



NORTH STAR

Environmental, Social and Governance Report 2024/25



CEO Foreword



Welcome

As Chief Executive of North Star, I am pleased to present our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Report for 2024/25, prepared in accordance with the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRS). This report reflects our commitment to delivering high-quality, sustainable homes and services, while remaining accountable to our residents, partners, and wider communities.

At North Star, ESG has never been an add-on — it has been at our core for the last 51 years and is central to our mission of creating homes and building futures.

We are proud to be ahead of the curve in our journey to Net Zero. Our strategy, embedded in our Asset Management and Business Plans, commits us to achieving EPC C across all homes by 2028 — two years ahead of the national target. We know these works will reduce the heating costs for customers and improve the warmth of their homes. In 2024/25, we delivered a wide range of retrofit measures, including insulation upgrades, solar PV installations, and low-carbon heating systems, all aimed at reducing energy consumption and tackling fuel poverty.

We continue to invest in community partnerships, such as our long-standing collaboration with Sprouts CIC, which has transformed our Community Hub

in Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees into a vibrant centre for food, wellbeing, and youth engagement. Our supported housing services have expanded to meet growing needs, and our tenant satisfaction score of 86.4% reflects our commitment to listening and acting on resident feedback.

We maintain a G1/V1 regulatory rating and follow the NHF Code of Governance 2020. ESG risks are actively managed through our Strategic Risk Register. Our new group The Tenant Voice and our Your Voice framework ensures residents have meaningful influence over decision-making, with over 500 members contributing to scrutiny and service improvement.

This report is a reflection of the dedication of our staff, the strength of our partnerships, and the voices of our residents. As we look ahead, we remain focused on delivering sustainable growth, enhancing resilience, and ensuring that our homes and services continue to meet the evolving needs of our communities.

James Walder
Chief Executive
North Star Housing Group

Section One

Environmental

Climate change

C1

Distribution of EPC ratings of existing homes

(those completed before the last financial year).

3 (0.07%)**540** (13.95%)**2962** (76.53%)**351** (9.06%)**13** (0.33%)**1** (0.02%)**EPC A****EPC B****EPC C****EPC D****EPC E****EPC F****C2**

C2 - Distribution of EPC ratings of new homes

(those completed in the last financial year).

1 (1.3%)**67** (88.2%)**2** (2.6%)**3** (3.9%)**3** (3.9%)**EPC A****EPC B****EPC C****EPC D****EPC E****EPC F**

Climate change



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?

North Star has a Net Zero strategy embedded in our Asset Management Strategy and 2025 Business Plan.

We are on track to meet the Climate Change Committee's recommendation that all social homes reach an EPC rating of C by 2030 and have committed to achieving this by 2028 (two years early). This early delivery not only ensures compliance with Government expectations but also supports our customers by reducing energy consumption and tackling fuel poverty.

To underpin this, we are investing in a comprehensive retrofit programme, supported by data held in our energy modelling system.

Our Business Plan includes a provision of over £55.6m of investment across the life of the plan, specifically allocated to

improving the energy efficiency of our stock. This includes both the short-term investment required to reach EPC C by 2028 and a further significant provision in later years to support progress towards Net Zero by 2050.

We recognise that achieving Net Zero remains a challenging and evolving agenda, dependent on emerging Government policy, funding support, and technology pathways. We have therefore taken a prudent approach in our financial planning, assuming no grant income, to ensure resilience and deliverability.

This strategy is aligned with our wider ambition to grow and sustain our housing offer, with 375 new homes planned over the next six years, ensuring both environmental responsibility and a continued response to housing need.

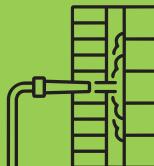
Climate change

Our retrofit work in the last 12 months:



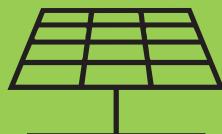
43

Improved loft insulation



29

Cavity wall insulation installs



62

PV panel installations



7

Air source heat pumps

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?

Supported by the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund grant, we have continued to deliver retrofit works to our homes in 2024/25. The retrofit work consisted of improved loft insulation in 43 homes, cavity wall insulation in 29 homes,

installation of PV panels in 62 homes, 7 air source heat pumps, and mechanical ventilation and programmable heating control upgrades. These measures all contributed to improving the EPC ratings to meet a C grade.

C5

Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 Greenhouse Gas emissions & total emissions per home

North Star is at an early stage of carbon reporting. We expect to be able to report Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2026/27, with Scope 3 to follow by 2027/28. Our aim is

to reduce our carbon footprint over the next five years and minimise our impact on the environment.

Climate change



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?

North Star recognises that climate change presents risks to our homes and supply chain, including flooding, overheating, and drought.

While we are at an early stage of developing a comprehensive climate risk assessment, we are already taking practical steps to understand and manage these risks.

For example, we monitor insurance flood risk assessments, apply flood and overheating consideration in the design of new homes. All retrofit programmes are delivered on a “no insulation without ventilation” basis to reduce overheating and damp risks.

Over the next 18 months, we will formalise this work into a fuller climate risk assessment using tools such as the Environment Agency flood risk mapping, local authority adaptation data, and our energy modelling system. This will allow us to map and prioritise homes most exposed to climate impacts and plan targeted resilience measures. We will also continue to embed climate considerations into procurement and supply chain requirements, ensuring contractors can demonstrate sustainability and continuity planning.

This approach means that, even as we build a fuller evidence base, we are already integrating climate risk thinking into design, investment, and retrofit decisions to protect both our homes and customers.

Ecology

C7

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

North Star has recently developed its first Biodiversity and Green Spaces Strategy, which sets clear priorities and targets for 2025/26.

This builds on the work we already do and will guide our longer-term approach as part of our ESG Roadmap and Asset Management Strategy.

In the meantime, biodiversity and green space improvements are already built into our day-to-day work. We work closely with our grounds maintenance contractor to make sure green spaces are safe, accessible, and well maintained, whilst also looking for ways to make them better for customers and wildlife.

We now include biodiversity measures on all new development schemes. This includes planting, which is relatively easy

to maintain, but attracts pollinators such as bees and butterflies. We also install bat and bird boxes, create hedgehog runs between gardens, and provide good-sized private gardens where possible.

We also support local community projects, for example, working with a local community food charity, Sprouts, to help improve health and wellbeing in our communities. With support from North Star and other partners, Sprouts and Cultivate Tees Valley have created a community garden in Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees. The garden is led by local people and supported by volunteers and staff. Food grown here is used at the North Star-owned Community Hub, where Sprouts run regular lunch clubs and cooking workshops.

C8

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

Given the relative size of our organisation and levels of finite resource, North Star does not currently have plans to develop a strategy.

We do not currently have a dedicated strategy to manage all pollutants. We have specific management plans in place for both asbestos and legionella

which ensure we have up to date inspections and risk assessments in place. We comply with all relevant health & safety and waste management regulations. We also have an environmental strategy in place with a focus on reducing carbon emissions from our properties and office locations.

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?

Yes, North Star has a strategy. Our approach to Green Procurement is captured in our Procurement Policy. North Star is committed to integrating sustainability principles into all procurement activities. We

aim to deliver value for money whilst promoting environmental protection, social responsibility and economic sustainability in line with the UK's sustainability goal and regulatory frameworks.

The following objectives reduce our impact on the environment when working with suppliers and contractors:



Environmental Protection:

Reduce environmental impact by sourcing goods and services that are energy-efficient, have minimal waste, and use sustainable materials.



Ethical Sourcing:

Support local communities by prioritising suppliers who promote fair labour practices, diversity, and community engagement.



Economic Sustainability:

Foster opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), social enterprises, and suppliers, contributing to economic growth.

C10

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

North Star does not currently have a strategy but we plan to develop one.

We plan to develop a Waste Management Strategy as part of the next iteration of North Star's Environmental Strategy. This is planned for inclusion in 2026/27.



Resource Management

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

North Star does not currently have a strategy but we plan to develop one. In line with our response to C10, a strategy will be developed and applied where appropriate across our properties and

operational offices. As part of our new build specification, we install dual-flush cisterns and aerator taps to regulate water flow.

Section Two

Social

Affordability & Security

C12

Rent compared to the relevant Local Housing Allowance (LHA) for properties that are subject to the rent regulation regime:

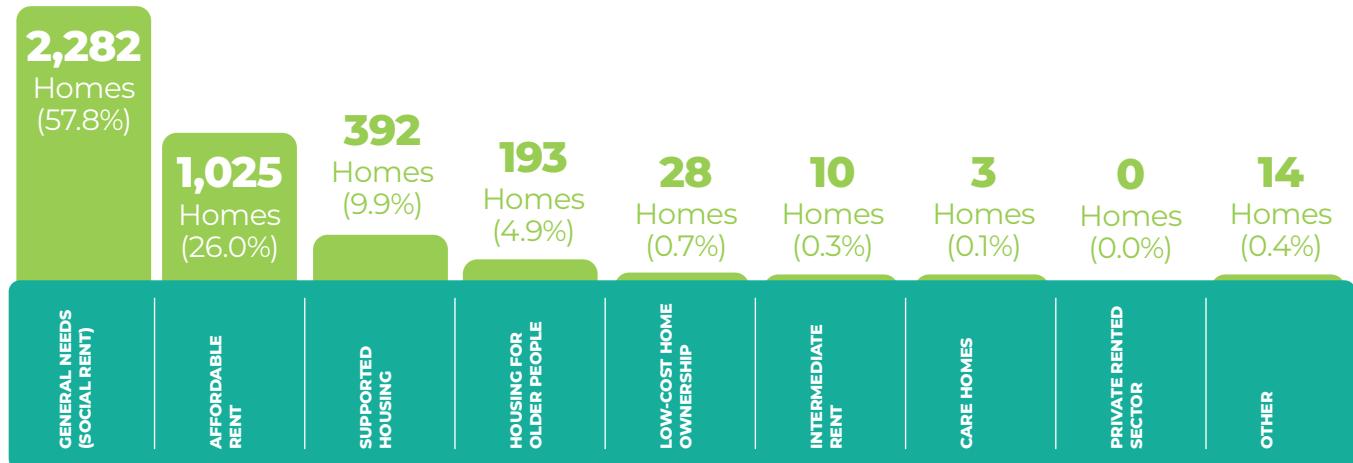
Local Authority	Average of Social Rent	Count of Social Rent	Average of Affordable Rent	Count of Affordable Rent	NSHG Average Rent	LHA	Variance (£)	Variance (%)
Darlington	99.09	315	125.57	197	109.28	106.97	-2.31	-2.16%
Durham	96.44	626	114.40	321	102.53	110.93	8.40	7.58%
Hambleton	120.50	57	142.07	26	127.26	102.79	-24.46	-23.80%
Hartlepool	114.05	240	124.83	111	117.46	113.87	-37.89	-33.28%
Middlesbrough	118.22	724	119.48	174	118.46	113.87	-4.59	-4.03%
Redcar	109.64	117	119.22	18	110.92	99.19	-11.73	-11.83%
Richmond	116.93	4	130.26	17	127.72	102.79	-24.93	-24.25%
Ryedale	—	—	131.24	10	131.24	138.09	6.84	4.95%
Stockton	117.06	660	132.57	166	120.18	113.87	-6.31	-5.54%
South Tyneside	112.74	36	—	—	112.74	119.18	6.44	5.40%
Sunderland	129.12	37	131.52	45	130.44	101.92	-28.52	-27.99%
Grand Total	110.35	2816	122.95	1085	118.93	111.22	-7.71	-6.93%

Weekly rents for North Star properties are set in line with the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard. 58% of our properties have a rent that is less than the LHA for their local authority. A further 15% of properties are charged a rent that is within 5% of the relevant local authority's LHA. A large proportion of remaining properties are let at an affordable rent, which is set at 80% of local market rent.

Affordability & Security

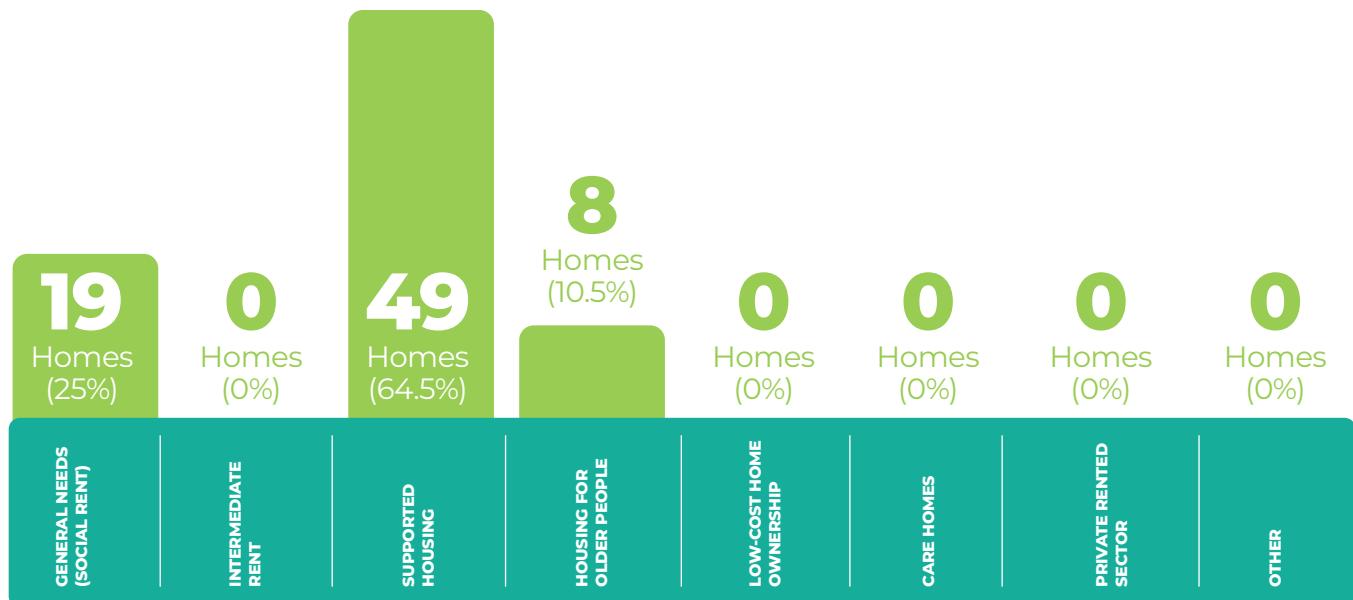
C13

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



C14

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



Affordability & Security

C15

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

Reducing the impact of high energy costs on customers is essential. Rising energy prices have disproportionately affected low-income households, and as a social housing provider we are committed to tackling fuel poverty.

Our main approach is through investment in the energy performance of our homes. We are on track to ensure all homes achieve at least EPC C by 2028, two years ahead of the Government's target. This investment reduces heat loss, improves insulation, and lowers the cost of keeping homes warm.

We take a data-led approach using our energy modelling system to identify the least efficient homes and target them for retrofit works.

Alongside capital investment, we support customers directly by signposting them to energy and budgeting advice and issuing fuel vouchers, in addition to referring them to specialist partners such as Citizens Advice and fuel debt support services..

We also continue to engage with customers to raise awareness of simple, low-cost measures to reduce consumption and maximise benefit entitlement.

This combined approach of investment, advice, and partnership working ensures we are actively helping customers reduce their energy costs now, while future-proofing their homes for the long term.

C16

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

All customers allocated a general needs tenancy are granted an assured tenancy. Customers allocated a supported housing tenancy are granted either an assured shorthold tenancy or a licence agreement.

There are no mandatory grounds for possession, except in cases of rent arrears, where the customer's account exceeds eight full weeks of unpaid rent.

In such cases, Ground 8 proceedings may be initiated, which constitute a mandatory ground for possession under housing legislation.

However, this ground is not routinely used. It is applied with caution and only when all other avenues of resolution have been thoroughly explored and exhausted.

Building Safety and Quality

C17

Describe the condition of the housing provider's portfolio

The condition of North Star's housing portfolio demonstrates full compliance with core safety requirements. For the reporting year 2024–25:

100%

of homes had all required gas safety checks completed

100%

of homes had all required electrical safety checks undertaken

100%

of homes had all required fire risk assessments carried out

100%

of homes had all required asbestos surveys or re-inspections carried out

100%

of homes had all required legionella risk assessments carried out

100%

of homes had all required communal passenger lift safety checks carried out

This means every property in the portfolio met statutory safety obligations at the end of 2024–25, with no outstanding checks across core health & safety requirements.

C18

What % of homes meet the national housing quality standard?

100%

of homes met the requirements of the Decent Homes Standard



Building Safety and Quality

C19

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

We take a proactive and structured approach to managing the risks associated with damp, mould, and condensation (DMC) to safeguard the health, safety, and wellbeing of our residents:

- Clear Policies and Accountability** – We operate under dedicated Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) and Disrepair policies, ensuring clarity of roles, responsibilities and processes.
- Training and Awareness** – All frontline staff and contractors receive annual “eyes wide open” training on the importance of identifying DMC and early warning signs. This ensures that every point of contact with a resident or property is an opportunity to identify issues.
- Monitoring and Assurance** – We use a DMC scorecard, reported to the Health and Safety Steering Group every six weeks, reviewed by SMT monthly, and shared with the Board quarterly, ensuring strong governance and oversight.

Prioritisation and Reporting – DMC cases are categorised under a specific job type to allow for prioritisation, efficient tracking, and accurate reporting. Weekly reports of open jobs are issued to contractors for updates.

Every Visit Counts – All staff, including principal contractors, are required to observe and report any signs of DMC or property condition concerns during visits.

Technical Expertise – Our surveying staff are trained and equipped to measure damp and mould accurately during property inspections.

Complaint Handling – All DMC complaints are escalated via a defined route, reviewed by a technical manager, and overseen by a Senior Management Team member, ensuring both technical accuracy and strategic oversight.

This approach enables us to identify, address, and monitor damp and mould effectively, embedding responsibility across the organisation while maintaining transparency and accountability at all levels.

Residents 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?

This year, we are pleased to report an overall satisfaction score of 86.4% - an improvement on last year's result of 83.2%. Benchmarking from earlier in the year suggests this places us in line with some of the higher performing landlords in the sector.

Whilst this is a positive step forward, we know there is still more to do. In particular, feedback continues to highlight the importance of repairs both as a driver of satisfaction and, at times, dissatisfaction. The fact that some customers cited the speed of repair as a key reason for their satisfaction, while others raised concerns about delays, indicates that there may still be inconsistency in how services are delivered. Over the coming year, we will focus on reducing this variation and ensuring that more customers experience consistently high standards.

Our 2024/25 Tenant Satisfaction Measures can be found on our website at: www.northstarhg.co.uk/customer-voice/tenant-satisfaction-measures/



86.4%

of our customers are satisfied overall with North Star

We will work to further increase customer satisfaction by:

- Working with involved tenants to map and understand the customer journey, especially in key service areas like repairs.
- Learning from positive experiences and embedding what works well into day-to-day service delivery.
- Remaining committed to listening to our customers and using their feedback to shape and improve the services we provide.

Residents Voice

C21

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

North Star has put in place a clear framework to ensure customers can hold management to account for the services they receive.

Central to this is the Your Voice network, which offers flexible and inclusive opportunities for customers to engage, regardless of background or location. With over 500 members, it provides multiple routes for involvement, ranging from surveys and events to more formal structures.

At the heart of this framework sits The Tenants' Voice (TTV), the core scrutiny and accountability group. TTV works directly with Board representatives, ensuring a strong link between customer input and governance. Two Board Members are designated as leads for customer engagement, strengthening oversight and demonstrating commitment at the highest level.

TTV's responsibilities include:

- Reviewing compliance with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.
- Managing the Recommendation Tracker, an open log of customer suggestions with clear responses and outcomes.
- Escalating customer concerns or ideas directly to the Board.
- Overseeing the Tenant Connection Strategy and championing accountability across involvement groups.

In addition, specialist groups provide further scrutiny:

- The Consumer Standards Group helps ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.
- The Performance Group reviews performance data, including complaints, and recommends improvements.
- The Policy Review Group checks early-stage policies to ensure they are customer-friendly.
- Task & Finish Groups bring resident insight to specific projects.
- The Customer Communications Group ensures North Star is communicating transparently and accessibly.

North Star also commits to transparency and evidence of impact. Outcomes from involvement activities are published, feedback loops are closed, and residents can see how their input has led to change. The Recommendation Tracker is central to this, making management responses visible and accountable.

Finally, the framework is underpinned by regulatory alignment, external benchmarking (TPAS and the Institute of Customer Service), and a focus on diversity and inclusivity, ensuring a wide range of resident voices are represented.

Through these arrangements, residents have structured, visible, and influential ways to hold management to account for service delivery, strengthening trust and accountability across the organisation.

Residents Voice



C22

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

No complaints were determined to involve maladministration.

Residents' Support

C23

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

We offer a range of supported housing services. Our services are split into three key areas:

Directly Managed Services

We deliver accommodation and support to a wide range of customers:

- **Young People Leaving Care** – We deliver 10 units of Ofsted-regulated accommodation, supporting 13 young people throughout the year to move on in a planned, positive way. Five of the young people moving on from the service in 2024/25 continued to be North Star customers.
- **Women's Services** – We deliver 18 units of accommodation and support to women and their children. During the year, we supported 14 women to move on in a planned, positive way.
- **Rough Sleeper Accommodation** – We deliver six units of accommodation. During the year, we supported five people to move on in a planned, positive way.

• **Temporary Accommodation Service**

– Our commitment to delivering supported housing services was extended during 2024/25. We took on the management of a service working in partnership with the local authority to develop and deliver a new temporary accommodation offer, consisting of 12 flats for young people aged 18–25 and 6 flats for families at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness.

• **Extra Care Services** – We deliver 50 units of accommodation, with on-site care and a bistro provision to support older people aged 55+ to remain independent within the community.

• **Sheltered Accommodation** – We deliver 125 units of accommodation within our sheltered accommodation services, ensuring older people over the age of 55 have a safe place to live within communities.

Partnerships

We work in partnership with 19 specialist support providers to deliver 288 bed spaces across a range of services, including independent living, rough sleeper support, and domestic abuse safe accommodation. These partnerships help us maintain balanced communities while supporting people to retain independence in safe, comfortable environments.

Fully managed on behalf of North Star

We have seven Specialist Support Agencies who manage properties on our behalf providing 106 valuable bed spaces to people experiencing domestic abuse, mental health issues and learning disabilities.

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.

We undertake a wide range of community investment activities based on a strategic priority of addressing the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 1 of No Poverty.

We fund projects in our communities that increase access to opportunities, raise aspirations and remove barriers to belonging. Projects we have supported include breakfast clubs at primary schools in partnership with Greggs, community grocery projects and support for family activities in rural areas.

The below case study illustrates our commitment to investing in lasting community engagement that builds trust and delivers support that is valued by communities and partners:

North Star have supported Sprouts CIC since 2019, initially starting by supporting the community cooking sessions the organisation was renowned for.

When the Covid 19 pandemic hit in 2020, Sprouts utilised our Community Hub in Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees to provide emergency relief services to the local community.

This project has grown in recent years to include a community grocery, community garden and numerous cooking and social sessions. As part of this partnership we were able to support a detached youth work pilot in the area that has seen Cornerhouse Youth Project extend their delivery from central Stockton into Thornaby.

Our partnership with Sprouts is built on a high level of mutual trust and confidence in our joint ability to use local knowledge to deliver outcomes for our communities. Sprouts' work, with the support of North Star's funding, is able to reach over 900 people living in and around Thornaby.

Section Three **Governance**

Structure and Governance

**C26**

Is the housing provider registered with the national regulator of social housing?

Yes – LH0084

C27

What is the housing provider's most recent regulatory grading/status?

G1/V1 (December 2025)

C28

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

NHF Code of Governance 2020

Structure and Governance

C29

Explain how the housing provider's Board manages ESG risks

The delivery of our Corporate Strategy, Leading & Growing to 2026, is underpinned by robust governance and effective risk management.

Our Risk Management Framework (RMF) was last approved by Board in December 2024 and is designed to support a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities for risk management within the business. The Board reviews its Risk Appetite annually, with the most recent statement being approved in June 2025. Risk management is the responsibility of everyone, from Board members to front-line staff, and is embedded in the culture of North Star.

Our approach is supported by the Three-Lines of Defence model, which provides assurance to Board that relevant risk controls are operating as expected in a way that reduces the likelihood or impact of a risk occurring. Risk appetite is owned by the Board, who hold overall responsibility for leading the organisation within a framework of sound governance, which enables risk to be identified, assessed, and evaluated.

Board and the Risk & Audit Committee receive quarterly updates on Strategic Risk Management, including our Strategic Risk Register, updates on emerging risks, and Board and Committee-led 'deep dives' across a number of areas.

More detail on our approach to ESG, in the context of Risk Management is captured below

Environmental Risk

We are committed to reducing our environmental footprint by investing in energy-efficient homes, embracing low-carbon technologies, and improving energy performance across our housing stock. Our approach includes retrofitting older properties, adopting sustainable construction practices, and monitoring environmental performance to meet decarbonisation targets set by Government.

Social Risk

Our role extends beyond housing; we're creating homes, building futures within inclusive, safe, and thriving communities. We actively engage with residents, prioritise the wellbeing of our customers, and work in partnership with others to address social challenges. We embed equality, diversity, and inclusion in our operations and ensure our services are accessible to all.

Governance Risk

Strong governance underpins our approach to ESG. We maintain transparent decision-making, robust risk management, and ethical leadership. Through this report, ESG oversight is available to all stakeholders, with clear accountability to recognised frameworks under the Sustainability Reporting Standard.

Structure and Governance

**C30**

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

No.

Board and Trustees

C31.1

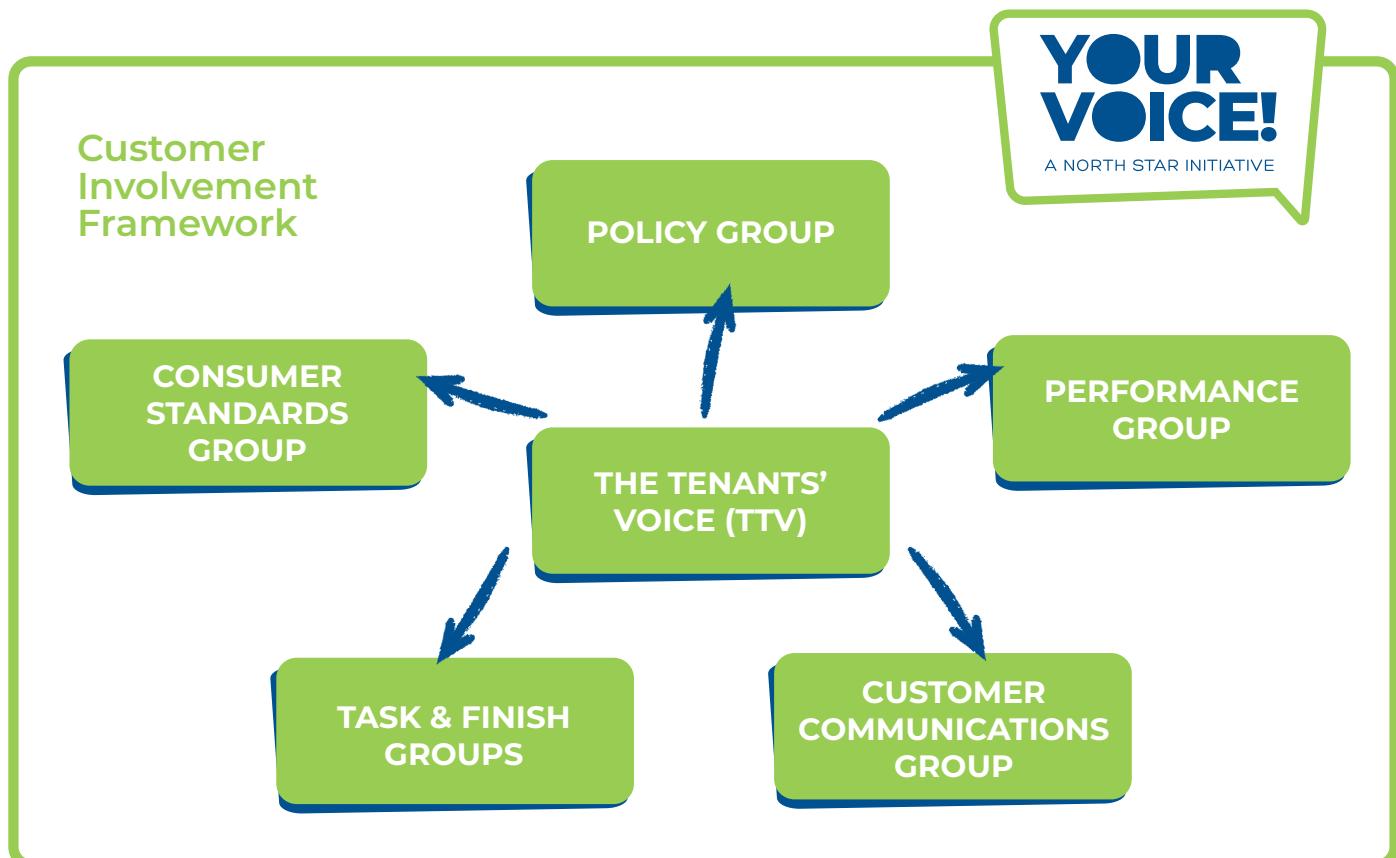
How does the housing provider ensure it gets input from a diverse range of people into the governance processes?



North Star's Your Voice framework offers flexible and inclusive opportunities for all residents to engage, regardless of background or location.

The network includes over 500 members and ensures representation through a variety of routes: surveys, events, Task & Finish Groups, and formal panels.

All involvement groups are designed to reflect the diversity of our customer base, with targeted approaches to include underrepresented groups. The Tenants' Voice (TTV) acts as the core scrutiny body, linking directly with the Board. Its membership is expected to be representative of the ethnicity and diversity of residents.



Board and Trustees



C31.2

Does the housing provider consider resident voice at the board and senior management level?

North Star embeds resident voice directly into governance.

TTV works closely with two appointed Board members who lead on customer engagement, providing a clear route for resident influence into Board-level discussions. TTV manages the Recommendation Tracker, an open log of resident suggestions with clear responses from management, ensuring

visibility of actions and accountability. The Chair and/or Deputy Chair of TTV attend each Board meeting to discuss reports on customers.

Your Voice groups such as the Consumer Standards Group, Policy Review Group, and Performance Group provide scrutiny on services, policies, and compliance, feeding directly into governance processes.

C31.3

Does the housing provider have policies that incorporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into the recruitment and selection of board members and senior management?

North Star embeds Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) into the recruitment and selection of Board members and senior management.

Our policies ensure recruitment is fair, transparent, and merit-based, with positive action to address under-representation.

Board and senior leaders receive EDI training, and initiatives such as the two-year Board development programme, run in partnership with the Housing Diversity Network (HDN) and other partners, support greater diversity and inclusive leadership.

Board and Trustees

C32

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

Board turnover 33.3% and SMT turnover of 50%

C33

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

Two

C34

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

100%

**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?

6 years (since 2019/20)

Board and Trustees

**C37**

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

Spring 2025

C38

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

Board members submit annual declarations of interest and are also required to make declarations of interest at each meeting, ensuring that any potential conflicts are identified and managed appropriately.

Staff Wellbeing

**C39****Does the housing provider pay the Real Living Wage?****Yes****C40****What is the housing provider's median gender pay gap?**

The Government requirements for gender pay gap reporting stipulate:

Any employer with 250 or more employees on a specific date each year (the 'snapshot date') must report their gender pay gap data.

You must report and publish your gender pay gap information within a year of your snapshot date. You must do

this for every year that you have 250 or more employees on your snapshot date.

North Star did complete Gender Pay Gap reports for internal purposes between 2018 - 2021. As there is no legal requirement for North Star to complete and publish GPG data, this information is not available.

C41**What is the housing provider's CEO:median-worker pay ratio?****4:1**

Staff Wellbeing

**C42**

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

North Star provides extensive EDI training to the whole workforce including:

Unconscious Bias; Anti-Racism; Neurodiversity Awareness; Disability Awareness; LGBTQ Awareness; Menopause training; Cancer awareness.

North Star has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and a Transitioning in the Workplace Policy - both of which have received critical friend reviews from external EDI organisations (Purple Reach and Hart Gables).

To assist in the promotion and

embedding of EDI policies, initiatives, training and awareness raising, North Star has a dedicated Inclusion Group, made up of a group of staff from across the business with a keen interest in EDI (approx 10% of the organisation).

Our staff and customers are involved in a number of EDI events including but not limited to: Local Pride events; Middlesbrough Mela; Eid celebrations; We have also sponsored Taste of Africa North East's Black History Youth Awards since their inception.

Staff Wellbeing

**C43**

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



A dedicated Wellbeing Group made up of members of staff from across the business (approx 10% of the workforce) help to drive forward Wellbeing initiatives for staff.

Staff have access to a number of wellbeing initiatives including:

- Free physiotherapy services
- Free confidential counselling
- Simply Health cashback healthcare plan
- Access to free pension advice
- Free eye tests
- Hybrid working
- Car Loans for essential car users
- Stress and Nutrition Workshops
- Access to Occupational Health Services
- Adoption, Maternity and Paternity leave above industry benchmarks and statute requirements

North Star have implemented a Financial Wellbeing Framework in which we will:

- Signpost staff to financial advice and support organisations
- Provide access to a Financial Education Service (CfED) to support financial wellbeing
- Signpost staff to local alternatives to high cost credit
- Provide a salary advance scheme
- Offer staff a salary sacrifice scheme for pension contributions
- Provide an annual staff survey to ensure that we can accurately monitor and measure how staff are faring financially
- Continue to be a Living Wage Employer

Staff Wellbeing

**C44**

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

Continuous conversations are regularly held between line managers and staff. However, on an annual basis, line managers conduct focused development continuous conversations that draw out specific staff requirements including: Technical skills; academic/ professional qualifications; shadowing opportunities; mentoring; management skills.

North Star will fund academic/ professional qualifications applicable to a person's role and/or will look to offer fully funded apprenticeship

programmes to enhance an individual's skill set.

We advertise all vacancies internally first. Roles are only advertised externally if they are not filled through our internal recruitment process.

We offer staff in house development programmes including Leadership development for all Managers; Managing the North Star Way for aspiring Managers and Skills for Change for all new starters.

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?

North Star's Procurement Policy sets out that "As an organisation North Star has a vision for the future which not only focuses on achieving value for money but has a huge emphasis on customer satisfaction and social value".

All purchasing and contracting activities must be "ethically, environmentally and socially responsible".

Social Value can be achieved by several avenues such as.

- Additional job or placement opportunities for the area
- Additional resource within our

communities through volunteering opportunities

- Opportunities to promote and strengthen our brand
- Additional opportunities for apprenticeships through expressed expectations for certain contract values.

Where possible we will include Social Value in any potential tender opportunity and make it part of the award criteria. Social Value can be measured in many ways and a sliding scale calculator has been developed which takes into consideration contract value.

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?

As set out in the Procurement Policy, North Star is committed to a procurement process that emphasises the principle of sustainability.

Our approach to green procurement is outlined as part of this policy. The policy underscores our commitment to environmental sustainability; aiming to minimise our environmental footprint through integrating environmentally conscious decision making into our processes.

We are committed to procuring products and services that have a minimal impact on the environment and contribute positively to the community. Our procurement practices will prioritise sustainability, ethical sourcing, and resource efficiency. Measures are in the process of being developed in order to monitor the impact of procurement on sustainability.



NORTH STAR

If you require any further information, please contact finance@northstarhg.co.uk