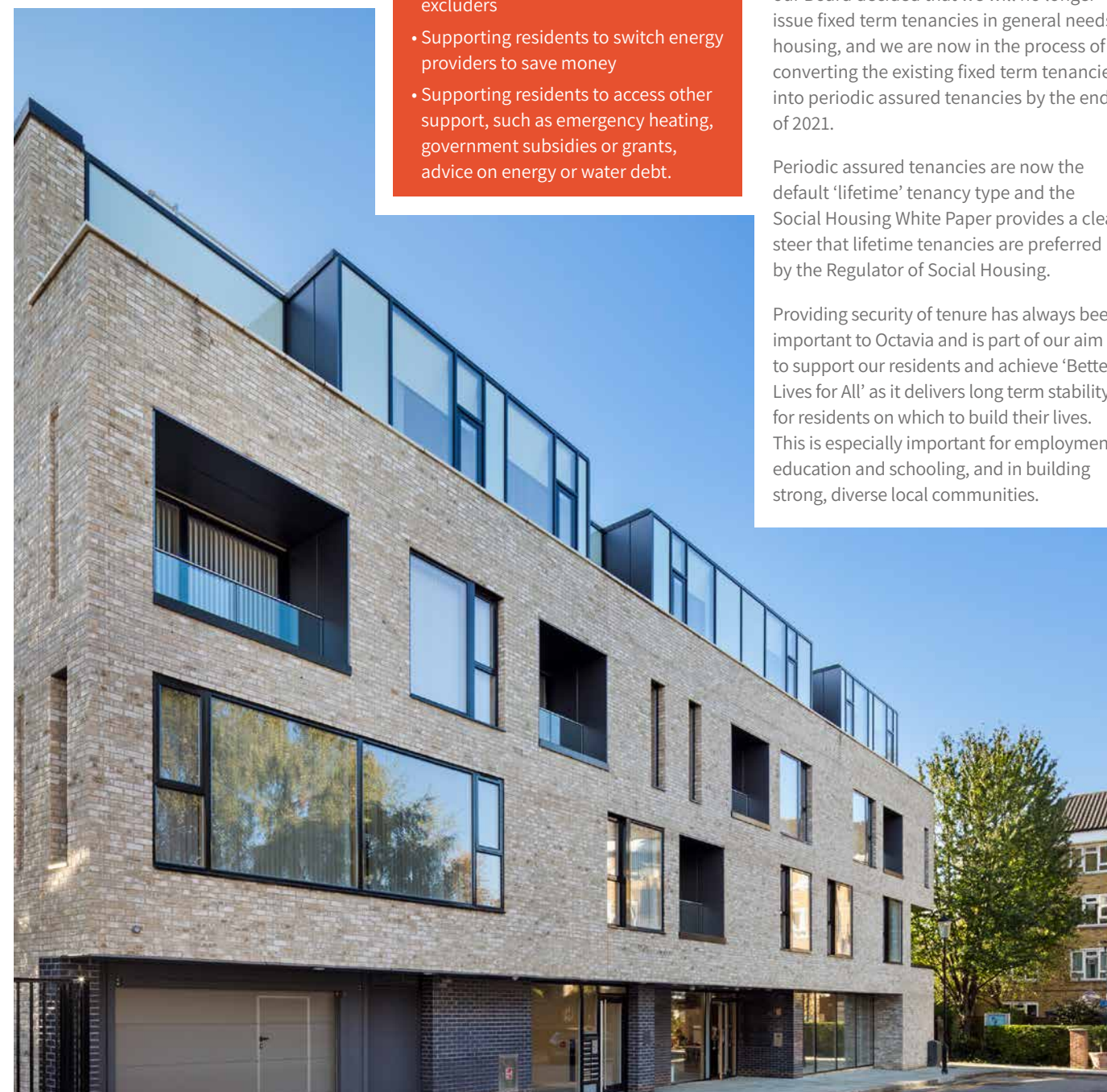
Our Financial Inclusion team offers one-on-one support to residents regarding rent, benefits, budgeting and debt reduction. They also provide information and signposting for residents to ensure that they are on the best energy tariff possible to help to reduce their energy bills.

Switchee units were installed several years ago in some of our properties. The Switchee is a smart thermostat designed to help residents better manage heating and hot water – and save them money on their energy bills.

We currently target fuel poverty advice through the Green Doctors, who provide free energy efficiency and tariff switching advice through our partnership with a charity called Groundwork. Groundwork's Green Doctors help households stay warm, stay well, save money on their household bills and reduce carbon. The aim is to support the people who most need our support, and their staff are as good with people as they are with technical knowhow. We promote the service on our website and in resident newsletters.

The Green Doctors focus is on the following:

- Identifying causes of heat loss in the home
- Helping identify and tackle damp or mould problems
- Offering useful tips for saving energy and water whilst ensuring homes stay safe and comfortable
- Installing small energy and water efficiency measures, such as draft excluders
- Supporting residents to switch energy providers to save money
- Supporting residents to access other support, such as emergency heating, government subsidies or grants, advice on energy or water debt.



Our retrofit plans are the main strategic approach to mitigating fuel poverty, we are retrofitting homes to support the Government's fuel poverty targets for EPC D by 2025 and EPC C by 2030. Our Financial Inclusion Team supports residents in fuel related debt.

C5. What % of rental homes have a 3-year fixed tenancy agreement (or longer)?

As of 31st March 2021 we had 23 tenancies in general needs with a fixed term of 5 years (0.5% of our tenancies). Earlier this year our Board decided that we will no longer issue fixed term tenancies in general needs housing, and we are now in the process of converting the existing fixed term tenancies into periodic assured tenancies by the end of 2021.

Periodic assured tenancies are now the default 'lifetime' tenancy type and the Social Housing White Paper provides a clear steer that lifetime tenancies are preferred by the Regulator of Social Housing.

Providing security of tenure has always been important to Octavia and is part of our aim to support our residents and achieve 'Better Lives for All' as it delivers long term stability for residents on which to build their lives. This is especially important for employment, education and schooling, and in building strong, diverse local communities.



Building safety and quality

C6. What % of homes with a gas appliance have an in-date, accredited gas safety check?

100%. As of 31 March 2021, all our properties have a valid annual gas safety certificate.

C7. What % of homes have an outstanding Fire Risk Assessment?

100%. As of 31 March 2021, all our properties have a valid Fire Risk Assessment. Our inspection cycle is between 1 - 3 years dependant on the use/ height previous risk rating of the building. For example, all care and buildings above 18m are inspected annually.

C8. What % of homes meet the Decent Homes Standard?

Octavia continues to maintain an excellent record on the Decent Homes Standard with 99.6% of our homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard. Just 14 properties did not meet the standard as of 31 March 2021, all of which failed due to the age of their kitchens and bathrooms.

Our kitchen and bathroom replacement programme was put on hold in March 2020 as a result of the pandemic. This work is due to re-start shortly, with the intention of completing 122 (30 bathrooms, 92 kitchens) units in the next twelve months. All 14 properties which failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard will be addressed as part of this year's programme.

Resident voice

C9. What arrangements are in place to enable the residents to hold management to account for provision of services?

It is important to us that residents are involved in shaping and improving our services. We value their views and feedback and ensure that their voice is heard at both strategic levels and in our service delivery.

The resident voice is heard strategically and locally through our menu of flexible involvement options designed to make resident engagement as easy as possible. In 2020-21, 1328 residents were involved with resident engagement activities holding our service to account and providing valuable feedback about the service.

Our strategic resident group, Your Voice, reports to our Group Services Committee. Meeting on a monthly basis, Your Voice is a cross-tenure resident group that works to ensure the voice of residents is heard. Consisting of 11 residents and three independent housing specialists, Your Voice, independently influences and helps to shape Octavia's services.

Your Voice receive regular performance reports to scrutinise how we have been performing and have made valuable contributions to reviews of our complaints policy, compensation policy, assignment and succession policy and our Sustainability Strategy. The group does this by looking at the wide range of resident feedback collected about our service delivery and through monitoring our performance, to determine its priorities for each year. These performance reports are shared with the Groups Services Committee and then with the Board and Executive team.



Keith has been an Octavia resident for over 30 years. He is a member of our resident strategic group, Your Voice, and a member of our Complaints Panel.

"I applied and joined Your Voice four years ago and it's been a really good experience, finding out what is going on with Octavia's service and being part of a team that scrutinises Octavia's work in a constructive way. Octavia actively encourages this. Board members and our Chief Executive have joined our meetings. It's clear Your Voice and residents mean something and Octavia genuinely values what we say.

Building a greener future

"Going forward, the environment is something many residents feel strongly about. Your Voice has made a contribution through working with Octavia to develop its Environmental Sustainability Strategy. Octavia wants to be as green as possible and we are helping with those plans.

Responding to Covid-19

"Of course, responding to Covid-19 has been, and will continue to be, very important. The crisis has brought home to all of us how important resident engagement is.

"There are lots of questions to be asked about what 'the new normal' looks like for services, and how residents and staff are supported. It's important that residents of all ages and backgrounds take part in asking these questions and having a dialogue with Octavia.

"Lastly and importantly, so many residents and local people are struggling financially, many have lost jobs, and young people especially are facing lots of challenges. Octavia do a lot already to help through the Foundation, but even more support will be needed now, as we start to recover from Covid-19."

We also take on board direct feedback from residents. For example, we contacted 506 residents over two ‘Call Around’ events, and a further 118 residents responded to a specific survey, which enabled us to gain valuable insight into how to improve the My Octavia App (by adding repairs functionality) and in redesigning our website. Repairs functionality has now been added to the My Octavia App, which has 1,448 active users.

Over 2020-21 we held 25 local meetings to address a wide range of issues including maintaining communal areas and any reported anti-social behaviour. These local events help to strengthen the connections between people and to build strong communities. We also hosted two focus groups involving twenty residents, including one to discuss how residents expect our services to be provided post-lockdown. Residents told us that maintaining flexible contact methods was important, and that they wanted us to continue focusing on supporting our communities and this feedback fed directly into our new Communities Strategy, which launched in October 2021.

C10. How does the housing provider measure Resident Satisfaction and how has Resident Satisfaction changed over the last three years?

We measure resident satisfaction through a number of transactional and perception surveys.

Our largest sample survey is our STAR survey with all general needs and Housing for Older People residents. We last conducted this survey in March/April 2020 to the required sample and method specified by Housemark, the sector’s largest benchmarking club. 589 surveys were completed (exceeding the minimum of 541 responses required for an organisation our size). Satisfaction scores remain in the top quartile compared to our London-based peers. We conduct this survey every three years, so the next survey is due in March/April 2023.

Satisfaction levels were stable across all indicators compared to three years’ ago despite the latest survey being conducted mostly during the first Covid19 lockdown (this timing is likely to have had a small negative impact on scores). The survey showed 82% of residents happy with our service overall, and 87% satisfied with the neighbourhood where they live.



The table below shows our latest STAR satisfaction scores compared to three years ago:

STAR 2020 questions	% satisfied 2020-21	% satisfied 2017-18	London Housemark comparison
Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Octavia?	82%	83%	Top quartile
How satisfied are you with the overall quality of your home?	81%	84%	Top quartile
Thinking specifically about the building you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Octavia provides a home that is safe and secure?	81%	Not asked	No data available
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Octavia is easy to deal with?	79%	Not asked	No data available
How satisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live?	87%	88%	Top quartile
How satisfied are you that your rent provides value for money?	82%	86%	Top quartile
How satisfied are you that your service charges provides value for money?	60%	59%	Upper median
Generally, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Octavia deals with repairs and maintenance?	76%	77%	Top quartile
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Octavia gives you the opportunity to make your views known?	74%	Not asked	No data available
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Octavia listens to your views and acts upon them?	70%	69%	Top quartile



C11. In the last 12 months, how many complaints have been upheld by the Ombudsman.

How have these complaints (or others) resulted in change of practice within the housing provider?

In 2020-21 we received a total of 106 complaints (an 8% reduction compared to the previous year). Our average response time to complaints was 8 working days, which is quicker than our standard service level of 10 working days. 89% of complaints were resolved locally by our service managers.

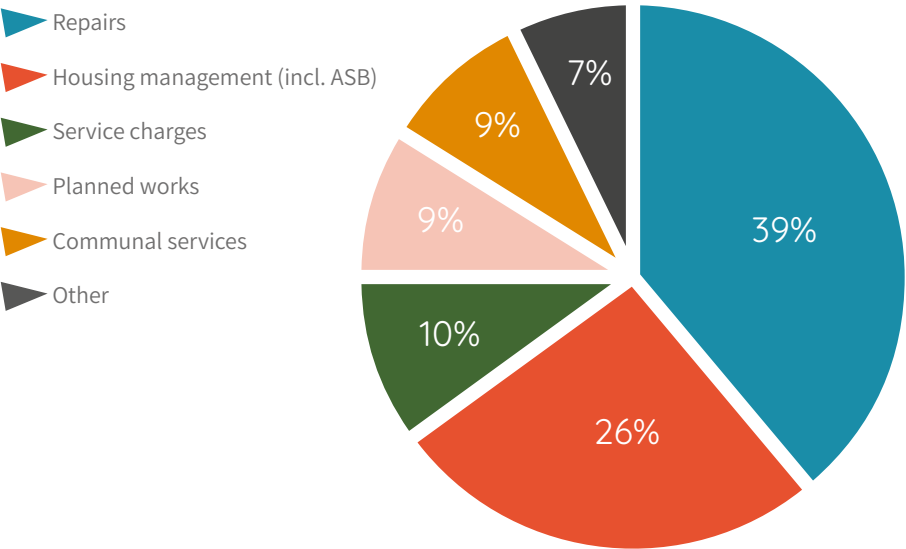
12 were escalated to our independent complaints panel. 8 complaints were reviewed by the Housing Ombudsman, and in one case the Housing Ombudsman found maladministration on the delays to completing a repair and the level of compensation offered. We take the learning from this finding and all complaints very seriously. We have subsequently reviewed the case and revised our Compensation Policy to reflect this finding.

In addition to the learning from this complaint referred to the Housing Ombudsman, a number of other service improvements were made from handling of complaints:

- We met with a managing agent to discuss improvements needed to their communication and responsiveness with residents and to build the working relationship.
- Reinforced our service standards at Operations Meeting with our contractors and their operatives.
- We are reviewing how we respond to noise nuisance and hard flooring issues with residents in our Your Voice group.
- More consistent and regular updates on progress with planned works to residents.
- Contractors to always offer temporary heaters when there are on-going heating problems.
- All void inspections to be signed off by the Buildings Inspector to ensure sufficient quality assurance that void standards are being met.

Dealing with complaints

In 2020/21, we received 106 formal complaints (nine fewer than in 2019/20) and the complaints were about:



Resident support

C.12 What support services does the housing provider offer to its residents. How successful are these services in improving outcomes?

Our community projects help create sustainable, diverse neighbourhoods, providing equality of opportunity. We want to enable people to live well and independently, with confidence in the future and in reaching their potential.

These projects connect with people across all age groups, optimising our impact and reach by helping to create and sustain vibrant, thriving neighbourhoods. In spite of the challenge of Covid-19 throughout the year, we continued in our ambition to make a difference. The uncertainty created by pandemic highlighted the importance of this work more than ever, as people struggled with their health and wellbeing, or were financially affected.

Our face-to-face activities were suspended for most of the year, but we still met our ambition in many areas, and reached 3,246 people through welfare assistance, training, employment, outreach and befriending, and youth activities. Our Better Lives Programme provides hundreds of older people every year with outreach support and one-to-one and group befriending, to help prevent social isolation and loneliness. We switched to a telephone and online delivery model for these services before the start of the year, in anticipation of increased need due to the pandemic. Our befriending service moved to a telephone service, as a record number of local people came forward to volunteer with us.

We are hugely grateful to our partners and volunteers who made continuing with our community projects possible. Just under 300 people were actively engaged in volunteering with us during the year, most of them involved with our befriending programme and many joining us during the height of the pandemic.

More than 20 volunteers were referred to us through our partnership with Westminster Council and 89 people were from corporate partnerships who were involved with befriending, virtual activities at our extra care schemes, and our employment and training programmes. Of the 878 people who benefitted from the service, 205 through one-to-one active befriending relationships.

At the end of 2020 we launched a report with New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) evaluating the impact of our Better Lives Programme on tackling loneliness and isolation. It revealed the programme's value in improving physical health, wellbeing and quality of life, with 40% of people using the service reporting a decrease in feelings of loneliness and 61% noting an improvement in mental wellbeing.

There is strong evidence to indicate that Octavia's service achieved many of its intended outcomes, including reducing loneliness, encouraging greater self-care, supporting physical health and independence and promoting wellbeing and quality of life amongst people who used the service. There is also evidence to indicate that the service has a positive impact on people's confidence and motivation to do activities and their ability to access essential services. The research also highlighted that the one-to-one befriending and group activities supported people who used the service to become more socially connected. Overall, 96% of service users were satisfied with the service they received from Octavia.

“What I like most is the interaction with residents. I also like helping residents with different issues. Residents are always really grateful. Not just for the cleaning services they receive, but for the help and support we provide as caretakers. I’ve received chocolates and flowers before after helping them out. They know they can count on me and that’s a good feeling.”

Octavia caretaker, Maria

During the research period, we reached more than 500 people and provided over 2,500 hours of befriending. NPC calculated the Social Return on Investment (SROI) from the service as 1:6 - so for every £1 spent in providing the service, an equivalent of £6 was achieved in terms of wider social value to society. We have shared the findings with the sector and plan to build on this with further work on measuring the impact of these services.

Employment

We supported 103 people with training and accessing new employment during the year, through workshops and skills training, with 16 people helped into work. In January 2021, we signed up to the Government's Kickstart Scheme, joining a consortium of 59 organisations to create three high quality, six-month placements for young people aged 16-24.

In March 2021, we signed up with Kensington and Chelsea borough's 'Pathways to Work' charter, pledging to work in partnership to tackle unemployment among social housing residents through increasing employability and opportunity by identifying and providing access to funding opportunities for training, employment opportunities and employer links, including work placements and internships.

Help from our friends

During the year, we supported 615 people with food bank referrals or food parcels

“Octavia’s employment service has helped to broaden my horizons and re-evaluate what I want from the next stage of my career. Now that I’m back in stable employment and I am able to revisit my longer-term search, it’s reassuring to know that Octavia will be there with me every step of the way.”

Octavia resident Sireh, who we supported to achieve a new job during the pandemic.

and secured grants for 96 people on low incomes to purchase essential household items such as fridges, cookers or computer equipment for education, training or work.

We also provided 364 older or disabled people with home handyman and gardening visits. We are extremely grateful to the Friends of Octavia and Westminster Alms houses Foundation for supporting

our discretionary grants and food bank referrals. We are also grateful to Chelsea Football Club Foundation and Dads House for providing meals and food parcels, which our Care and Outreach teams delivered to people shielding or facing hardship.



Placemaking

C13. Provide examples or case studies of where the housing provider has been engaged in placemaking or placeshaping activities.

Octavia's Better Lives Community Fund supported a further 763 younger people through grants to small local charities and voluntary groups that are working with children and young people experiencing isolation and/ or from low-income households.

Grants are given to organisations that clearly demonstrate outcomes and impact, and specifically how they reach children and young people, how many they reach, what proportion of children and young people our grant will reach and what difference they expect the project to make.

“Ten local charities benefitted from a total of £42,581 grant funding, with recipients given flexibility to use allocated funds to respond to needs created by the pandemic.”

We are very grateful to the Octavia Foundation Trustees for their support with managing the fund.

- £42,581 donated to 10 local charities through Octavia's Better Lives Community Fund - 763 young people attended activities provided
- 134 young people attended regular weekday and school holiday events
- 615 people received food vouchers and/or food parcels

- 246 people supported through our dedicated Covid community response across support and care services
- 96 people received grants for essential home items
- Helped 103 people seeking employment and training
- 293 people volunteered with us
- 878 people benefitted from outreach, befriending and activities

Connecting younger people

Our youth team kept 134 young people connected and creatively engaged through a mixture of after school and school holiday activities, many of them held virtually, including:

- An intergenerational 'Gen Pals' project, partnering young people with an older 'pal' to share stories over Zoom and through letters and digital art
- A video produced with Hammersmith & Fulham Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), to boost confidence among young service users about returning to school after the end of lockdown
- A local project creating podcasts about the urban development in the Kensal Green area of west London.

“Our youth team kept 134 young people connected and creatively engaged.”

One of our main programmes called 'Birth of Cool', a film and digital art project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, continued during the year. The programme provides young participants with the opportunity to learn new digital media skills, enjoy a creative outlet and connect with media art experts in the field.

A total of 32 young people, guided by adult volunteers, mentors and industry experts, were involved in the Birth of Cool programme. 9 of those young people went on to further education or work in the digital arts professions.

'Birth of Cool' produced a series of installations and interactive exhibits, including two broadcast-standard films. One of those films, 'Punk Road', which documented the cultural and fashion history of the Kings Road in Chelsea, was accepted into 5 film festivals worldwide (London Rocks Arts Festival 2020, Screen Power Film Festival 2020, New Indie London Film Festival 2020, The Lift-Off Sessions 2020 and LA Punk Festival 2020), eventually placing runner-up at the London Rock Film Festival in 2020. You can find out more and watch the films here: <https://www.birhofcool.org/>



Quality Care

Octavia has seven extra care schemes, providing 179 homes for older people in central and west London. All were rated as Good in their last Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection, with two rated as outstanding for responsiveness. These homes offer varying levels of care, tailored to the individual needs of residents, with two of them specialising in dementia care.

Our sheltered homes provide independent living for older people, and our supported housing schemes meet a range of needs, including people with learning disabilities or mental health issues and young people at risk.

Our emphasis is on relationship-based care for the individual, understanding who are the important people in their lives and working with them in partnership to get the best outcomes, including improved confidence and resilience, reduced loneliness, improved health and wellbeing and a sense of belonging.

At the beginning of the year, our older people day services and support services adapted quickly to the evolving Covid emergency. We combined our resources across our day centre service, activities, outreach and befriending to support 246 people through a dedicated Covid community response initiative.

Residents of our extra care schemes were asked to shield, in line with national rules set out by government and we were in daily contact with local authorities and public health teams. Throughout the lockdown, our care staff stepped up to reassure residents and keep them safe, meeting extra emotional and wellbeing needs, in addition to continuing to meet care needs. We used technology to ensure residents were able to remain in contact with family and friends and kept them engaged through socially distanced and virtual events (within the parameters of the lockdown restrictions).

- **All 7** extra care schemes rated 'Good' by the CQC
- **94%** satisfaction rating from people using our care and support services
- **108** people benefitted from floating support
- **103** sheltered housing residents provided with on-site support
- **210** people took part in tailored activities
- **206** people were socially engaged with befriending
- **179** people received **3,369** hours of care per week
- **12** people able to leave hospital through our reablement units



ENVIRONMENTAL

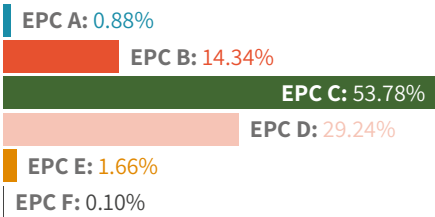
ENVIRONMENTAL

Climate Change

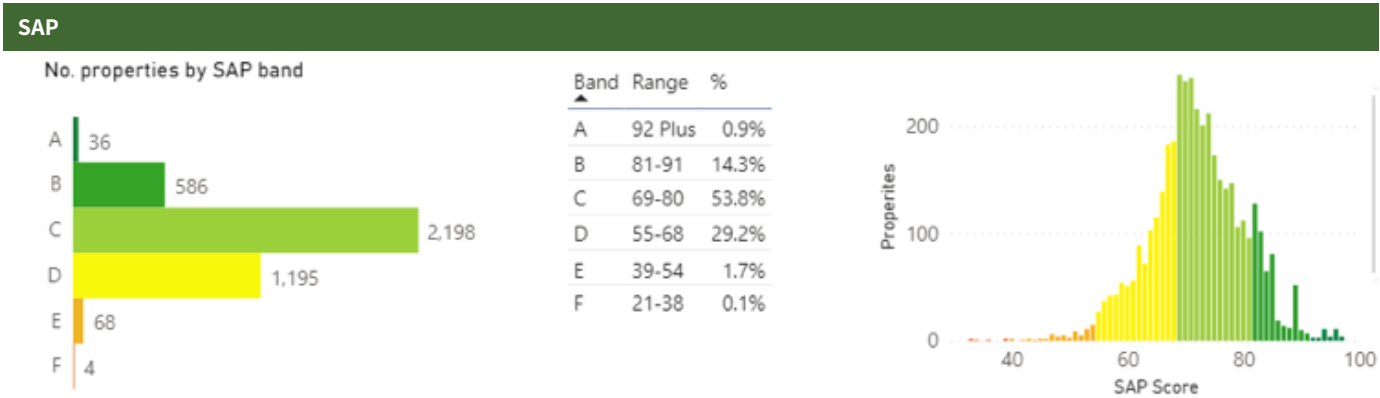
C.14 Distribution of EPC ratings of existing homes (those completed before the last financial year)?

Our investment in sustainability has seen a positive increase in the average Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings of our homes. As of March 31, 70% of our homes were rated C or above.

The distribution of EPC ratings for Octavia-owned homes in March 2021 are as follows:

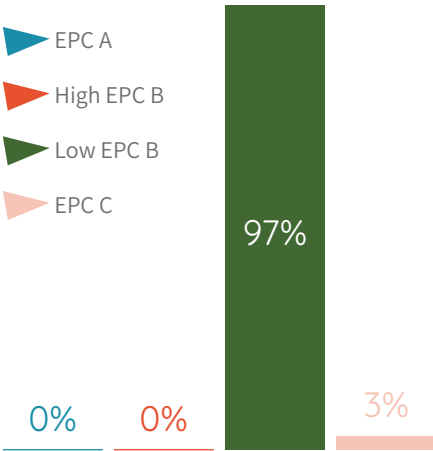


To date, we have not collected data on shared ownership and leaseholder properties and that data is not included here. Data on shared ownership and leaseholder properties will be included in reports in subsequent years.



C15. Distribution of EPC ratings of new homes (those completed in the last financial year)?

Octavia acquires most of its new builds through Section 106 schemes. A working group has been established to move forward the development of a strategy for net zero carbon new builds by 2030.



C16. Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions?

Octavia groups its carbon footprint into scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions.

Scope 1 covers direct emissions from owned or controlled sources. This includes emissions from gas used in offices, landlord's gas supply to communal areas (heat networks), and business mileage.

Scope 2 emissions include electricity bought for offices, and landlord's electricity supply to communal areas. Also includes transmission and distribution losses.

Scope 3 includes all other indirect emissions that occur in our supply chain, from leased assets, and outsourced activities. This includes fuel for our contracted maintenance fleet, estimated figures for the embodied carbon in building 100 new homes per year, and emissions from resident energy use from our housing. Emissions from homes have been estimated using EPC data (SAP/RdSAP) and heating system data.

Scope 1	1,080 tonnes CO2e
Scope 2	1,276 tonnes CO2e
Scope 3	14,660 tonnes CO2e
Total	17,016 tonnes CO2e

Octavia reports on carbon emissions through annual SHIFT and SECR reporting. Emissions are calculated by consultants from SHIFT during their audit process. Octavia's new Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2022-2025) outlines our position on reducing our carbon footprint. We have established short term targets (up to 2025) for targeting emissions from various sources. This includes targets for landlords' energy, housing stock (retrofit), and new homes. Some of our emissions data is based on assumptions and we are planning to improve the quality of this data in our new strategy, for example developing data capture mechanisms to calculate embodied carbon during construction of new homes. Our Environmental Sustainability Strategy outlines our long-term plans for retrofitting homes to EPC C (by 2030) and net zero carbon by 2050 (at the latest). We have costed our retrofit plans and understand the direction we are taking to reduce the most significant part of our carbon footprint (existing homes).

C17. What energy efficiency actions has the housing provider undertaken in the last 12 months?

Due to Covid, we completed a reduced planned works programme over the past year but were able to offer a high standard of service in many areas, including installing EWI and new windows to 124 homes, improving the fabric to increase energy efficiency. Additionally, 161 boiler upgrades were installed to the housing stock to increase the energy efficiency of these homes.

Since 2018, Octavia has carried out sector-leading work in delivering retrofit to Victorian 'hard-to-treat' street properties. This has included delivering external wall insulation (EWI) and new windows which improve the thermal performance of the homes, making them warmer and lower carbon. These properties are solid wall brick properties with no cavity, meaning that they can only be insulated by applying insulation to the outside or inside of the walls.

Planning constraints limit our options to insulate the external wall of the street facing side, so we have focused our efforts on the rear wall. In future retrofit programmes, we will insulate the street facing side of the property from the inside (internal wall insulation). The current programme of retrofit is ending this year.

We will build on this with our new Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2022-2025) which sets out our long-term vision for delivering the deep whole house retrofit required for net zero carbon. Our next phase of retrofit will focus on meeting minimum EPC D by 2025, and EPC C by 2030. These targets are aligned to Government's Fuel Poverty strategy and the recently published Heat and Buildings Strategy.

Over the last year, we have spent time developing our strategic approach to retrofit, calculating our approach and costs meeting EPC and net zero carbon targets. Our new retrofit plans are integrated into our Asset Management strategy and aligned with Octavia's 30-year financial business plan. See new strategy for targets and further information.

C.18 How is the housing provider mitigating the following climate risks: Increased flood risk, Increased risk of homes overheating?

Octavia recognises that climate change is a risk to our communities and our business. To improve our resilience to these risks, we are taking a strategic approach to climate change adaptation. We have started to collect data to understand our current and future risks and we will use this information to develop processes and interventions to mitigate these risks.

Homes estimated at risk of flooding:

- 71% at low risk
- 9% at medium risk
- 20% at high risk

Homes estimated at risk of overheating:

- 16% at low risk
- 64% at medium risk
- 20% at high risk

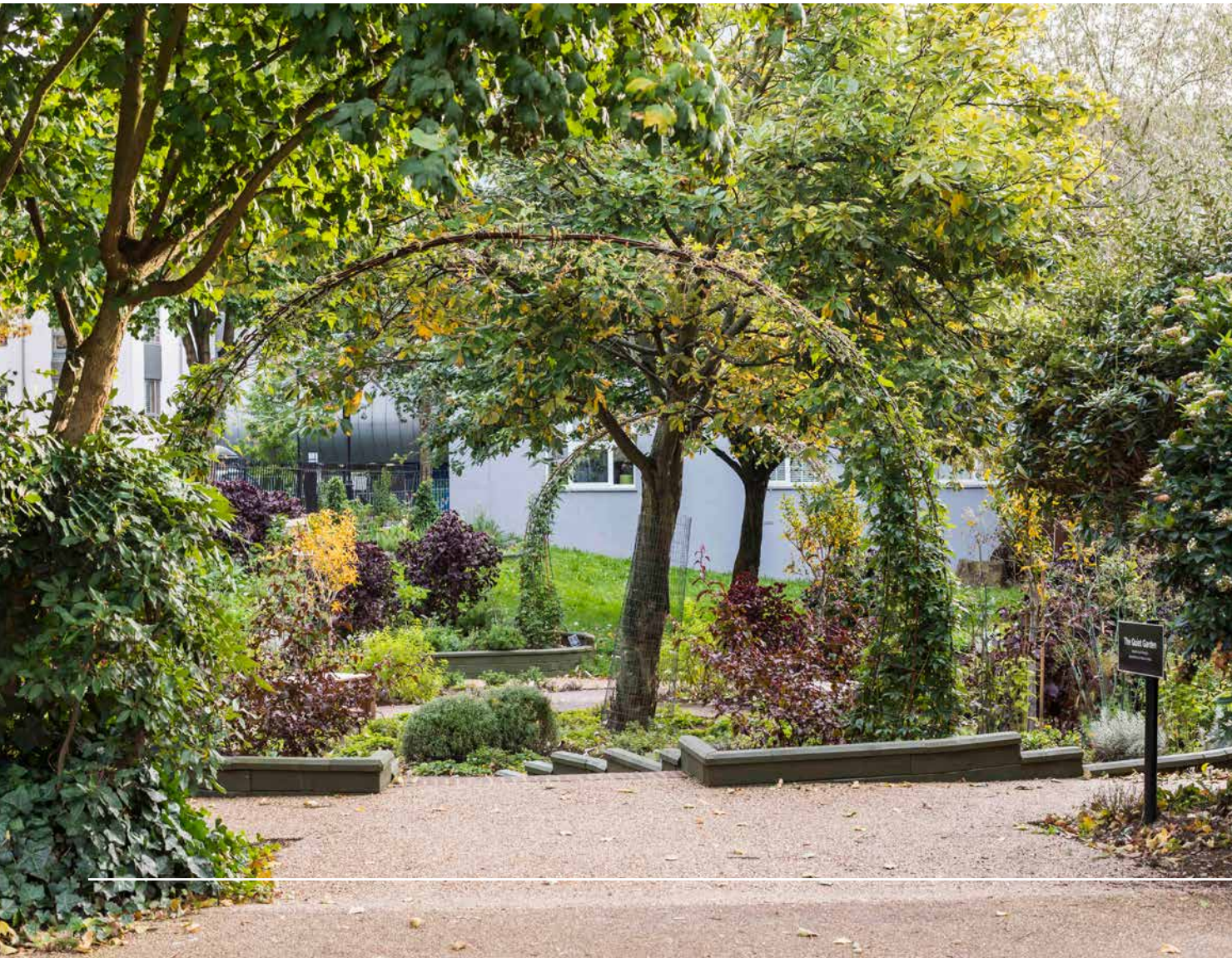
Flood risk data was assessed by sustainability consultants, SHIFT, at individual properties across the whole stock using GIS analysis and Environment Agency flood risk maps. This included the risk of fluvial and surface water flooding. Using the findings from this analysis, Octavia is developing a flood risk action plan. Sites identified as high and medium risk will be surveyed by flood risk experts to understand the measures which can be installed to mitigate flood damage. We will develop processes to inform, protect and support residents during flooding that may occur in the future.

In 2021, overheating risk in existing homes was assessed using a bespoke tool developed by SHIFT. This tool has identified risk factors such as property type, heating systems, population density, geographic region and the impact of projected summer temperatures.

Our new environmental sustainability strategy sets a target to develop an overheating action plan so we are developing our data to understand where the biggest overheating risks are before developing a mitigation plan to reduce these risks. High risk properties will be addressed in future planned maintenance works.

Octavia assesses overheating risk in new homes during the design stage and high-risk factors are mitigated at this stage. We also employ an expert on overheating to provide additional guidance and recommendations.

To improve our resilience to these risks, we are taking a strategic approach to climate change adaptation.



C.19 Does the housing provider give residents information about correct ventilation, heating, recycling etc. Please describe how this is done?

When new residents join the Octavia family, we ensure that they are fully briefed on energy use, eco-settings for white goods, water use, heating and lighting controls. In new-build properties we demonstrate this either in person, on video or both. This is particularly helpful for understanding heat networks that are a feature of many of our new-build properties. We have a specialist ‘aftercare’ team for this work, who are available as residents settle into their new homes. We provide free energy saving ‘Green Doctor’ consultations to residents to help reduce the energy use and cost of heating their homes.

As one of the oldest housing providers in the UK, we are aware that our older stock has specific issues around ventilation and our front-line teams are fully briefed on the need for correct ventilation, to prevent condensation and mould forming. We also advise residents about this when they sign a tenancy for an older property, periodically providing advice and guidance on mould and condensation prevention in our resident newsletter and online. Where mould is reported, a surveyor will always visit a flat to provide specific bespoke advice as a remedy.

We have also installed 50 ‘Switchee’ smart home thermostats which automatically help residents optimise their own heating systems helping to tackle fuel poverty and reducing condensation and mould.

We believe in the maxim ‘build tight, ventilate right’. When we make homes warmer and airtight to save energy, we will address ventilation to ensure homes have good indoor air quality that mitigate the risk of condensation and mould.

Our housing model also maintains a residential caretaking service, across all tenures of estate. This allows our estate recycling to be delivered successfully and reduce any instances of recycling being rejected by the local authority. We display recycling information on the communal noticeboards and the caretakers are on hand to offer advice on request as to what is suitable for recycling.

Finally, we are lucky to have a chain of 14 charity retail stores in our organisation, mostly based in the neighbourhoods where our residents live. As well as being hubs for the community, residents are able to take clothing in as donations, to prevent them going to landfill, and also buy clothing for themselves – offering significant savings and reducing the carbon footprint associated with the clothing industry. All surplus revenues from these stores is reinvested to provide additional services in the community.

Ecology

C20. How is the housing provider increasing Green Space and promoting Biodiversity on or near homes?

Octavia has collected biodiversity data for our latest SHIFT environmental assessment. SHIFT's biodiversity calculator uses data collected from Octavia's grounds maintenance team to calculate the tonnes of biomass above ground across our stock. This will be reported annually and increases in the sizes and biodiversity of green spaces will be captured.

Octavia's new Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2022-2025) sets a target for 6% of land to be protected for biodiversity by 2025. 3% of land is currently protected for biodiversity.

Octavia Hill was passionate about protecting and managing green spaces for Londoners. We will continue this legacy by working with residents to improve management of green spaces and to achieve our strategic biodiversity targets. Our new strategy aims for at least 5 resident led improvement projects on Octavia Green spaces, such as communal gardens and additional tree planting.

We haven't developed programmes of work or specific plans to improve biodiversity as yet. This is an ambition and we need to bring in internal resource, i.e. a green spaces manager, to start delivering this work.

C21. Does the housing provider have a strategy to actively manage and reduce all pollutants? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

With the exception of providing regular advice to residents around condensation and mould, as described above, Octavia is not currently managing this area.

Our grounds maintenance teams minimise the use of harsh chemicals and pesticides and we also have a robust asbestos policy and procedure which includes management surveys for all blocks which were built pre-2000. Where asbestos is identified reinspection surveys are undertaken to monitor and manage. All intrusive works are subject to R&D surveys. Asbestos removals are always undertaken by a licensed contractor and with full four stage clearance certification.



Resource Management

C22. Does the housing provider have a strategy to use or increase the use of responsibly sourced materials for all building works? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

Yes. Through our SHIFT audit, Octavia collects data on its maintenance supply chain for responsibly resourced materials. On average, 84% materials for maintenance activities are responsibly sourced. Our largest maintenance contractor's material use is ~ 52% responsibly sourced.

Octavia's procurement strategy outlines that 'we specify materials that minimise the impact on the environment: recycled paper; responsibly sourced timber; no single use plastic, etc. and positively endorse (through our tendering processes) suppliers who demonstrate a responsible approach to minimise waste to landfill in their processes.'

For new homes, Octavia's new Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2022-2025) sets a target to start collecting data on responsible resource use by 2023. Once our baseline is established, we will establish a reduction strategy and targets.

C23. Does the housing provider have a strategy for waste management incorporating building materials? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

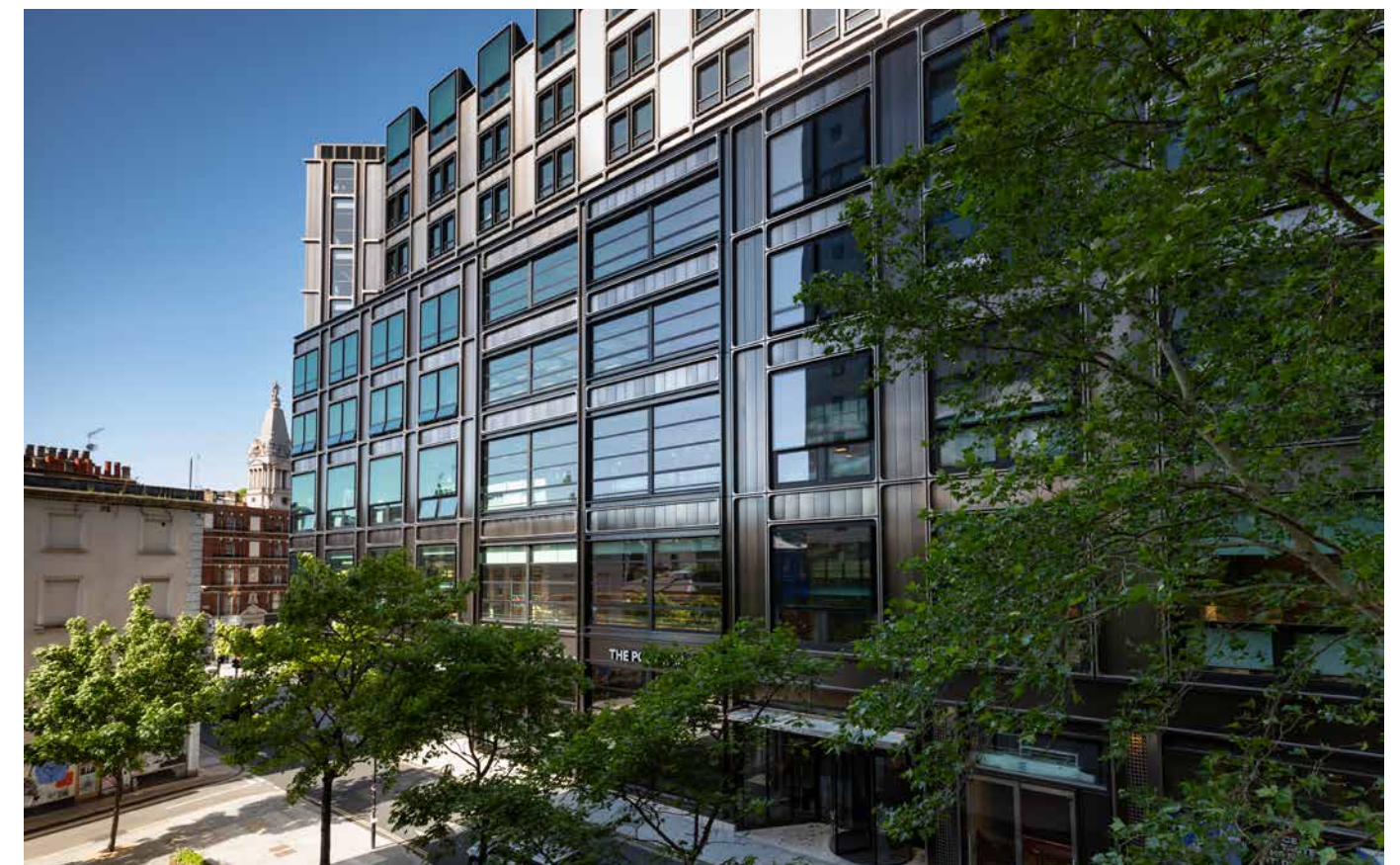
Yes. Through SHIFT assessments, data is collated annually from our top contractors to assess their waste data. Our 2021 supply chain survey concluded 95% of refurbishment waste was diverted from landfill through recycling or incineration.

For new homes, Octavia's new Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2022-2025) sets a target to start collecting data on construction waste by 2023. Once our baseline is established, we will establish a reduction strategy and targets.

C24. Does the housing provider have a strategy for good water management? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

Yes. We report annually on our water consumption footprint through SHIFT. Our estimated housing stock consumption is 147.3 litres per person per day. This is calculated using SHIFT's water efficiency calculator which makes assumptions on annual water consumption based on the age of a home. Our head office used 905 m3 of water during the reporting period.

Octavia's new Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2022-2025) sets a target to reduce the 2021 baseline of housing water consumption by 5% by 2025, reducing further to just 130 litres per person per day by 2030, by specifying low-flow water devices during retrofit. The exact specification for equipment is not yet agreed and further planning is required, as we work our partners and suppliers. We will also provide residents advice on how to use less water.





GOVERNANCE

GOVERNANCE

Structure and governance

C25. Is the housing provider registered with a regulator of social housing?

Octavia is registered with the Regulator of Social Housing L4422

C.26 What is the most recent viability and governance regulatory grading?

G1/V2- published 16/12/20. IDA completed; regulatory judgement due by the end of 2021

C.27 Which Code of Governance does the housing provider follow, if any?

NHF Code 2020 adopted from April 2021.

C.28 Is the housing provider Not-For-Profit? If not, who is the largest shareholder, what is their % of economic ownership and what % of voting rights do they control?

Octavia is a not-for-profit organisation.

C29. Explain how the housing provider’s board manages organisational risks

The Group board approved a new Group Risk Management Framework in June 2020. The objective of the approach set out in this framework is to assist in the achievement of Corporate objectives. This was developed following a Board risk workshop in May 2020 which focused on an updated risk appetite statement with golden rules and a revised risk register.

The framework includes an annual board approved risk appetite statement and a quarterly review of the risk register including any significant issues for the board to consider, issues in the operating environment and consideration of risks that are escalated by the Executive, Audit and Risk Committee or other Board Committees.

The Executive Team review the full risk register and the operating environment.

Committees review Corporate risks and escalate to the Board.

The Audit and Risk Committee reviews Corporate risks quarterly and the Full risk register annually. It escalates significant risks to the board and test controls and assurance.

The Board has responsibility the overall review of Corporate risks and ensuring that the actions in place achieve sufficient mitigation.

C30. Has the housing provider been subject to any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months (e.g. data protection breaches, bribery, money laundering, HSE breaches or notices) that resulted in enforcement or other equivalent action?

No adverse findings or judgements.



Board and trustees

C31. What are the demographics of the board? And how does this compare to the demographics of the housing providers residents, and the area that they operate in?

The board is diverse with a good gender balance of 5 female and 6 male. There are 3 Black minority ethnic board members. The board has resolved to maintain an equal gender balance and to work towards a balance of ethnicities that reflects the diverse communities served by Octavia. Average tenure on the Board is 2 year's 9 months as of 31st March 2021. The average age of our Board members is 62. There are no places on the board allocated for any constituency group. The two residents on the board were recruited for their lived experience as Octavia tenants and their skills are highly valued.

We remain determined to ensure our board continues to reflect the communities we serve as future opportunities arise. To support our continued focus on equality, diversity and inclusion we have also recruited two high potential apprentices from Black minority ethnic backgrounds for 12 months, one to sit on the Board and the other to sit on the Corporate Committee.

The Board apprentice is a qualified solicitor and Head of Legal for a renewable energy, sustainability and green technology company with experience in fundraising, energy markets, fund finance and asset management. The Corporate Committee apprentice is Head of IT at an infrastructure development and finance organisation with experience in project management and HR transformation programmes.

These apprentices are not Board or Committee members but will attend meetings and receive papers, thereby offering an alternative view and opinion for the Board to consider. The scheme will also provide them with an opportunity to build their experience for potential future non-executive, board and committee roles. The apprentices will also receive support for their personal and professional development. The Board and Committee Chairs are fully supportive of these appointments.

C32. What % of the board AND management team have turned over in the last two years?

Board turnover Apr 19-Mar 21: 55%. This was unusually high as several members left during that period due to a convergence of multiple retirements. Executive team turnover Apr 19-Mar 21: 57%

C33. Is there a maximum tenure for a board member? If so, what is it?

The maximum term for board members was 9 years for the period up to the end of March 2021. This is based on the NHF Code of Governance 2015 which was the adopted Code of Governance for the period in question.

From April 2021, the Board adopted the NHF Code of Governance 2020 which provides for a maximum term of 6 years with the discretion to increase this by an additional one to three years depending on there being a good business case.



C34. What % of the board are non-executive directors?

The CEO is the only non-executive director (NED) who is also a board member. This is in line with the sector approach to Executive members on boards, especially for charitable organisations. As referenced below (C39), we conduct periodic externally facilitated board evaluations. We are also the subject of in-depth regulatory assessments by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), which include a focus on the board, its engagements and decision-making processes.

C35. Number of board members on the Audit Committee with recent and relevant financial experience?

The two non-executive board members on the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) are both qualified and suitably experienced senior finance professionals. One is a Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants and has experience as a Board member and Audit and Risk Committee member with other Regulated Providers gained during a career spanning 35 years in finance and housing. The other member holds an Executive MBA and is a qualified Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, with experience as a director of business assurance, and as a former a CEO and Deputy CEO of a Registered Provider (RP).

The two independent members of the ARC (also members of the Finance Committee) are both qualified and suitably experienced senior finance professionals. One is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants (ACA) and an experienced Executive Director with over 20 years' experience in housing, support and care.



The other independent member is a CCAB qualified accountant and a current Director of Audit and Assurance at a charity.

The Board has a wide range of skills and experience and recruitment to the board is based on any emerging needs or filling any gaps that are identified. The Governance Handbook includes an indicative set of skills that the board needs overall.

C36. Are there any current executives on the Remuneration Committee?

The Corporate Committee is responsible for nomination and remuneration matters. The CEO is a member of this Committee but does not have voting rights on any remuneration matters. Also only non-executive members can form a quorum for nomination and remuneration matters.

C37. Has a succession plan been provided to the board in the last 12 months?

After a high turnover during 2019- 202 we are looking for stability. As such, no formal succession plan to the board has been provided in the last 12 months. We do have a record of the rotational position which the team uses to action plan, including initial discussion with the Group Chair and conversations with the relevant NED, prior to a report to the Board for consideration, in line with the NHF Code of Governance 2020 requirements.



C.38 For how many years has the housing provider's current external audit partner been responsible for auditing the accounts?

Our external auditors (KPMG) were appointed in 2021, so have less than one year in post, thereby ensuring independent scrutiny. This change result from revisions made by the Financial Reporting Council, ("FRC") to its UK Ethical Standard and Auditing Standards, to separate audit and non-audit services in line with independence 'best practice'.

C39. When was the last independently run, board-effectiveness review?

The last independent review of board-effectiveness was undertaken in 2018, which was closely followed by an appraisal of all Board members undertaken by the board Chair. The next independent review of board-effectiveness is scheduled for the end of 2021.

We are also subject to in-depth regulatory assessments by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), which include a focus on the board, its engagements and decision-making processes. Our last regulatory assessment took place during August and September 2021.

In December 2020 we conducted an in-depth internal effectiveness review which concluded that Octavia Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) have good strategic oversight and a clear understanding of their roles, including governance matters, vision setting and provision of constructive challenge.

C40. Are the roles of the chair of the board and CEO held by two different people?

Yes. The Chair and the CEO are completely separate roles with clear role descriptions and responsibilities.

C41. How does the housing provider handle conflicts of interest at the board?

A declaration of interest is made at the beginning of each board and committee meeting and board members are required to provide a formal declaration of interests on an annual basis.

Conflicts of interest are formally declared annually and members are obliged to update their declaration whenever a new issue arise. Members are also required to make a declaration at the beginning of each meeting they attend. Conflicts are managed pragmatically and members are obliged, by their agreements, to withdraw or ultimately stand down if a conflict cannot be managed by other means.

Staff wellbeing

C42. Does the housing provider pay the Real Living Wage?

We are not an accredited Living Wage Employer, however we do pay all our staff a minimum of the London Living Wage.

C43. What is the gender pay gap?

The gender pay gap measures the difference in the average hourly earnings of men and women within the organisation. This is different from equal pay, which is the pay difference between men and women who do equal work.

All jobs are evaluated using an external organisation that benchmarks salaries against the job market to make sure we measure the value of every role in a consistent way and pay equally for work of equal value.

- The mean gender pay gap for 2020 is 17%, a decrease of 9% from 2019. The median gender pay gap for 2020 is 24%, a decrease of 5% from 2019.
- The mean gender bonus pay gap is 21%, a decrease of 21% from 2019. The median gender bonus pay gap for 2020 is 24%, a decrease of 2% from 2019.

Group of employees	Mean pay gap	Median pay gap
All staff	17%	24%
Care/Retail staff	22%	10%
Office and Housing staff	0.5%	3.5%

The table below shows the progress we’ve made over the last four years to close the gender pay gap over the past few years.

Year of data	Mean pay gap	Median pay gap	Mean bonus gap	Median bonus gap
2020	17%	24%	21%	24%
2019	26%	29%	42%	26%
2018	30%	31%	30%	3%
2017	24%	31%	54%	42%

We have made some progress towards closing the gender pay gap since the last report and are committed to improving it still further.

Our longer-term plan to address our gender pay gap will be incorporated in our EDI strategy. We have also identified several quick-win actions to help improve things in the short term, including continuing

to deliver and prioritise our equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) goals and action plan, build on the success of remote working during the pandemic to provide more flexible working opportunities and wellbeing support and to continue to focus and improve on inclusive recruitment and selection processes.

- The proportional difference between men and women receiving a bonus is 1%.

Whilst our overall workforce is 67% women to 33% men, our frontline services of Care and Retail staff is 88% women and 12% men. This ratio reflects the UK workforce trends for staff in Care and Retail positions as a whole.

In the table below, we can see the difference this makes in our gender pay gap. For our housing and central functions our gender pay gap is significantly smaller.

C.44 What is the CEO-worker pay ratio?

This is the first year Octavia has calculated our CEO-worker pay ratio, which is as follows:

CEO Pay Ratio	
25th percentile	8:1
50th percentile	6:1
75th percentile	4:1

C.45 How does the housing provider support the physical and mental health of their staff?

Octavia offers a range of wellbeing activities and enhanced benefits and is committed to developing and maintaining a working environment that promotes and protects the health and well-being of all colleagues.

We provide a free, 24 hour a day confidential Employee Assistant Programme. Also, we provide access to Simplyhealth Cash plan which provides money back for everyday health expenses and treatments. Our staff also have access to WeCare - a 24/7 online GP, mental health support service, and get fit programme.

Octavia has a wellbeing resource page on its intranet homepage. On the wellbeing resource page there is further information on other supportive tools available to help support colleagues, this includes our Wellbeing statement, wellbeing workplans, Covid support resources, information supporting Financial, Physical, and Mental health, and information on contacting our Mental Health First Aiders.

Octavia’s Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA’s) are a group of colleagues who’ve been trained to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and are keen to end mental health stigma. They understand the importance of non-judgemental listening and are there to help colleagues who need to speak to someone about their mental health or on behalf of a colleague they are concerned about.

C46. Average number of sick days taken per employee?

3.34 days per employee per annum.



Supply chain

C47. How is Social Value creation considered when procuring goods and services?

Octavia aims to diversify its supply chain by adopting procurement processes to encourage and provide opportunity for local businesses and small and medium size enterprises (SME's) to bid for business with the organization thus adopting the principle of a fair and inclusive competitive process as set out within the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended) [PCR].

As such social value, in accordance with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, is an underlying element required to achieve the principles set out within the legislation i.e. PCR and would be considered within all procurement's taking into account value threshold and risk status.

This will be on a project-by-project basis as social value output may differ based on type of services/goods/works provisions. The proposal will be that this is considered within individual departments on each sourcing activity to be undertaken and where social value is identified in a project, it can be set out as selection criteria with a percentage weighting allocated to it and submissions will in turn form a contractual obligation which the prospective successful supplier must fulfil.

For example, as we prepared to return to our head office in line with government advice, we sourced environmentally friendly cotton and linen facemasks form a multi-award-winning social enterprise which provides employment opportunities for ex-offenders aged between sixteen and eighteen, actively reducing reoffending whilst increasing engagement, participation, employability and educational levels of those young people to increase their life chances.

Octavia Procurement Strategy and Procurement Policy & Financial Regulations clearly sets out a requirement that ensures social value remain a vital consideration and element in all sourcing activities undertaken within the organisation.

C.48 How is environmental impact considered when procuring goods and services?

Octavia takes into consideration the three pillars of sustainability - economic, environmental and social in its procurement processes. Procurement activities for the sourcing of goods/ services/works does have an impact the environment which must be identified and managed effectively by Octavia and in turn influence its supply chain practices.

This includes:

- Drafting of project specification/scope of requirements by selecting products and services with the least ongoing environmental impacts. For example reduction of carbon footprint (use of water, electricity and fuel), specify materials that minimise the impact on the environment: recycled paper; responsibly sourced timber; no single use plastic, waste/disposal management etc.
- Embedding as a criterion in the supplier selection process i.e. a high score allocated to criteria which positively endorses bidders who demonstrate a responsible approach to minimise negative environmental impact in their processes.

Octavia Procurement Strategy/ Procurement Policy & Financial Regulations clearly sets out a requirement that ensures sustainable procurement practices remain a vital consideration and element in all sourcing activities undertaken within the organisation.

Octavia takes into consideration the three pillars of sustainability - economic, environmental and social in its procurement processes.

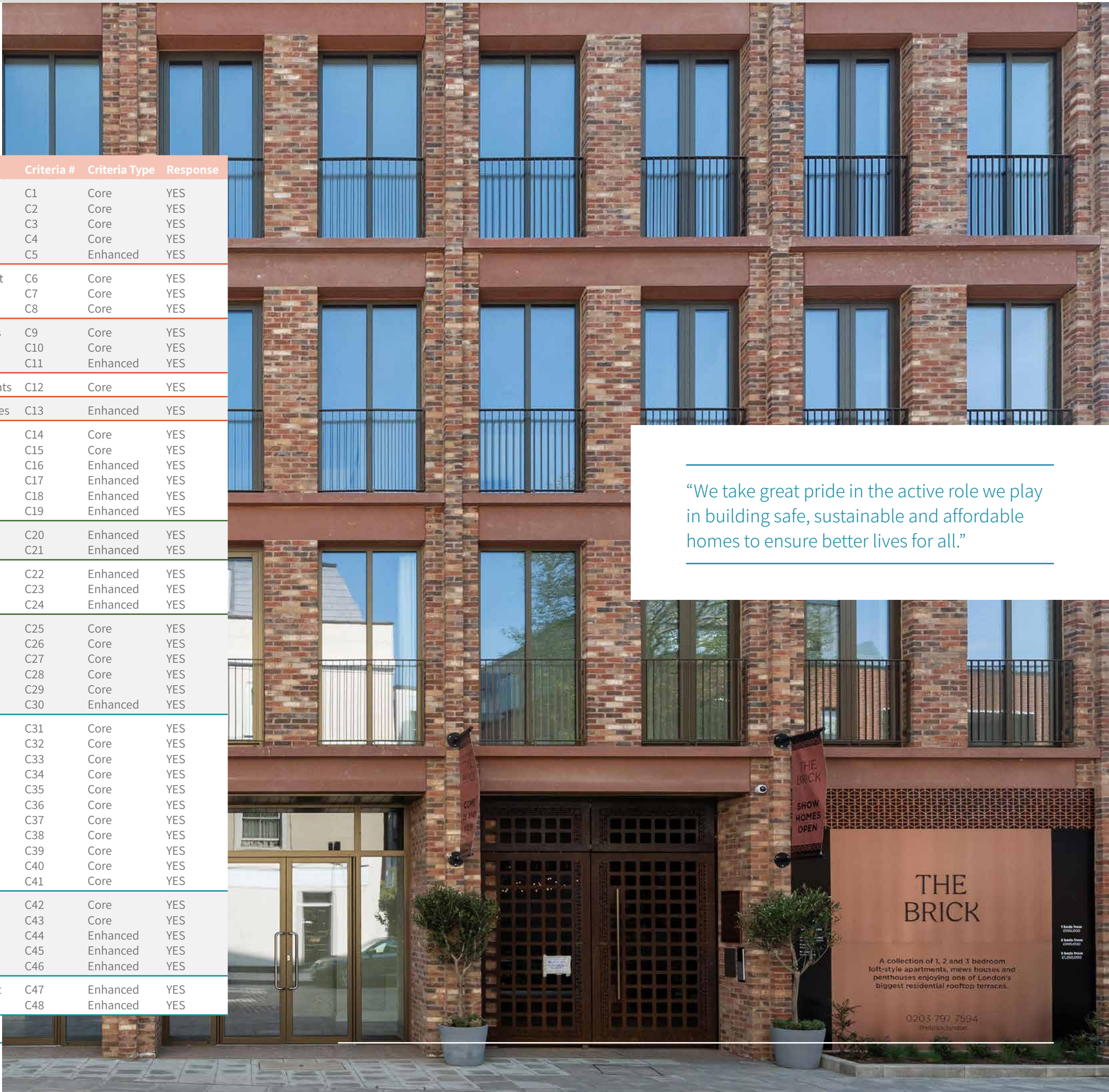


Sustainability Reporting Standard (SRS)

Within each theme in the report, we have reported against all Core and all Enhanced criteria.

ESG	Theme #	Theme	Description	Criteria #	Criteria Type	Response
Social	T1	Affordability and security	Extent to which homes are genuinely affordable	C1	Core	YES
				C2	Core	YES
				C3	Core	YES
				C4	Core	YES
				C5	Enhanced	YES
	T2	Building safety and quality	Meeting legal responsibilities to protect residents and keep buildings safe	C6	Core	YES
				C7	Core	YES
				C8	Core	YES
	T3	Resident voice	Listening to and empowering residents	C9	Core	YES
				C10	Core	YES
				C11	Enhanced	YES
	T4	Resident support	Initiatives to support individual residents	C12	Core	YES
	T5	Placemaking	Initiatives to support wider communities	C13	Enhanced	YES
Environmental	T6	Climate change	Impact on climate change and risk mitigants	C14	Core	YES
				C15	Core	YES
				C16	Enhanced	YES
				C17	Enhanced	YES
				C18	Enhanced	YES
				C19	Enhanced	YES
	T7	Ecology	Protection of the local environment and ecology	C20	Enhanced	YES
				C21	Enhanced	YES
	T8	Resource management	Waste and water management and sustainably sourced materials	C22	Enhanced	YES
				C23	Enhanced	YES
				C24	Enhanced	YES
Governance	T9	Structure and governance	Structure and approach to governance	C25	Core	YES
				C26	Core	YES
				C27	Core	YES
				C28	Core	YES
				C29	Core	YES
				C30	Enhanced	YES
	T10	Board and trustees	Suitability and performance of the board and trustees	C31	Core	YES
				C32	Core	YES
				C33	Core	YES
				C34	Core	YES
				C35	Core	YES
				C36	Core	YES
				C37	Core	YES
				C38	Core	YES
				C39	Core	YES
				C40	Core	YES
				C41	Core	YES
	T11	Staff wellbeing	Staff support and wellbeing	C42	Core	YES
				C43	Core	YES
				C44	Enhanced	YES
				C45	Enhanced	YES
				C46	Enhanced	YES
	T12	Supply chain	Social value and environmental impact of procuring goods and services	C47	Enhanced	YES
				C48	Enhanced	YES

“We take great pride in the active role we play in building safe, sustainable and affordable homes to ensure better lives for all.”





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