

Environment, Social and Governance Report



This report sets out the performance and impact of United Welsh Housing Association Ltd in terms of the Environmental, Social and Governance aspects of our business.

We have chosen to use the framework devised by the UK-wide ESG Social Housing Working Group. The Group developed a Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRS) which was launched in November 2020, and covers 48 criteria. The Standard develops the three ESG areas into 12 themes and each theme is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Each theme has one or more criteria against which to measure; some criteria are classed as 'Core' (the most important) or 'Enhanced' (more aspirational).

This is our first report using this framework and shows results for all Core criteria (C) and those Enhanced criteria (E) where we have made some progress. The information will be updated annually.

ENVIRONMENT			
Theme	Type C/E	Criteria	2020/21 Results
Climate change	C	Distribution of EPC ratings of existing homes (those completed before the last financial year)	We measure using SAP ratings, so the following bandings are approximate. 5% EPC A; 60% EPC B; 30% EPC C; 5% EPC D
	C	Distribution of EPC ratings of new homes (those completed in the last financial year).	In 2019/20 reported that SAP rating of new properties was on average 83 (roughly equivalent to EPC B). New self-delivered schemes in the pipeline will be EPC A.
Ecology	This theme only has Enhanced criteria, against which there is nothing to report yet.		
Resource management	This theme only has Enhanced criteria, against which there is nothing to report yet.		

SOCIAL

Theme	Type C/E	Criteria	2020/21 Results										
Affordability and security	C	Share, and number, of existing homes (homes completed before the last financial year) allocated to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General needs (social rent) • Intermediate rent • Affordable rent • Supported Housing • Housing for older people • Low-cost home ownership • Care homes • Private Rented Sector 	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">General Needs</td> <td style="text-align: right;">66% (4049)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Older People</td> <td style="text-align: right;">13% (819)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supported housing</td> <td style="text-align: right;">14% (886)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Affordable</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2% (112)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LCHO</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5% (282)</td> </tr> </table>	General Needs	66% (4049)	Older People	13% (819)	Supported housing	14% (886)	Affordable	2% (112)	LCHO	5% (282)
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	C	How is United Welsh trying to reduce the effect of fuel poverty on its residents?	Support in managing energy bills from Money Advice Team; Commitment to build to EPC-A; Already have several properties with solar and photovoltaic for domestic energy or hot water; Piloted houses built to Passivhaus; Several schemes with ground or air-source heat pumps as primary heating system.
	C	For properties that are subject to the rent regulation regime, report against one or more Affordability Metric: 1) Rent compared to Median private rental sector (PRS) rent across the Local Authority 2) Rent compared to Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	We base our rents on affordability principles developed by JRF Foundation.
	E	What % of rental homes have a three-year fixed tenancy agreement (or longer)?	None
Building safety and quality	C	What % of homes with a gas appliance have an in-date, accredited gas safety check?	99.98%
	C	What % of buildings have an in-date and compliant Fire Risk Assessment?	100.00%
	C	What % of homes meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (incl Acceptable Fails)?	100%
Resident voice	C	What arrangements are in place to enable the residents to hold management to account for provision of services?	We have recently developed a new Tenant Involvement & Participation Strategy. This envisages tenants being able to engage as suits them. We plan to establish a Panel of informed tenants for more detailed engagement. We have held digital meetings of groups of interested tenants on particular topics e.g. rents.

	C	How does the housing provider measure Resident Satisfaction and how has Resident Satisfaction changed over the last three years?	Rolling independent telephone perception survey surveying approx. 100 tenants per month. Results monitored through quarterly reports to the Executive Team. No targets set as we aim to maintain satisfaction levels and monitor reductions. Satisfaction in many measures has dropped during 2020/21.
	E	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?	Four complaints were escalated to the Ombudsman, none were upheld.
Resident support	C	What support services does the housing provider offer to its residents. How successful are these services in improving outcomes?	<p>Jobs & Training - 49 tenants were placed in work in 2020/21; 80 tenants were provided with training and others were supported in trying to find work or how to cope when they have lost their jobs.</p> <p>Money Advice – We provide advice in how to manage money and budgets, providing support to make claims for UC, DHPs and other benefits (520 people supported in this way in 2020/21).</p> <p>Connect and Community services – We signpost tenants to services to support mental health and physical health, and the reduction of loneliness (133 tenants in sheltered accommodation benefitted).</p>
Placemaking	This theme only has Enhanced criteria, against which there is nothing to report yet.		

GOVERNANCE

Theme	Type C/E	Criteria	2020/21 Results
Structure and governance	C	Is the housing provider registered with a regulator of social housing?	Yes - Welsh Government
	C	What is the most recent viability and governance regulatory grading?	Standard/Standard <i>(highest possible rating for Welsh Government system of assessments).</i>
	C	Which Code of Governance does the housing provider follow, if any?	Community Housing Cymru and National Housing Federation
	C	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?	Yes, not-for-profit
	C	Explain how the housing provider's board manages organisational risks.	Strategic Risk Map with accompanying Assurance Map
	E	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

Board and Trustees	C	<p>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?</p> <p>Add commentary if useful</p>	<p>Board - 36% female; 0% BAME; 9% have a disability. Average age is 51; average tenure is 4.5 years.</p> <p>Tenants - 58% female; 2% BAME; Median age for new tenants over the last two years or so is in the age range of 55-64.</p>
	C	<p>What % of the board AND management team have turned over in the last two years?</p> <p>Add commentary if useful</p>	33%
	C	<p>Is there a maximum tenure for a board member? If so, what is it?</p>	Yes - 9 years for non-executive board members
	C	<p>What % of the board are non-executive members?</p>	73%
	C	<p>Number of board members on the Audit Committee with recent and relevant financial experience</p>	3 out of 5 Audit & Risk Committee members have experience as finance directors, group financial controllers or heads of risk.
	C	<p>Are there any current executives on the Remuneration Committee?</p>	No
	C	<p>Has a succession plan been provided to the board in the last 12 months?</p>	No
	C	<p>For how many years has the housing provider's current external audit partner been responsible for auditing the accounts?</p>	2020/21 was the current engagement partner's first year. The firm rotate engagement partner at regular intervals.
	C	<p>When was the last independently-run, board-effectiveness review?</p>	2021
	C	<p>Are the roles of the chair of the board and CEO held by two different people?</p>	Yes
C	<p>How does United Welsh handle conflicts of interest at the board?</p>	For a matter coming up to a board decision, if there is a conflict of interest the Chair determines whether	

			it is appropriate for the board member to stay in the room (possibly to answer questions of clarification) or to leave the room. In relation to other code of conduct issues the Chair will discuss the matter with the board member and agree a way forward.
Staff wellbeing	C	Does United Welsh pay the Real Living Wage?	Yes
	C	What is the gender pay gap?	18% (2020)
	E	What is the CEO-worker pay ratio?	For 2019/20 the ratio of CEO pay to median staff salary was 4.74
	E	How does United Welsh support the physical and mental health of their staff?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible working in terms of hours to support work/life balance • Collective Voice - our team who collaborate with management on staff issues (also act as trades union reps) • Appointed a Staff Wellbeing Lead • Space in our MS Teams network for staff to post helpful articles or comments • Provide counselling service • Eye tests and other health scheme benefits on offer
	E	Average number of sick days taken per employee	5.41 days for the year ended 31 March 2021
Supply chain management	This theme only has Enhanced criteria, against which there is nothing to report yet.		