



Environmental, Social
and Governance Report
2023



About us

60 Years on from our inception, Orwell continues to be an organisation that believes ‘together we make a difference.’ We are committed to making a real difference to local people. Providing homes for over 8200 residents and customers, and managing around 4300 homes across East Anglia, we are on a mission to provide housing, care and support services with the customers at our heart.

This means that, even against the backdrop of very challenging financial circumstances, and a really tough external operating environment, we go further than just being a social landlord. For **#teamorwell**, fulfilling our mission and delivering on our vision means that we choose to do things which go way beyond our duties and responsibilities as a social housing provider. Whilst these are really important to us, and we ensure we meet all of those obligations, we also do a lot more besides.

Providing these additional services and going the extra mile for our customers means that we make conscious decisions to invest some of our income back into our communities, not because we have to but because we know it is the right thing to do and we know that there is more to being a housing association than simply providing bricks and mortar. A home is more than a house, and a community is more than an estate.

Our development company, Orwell Homes, supports the work of Orwell Housing by building homes for the private market as well as providing development services to Orwell Housing. Any surpluses generated by Orwell Homes are reinvested into our affordable housing provision and services to our diverse customers, some of whom have significant vulnerabilities.

We are rated G1 (Governance) and V2 (Viability) by the Regulator for Social Housing. We have a strong and well-established governance structure which includes independent Board members with a wide range of skills from the public, private and voluntary sector. Two of our Board member posts are reserved for Orwell customers to ensure the customer voice is heard right at the heart of the governance of our organisation. The Board devolves some of its work to its committees which cover audit, customer insight and remuneration and nominations. Orwell Residents’ Group and other customer groups provide a level of scrutiny over our services and we are working to diversify membership of these key groups, so that they are fully reflective of our customer base.

Our Vision

That everyone has a safe place to call home with the care and support they need to live their best life.

Our Mission

That together we make a difference by providing housing, care and support services with the customers at our heart.

Our values



People-focused

People are at the heart of our organisation. By recognising people's diverse needs and strengths and treating everyone fairly, we can both serve our customers better and support our teams to run a brilliant organisation and improve services.

Ambitious

We are ambitious to grow the organisation so that it can do more and realise the full potential of Orwell, our employees, and those we support and house.

Collaborative

We will work in partnership and search out best practice. We will collaborate with tenants, customers, colleagues and like-minded organisations to develop solutions together.

Effective

We will be economic and embed efficiency across our services, ensuring we lead the way with our knowledge and expertise. We will ensure that our teams are committed and competent to be the best at what they do, in order that they can provide the highest possible standards of service.



About Environmental, Social and Governance reporting

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting refers to the disclosure of data relating to organisational performance in three areas: environment, social and corporate governance. It is also known as sustainability reporting.

Orwell adopted the Sustainability Reporting Standard (SRS) for Social Housing in 2022 and this report is structured to comply with that standard. We recognise that adopting a uniform approach will contribute to our progress in these areas and as a sector.

The SRS was created by an independent body made up of members from across the housing and financial sectors. The reporting themes and criteria were developed as a result of extensive consultation and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders including customers.

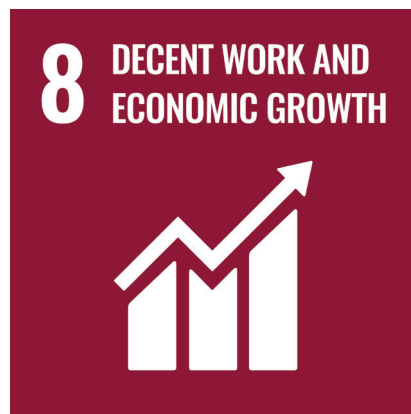
To remain transparent and accountable to our stakeholders, we will report annually on our environmental, social and governance performance. Within each theme we will report against individual criteria.



ESG area	Criteria (C)	Definition
Social	C1 – C5	Measures the affordability of the homes we provide to those on low incomes. It also seeks to assess how contractually secure our customers are.
	C6 – C8	Measures our legal compliance in protecting our customers and keeping their homes safe and secure.
	C9 – C11	Measures how we are listening to our customers and ensuring we hear what they are saying.
	C12	Measures what support we are providing our customers to improve their quality of life.
	C13	Measures how effectively we undertake whole organisation place making activities to improve our communities as a whole.
Environmental	C14 – C19	Measures our impact on the environment as well as how effectively we are planning for carbon net zero and sustainable homes.
	C20 – C21	Measures how effectively we are nurturing biodiversity and promoting green spaces within our communities.
	C22 – C24	Measures how effectively we are managing waste, pollutants and water in our supply chains and development programmes.
Governance	C25 – C30	Measures how effectively we are governed and structured.
	C31 – C41	Measures our board performance.
	C42 – C46	Measures how effectively we look after our employees' physical and mental health.
	C47 – C48	Measures how we manage our supply chain to maximise social value and minimise negative environmental impacts.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals are a call for action by all countries – poor, rich and middle-income – to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognise that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection. More important than ever, the goals provide a critical framework for COVID-19 recovery.





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

The background is a solid teal color with several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in a slightly lighter shade of teal. These shapes are primarily triangles and quadrilaterals, some pointing upwards and others downwards, creating a layered, architectural effect.

Social

Affordability and security

We are committed to ensuring our homes are affordable and provide the highest possible levels of financial and physical security. Many of our rents are below Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, and we are committed to providing secure tenancies through fair agreements with our customers.

We recognise that fuel poverty is an issue that affects our customers. We are committed to improving this by raising awareness and ensuring our homes are warm and efficient.

C1. Our rent rates

Rent	Percentage
% of Private Rental Sector (PRS) rent	55.5%
% of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rent	75.8%

C2. An overview of our homes by type completed before the 2023 financial year

This is a breakdown of our existing properties (completed before 2023):

Property Type	Units	Percentage
General Needs	1888	46.6%
Intermediate Rent	18	0.4%
Affordable Rent	957	23.6%
Supported Housing	386	9.5%
Housing for Older People	440	10.9%
Low-cost Home Ownership	152	3.7%
Care Home	24	0.6%
Private Rented Sector	0	0.0%
Other*	189	4.7%

*Other relates to Market Rented and Market Rented Extra Care.

C3. Our homes completed during the 2023 financial year, by type

This is a breakdown of our new properties (completed Jan - Dec 2023).

Property Type	Units	Percentage
General Needs	1	0.8%
Intermediate Rent	0	0.0%
Affordable Rent	74	62.7%
Supported Housing	18	15.3%
Housing for Older People	0	0.0%
Low-cost Home Ownership	25	21.2%
Care Home	0	0.0%
Private Rented Sector	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%

C4. Working to reduce fuel poverty

Orwell has a budgeted plan of improvements to our homes which will improve their warmth and energy efficiency, including window, doors and storage heater upgrades and replacements. We have also successfully drawn down net carbon zero funding from the Government and are working to retrofit some of our homes to vastly reduce their carbon output.

C5. Providing long-term security through fixed term tenancy agreements

88.6% of our rented homes are let on at least a 3 year fixed term tenancy basis.



Building safety and quality

We are committed to achieving the highest possible standards in building safety and quality. We continually strive to ensure that all of our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard, and keeping our customers safe is an integral part of the services we provide.

As at 31 December 2023:

C6. Ensuring our homes have gas safe appliances

99.6% of our homes had an up-to-date gas safety check.

C7. A commitment to fire safety through robust risk assessment

100% of our homes had an up-to-date and compliant fire risk assessment where one was required.

C8. Delivering properties that meet the Decent Homes Standard

100% of our homes met the Decent Homes Standard.



Customer voice

C9. A transparent and customer-focused approach to providing services

Here at Orwell we are passionate about ensuring the customer voice is at the heart of everything we do. We work together with our customers so that they are able to influence and shape future initiatives, policies and services.

We were delighted to expand our Customer Insight and Engagement team in 2023 with the addition of our Customer Insight Officer, who is dedicated to bringing together and analysing all the feedback we receive from our customers, ensuring that any lessons we can learn are shared across the whole of #teamorwell.

The CHAT (Complaints Handling Assessment Team) initiative was relaunched in 2023, enabling our customers to scrutinise the quality of our complaint handling. Customers review our responses to complaints and recommend areas for improvement. Their feedback is collated and sent to all Orwell leaders, ensuring that learning is shared across the whole organisation. We are looking to expand this group further in 2024 to ensure we have a diverse range of customers representing all the communities we serve.

Our ORG (Orwell Residents' Group) continues to play a key role in our customer engagement offer. They monitor and scrutinise our performance against Key Performance Indicators and customer satisfaction levels, and provide feedback on how we apply the learning from these.

Each year, the ORG decides which 3 areas of the business they would like to review. In 2023, they chose Communications, Estate Services and Development Home User Guide and all results in the form of a *"you said we did"* will be available on our newly designed **'Get Involved'** web page.

The next phase of our evolving customer engagement offer will be to launch a new digital engagement platform in connection with Engagement HQ, which will allow us to become more interactive with customers, engaging them in decisions at an earlier stage, so that we get our services right for them from the start.

C10. Clear customer satisfaction benchmarking to drive better engagement

Orwell carries out a variety of surveys in order to understand how our customers experience the services we provide.

We currently collect customer feedback via transactional surveys covering many service areas including anti-social behaviour, complaints, end of tenancy, lettings, new development, programmed works, repairs, and tenancy sustainment.

During 2023, we reviewed the content of our surveys and trialled a variety of formats and methodologies to encourage greater engagement. As repairs is a very important service for our customers, we have focussed on collecting and analysing data and developing a reporting framework in this area.

We identify trends, look at specific contractor data and case studies and complaints, and gather all sources of customer feedback together. Meetings are held to discuss the findings, propose actions and monitor outcomes, which are recorded on an action plan.

We also carry out one-off surveys to obtain feedback about specific issues, or where we are looking to change the service offered to customers. In 2023, we have consulted customers about our damp and mould service and proposed changes to repair appointment times.

In April 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing introduced performance measures called Tenant Satisfaction Measures. These measures aim to hold housing providers accountable for their actions and give customers greater access to information about their performance.

There are 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures and all social housing providers must report on them. The measures are split into two parts:

- ▲ **10 performance measures that we collect through management performance information.**
- ▲ **12 customer perception survey measures that are being collected through surveying customers directly.**

The results so far have been analysed for themes and triangulated with our transactional surveys and other customer feedback.

C11. Striving to achieve best practice in complaints handling

In the last 12 months, Orwell had 0 cases of maladministration found by the Housing Ombudsman.

Orwell complies with the Housing Ombudsman's revised Complaint Handling Code. A self-assessment of our compliance with this Code is approved by Board annually, and is published on our website for our customers to see. Our most recent self-assessment went to Board in February 2024. Furthermore, Orwell has a comprehensive Complaints and Compliments Policy, which is publicly available on our website, alongside comprehensive guides which are simple to follow. These guides are continuously updated to ensure our customers know how to raise a complaint with Orwell and to make this as easy as possible.

Complaint handling information is reported on a quarterly basis to the Customer Insight Committee and on an annual basis to Board. Feedback from complaints is used to drive improvements in processes and to improve the customer experience. Regular meetings are held between the Customer Insight and Engagement Team and our Repairs Team to share feedback from complaints and cross-reference this with other customer satisfaction data. Service improvements across all teams are identified based on the feedback. This is then published in the 'you said, we did' section of our website to provide feedback to customers.

The Chair of Orwell's Customer Insight Committee is a Board member and acts as Orwell's Complaints Champion.

Our complaint guides are continuously updated to ensure our customers know how to raise a complaint with Orwell.

Customer support

Our commitment to helping our customers build successful and fulfilling lives extends far beyond a landlord relationship.

C12. Offering support and advice that leads to better outcomes for our customers

Orwell provides care and support services to diverse customer groups, including people with a learning disability, people escaping domestic abuse, people who are, or have been, homeless and older people. Some of these services are regulated by the Care Quality Commission. The support provided is person-centred and intended to improve quality of life through a variety of strategies and outcomes; these will range from supporting people to gain employment and developing and maintaining practical life skills, through to simply making choices. Outcomes include improved health, wellbeing, confidence and esteem.

In our temporary and supported living properties, we have supported people to access planned moves to more permanent accommodation (103 out of 174 total moves). We have supported customers and their families to be safe and free from harm using our safeguarding procedures and ensuring all employees are trained and able to manage concerns. Of the 113 safeguarding concerns raised in 2023, Orwell reduced or removed risk of harm in 97% of cases through partnership arrangements and empowering individuals to gain control, access support or develop skills that protect them from harm. Where cases are recorded as a remaining risk this often involves victims of domestic abuse returning to the perpetrator. However, even in these cases we will have equipped victims with safety planning options to reduce risk.

Orwell has its own bespoke Tenancy Sustainment Team. In 2023 our Tenancy Sustainment Officers assisted 103 customers, 100% of whom maintained their tenancy. We achieved 160 positive outcomes supporting our customers to achieve goals that related to finances, housing, employment and training, or their health and well-being.

We have redefined our customer offer for people living in sheltered housing, following a comprehensive engagement exercise with customers. This service is now called Housing for Over 55s, and we have Community Officers on site who provide support to ensure our customers are managing well independently. We work closely with external agencies where support is required above the level we offer.



Placemaking

We are committed to creating communities that are great places for people to live and call home.

C13. Transforming spaces to build better communities

In 2023, Orwell completed the construction of 31 new affordable flats on a redundant former commercial site in the centre of Lowestoft. The regeneration of this brownfield site has transformed a prominent and visible part of the town and provided much needed affordable accommodation with great access to the town centre amenities and services.

During 2023, Orwell started construction on a brownfield site in suburban Ipswich on a site of a former shop and warehouse. Working with the East of England Co-op we were able to secure this land and achieve permission to demolish the old shop and build 15 homes for rent and shared ownership. This will bring much needed affordable accommodation to the town on a site well served by local amenities, services and travel links.



Environmental

Climate change

We believe we have a fundamental role to play in safeguarding the world we live in for our customers both now and in the future. We need to establish the right data from our homes to ensure we can deliver EPC C by 2030 and carbon net zero by 2050. We are committed to being open to innovation and working in partnership with others in order to achieve our ambitious goals.

C14. Distribution of EPC ratings of our existing homes (completed before 2023)

Rating	Percentage
EPC rating A	0%
EPC rating B	1.8%
EPC rating C	62.8%
EPC rating D	31.4%
EPC rating E or worse	4%
No EPC rating (unknown)	0%

C15. Distribution of EPC ratings of new homes (completed Jan to Dec 2023)

Rating	Percentage
EPC rating A	0.0%
EPC rating B	96.0%
EPC rating C	2.0%
EPC rating D	2.0%
EPC rating E or below	0.0%
No EPC rating (unknown)	0.0%

The addition of homes at EPC rating C and D relates to four properties acquired for refurbishment.

C16. Scope one, two and three greenhouse gas emissions

Greenhouse Gas Emission	tCO2e
Scope 1 emissions	1,771,900
Scope 2 emissions	368,100
Scope 3 emissions	8,097,300
Total scope emissions	10,237,300

In 2023 Orwell worked with Carbon Charter to establish a carbon baseline.

C17. A proactive approach to energy efficiency

As lighting reaches end of life we replace with low energy solutions. We have commissioned a consultant review of our new home design which sets out how we can achieve net carbon zero in the delivery of our new homes. The first stage of this journey is to continue with a fabric-first approach, making homes as energy efficient as possible and we have also committed to no longer using gas as the default energy source for new homes. New homes will have efficient air source heat pumps and car charging points, or the infrastructure to install them at a later date.

We have a budgeted property improvement plan to help us move towards net carbon zero. In 2023 we upgraded the windows and doors of 129 properties and replaced heating boilers in 94 properties, and fitted 18 air source heat pumps.

C18. Working to mitigate and reduce climate risks now and in the future

We mitigate flood risk by creating emergency action plans and building protection, and fully assessing flood risk at the point of site identification for new homes.

C19. Helping our customers to become stakeholders in their environmental future

Orwell provides heating information and guidance related to heating and ventilating using internal communications and our website. This information is also contained within every tenancy sign up pack. Information on local authority recycling and waste collection is provided for newly-constructed homes.



Ecology

We believe we have a responsibility to ensure that our homes and communities play a proactive role in the preservation and safeguarding of local ecology. We promote biodiversity in our new and existing communities.

C20. Building sustainable communities that champion biodiversity and open spaces

60 trees for 60 years

To mark Orwell's 60th anniversary we have committed to plant 60 native trees, one for every year we have been providing homes. In the UK, trees are our biggest plants and our best allies in the fight against climate change. A fundamental part of biodiversity, the benefits of planting trees has gone beyond being a 'nice to have' to being hailed as the number one preventative solution.

Trees provide all manner of essentials, from the oxygen we breathe, to food, habitat, water, medicine, shade and more. Trees are incredible creations within their own right. Trees also act as a sound barrier, so when planted between roads and homes, they block out unwanted noise pollution, as well as absorbing harmful traffic fumes.

Wildlife and natural systems depend on trees too. Woodland and forests host a rich biodiversity, with every part of a tree, from roots to leaves, supporting life in some way. From the birds that nest in branches, to thousands of insects that crawl within and upon it, to roosting bats and foraging squirrels and badgers, one single tree can support a whole myriad of activity.

In a nutshell, planting trees is good for the environment because of their ability to absorb carbon dioxide and expel oxygen through the process of photosynthesis.

Human activity has dramatically increased the levels of carbon dioxide or CO₂ in our atmosphere since the industrial age, via the continued burning of fossil fuels such as gas, oil and coal.

Native trees serve all the animal, bird, reptile and insect species that exist in our environment, which is why they're so important. If we don't provide the wildlife with the host plant it needs, those species of animal, bird and insect will simply not be present anymore.

By planting a diverse range of native plants and tree species in our gardens, our commercial premises and land, we encourage a whole network of different life forms. Eco-systems thrive when there is an abundance of plant life for all types of insects. In turn, this diverse range of insects enhances the food chain, resulting in a wider array of birds, mammals and fish.



C21. Working in partnership to eliminate pollution from building new homes

Orwell's Development Design Guide includes a commitment to only use materials in our construction which are not harmful to the environment. Contractors are required to have a site waste management plan and to report the discovery of any contaminating materials or substances.



Resource management

We are committed to ensuring our existing homes and future developments meet ethical targets and standards relating to responsibly sourced materials.

C22. A commitment to developing responsible resource management processes through measurable targets

Orwell's Development Design Guide includes a commitment to only use materials in our new home construction which are not harmful to the environment. This means that, in specifying materials, designers should follow the Green Guide to Specification Housing, aiming for materials which have an 'A' rating.

C23. A commitment to putting robust waste management processes at the heart of our building strategy

Our Development Design Guide sets out that developments should make the best use of reused and recycled parts and materials. For example, using reclaimed bricks instead of new bricks, using demolition material instead of new materials to build up roads, footpaths or underground floors or using aggregate for ground slabs, foundations or concrete pavements. It also sets an expectation that buildings should be designed and built so that materials can be easily reused or recycled when buildings are demolished. When designing a scheme, architects and designers will be expected to detail how they have considered the disposal of waste from the site both from an aesthetic and a practical point of view. Orwell has a flowchart to manage waste.

We are currently reviewing our responsive repairs waste management activities, and anticipate rolling out a consistent approach across all areas of Property Services. At both of our repairs depots, we have removed the general waste skips and replaced them with individual skips to enable us to sort waste into general waste, dry mixed recyclables, paint, plasterboard, hardcore, metal and wood. As a result of this, we are able to reduce our carbon footprint and quantify how much the repairs division of our organisation is able to recycle. During 2023, our Estate Services Team recycled 97% of their green waste and recycled 100% of their leaf waste. 96% of our aged and damaged wooden outdoor furniture has been replaced with recycled plastic furniture which will last longer and require less maintenance, all old wooden items were recycled.

C24. Working to reduce water waste and ensure efficient water management

Water management is a primary consideration in all new developments. Our environmental and sustainability approach will be reviewed and updated to extend this into our programmed works operations.

Governance

Structure and governance

We are dedicated to robust governance effectively underpinning our organisation to support the delivery of our strategic objectives.

C25. Our services are registered and regulated

We are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing and some of our care services are regulated by the Care Quality Commission.

C26. Achieving regulatory excellence in viability and governance

Following Orwell's In Depth Assessment (IDA) from the Regulator of Social Housing published 15 November 2023, we have achieved a governance and viability grading of G1/V2.

C27. Working to a recognised Code of Governance

In 2021, we adopted the National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2020.

C28. Providing a not-for-profit service

As a group, we operate as a not-for-profit business. Surplus from operations is reinvested in our current properties and services, as well as providing funds to develop more homes.

C29. Continuous organisational risk management to ensure better outcomes for everyone

Strategic risks and major operational risks are considered at every Board meeting, following review by the Executive Directors and Operational Management and Audit Committee. The effectiveness of this system is kept under review and the responsibility to bring weaknesses and improvements required to the attention of Board, is principally delegated to the Audit Committee.

Orwell also has in place an Assurance Map to monitor and confirm assurance activities across the business. The Assurance Map is regularly reviewed at Board as part of the Performance report and by Audit Committee. The Board recognises it has overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the whole system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

C30. Maintaining the highest possible ethical and legal standards

We have not had any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months.

Board

We are committed to ensuring the Board reflects the diversity of the areas in which we work, adding value through a diverse outlook and experience to help us deliver on our objectives to make Orwell and our communities great places to be.

C31. A commitment to creating a diverse, skills-led, knowledge-rich Board

The demographics of our Board are set out here:

Measure	Data
% of Board that are women	62.0%
% of Board that are BAME	8.0%
% of Board that have a disability	8.0%
% of Board that are LGBTQ+	15.0%
Average age of Board members (years)	54
Average Board tenure (years)	3.8

This information is collected via an annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion survey. (At present we are not able to compare these figures to the demographics of our customers, however a customer insight programme is in progress which we anticipate will enable meaningful comparison in the near future.)

C32. Creating stable leadership for the future

During the last two years, we had a 41.7% Board member turnover and a 44.4% management team turnover. Four members of the Board retired following end of term, and one Board member resigned. The management team consists of our Chief Executive and Directors and during the last two years, two Directors have left, one of them retiring after 17 years of service.

C33. Ensuring we benefit through new thinking, new learning, and new ideas

The maximum tenure for a Board member is 6 years, ensuring there is opportunity to keep the Board's opinions fresh with new experiences and knowledge.

C34. Creating the right blend within the senior leadership team

100% of the Board are non-executive directors.

C35. Financial leadership rooted in relevant skills, experience, and knowledge

We currently have three board members on the Audit Committee with relevant finance experience.

- ▲ Qualified accountant (FCCA) working at Senior Management and Executive Director roles in Social Housing and Care sector. Also has a background in establishing and running a multi award-winning business.

Senior positions in a variety of sectors including Banking, Mobile Communications and the Financial Ombudsman Service, prior to joining a large Housing Provider as interim COO and shortly thereafter CEO for 4 years, and now along with Board position at Orwell current Chair of another HA.

Chartered Accountant and a Certified Information Systems Auditor with a background in auditing and accounting. Starting career with Deloitte in external audit covering entities in the banking, financial services and manufacturing sectors before moving into internal audit covering payments operations at a major bank. Currently a Director in Internal Audit covering Technology at a major bank.

C36. Number of executives on the Remuneration Committee

There are no current executives on the remuneration committee.

C37. A commitment to the future through succession planning

We have created a succession plan which has been discussed by our Board. Board succession planning is reviewed annually along with Board member recruitment to ensure the right blend of skills and experience.

C38. Experienced external financial oversight

Our current external auditor has been responsible for auditing the annual accounts of Orwell for four years.

C39. A commitment to independent benchmarking of senior leadership

An independent review of Board effectiveness was completed in November 2021, recommendations from the review have been fully implemented. The next independent review will take place in 2024.

C40. Our Chair and CEO roles are independent of one another

The roles of CEO and Chair are held by two different people, with clearly defined role profiles and responsibilities.

C41. Rigorous processes to eliminate conflict of interest issues

Declarations of interest are requested from Board members in writing annually and reported to Board on an annual basis. Each Board and Committee meeting has a formal agenda item for declarations of interest to be noted. Board member agreement for services stipulates requirement to declare interests actual or potential as required by Orwell's rules, and policies including Probity policy, Subsidiary Governance Policy and Board Disputes, Complaints and Grievances Policy. Where a conflict is identified that particular board member would not take part in discussion or vote on the matter.

Orwell has adopted the NHF Model Rules 2015 and conflicts will be dealt with as per these rules and/or the Board Disputes, Complaints and Grievances Policy.

Employee wellbeing

C42. A commitment to the Real Living Wage

Whilst Orwell is not currently a Real Living Wage employer, we have a commitment to benchmark pay on an ongoing cycle to ensure that pay keeps pace with the market for all roles.

C43. Dedicated to reducing the gender pay gap

Our 2022/2023 mean gender pay gap was 8.4% and we remain committed to improving this in the future, and have an action plan in place to address gender pay gap equality.

C44. Valuing every member of our team

The CEO to median-worker pay ratio is currently 6.5.

C45. Ensuring our policies and processes support the physical and mental health of our people

We support our colleagues by implementing the following initiatives:

- ▲ Wellbeing Strategy
- ▲ Attendance Management policy and procedure
- ▲ Return to Work interviews
- ▲ Employee Assistance Programme
- ▲ Wellbeing Champions throughout organisation
- ▲ Role with dedicated Wellbeing element
- ▲ Mental Health First Aiders throughout organisation
- ▲ Occupational Health
- ▲ Reasonable adjustments supported where required
- ▲ Stress Risk Assessments carried out as required
- ▲ Health Cashplan
- ▲ Lifestyle portal including discounts in shops/entertainment venues/online and discounts on gym membership
- ▲ FREDIE group (EDI group) and LGBTQ+ Ambassador
- ▲ Knowledge Cafes sharing information regarding wellbeing and inclusivity topics
- ▲ Men's Monday (group for men to get together and talk with support and speakers)
- ▲ Dedicated wellbeing area on Facebook Workplace
- ▲ Allocated People Partner to all colleagues (notified on induction)

C46. Creating a healthy environment for work

The average number of sick days taken per employee during 2023 was 9.8 and we are committed to reducing this.

Supply chain

C47. A commitment to creating social value

Orwell's Procurement Strategy contains the following objectives: Demonstration of social value and environmental sustainability is included within all new specifications and positive outcomes generated. Orwell aims to use local supply chains in Procurement and works with Customer Groups to co-create future tender specifications and service standards. We produce an annual Social Value Report, telling the stories of the positive difference we make.

C48. Reducing the environmental impact of our supply chains through best practice procurement policies

Orwell's Procurement Strategy contains the following objective: Demonstration of social value and environmental sustainability is included within all new specifications and positive outcomes generated.





**If you would like this leaflet in another
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comms@orwell-housing.co.uk
or call 0345 60 100 30**

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