

The Difference We Make

Environment, Social
& Governance (ESG)
Report 2020/21



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Key Sustainability Events 2020/21

- Awarded 3rd Place in the **Top 30 Sustainable Housing Associations** by Digital Housing
- Achieved **SHIFT Silver rating** accreditation for our Environmental Management System
- Became early adopter of the **Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing**
- Launched **Sustainable Finance Framework** with a Second Party Opinion from ISS Corporate Solutions
- Pilot project for four new affordable homes with **Passivhaus standard** in Chard, Somerset in partnership with Beattie Passive
- First housing association to move to a **hybrid working model**, reducing **office carbon footprint by 50%**
- Installed **141 ground source and air source heat pumps**, and **2,723** cavity wall insulations – saving **26,621 tonnes of CO₂** across the life of the measures
- Our partnership with the **Community Forest Trust** has seen **13,236** trees planted to date
- Named in the **Sunday Times Best Companies Survey** as one of the **Top 25 Housing Associations to work for**, as well as one of the **Top 100 Best Companies to work for in the South East and the Midlands**



Introduction

As a leading social housing provider, we aim to make a difference for our customers, colleagues, and the communities of which we are part. In a period of great change and uncertainty, now more than ever, aiming for higher standards of sustainability is increasingly important for the future of the society we live in.

Last year, a group of UK housing associations, banks, and institutional investors took the initiative to create a new Sustainable Reporting Standard for social housing. As sustainability is a cornerstone of our business, Stonewater decided to be an early adopter of the new reporting standard, which will be the basis for our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting going forward.

The UK government has committed to reduce CO₂ emissions to net zero by 2050. UK residential housing accounts for about 15% of total CO₂ emissions. As a result, housing associations have an important part to play in reaching the net zero target and at Stonewater, this is something we feel passionate about. Currently a new, ambitious Environmental Strategy, to reach net zero CO₂ emissions by 2050, is under review.

As part of reducing our CO₂ emissions, we design and develop all our new homes with high energy efficiency in mind, taking into account a multitude of factors, including welfare reform, affordability, sustainability, as well as ensuring families have space to live and grow. Our Development Strategy for new homes is fully aligned with our Environmental Strategy, and as such, energy efficiency of all our new homes is ranging from EPC A to EPC C, with just under 89% of EPC B standard.

In addition, we continue upgrading the energy efficiency of our existing homes, with a target for all our homes to be a minimum of EPC C by 2030, which will reduce CO₂ emissions by 8,000 tonnes per year.

Our vision '**For everyone to have the opportunity to have a place that they can call home**', runs in parallel to our commitment to do the right thing for our customers and the environment. In a challenging year, we have handed over another 671 affordable high quality homes to our customers, and based on our ambitious development

plans, this year we expect to hand over in excess of 1,000 homes, increasing to 1,500 new affordable high-quality homes a year from 2022/23.

In the UK, it is estimated that 2.4m households live in fuel poverty. At Stonewater, we want to help tackle this problem. In 2020/21, we upgraded insulation in around 2,700 of our existing homes and installed just under 150 energy efficient heat pumps, reducing our customers' utility bills. In order to raise awareness of energy efficiency measures among our customers, we also ran several energy saving campaigns, such as our 'get ready for winter' campaign and the 'big energy saving week' campaign.

For Stonewater to provide an excellent service for our customers, it is important that we continue to be able to attract the highest quality staff, and as such we were delighted that Stonewater was named 'Very good to work for 2021' The Sunday Times Best Companies Survey, which celebrates the very best in workplace engagement. In addition, Stonewater was named one of the Top 25 Housing Associations to work for, as well as one of the Top 100 Best Companies to work for in the South East and the Midlands.

Stonewater is a strong, dynamic and well-managed social business, with a long-term rating of A+ by independent rating agency S&P Global Ratings and a top G1/V1 governance and viability ranking from the Regulator of Social Housing.

This report should be read in conjunction with Stonewater's:

- Environmental Strategy 2019-22;
- Social Responsibility Strategy 2019-24; and
- Sustainable Finance Framework June 2021

The Sustainable Reporting Standard for Social Housing

In times of Covid-19 and global warming, sustainable development has become increasingly important. As a major provider of affordable housing, the UK social housing sector has an important story to tell, and is well placed to promote and develop sustainable living, for the benefit of customers and society in general.

For Stonewater, providing affordable, high quality, energy efficient homes is at the core of what we do. Consequently, when a group of housing associations, investors, and banks, took the initiative to create a sector-wide approach to sustainable reporting for social housing, it was an easy decision for us to become an early adopter. Going forward, the Sustainable Reporting Standard for Social Housing will be the basis for our annual ESG report for our investors and other interested stakeholders.

The Sustainable Reporting Standard for Social Housing focuses on 12 themes and 48 criteria for ESG reporting, which are fully aligned with multiple international frameworks and standards, including the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB), the International Capital Markets Association (ICMA), and Loan Markets Association (LMA) Principles. The 12 core themes and their UN SDG alignment are as follows:



UN Sustainability Development Goals

	Theme Name ¹	Description	UN SDG ²		
ENVIRONMENT	Climate Change	Impact of climate change, and how risks are mitigated	7	13	
	Ecology	Protection of local environment and ecology	13	15	
	Resource Management	Sustainable approach to sourcing materials	11	13	
SOCIAL	Affordability and Security	Property affordability, fuel poverty, security	1	10	11
	Building Safety and Quality	Legal responsibility of building safety	11		
	Resident Voice	Listening to and empowering residents	11		
	Resident Support	Initiatives to support individual residents	11		
	Placemaking	Providing great places for people to live and enjoy	11		
GOVERNANCE	Structure and Governance	Overall structure and approach to Governance	16		
	Board and Trustees	Quality, suitability and performance of Board and Trustees	16		
	Staff Wellbeing	Support of staff and their wellbeing	16		
	Supply Chain Management	Environmental impact and social value in procurement	11	13	

¹The Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (<https://esgsocialhousing.co.uk>)

²United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (sdgs.un.org/goals)

Climate Change

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The UK Government’s target is to reduce CO₂ emissions to net zero by 2050. In the UK, residential housing contributes a significant part of total greenhouse gas emissions. As Stonewater owns and manages around 33,600 homes across England, we will have an important role to play in helping the nation’s drive to reduce emissions.

We will do this by continuing to develop high quality homes, with a clear focus on affordability, sustainability and environmental performance, and by continuing to upgrade energy efficiency of our properties.

Blackbird Leys in Oxford

One example of energy efficiency measures of our existing homes is our Blackbird Leys development in Oxford. As part of the Energy Superhub Oxford project, Stonewater has teamed up with Kensa Contracting to install energy efficient, low carbon heating solutions at 56 homes.

Installations at the homes will integrate individual shoebox ground source heat pumps inside each property, with Switchee heating controls, which will constantly sense, learn and respond to the customer’s behaviour. By adding smart technology to the running of the heat pumps, heat-optimising software will take day-ahead forecast half-hourly electricity costs and automatically shift the operating times, to enable occupants to make savings from dynamic tariffs without having to change their activities.

Through this project, customers will benefit from cheaper and cleaner renewable heating, while at the same time reducing CO₂ emissions.

We were delighted that our Blackbird Leys project has been shortlisted by Inside Housing’s Development Awards as Climate Change Retrofit Project of the Year.



Distribution of EPC Ratings of Existing Homes

At Stonewater, our ambition is to provide our customers with high quality housing while reducing our CO₂ emissions. As part of this, we continuously upgrade the sustainability and energy efficiency of our existing properties. It is our ambition to have no properties with an EPC rating below band C by 2030.

EPC Ratings of Existing Homes	
EPC Band ¹	Percentage
% of Homes rated A	0.1%
% of Homes rated B	5.8%
% of Homes rated C	59.6%
% of Homes rated D	33.3%
% of Homes rated E	1.1%
% of Homes rated F	0.1%
% of Homes rated G	0%

Distribution of EPC ratings of New Homes

Our aim is to develop high quality affordable and sustainable homes for our customers, while reducing the carbon footprint of the homes we build. All of our new homes are developed subject to our high design standards, taking into account a multitude of factors, including sustainability and affordability.

EPC Ratings of New Homes	
EPC Band ¹	Percentage
% of Homes rated A	1.6%
% of Homes rated B	88.7%
% of Homes rated C	9.7%
% of Homes rated D	0%
% of Homes rated E	0%
% of Homes rated F	0%
% of Homes rated G	0%

¹New homes completed in the previous financial year

Passivhaus standard homes in Chard

A key part of Stonewater's Development Strategy is to develop an approach to building our homes to net zero standard. As part of this, we are exploring opportunities to deliver Passivhaus standard airtightness and insulation to reduce reliance on traditional forms of heating, and to deliver lower energy bills for Stonewater customers.

We have undertaken a pilot project in Chard, Somerset to build four new affordable homes with Passivhaus standards. Passivhaus is an advanced low-energy construction standard for buildings that offers significantly reduced heating costs, superior air quality and high-performance homes.

In partnership with Beattie Passive, Stonewater's local managing contractor Ashcot Construction is currently

undertaking training to construct homes to Passivhaus standards. This pilot project will enable Stonewater and Ashcot Construction to deliver more homes following Passivhaus principles going forward.

Our project in Chard, Somerset which is supported with funding from Homes England and South Somerset District Council, will be developed on brownfield redundant land. This used to be part of the Chard Working Men's Club, a former three-storey building that was renovated and transformed into five one and two-bedroom affordable apartments in 2015. This pilot project, which includes four two-bedroom homes, is expected to complete by the end of this year. All of the homes will be available for affordable rent, and each one will include a garden and parking space.



2020/21 Streamlined Energy & Carbon Reporting (SECR)

Stonewater is not required to report energy and emissions under the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting Requirements. The below information has been provided on a voluntary basis.

Energy Consumption	
Mains gas (MWh)	14,253
Transport fuel – business travel in employee-owned vehicles (MWh)	438
Mains electricity (MWh)	10,011
Total Energy Consumptions (item 1-6) (MWh)	24,702
Combustion of gas (Scope 1) (tCO2e)	2,620
Combustion of fuel for Transport (Scope 3 – business travel in employee-owned vehicles) (tCO2e)	94
Purchased electricity (Scope 2, location-based)(tCO2e)	2,465
Total gross emissions for which SECR reporting required (items 7-10)(tCO2e)	5,179
Total gross emissions (item 11) per property managed (tCO2e/property)	0.152
Methodology	
Greenhouse Gas Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard	
Other emissions – non mandatory	
Emissions from downstream Leased Assets (rented homes) – Scope 3: (tCO2e)	71,689
Emissions from contractor Fleet – Scope 3: (tCO2e) (Jan-Dec 2020)	976
Total emissions – mandatory plus non-mandatory reporting	
Total of scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions: (tCO2e)	77,844
Intensity Ratio: Total Gross emissions for all scopes 1, 2 and 3 (tCO2e per property)	2.27

Explanatory notes on the data

- 1) Mains electricity and gas consumption data has been provided by our energy broker, who purchases energy on Stonewater's behalf
- 2) The energy consumption associated with business travel in employee-owned vehicles is not directly measured and has therefore been estimated from the mileage driven, which is captured by our expense handling software
- 3) Emissions have been calculated using 2020 UK Government Greenhouse Conversion Factors for Company Reporting. The exception to this is emissions from main electricity which has been provided by our energy broker based upon our corporate renewable supply contracts

Energy Efficiency Measures

It is our ambition to upgrade all our existing homes to a minimum energy efficiency rating of EPC C by 2030. In order to achieve this, we invest in improvements to our homes, including ground source and air source heat pumps, cavity wall insulations and solar panels, on an ongoing basis. Over the previous financial year, retrofit work included:

Energy Efficiency Action 2020/21	Number	CO ₂ Reduction (tonnes) ¹
Ground Source Heat Pump Installation	58	2,088
Air Source Heat Pump Installation	83	4,110
Cavity Wall Insulations	2,723	20,423

¹CO₂ saved across the life of the measure

In addition, Stonewater incentivises colleagues to use hybrid and electric cars by providing higher levels of leasing allowances and covering the cost of installation of electric charging points.

It is Stonewater's target to **reduce our office carbon footprint by 33% to 81.5 tonnes per annum** and to **reduce our business miles carbon footprint by 33% to 482 tonnes per annum** by March 2022. As a result of the ongoing pandemic, these targets have now been reached early.

	2020	2019	March 2022 Target
Office Carbon Footprint ¹	53.4t	123t	81.5t
Business Miles Carbon Footprint ¹	197.5t	724t	482t

¹Tonnes per annum

Shortly after the beginning of Covid-19, Stonewater shifted to home working for the majority of colleagues. Since then, our offices have been largely unused and business miles travelled have been reduced to an absolute minimum. Consequently, Stonewater's office and business miles carbon footprints have declined significantly.

Stonewater became a front-runner in the housing sector by introducing a permanent move to hybrid working. As part of this, we have reduced our number of offices and are in the process of redesigning the layout of our remaining offices. As a result, in the post-pandemic landscape, although we expect our office and business carbon emissions to increase this will only be marginal, as we have reduced our office space on a permanent basis, resulting in a permanent office carbon reduction of 44 tonnes per annum. The reduced number of offices is also likely to result in reduced business travel between our offices.

Flood Risk and Risk of Overheating

Stonewater has undertaken flood risk mapping of all our homes, which identified 209 homes subject to high risk of flooding, either by river, coastal or surface water.

In order to reduce risks for homes that are subject to high flood risk, we are trialling installation of flood risk mitigation measures, at 15 of our most at risk homes, which experienced flooding in 2019/20. Once trials are complete, and we have a better understanding of the process, we plan to roll out suitable measures to our other high flood risk homes.

We are also planning to trial a flood alert system, which will provide more timely and accurate information to colleagues and customers, based on live weather data. This will enable us to implement emergency procedures and provide greater support for customers. Additionally, the flood alert system will allow customers to better prepare to protect their belongings and ensure their safety.

Based on the SAP¹ data for our properties, Stonewater has analysed the risk of overheating in our homes. As a result, we have identified 112 properties at high risk of summer overheating. We are currently planning to support customers in these properties by providing advice on minimising the risk of overheating.

Energy Saving Campaigns

As part of the service we provide our customers, we raise awareness about energy efficiency, how to run their homes effectively, and how to reduce the cost of utility supplies as much as possible. To do this, we support our customers through social media, our Customer Service Centre or through energy saving campaigns.

¹Standard Assessment Procedure

Ahead of last winter, we launched our 'get winter ready campaign', which was highlighted on a dedicated page on our website, in our e-newsletter, which is distributed to all customers who have opted to receive it, and via posts on our social media platforms.

During the winter, we launched our 'switching energy supplier' campaign via our social media platforms, in which we shared information with our customers about the possible benefits of switching energy provider.

We also joined the national 'Big Energy Saving Week' campaign, creating our own content and graphics, sharing posts on our social media platforms each day of the week, covering topics, such as switching tariffs, grants, benefits, or tips for being energy efficient at home.

To continue our work supporting customers and tackling fuel poverty, we have more energy saving events planned including an energy efficiency video campaign; information about the benefits of collective energy switching; and a pilot scheme to refer customers to an expert energy advice service when required.

As part our ambition to upgrade the energy efficiency of all our homes to EPC C, we install an increasing number of energy efficient heat pumps in many of our homes. As part of the service, we are also planning targeted advice for new heat pump users, in order to support and help our customers to make the most of the new installation.

Customers can also contact our Customer Service Centre colleagues, who can provide information and advice to people who are suffering from condensation in the home, to ensure that properties are being ventilated correctly.



At Stonewater, we want to create a healthy and sustainable living environment for our customers. Where possible, we will utilise and enhance open spaces around our developments to create habitats for wildlife and edible gardens, as well as space for relaxation and exercise.

Community Forest Trust

As a major property developer, we are conscious about the environmental impact of the new homes we build. To offset the timber used in the construction process of our properties, we plant one new tree on our construction sites for every new house we build. In addition, we were the first registered housing provider in the UK to enter into a partnership with the Community Forest Trust (CFT), who plant another five trees for every home we build. In 2020/21, based on 671 new homes, the CFT will plant another 3,355 on our behalf. So far, a total of 13,236 trees have been planted since we launched our partnership with the CFT.

Edible Gardens

As part of our Environmental Strategy and our Development Strategy, we continue to create edible landscaping as part of the development of our new homes, where possible by incorporating fruit trees and fruit bushes in order to promote greater sustainability and healthy living among our customers.

Orchid Acre Close, Stoke-Sub-Hamdon

One example of how we incorporate ecology and edible landscaping in our developments is our recent project at Orchid Acre Close in Stoke-Sub-Hamdon, which

was selected as a finalist for Best Shared Ownership Development in the prestigious Inside Housing Development Awards. For this project, Stonewater helped provide affordable homes in an area where many local people are priced out of the housing market. This scheme included an attractive community garden, where residents can grow their own fruit and vegetables, and featured a decorative archway depicting orchids and the village's historic glove factory.

Pollutants

Stonewater is in the process of developing a strategy for reducing pollution derived from the development and maintenance of our homes. In addition to reducing CO₂ emissions from our homes, it is also our ambition to reduce our emissions of other greenhouse gases, such as methane and nitrous oxide. We are currently in the process of integrating this in our Environmental Strategy.

As part of our Sustainable Procurement Policy, we encourage our contractors to use less harmful products, for example paints, which give off fewer Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). In addition, we are working with our grounds maintenance contractors to ensure they do not use herbicides. For ground maintenance, we are also planning to reduce the usage of petrol equipment.



Responsibly Sourced Materials

We see it as our responsibility to carry out our procurement activities in an environmentally responsible manner.

Through our Sustainable Procurement Policy, we work with our contractors and suppliers, to ensure that an increasing proportion of materials used have been manufactured in an environmentally friendly way. We track our progress using the SHIFT Environmental Management System. According to SHIFT accreditation, for 2020, 36.3% of our maintenance materials were responsibly sourced.

Waste Management

'Reduce, Re-use, and Recycle' is the basis for our Waste Management Policy. Stonewater actively works to reduce waste and increase recycling, from our homes, contractors, and offices.

In order to raise awareness of recycling from our homes, we run recycling campaigns in our developments. In this way, we work to increase recycling rates among our residents, beyond local authority recycling targets.

As part of our Sustainable Procurement Policy, we actively work with our suppliers and contractors to reduce building materials waste, and single-use plastics. In addition, we work to increase the proportion of building material and refurbishment waste recycled and diverted from landfill.

We also measure progress of our Waste Management Policy using the SHIFT Environmental Management System. In 2020, 85.48% of our refurbishment waste was recycled or reused.

Water Management

Our ambition is for our homes to be fitted with the most water efficient products. When the time comes to replace our kitchens and bathrooms, we use more water efficient products, such as dual flush cisterns and aerated taps.

At Stonewater, we measure water consumption for our homes using the SHIFT Accreditation water efficiency calculator tool. Environment Agency research suggests that UK domestic water efficiency should be 130 litres per person, per day by 2030 in order to adapt to forthcoming climate change. For 2020, water consumption for our housing stock was estimated at 135.3 litres per person, per day.

We are in the process of developing a strategy for water consumption, which will be incorporated in our Environmental Strategy going forward.

Affordability and Security

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Affordable Housing

Our vision is **'For everybody to have the opportunity to have a place that they can call home'**, and providing high quality affordable homes is at the heart of everything we do.

Despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, in the financial year 2020/21 we handed over around 671 affordable high quality homes. This year, we expect to be able to hand over in excess of 1,000 new homes, increasing to at least 1,500 new affordable high quality homes every year from 2022/23.

In addition to our ambitious development plans, Stonewater is proud to be part of the largest Homes England strategic partnership alongside Guinness

Partnership – with £224m funding for 4,500 additional high-quality affordable homes by 2022.

About 82.3% of our homes fall in the either the General Needs (social rent) or the Affordable categories.

Most of our properties are rented out at affordable levels compared to the private sector rental market. For our 10 largest areas in the General Needs (social rent) category, including around 20,900 homes, the average discount to the private sector rental market is currently about 43.4%.

In order to offer our customers the best possible security of tenure, our standard tenancies are either assured or 12-month starter tenancies, which convert to assured after the first year where there are no issues with the tenancy.

Units of Housing Stock				
	31 March 2021		31 March 2020	
	Number	%	Number	%
General Need (Social rent)	20,901	69.4	20,739	70.6
Affordable	3,813	12.7	3,443	11.7
Shared Ownership	2,720	9.0	2,517	8.6
Supported Housing	440	1.5	430	1.5
Housing for Older People	2,207	7.3	2,224	7.6
Other	33	0.1	29	0.1
Total Owned	30,114		29,382	

Average Rental Discounts (General Needs)			
	Average monthly Private Sector Rent ONS (£) ¹	Average monthly Stonewater Rent (£) ²	Discount
Bedford	£835	£550	46.1%
Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole	£850	£454	46.6%
Central Bedfordshire	£896	£466	48.0%
Coventry	£717	£717	42.5%
Dorset	£811	£447	44.9%
Dudley	£585	£374	36.1%
Herefordshire, County of	£643	£388	39.7%
Sandwell	£615	£353	42.5%
South Somerset	£683	£414	39.4%
Wiltshire	£823	£430	47.8%

¹www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/privaterentalmarketsummarystatisticsinengland

²Average monthly General Needs (social rent) category, for the 10 largest areas in our property portfolio

Fuel Poverty

In April 2020, it was estimated that 2.4 million households in the UK experienced fuel poverty. In a year of global pandemic, it is estimated that at least another 600,000 households have fallen into fuel poverty since then.

At Stonewater, we help to reduce the cost of heating and fuel poverty for our customers in a number of ways. Through our ambitious plan to improve energy efficiency of all our properties to a minimum of EPC C by 2030, we reduce the cost of heating homes for our customers. We also raise awareness about energy efficiency among our residents, by promoting energy-saving campaigns for our customers on an ongoing basis.

Renovation of Existing Homes 2020/21

	Number	Average Saving ¹
Ground Source Heat Pump Installation	58	£350
Air Source Heat Pump Installation	83	£185
Cavity Wall Insulations	2723	£50

¹Average utilities saving per home per year

During the global pandemic, many people have faced financial hardship. At Stonewater, we work to support our customers by providing information on how to navigate the benefits system and offer flexible rent payment arrangements for those in difficult financial circumstances. We also work closely with our charity partner, The Longleigh Foundation, to offer individual hardship grants to those most in need. During the last year, Longleigh has made £500,000 available through hardship grants to customers impacted by the pandemic.

We also support and inform our customers through our energy saving campaigns, for example guidance on energy efficiency and running your home effectively through winter, and our 'get ready for winter' campaign via our website and our social media platforms. Earlier this year, we also joined the national 'Big Energy Saving Week' campaign, which covered information about switching tariffs, grants, benefits, and tips for being energy efficient at home.

Building Safety and Quality

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Risk Assessment Data 2020/21

Gas Safety Check, %	99.88%
Fire Risk Assessment, %	100%
Electrical Assessment, %	98.26%
Decent Homes Standard, %	99.99%

As of 31 March, 99.88% of our homes were up-to-date with gas safety checks, which is within our risk tolerance of 99.5% - 100%. Most of the homes with overdue gas safety checks were due to difficulty in getting access due to Covid-19.

At the end of the financial year, 98.26% of our homes had up-to-date electrical assessments. At year-end, there was a backlog of electrical assessments, most of which were as a result of customers self-isolating or a large number of staff employed by our service providers self-isolating.

As of 31 March 2021, 99.99% of our homes meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard. As part of our reporting to the Regulator for Social Housing, an independent surveyor uncovered minor electrical faults in four of our homes. Subsequently, the faults have been rectified, after which 100% of our homes now meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

As a charitable housing association, engaging with and receiving feedback from our customers is a cornerstone of our corporate governance framework, which we constantly work to improve.

As a result, we have introduced a new function in order to align the business areas of Complaints & Feedback, Customer Engagement, and Customer Communications. By bringing these areas together, we ensure that we are truly a 'listening organisation' by capturing the customer voice at every service 'touchpoint' and ensuring that it influences our services.

Customer voice and learning, including from our Customer Scrutiny Panel, is reported through the business to Operational and Executive Director Groups, Customer Experience Challenge & Assurance Panel, and our Board.

Through this new function, we continue to build on our existing approach but also innovate to find new ways to listen, engage and communicate with our customers, and to meet the commitments within the Government's Charter for Social Housing Residents and the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants Charter (to which we were an early adopter).

Aligning customer communications with engagement, complaints and feedback ensures that we keep our customers informed and 'in the loop', making sure customers are aware of how their feedback is shaping our services.

Effective governance ensures customer influence is at the heart of service delivery via the following formal groups:

Customer Experience Challenge & Assurance Panel (CXCAP)

This group, which consists of two customer members, a Board member, and an Executive Director, has oversight of insight and engagement activity, as well as our customer offer, design of service, and customer satisfaction. This ensures that we are listening to our customers and that services are influenced by the customer voice. The two customer members also sit on the Customer Scrutiny Panel, acting as a conduit between the two groups.

Customer Scrutiny Panel

This group, which is made up of 12 customers from across the country, will carry out a 'deep dive' into service areas, highlighted by the customer voice and performance. They provide recommendations for change or improvement, which are discussed at CXCAP and reported directly to the Board. In addition, the Customer Scrutiny Panel will re-visit recommendations after a six and twelve-month period to ensure that they are fully embedded within service delivery.

Our Board report template includes an assurance of customer engagement and communication for any change in service design, service standard, policy or process.





Customers are asked every three years how they want to be involved in holding Stonewater to account for the services that we provide, which has shaped our engagement 'tool box'. This provides a flexible, comprehensive offer of informal and formal opportunities to influence service delivery, which in addition to the above formal groups includes:

Facebook Community Group & Customer hubb (help us be better)

The Customer hubb has 963 active members and the Facebook Community Group has 811 members. These online customer forums enable customers to build networks between themselves, as well as enabling customers to post about particular issues and interact with Stonewater colleagues. The engagement with customers on these forums informs reporting on the customer voice and complements our other consultation work.

Mass SMS and e-mail consultation

We use this as the primary way to consult with our customers, obtaining between 500-1000 responses when seeking their feedback on issues. This customer feedback then directly influences service delivery. We use customer segmentation data to ensure a representative sample of customers.

Ad-hoc focus groups

We use these groups to drill down on particular issues, reach particular groups and test services, such as changes to our 'MyHome' customer portal.

Customer Readers Panel

This online group of 37 customers nationally enables us to test our communications and 'tone of voice' with customers to ensure that our communications are as customer-focused as possible.

Customer Satisfaction

At Stonewater, we want to make sure that the customer is at the heart of our decision making. Our Customer Promise is '**We are proud to make things personal. If it matters to our customers, it matters to us**', and we welcome all customer feedback as a positive opportunity to improve the services we deliver.

We want to ensure that improving our customer service is a dynamic and permanent process. This is the responsibility of our Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) steering group, which is a cross-departmental group of colleagues. The CSAT steering group owns and drives our CSAT action plan, which aims to improve customer satisfaction levels. This has led to several improvements, such as a Customer Promise Programme for colleagues; becoming a member of the Institute of Customer Service (ICS); carrying out customer and colleague ICS surveys; the creation of a set of customer commitments; and our organisational tone of voice.

Customer Satisfaction Index			
	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Overall Satisfaction ¹	84.5%	77.9%	79.1%
UKCSI ²	65.3	60.5	n/a

¹From 2020/21 the data for the Overall Satisfaction score is collected using 'Rant & Rave' fast feedback platform. Prior to this, data is collected, via a monthly a monthly perception survey

²Stonewater started participating in the ICS Business Benchmarking Survey from 2019/20

Rant & Rave

We gather feedback on our transactional services using Rant & Rave's fast feedback platform. This modern customer experience measurement solution is allowing us to embed the voice of the customer into the heart of the organisation, which enables us to review our services and keep pace with changing customer expectations,

understanding what matters most and when. The ability to gain more timely feedback leading to greater insights has turned customer satisfaction into a lead KPI. Using this tool allows us to benchmark and share learning across sectors, as well as within the social housing sector.

Institute of Customer Service

2020/21 was the second year Stonewater carried out the ICS Business Benchmarking Survey. The survey provides a UK Customer Satisfaction Index (UKCSI) score for Stonewater as a whole and enables us to benchmark against others, inside and outside of the sector.

Customer Complaints

At Stonewater, we actively welcome all complaints, compliments or comments, as they let us know what is working well and the areas we need to improve. We will accept complaints, compliments and comments in any way they are reported and we will publish what we have changed as a result, so that customers know how their views and ideas are helping to amend and improve our services. We include this information in our Annual Customer Review, in customer newsletters, on our Customer hubb, on our website, and via our social media channels.

Our aim is to resolve any complaint as quickly as possible, by fully investigating and responding within 10 working days from the date we receive the complaint. In the unlikely event a customer complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, the customer may, after a period, refer their case to the Housing Ombudsman Service. For Stonewater, the number of complaints for the last 12 months that have been upheld are as follows:

Ombudsman Determinations	Count
Maladministration	3
Maladministration and Service Failure	3
Service Failure	6
Grand Total	12

In the unfortunate event a complaint is referred to the Housing Ombudsman Service, it is critically important that we improve and learn from the case. Examples of changes which have been implemented as a result of complaints brought against Stonewater include:

- A full review into how we repair and maintain communal doors and door entry systems will enable a proactive approach to addressing the repairs for the long term and reduce complaints volume
- Both the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) policy and procedure were changed and strengthened during 2019 to address the service improvements required to avoid a repetition of the issues identified by the Housing Ombudsman
- An improved escalation process which flags repeated contact from the customer regarding outstanding repairs is being put together through collaboration work between the Customer Service Centre Manager and Customer Feedback Manager
- Formal complaint handling has been addressed through the various improvement projects undertaken throughout 2019/20, including a full lean review; Scrutiny Panel review; and projects undertaken with the Housing Ombudsman Service
- A new approach to handling complaints was implemented during 2019/20. Part of these improvements include all the complainant's concerns being recorded and documented in the formal acknowledgement letter to prevent this issue reoccurring
- Our Customer Compensation Policy was reviewed and signed off in September 2019. Compensation is now only offered by the Customer Feedback Team, and checked against and the Housing Ombudsman remedial guidance, prior to it being offered to the customer

As a social housing provider, our mission is to deliver good quality, affordable homes to people who need them the most. Some customers may be vulnerable for a number of reasons. Stonewater is committed to meeting their needs through the provision of suitable accommodation and appropriate, responsive landlord services.

Stonewater Supported Living Services

Stonewater Supported Living Services specialise in the delivery of support and accommodation services for young people, those fleeing domestic abuse, and those with mental health needs. Stonewater has a proven track-record of successfully providing support to around 400 customers at any one time across our portfolio of 16 commissioned and charitably funded Supported Living Services.

Stonewater is nationally recognised for our specialist expertise in working with people affected by domestic abuse, including our South Asian Women's Refuge, and our specialist LGBTQ+ Safe Space. We have recently increased our refuge provision by securing Local Authority commissioned services in Brighton and Bedford. As keen advocates for young people, we deliver accommodation and community-based support services, and have developed services in the past few years working with young homeless families and asylum-seeking children.

Case study: South Asian Women's Refuge – Yasmin

Yasmin (not her real name) is a 30-year-old Bangladeshi woman with young children. She experienced significant domestic abuse from her husband, which also escalated towards her two girls.

“My life was very lonely and chaotic; I never knew when the abuse would start or end. All I wanted to do was to keep my children safe, but I didn't know how. I thought leaving my home situation would lead to my children being taken away from me, removed into care.”

“I had come to the UK on a spouse visa, but I wasn't aware that I could apply for leave to remain, so I felt very unsettled. I arrived at Stonewater's South Asian Women's Refuge (SAWR), where I was linked in with an immigration solicitor who applied for the Victims of Domestic Violence (VDV) concession.

“I have received a lot of support whilst at SAWR, not only did the team make sure I had access to food and clothing for me and my children, but they have also supported me in moving forward. I have received support with immigration advice, support with benefits including universal credit, child benefit and housing benefits and with health-related matters such as health visitors and registering with a GP.”



Homeless Link Excellence Awards 2020

In 2020, Stonewater won the Homeless Link Excellence Award for Innovation in Housing. The award recognised the Extended Domestic Abuse Service Stonewater launched to help the rising number of people seeking support during the pandemic. Stonewater manages dedicated domestic abuse services for people who would traditionally find it difficult to access support and housing, which includes providing supported housing for South Asian women and children, women with complex needs, a community outreach support programme, and an LGBTQ+ Safe Space.

When Covid-19 hit, the team took immediate action to increase the capacity to accept new customers, providing them with a safe space to live and person-centred support. We used empty homes from our general needs stock to house additional referrals and harnessed technology to provide virtual support during lockdown from our team of Domestic Abuse Coaches.

This included providing computer tablets to all new and existing customers and their children, so they could access online communication channels, information and educational resources.

Our Services

All our services for vulnerable customers, offer person-centred, strengths based support planning and coaching, with a focus on physical and mental health and wellbeing, access to education, employment and training (EET), and access to money management and financial inclusion. All of our vulnerable customers are offered support in these areas, with the majority of customers requiring further specialist support in one or more of the given areas.

We take a very proactive approach to engaging customers in EET activities, including one-to-one and group CV writing/job search courses, and fostering relationships with training partners, local colleges and specialist providers such as The Prince's Trust. For example, our service in Swindon hosts a weekly youth skills and employment hub, which is delivered in partnership with the local authority and the Department for Work and Pensions.

All our vulnerable customers are offered receive support to maximise their income via one-to-one budgeting support and financial inclusion group sessions. At point of entry, all customers are supported to claim their welfare benefit entitlement, therefore reducing the risk of debt and maximising their income. Some customers are signposted to specialist money management services, which support them to address previous debts and make repayment arrangements.



Additionally, support with physical and mental wellbeing is an integral part of our offer and all of our vulnerable customers are supported to register with their local GP and access any specialist healthcare need they might have. Customers are signposted to local gyms, music therapy classes, and specialist mental health services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Currently, 50% of our customers have an identified mental health need and are actively engaging with services.

In order to measure performance of our Supported Living Services, we monitor a range of KPIs via our Digital Case Management system, InForm. The KPIs vary from service to service but might include:

- Physical and emotional health and wellbeing
- Engagement in employment, education and training activities
- Achieving economic wellbeing
- Positive move-on to independent accommodation

All KPIs have minimum agreed targets, which are reviewed regularly with commissioning managers to ensure effective service delivery.

Typically, our services deliver the following outcomes for customers as a minimum:

- **Engagement with healthcare practitioners** – Out of customers who have received support, typically 90% experience health improvement
- **EET activities** – Out of the customer who have received support, typically 65% gained a qualification or job
- **Economic wellbeing** – Out of customers supported, typically 90% experience improved economic wellbeing by maximising income and reducing debt
- **Housing Support** – Out of customers receiving housing related support, typically 80% move on to independent accommodation

As a housing provider and neighbourhood creator, we put all our new build developments through a robust assessment, both prior and post-development. Prior to development, we want to ensure that the homes we build meet the needs of the existing community, that there is demand, and that these homes offer a real affordable option for those eligible to apply for them. We consider a number of factors, such as the local opportunities for employment, transport networks and the local housing profile. We also consider practical elements such as broadband provision, parking, layout and design, as well as future running costs, and environmental impact. This way we can ensure that our new developments have a positive impact on both the existing and new community. Post-development, we consider any issues that have arisen, look to mitigate any impact, and ensure that we learn from them. We also use customer feedback to determine what worked well in order to replicate this where appropriate.



Former Parker Pen Factory Site in Newhaven

Within all our new developments, we introduce an element of public art and/or edible landscapes. An example of this is our development on the former Parker Pen factory site in Newhaven. We have worked with artists to create pieces of art that are not only impactful but are practical and recognise the history of the site. Alongside this, we are delivering outside areas that meet the needs of the entire community, with an interactive natural play space and outdoor gym.

Noden's Mews, Waterworks Lane, Leominster

December 2020 saw the completion of our site at Waterworks Lane, Leominster, where six previously homeless veterans, worked alongside our local contractors, to deliver 19 new affordable homes. The scheme was completed in collaboration with Alabaré Community Self Build (Veterans) scheme. Each of the veterans gained valuable work experience and now live in one of the homes that they helped to build.

Dwain, one of the Veteran self-builders, said:

"This scheme has changed my life. Only last year I was sleeping rough with no hope and my health suffered. Now

I have got my self-esteem back, and I have got a home where I can bring my children to, and celebrate Christmas together. I have also gained qualifications and work experience that will help me get a new job, and support me and my family. It's been fantastic and thank you all."

Stonewater is delighted that the Noden's Mews project has been short-listed for a Development Award by Inside Housing, in the category for Best Partnership (Rest of UK).

Ovenden, Halifax

During the last year, Stonewater has changed the way we deliver our services to our customers. As well as Tenancy Management, we now have Resolution and Neighbourhoods Teams. Our Resolution Team ensures that any enforcement action required is taken, along with any target hardening, and environmental changes needed to prevent further issues. They also provide valuable victim and witness support.

A recent example of this work was demonstrated when a large number of reports came in regarding a scheme in Ovenden, Halifax. These reports included hate crime, drug use and dealing, car theft and criminal damage, verbal abuse and harassment. The entire

neighbourhood was affected, and it appeared that the issues all initiated at one address and one individual in the street. As a result, Stonewater colleagues pulled together a problem-solving group with police, the local authority, social services and youth offending team. The appropriate injunction and support for this individual has been put in place, and residents now enjoy their homes in peace and without fear.

Support from The Longleigh Foundation

Our Neighbourhoods Team works with our customers to address issues such as parking, rubbish, noise and boundary issues. All teams have access to funding through community grants or our charitable foundation, Longleigh, to deliver the improvements and changes needed, and both individual and community grants are available.

Case study

Following a recent bin store fire at a neighbourhood in Dorchester, the team worked with local customers to understand the cause. There was a history of misuse and the residents felt that the store was too close to the flats. A family had been moved to temporary accommodation as a result of the fire, and residents wanted to relocate the bin store. Whilst determining where it should be moved to, it became apparent that parking was also an issue on site. Following consultation, residents agreed a new site for the store, along with protocols for use and implementation of a new parking scheme. Customers told us that, along with feeling safer, they now have a new pride in their neighbourhood.



And many other examples...

Stonewater also supports and delivers a number of activities that assist our customers with some of the challenges they face. The pandemic has also been an added pressure for many households.

These include the funding of a number of programmes through the Longleigh Foundation, addressing financial and emotional wellbeing, and digital accessibility and capability.

Clean Slate is a referral service offered to those needing support and guidance with financial matters. In the last year, 82 customers have made use of this.

Working in partnership with Stonewater, in 2020/21 'We are Digital' has supported 95 customers, helping them to access devices and with training where needed.

Within our Retirement Living schemes we have also delivered a programme of activities aiming to reduce social isolation and ensuring that customers who were particularly affected by the pandemic restrictions had the support that they needed. This included regular telephone check-ins, befriending calls, coffee mornings, exercise and art and craft sessions, delivered in a Covid-safe way.

During the last year, we have also supported six former rough sleepers into safe and secure accommodation.

These activities have helped Stonewater deliver in the region of £12.5 million of social value, a cost benefit of £71 for every pound spent.

Structure and Governance

Good corporate governance is the foundation of how we operate. It ensures accountability to key stakeholders, and alignment with our Vision and Values at all times.

As a charitable, not-for-profit housing association, we work to the rules and regulations of the UK Regulator for Social Housing. In addition, to ensure we achieve the highest standards of governance and Board excellence, we are fully aligned with the rules and principles of the National Housing Federation’s Code of Governance 2020.

Regulatory Viability and Governance Grading	G1/V1
Regulator of Social Housing Registration Number	L1556
National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2020	✓
Not-for-profit housing provider	✓
Adverse regulatory findings over the last 12 months	None

Customer Involvement

As an important part of ensuring our success in providing high-quality, affordable housing, customer involvement and communicating with our customers is particularly important. At Stonewater, our customers are an integrated part of our corporate governance process. One of the ways our customers provide their views and input is through our Scrutiny Panel, which consists of 12 customers from across the country, who review our services and recommend changes or improvements. In addition to ensuring, that the customer voice is heard, two customers are represented on our Customer Experience Committee. Finally, a group of customers form a Complaints Panel, which independently review formal complaints to ensure we are being fair in our findings.

Risk Awareness

At Stonewater, we promote a culture of risk awareness, based on our Risk Management Policy. The Board is responsible for ensuring that Stonewater has an effective risk management framework in place.

The Executive Directors’ Group (EDG) has the day-to-day responsibility for the identification and management of risks, and for the implementation of policies to support the process of internal control. New, emerging and high-scoring risks are monitored through the Strategic and Operational Risk Register, which is kept under review by the EDG and the Risk & Assurance Committee in order to ensure that it fully reflects the risks to the delivery of Stonewater’s operational and Strategic Plan.

The Board has adopted a risk appetite statement, which sets out the nature and levels of risk Stonewater is prepared to take in order to achieve strategic objectives. Performance against these risks are kept under review, facilitated through the use of metrics to enable the Board and committees to assess whether performance remains within the risk appetite parameters. The Chief Executive reports to the Risk & Assurance Committee on the effectiveness of the internal control environment.

As a charitable housing association, we strive to serve and promote the interests of our customers and the communities we work in, and to ensure that the views and needs of our customers are at the heart of our strategic decision-making at all times.

To ensure that the Board represents our customers in the best possible way, the Board seeks to have a membership that reflects the diversity of Stonewater's customers and the communities in which we work.

Stonewater Board Diversity		
Diversity Strand	31 March 2021	Stonewater Customer Profile
Ethnicity (% BMA)	17% (17%)	11%
Gender (% Female)	42% (42%)	60%
Disability (% Disabled)	17% (17%)	9%
Age Range	5 decades (3 decades)	-

At Stonewater, the Board consists of 12 members (11 non-executives and 1 executive) including people from a wide variety of backgrounds and diverse attributes. The diversity of our Board supports a healthy debate and challenge, ensuring that a range of perspectives are included in the decision making process.

Chair of Board and CEO independence	✓
Maximum Tenure Board Members	6 Years
Average Board Tenor	3 Years
% of Non-Executives on Board	92% (11 out of 12)
Executives on Remuneration Committee	None
Succession plan provided to Board in the last 12 month	✓
Tenure of current external audit partner	6 years (BDO)
Number of Risk and Audit Committee members with recent financial Experience	2

Of Stonewater's 11 non-executive Board members, seven (64%) have been appointed over the past two years (as of 31 March 2021). Of the six Executive Directors, one (17%) has been appointed over the past two years.

Efficient handling of conflict of interest at the Board is an important part of efficient corporate governance. Stonewater is fully aligned with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance 2020, Principle One, which specifies guidelines about the integrity of the Board, including conflict of interest.

Creating a positive health and wellbeing culture, and supporting the physical and mental health of our colleagues is essential to ensure a happy and motivated workforce, which in turn benefits our customers.

Communicating with colleagues

An important part of a positive health and wellbeing culture, especially with the challenges of Covid-19, is internal communications, which we work on tirelessly through numerous channels. These include all-colleague 'Team Talks', OurPlace, our intranet platform, manager briefings, and Yammer. However, during the pandemic we have also developed new tools to support managers and colleagues, such as a Wellbeing Toolkit, support for managing remote teams, and advice and tips on topics such as how to be comfortable working from home.

Colleague Mental Health

At Stonewater, we believe that no one should have to face mental health problems alone. To support our colleagues, we employ a team of mental health first aiders. In addition, we have an employee assistance programme run by BHSF, which provides a Health and Wellbeing advice line, access to face-to-face counselling, and an online GP service. We have also established a virtual Wellbeing Centre, which provides advice and guidance for staff about a range of healthy living topics.

Hybrid Working

At the beginning of the pandemic, in order to ensure continuous support for our customers, and the health and wellbeing of our colleagues, we moved to a home-based working model for the majority of our colleagues, almost overnight. This has been a challenging period for colleagues, where a positive health and wellbeing culture has been more important ever. Based on our experience from the past year, a survey revealed that 89% of our colleagues want to continue home-working for the majority of the time. Stonewater has therefore decided to transition to a hybrid model on a permanent basis, offering staff more flexibility and a better work-life balance.

Pay Reporting

Stonewater is fully committed to equality in all aspects of our operations and has a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of sex, race, religion, age, or other characteristics. In addition to our statutory obligation to report our Gender Pay Gap, we have, now for the second year running, undertaken an ethnicity pay reporting

exercise. The reason for doing this is that we want to proactively address pay inequality in all its forms.

The 2020 UK national pay gap reported by ONS was 15.5%. Possible explanations could be that in the UK men are more likely than women to work in senior roles, which are typically higher paid, and women are more likely than men to work in front line roles at the lower end of the organisation. In addition, men are more likely to work in highly paid technical roles, such as IT. This pattern is largely reflected in the current make-up of Stonewater's workforce. In order for there to be no pay gap, there would need to be an equal number of men and woman in each of our pay quartiles. Changing this pattern is an important part of our equality strategy.

While we are pleased to see another decline in our gender pay gap to 16.84% for 2020 as a result of our Equality Strategy, we expect this trend to continue and result in a further downward reduction in the next Gender Pay Gap Report.

Ethnicity Pay Gap

We believe it is important that opportunities are equal for everybody, regardless of race or other characteristics. On a voluntary basis, we have now for the second year undertaken an ethnicity pay reporting exercise. For the second year, this exercise had an encouraging outcome, at -0.07%, or largely no pay gap for this category.

Pay Statistics and Sick Days			
	2020	2019	2018
Median Gender Pay Gap	16.84%	21.47%	24.41%
Median BAME Pay Gap	-0.07%	-2.02%	-
	2020	2019	2018
Living Wage Payer	✓	✓	✓
	2020	2019	2018
CEO-Worker Pay Ratio (Option B) ¹			
25th Percentile	11:1	11:1	-
Median	8:1	8:1	-
75th Percentile	5:1	6:1	-
	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Average Number of Sick Days	3.75	5.11	4.31

¹The Companies (Miscellaneous Reporting) Regulation 2018

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

For Stonewater, EDI is considered a strategic driver. In order to create a real sense of belonging for our colleagues, we believe it is important that Stonewater is a truly diverse organisation.



To ensure this, Stonewater has set up an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Delivery Board (EDIDB), which governs and structures our approach to EDI across the organisation.

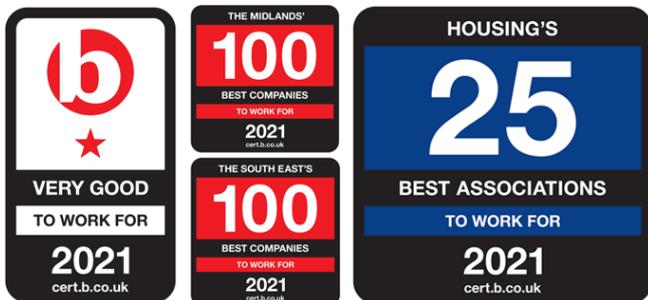
Initiatives created to develop Stonewater as a truly diverse organisation include projects such as 'I am Stonewater' in 2019, Stonewater's Year of Inclusion (2020) and Inclusion21, which are programmes designed to celebrate the diversity of our colleagues. We have also established EDI employee groups, such as 2Gether, Spectrum, Alliance, and Inspire, for networking, support and for raising awareness EDI issues.

As part of supporting and driving EDI, Stonewater has adopted the Social Housing Equality Framework (SHEF), which is designed to help and enable organisations to promote and integrate EDI into systems, policies, and procedures.

Sunday Times Best Companies Survey

For the third consecutive year, Stonewater has been named as one of the Top 25 Housing Associations to work for, as well as one of the Top 100 Best Companies to work for in the South East and in the Midlands.

At Stonewater, we participate in the Best Companies Survey as a way of measuring internal employee engagement, and as such we are delighted that in addition to our survey rankings, we have been named 'Very Good to Work For 2021'.



Supply Chain

11 13

By adopting sustainable procurement practices, we aim to ensure that our contractors and suppliers work to limit their environmental impact and increase social value creation over time. We do this by making sustainability part of our ongoing procurement process.

Environmental Impact

The main environmental impacts from our procurement activities and supply chain are derived from CO₂ emissions, contractor mileage, supply chain waste, and sourcing of products and materials.

Supply Chain Environmental KPIs

	2020
Maintenance CO ₂ emissions ¹	35.76 kg CO ₂ / home
Responsibly sourced maintenance materials	36.4%
Refurbishment waste recycled or reused	85.48%

¹Contractors mileage and subsequent CO₂ emissions

As part of the procurement process, contractors and suppliers are subject to an environmental screening process, which ensures that only suppliers and contractors with an environmental and/or waste management policy in place, or who are prepared to adopt Stonewater's Environmental Procurement Policies³, are invited to participate in a formal tender process.

While our environmental procurement policies apply to all Stonewater suppliers and contractors, we aim to ensure that our policy does not place unnecessary and overly burdensome requirements on small and medium sized enterprises, putting them at a disadvantage in doing business with us.

As part of monitoring environmental performance in our supply chain, we ask contractors and suppliers to provide performance data on a regular basis.

Social Value Creation

As part of the procurement process, potential contractors are also asked a number of due diligence questions, including the contractor's health and safety arrangements; equality and diversity commitments; modern slavery and human trafficking statement, as well as commitment to social value creation.

³Our new Environmental Procurement Policy is now near completion

The Longleigh Foundation

In 2015, as a consequence of government budget cuts and policy reform, impacting the most disadvantaged members of the community, Stonewater set up the Longleigh Foundation, recognising that many of its residents, in both independent and supported housing, had needs which were not being met. Because Longleigh was set up as an independent charitable foundation, it was able to provide help and support for both individuals and communities, beyond what Stonewater could achieve as a landlord alone. In 2017, Longleigh was named 'Innovation of the Year' at the prestigious 24housing Awards.

The social mission of the Longleigh Foundation is: 'to provide funding that enables lives to be transformed', and as part of that, Longleigh supports and funds many Stonewater projects, including:

- **A woman's refuge in Southampton**, which provides a tailored programme to support woman who have fled domestic abuse
- **We are Digital** – a programme of support people who are digitally excluded due to geography, education, skills and finances
- **Veteran's Self Build Project** – a self-build project, and training and welfare costs for veterans
- **Safe Space** – development of support at a bespoke refuge for people from the LGBTQ+ community fleeing domestic abuse
- **Digital Tables** – innovative interactive digital tables and colleague capacity to support older people with dementia

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