



A REPORT ON OUR
**SOCIAL,
ENVIRONMENTAL,
AND GOVERNANCE
PERFORMANCE**

OCTOBER 2024



BARNSBURY
HOUSING ASSOCIATION



Board chair
Sean McLaughlin

INTRODUCTION

Barnsbury Housing Association is one of Islington’s smallest housing associations, set up in 1967 to provide affordable homes for households on modest incomes.

This report gives data and commentary on our standards under three headings, social, environmental and governance.

Our standards conform to the new *sustainable reporting standard* for social housing landlords agreed in late 2020 and updated in 2023.

Barnsbury HA’s 299 social rent homes include many restored heritage properties but also well-designed newly built properties on smaller sites or on small estates.

We are an Islington service so one objective is securing more sites in Islington to build new homes.

A more pressing priority is investing more in our older homes to make them more fuel efficient. This is being driven by climate change and the sharply rising cost for our tenants of household power bills.

We hope our report will give you a clear understanding of our purpose and standards and the factors - local and wider - that shape and influence them.

Sean McLaughlin
Chair, Barnsbury HA board



Staff and tenant board members helped run our annual funday, with highlights including the tug o’war. The girls, of course, won.

Building successful communities ● a place to belong ● a place to grow

WE CONNECT

The long-lasting changes we seek will see us:

- ✓ lead our sector in hearing the ‘tenant voice’
- ✓ widely seen, known and trusted
- ✓ known as a welcoming and approachable ‘community landlord’
- ✓ try out new ideas and approaches
- ✓ as a great team - working as one

WE BUILD

- ✓ play our part in tackling homelessness
- ✓ build affordable new homes
- ✓ evolve our service, shaped by tenants’ changing needs and a desire to cut inequality
- ✓ build a strong bond of trust with our tenants - a sense of belonging and community

WE ANTICIPATE

- ✓ make our homes fit for the future
- ✓ lead our sector with our carbon reduction strategy
- ✓ in tune with the needs and aspirations of tenants we house now and in coming years and designing our services to suit



SOCIAL



AFFORDABILITY AND SECURITY

1 For properties subject to the rent regulation regime, report against one or more affordability metric: rent compared to the median private rental sector (PRS) rent across the local authority or the local housing allowance (LHA)

Barnsbury Housing Association was established in 1967 to help keep a rapidly gentrifying Islington affordable to people on moderate incomes.

That remains our purpose, with Islington one of the most expensive areas of London in which to live. Our median rent is around **32% of market rent** levels and **39% of LHA** levels. **All of our homes are let at social rents.** We do not have any homes let at 'affordable rent'.

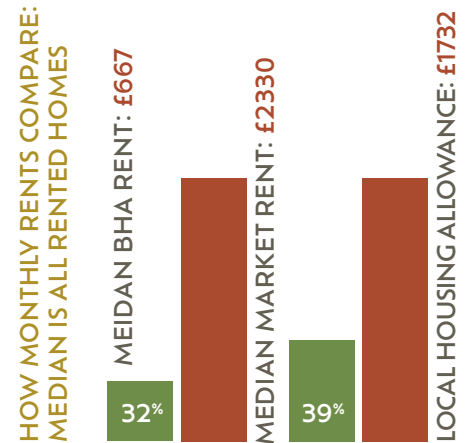
2 Share and number of existing homes (homes completed before the last financial year) allocated to:

general needs (social rent)	99.6%	299
other tenures	-	-
private rented sector	0.3%	1
other	n/a	n/a

BHA is committed to providing genuinely affordable homes in one of the most expensive areas of London. **99.6%** of our homes (299) are **general needs** and let at **social rents**. One home, representing 0.3% of our stock, is let at a market rent. It is the old Barnsbury Housing Association office.

Of our general needs homes, we have adopted a policy of letting bedsit and one bedroom homes to **key workers** on low to moderate incomes. They are currently charged social rents.

We also have one scheme which is **housing for older people** called Highbury View.



Almost all of our Islington homes are let at social rents in a borough where the average monthly market rent for a three-bedroom property is £2700. The Barnsbury HA monthly median rent for a home that size is £762.



3 Share and number of new homes (completed in the last financial year) allocated to:

- general needs (social rent)
- other tenures

n/a

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

We are mainly doing this by participating in the **Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund retrofit programme**. This will upgrade 76 homes on our Morland Mews estate to EPC C.

It will make a real difference to many residents' bills and will address the issue we identified last year, when 38% of our tenants told us they are struggling to afford the cost of heating their homes.

We have also worked with **Shine**, which provides energy advice for residents, and with **HACT**. Last year we shared grants totalling £940 between 24 tenants, some of which went towards heating bills.

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

All of our homes (with the exception of one market rent property) are let on **secure or assured tenancies** at **social rents**.

Our retrofit programme will upgrade 76 homes on our Morland Mews estate to EPC C but we have also used grant and charitable funding to help tenants with fuel bills and Shine has advised tenants on ways to cut household energy use



We have also worked with Shine, which provides energy advice for residents, and with HACT. Last year we shared grants totalling £940 between 24 tenants, some of which went towards heating bills.

BUILDING SAFETY AND QUALITY

6 Describe the condition of the housing provider's portfolio, with reference to:

% of homes for which all required: gas safety checks have been done.

At 31 March 2024, **99%** of our homes had an in-date gas safety certificate.

% of fire risk assessments done

At 31 March 2024, **100%**, with all high and medium priority actions completed.

% of electrical safety checks done.

At 31 March 2024, **100%**.

7 What % of homes meet the national housing quality standard?

At 31 March 2024, **98.4%** of our homes met the **Decent Homes Standard**.

Of those which fail, what is the housing provider doing to address these failings?

The five failures were due to damp and mould issues. In two homes, in a relatively new Section 106 scheme, extensive works are underway to remedy damp. Remedial work to all others was done in early 2024/25.



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

We do our best to make it straightforward and easy for residents and staff to understand what causes damp and mould.

We explain this and how best to avoid the problem using our website, newsletters, our service standard for damp and mould and our leaflet.

We hold regular campaigns to encourage residents to report damp and mould.

We respond with empathy and sensitively to each case reported and assess it with urgency.

We make an initial inspection within 48 hours then do a more in-depth, follow-up inspection using tools that include an infra-red camera, hygrometer and damp meter.

Every case is entered onto our damp and mould register and regularly monitored for progress.

We carry out all works needed to remedy the cause of damp and mould including repairing any damage to decorations.

We provide dehumidifiers free of charge if they are needed for as long as the problem continues.

We make sure in each case residents understand what caused the damp and mould and how to mitigate future occurrences.

We monitor each case for the 12 months after works are completed to make sure the problem does not return. Before closing a case we first make sure the resident is satisfied with the outcome.



Our service standard for damp and mould sets out our standards for responding to reports of the problem. Our leaflet also explains common causes of mould.

THE BARNSBURY HA HOMES STANDARD

We aim for a standard much more demanding than the *Decent Homes Standard* our regulator expects us to meet.

We follow this for every empty home before it is relet and when we replace kitchens or bathrooms.

It informs our maintenance and decorating work and priorities for investing in our properties.

We fit highly energy-efficient appliances and energy-saving fittings and systems.

Tenants' choices are broad and driven by quality, whether they opt for our materials or choose their own.

What each tenant gets is a home that is functional, comfortable, affordable and looks good.



Our own homes standard determines the quality of decorating and materials we use for tenants' homes and in shared parts of our buildings



Our resident panel helped us organise and run this year's funday. Among the stand-out performances was tenant Naomi (centre pic) giving her debut public singing performance

RESIDENT VOICE

9 What are the results of the housing provider's most recent tenant satisfaction survey?

How has the housing provider acted on these results?

In response to the introduction of **tenant satisfaction measures** in 2023 we commissioned Acuity to carry out a satisfaction survey in October 2023. Some 50% of our residents responded, with the survey carried out by phone, post and online.

Overall satisfaction with our service was **72.7%**, with satisfaction with the **repairs service** at **77%**. Both of these figures are **above** the Housemark median

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

Over 2023/24 our community engagement and communications manager worked closely with tenants from across our homes to further develop our approach.

Our strategic resident group, the **BHA resident panel**, was set up in 2018 and plays an important role in developing and scrutinising our policies and strategies. We also have two **resident board members**.

One of the first items on every board agenda is **Customer voice**, which updates our board on recent engagement activities and customer feedback on our service.

Our regular programme of **estate walkabouts** brings together staff, board members and residents to review estate management or repairs issues. A report to residents tells them what we picked up, what we will be doing about it and any other improvements we are making.

We publish an **annual report** to tenants with facts and observations from them and us on our services over the past year and our plans for new or enhanced services.

We hold **weekly surgeries** for tenants, some at our housing office but others on a rotating schedule at each of our estates. This gives them a safe space to discuss issues in confidence and gives us their perspective on matters like home, community and support needs.

Our older people's housing service has a very active **tenants association**. We meet monthly over coffee to get their feedback on the service and an update on events they are organising. We also arrange **occasional talks** or **training** for older tenants to help counter loneliness and isolation.

We hold quarterly **meet the chief executive and director** days so tenants can drop by to discuss any aspect of our service and give ideas and suggestions for improvements.

We have installed **suggestions boxes** at all of our properties. These and any suggestions given online, by email, in person or by post are recorded and, where possible, put into practice.

11 In the last 12 months, in how many complaints has the national Ombudsman determined that maladministration took place?

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

In the last 12 months we had two maladministration determinations from the Housing Ombudsman. Both related not to the substance of the complaint (one was about antisocial behaviour, the other a heating system) but the length of time it took to organise stage 3 complaints hearings.



RESIDENT SUPPORT

12 What are the key support services that the housing provider offers to its residents?

How successful are these services in improving outcomes?

We see ourselves as much more than a landlord. Our vision is to create sustainable homes and thriving communities.

To help deliver this vision we in 2023 began our **Staying Connected** visits. Over the course of the year, we visit every single resident in their own home. It lets us **update information** we hold on them and check the **condition of their home** but we can also find out whether or not they need any **additional support** from us or another agency.

This year, with just one-third of visits completed we have already helped some secure **direct financial support** totalling £20,000.

More importantly we have linked residents who would never have asked for help until they reached crisis point to services such as **mental health, hoarding support** and **occupational therapy**.

As well as helping residents, this approach will lead to **substantial savings** for us as we tackle repairs before the problem escalates, help avert serious hoarding and find we are getting better access to homes for regulatory compliance visits. Savings are also being made for social care and health budgets.

Over the year we also secured over £11,000 from Islington Council's hardship support fund helping several tenants in arrears avoid eviction.

Residents struggling with power bills are referred to the council's Shine (Seasonal Health Intervention Hub) service for free energy advice and support.

We also refer residents to the council's income maximisation team (iMax). Both iMax and Islington Citizens Advice Bureau offer free independent and confidential services on debt, benefits, and budgeting.

Perhaps the **best advocate** for our support service is Maurice, an 84-year-old resident of our older people's housing service.

Maurice told us a visit by our independent living officer '**changed my life**'. Colette had noted a need for and arranged adaptations to his home that he would never have asked for, helped him apply for attendance allowance and got him a free taxi card.

Maurice had only known about a few of these and certainly didn't know he was entitled to them. He tells us he has never been so well off, is able to visit friends and family, and will be living safely and happily in his home for longer.



Asif and Nicky from our housing team are regulars on our estate walkabouts but also hold twice weekly one-to-one support sessions for tenants, from our Morland Mews office but also visiting on a rota tenants at all our other properties



Head massage and a free NHS health check were some of the healthier extras laid on for tenants at our funday



Maurice told me a visit by our independent living officer '**changed my life**'.... He tells us he has never been so well off, is able to visit friends and family, and will be living safely and happily in his home for longer.



Our annual funday, now in its 48th year, is held every summer in our park and the adjacent football pitch ('the cage' as younger tenants have dubbed it). Members of staff and board members turned out in force to help on the day and get to know our tenants better.

PLACEMAKING

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

As a small neighbourhood housing association, we feel a strong sense of responsibility for making sure our homes and estates make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood and streetscape.

That is how we started out: buying homes on Barnsbury Street that were slums at the time.

We refurbished them and by doing so saved heritage properties and helped keep a rapidly gentrifying area affordable for people on moderate incomes.

We are proud of our homes and buildings. Almost all are in conservation areas and many of our homes are in listed buildings.

One of our key targets is making sure our homes and estates are places where our residents feel proud to live.

On our main estate, Morland Mews, we have a football pitch that is open to, and well used by, the local community, including our local Thornhill School.

We also have a park and play area on the estate and take great care to make sure they are well kept and welcoming for the local community.

Our plans for Morland Mews include building a new community centre. It will have many uses, among them hosting coffee mornings, exercise classes, meetings and other activities.

It will be used by our residents but will be open to use by other local groups like the scouts.

The large and beautiful garden at Highbury View, our scheme for older people, is well used by the residents and they regularly use it for their get-togethers, including an annual summer garden party.

“

...operating in just one borough we feel a special responsibility to make sure our homes and estates make a positive contribution to the street landscape and to our neighbours.



ENVIRONMENTAL



CLIMATE CHANGE

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

As of March 2024, 85% of our homes (255) had an EPC. Of these, 53% already meet the government target of EPC C. As of September 2023, the EPC distribution of our homes was:

6%	EPC B
47%	EPC C
41%	EPC D
6%	EPC E

We have a Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund programme now underway which will bring 76 of our homes that are currently EPC D-F, up to EPC C by March 2025.

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

We did not complete any new homes in 2023/24. We plan to start building six new general needs social rent homes in 2025.

We will create them by converting under-used undercroft garages on our main estate, transforming 40 garages into six new one and two bedroom flats. Our priority will be letting them to people who need a ground floor, accessible home. As well as making better use of what are currently under-used facilities, the project will improve the energy efficiency of homes above them.

16 Does the housing provider have a Net Zero target and strategy?

Our *sustainability strategy 2022/25* sets out our aim of reaching Net Zero by 2050.

17 What retrofit activities has the housing provider undertaken in the last 12 months in relation to its housing stock? How do these activities align with, and contribute towards, performance against the housing provider's Net Zero strategy and target?

Since our successful bid for Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding in 2023 we developed our plans and did extensive preliminary work, including tenant consultation and detailed surveys in 2023/24. Work inside and to the exterior of tenants' homes began in September 2024.

This project will see us investing a total of £1 million to upgrade the coldest 76 homes on our Morland Mews estate. Most homes will by March 2025 be uplifted from an EPC D, E or F to EPC C.

The project includes *cavity wall extraction and refill*, so also addresses a major cause of damp and mould. Homes now the worst performing for energy efficiency will also benefit from *air-to-air heat pumps* and *solar panels*.

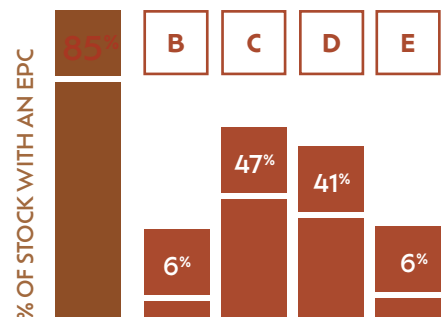
Because this project comprises 25% of all our stock it will lead to a drop in the number rated below EPC C, from 138 to around 62.

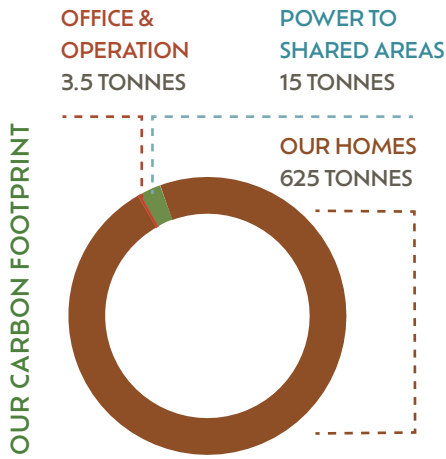
We also improved 16 homes under our general stock investment programme in 2023/24.

This included improving windows in heritage properties, strengthening roofs and replacing boilers. We also carried out 105 energy efficiency upgrades including loft insulation, draught-proofing and better ventilation.



Our Eden Grove properties, built in 2018, are insulated to a standard far exceeding those of our other homes. We hope to achieve similar results with our garage conversion works, also making much more energy efficient the homes above each garage.





18 Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 green house gas emissions

We measured our organisational carbon footprint in 2020. This found our scope 1 emissions were 3.5 tonnes, scope 2 were 15 tonnes and scope 3 were 625 tonnes.

The scope 3 emissions only include those from homes we own, not from suppliers.

19 How has the housing provider mapped and assessed the climate risks to its homes and supply chain, such as increased flood, drought and overheating risks?

How is the housing provider mitigating these risks?

We have not yet carried out a mapping exercise.

All of our homes are in Islington, London, where flood risk is mitigated by the Thames Barrier.

On new developments we make sure we have sustainable drainage to mitigate risks of heavy rainfall, as mandated by the London Plan.

As part of our plans for retrofitting, we are looking at the risks of overheating in homes and designing retrofit plans for each building to mitigate this risk.

On a practical level, we are experiencing increased roof leaks due to excessive rainfall and we have adopted a policy of frequent gutter clearance and installing larger capacity guttering on properties most affected.



A large portion of our repairs budget went on roof repairs last year following repeated downpours caused by our changing climate



On a practical level, we are experiencing increased roof leaks due to excessive rainfall and have adopted a policy of frequent gutter clearance and installing larger capacity guttering on properties most affected.



ECOLOGY

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

If yes, please describe with reference to targets in this area. If no, are you planning on producing one in the next 12 months?

Green space is at a premium in Islington and we are proud of the high quality green space on some of our estates, including a ***park and football pitch*** on Morland Mews and an ***extensive garden*** at Highbury View.

We retendered our garden maintenance contract in 2024, which included a ***requirement to upgrade planting*** on some estates. Improving biodiversity is part of our approach to sustainability.

We successfully applied for external funding under Islington Council's ***Greener Islington fund*** to improve an under-used courtyard garden at our scheme at Milner Square, involving residents in clearing and designing the revitalised space.

As part of our garage redevelopment proposal, we propose to upgrade the landscaping on Morland Mews to make it more ***biodiverse*** and ***wildlife friendly***.

Our sustainability strategy includes targets for improving biodiversity and we have an ambition to develop ***biodiversity plans*** for each of our buildings and estates.

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

If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

We proactively manage damp and mould and asbestos as part of our obligation to manage building safety. Our approach to these is included within our compliance policies.

We do have a COSHH policy and make sure our estate staff limit use of harsh chemicals and pesticides. This was also included in our list of requirements when in 2024 we retendered the contract for our garden maintenance.



Independent living officer Colette has helped the tenants association at older people's housing scheme Highbury View secure a £500 grant for a wildlife gardening project



Tenant board member Janice and Olive, who lives on our Morland Mews estate, are both keen gardeners and help out as volunteers in a local park



Our Morland Mews estate is in line for landscaping upgrades to make it greener and more wildlife friendly. Our ambition is to have biodiversity plans for all our estates and buildings.



Estate services officer Marius has worked hard to encourage recycling on our estates, helped by ward councillor Rowena Champion (*second left*), the council's executive member for environment, air quality, transport and recycling

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

22 Does the housing provider have a strategy to use or increase the use of responsibly sourced materials for all building and repairs works?

If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

Our *sustainability strategy* includes targets for maintenance materials (for example FSC-certified timber) as well as reducing the use of single use plastics and paper in our offices.

On new developments we specify that building materials should be sourced from sustainable sources.

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

If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

This is not an area of focus for us so far, partly as we do very little new build.

We have done a lot of work over the last year to improve recycling facilities on our main estate, including working with Islington Council's executive member for environment, air quality and transport to promote recycling.

24 Does the housing provider have a strategy for good water management?

If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?

We have not to date reported on water usage and we do not have a specific strategy. However our *BHA Home Standard* makes sure we use low water-use fittings in bathrooms when we refurbish a home. Under our *Green Voids Standard* we fit 'hippos' and other water-saving devices to properties before they are re-let.



GOVERNANCE



STRUCTURAL AND GOVERNANCE

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

Yes, we are registered with the Regulator for Social Housing.

26 What is the most recent regulatory grading/status?

As a small provider with less than 1000 homes, we are not subject to regulatory judgements.

27 Which code of governance does the housing provider follow, if any?

Our board adopted the *National Housing Federation's* 2020 code of governance in April 2021 and our board monitors compliance with it every year.

28 Is the housing provider not-for-profit?

If not, who is the largest shareholder, what is their % of economic ownership and what % of voting rights do they control?

We are a not-for-profit Cooperative and Community Benefit Society.

29 Explain how the housing provider's board manages ESG risks.

Are ESG risks incorporated into the housing provider's risk register?

Net Zero and climate change is one of the top risks in our *risk register*, including climate adaptation. The board reviews the risk register at every meeting and we have a monitored action plan in place to reduce our risk in line with our risk appetite.

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

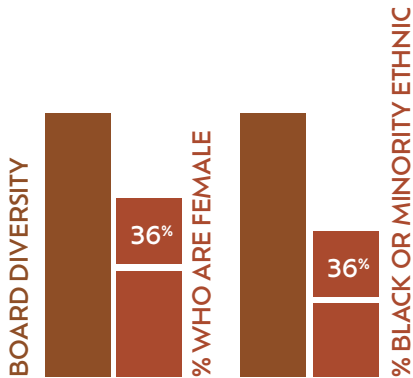
No, we have not been subject to any adverse regulatory judgements.



Asset manager Michael explains to colleagues at one of our fortnightly team meetings what has been done so far to try to resolve a complex and enduring fault. All our staff contribute to problem solving, recognising that matters affecting one service can and often do affect others.



The board reviews the risk register at every meeting and we have a monitored action plan in place to reduce our risk in line with our risk appetite.



Our leadership team remains 75% female, with finance director Lynsey, *pictured right*, joining us in 2022 and homes and communities director Cheryl taking on a new full-time post of housing and communities director last summer



We also have as a standard item on our board template a check to test how has the residents' voice been heard on this issue. This question is also asked in the board self-appraisals session at the end of each meeting

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

Does the housing provider have policies that incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into the recruitment and selection of board members and senior management?

We are proud of the diversity of our board members and our board is broadly reflective of the community we work in.

36% women

36% BME

Average age of board members is 49 years

Average length of service is 3.4 years

Our last recruitment drive included advertising to the *Women in Social Housing* and *Black on Board* networks. We are planning in 2024/25 to adopt the National Housing Federation's *Chairs Challenge*, with an EDI session at our September 2024 board strategy day to kick this off.

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

As well as having two residents on our board, we have a resident panel and the minutes of this meeting are included on every board agenda.

We also have as a standard item on our board template a check to test *how has the residents' voice been heard on this issue*.

This question is also asked in the board self-appraisals session at the end of each meeting.

32 What % of the housing provider's board has turned over in the last two years?

Over the last two years to March 2024, we have seen a 30% turnover on our *board*. Two members retired after reaching the end of their terms and another resident board member stepped down.

What % of the housing provider's senior management team has turned over in the last two years?

We have had a 50% turnover on our *leadership team*. Finance director Lynsey van Aswegen joined us in October 2022 and housing and communities director, Cheryl Whittle joined in summer 2023.



33 Number of board members on the housing provider’s audit committee with recent and relevant financial experience.

The **chair of our audit, finance and risk committee** is Jonathan Bunt, a qualified accountant and ex-local government finance director. Matthew Smith, also a member of AFRC, is a chartered accountant with strategic financial experience including treasury, business planning, mergers and acquisitions and fundraising.

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

None.

35 Has a succession plan been provided to the housing provider’s board in the last 12 months?

Yes, the board reviewed the **succession plan** and **skills audit** in 2024 and recruited new members specifically to fill the skills gaps identified.

36 For how many years has the housing provider’s current external audit partner been responsible for auditing the accounts?

Auditors **Price Bailey** have worked with us for three years.

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

Our last external review was in June 2022. We carried out internal board reviews in 2023 and 2024, with an external review due in 2025.

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

We have adopted the **NHF’s 2022 code of conduct**. All board members must declare any interests and we maintain a register of interests.

39 Does the housing provider pay the Real Living Wage?

Yes, all of our team members are paid above the **London Living Wage**.



Top row: Jonathan Bunt (*left*) is chair of our audit, finance and risk committee. He and new board member Matthew Smith (*right*) are both qualified accountants

Second row: Matthew and three others have joined our board in the past 12 months, recruited to fill gaps we identified in the range of board skills. *Left to right*: Katri Wilson, Kenny Johnson and Ben Kelly



Board member Micah Gold gives two pleased younger tenants their booty from the funday tombola



All staff meet in person or online every two weeks in office space in Islington we rent from a larger social landlord. Most of the team work remotely part of the week, with schedules planned ahead to maintain a consistent staff presence out and about on estates and in our two offices.



All members of the team have a tailored training plan which we deliver both in person (in house and externally) and via on online learning portal.

40 What is the housing provider's median gender pay gap?

The gender pay gap measures the difference in hourly pay between male and female members of staff. We are a small team of 12 staff - nine women and three men.

Our *gender pay gap* for 2024 is **-16** so the average salary for women is 16% higher than the average salary for men. This reflects our having three women including the female chief executive on our leadership team of four.

41 What is the housing provider's CEO: median-worker pay ratio?

The ratio of the chief executive's salary to the lowest paid employee is **3.4:1**. This compares with 3.9:1 in 2022/23.

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

In 2024, we set up an EDI group with three staff given responsibility for looking at any themes or trends relating to EDI within the tenant and staffing profile.

The group has agreed three priorities for the year:

- mental health in the workforce
- committing to the cultural calendar and providing significant information to staff and tenants
- raising awareness of disabilities.

An *EDI strategy* is being drawn up that will look at all areas of work and we have a robust *EDI policy* in place. Staff have had EDI training, with a mandatory update each year.

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

We deliver a full training plan covering all core areas to support staff at work with mental health awareness and stress in the workplace. We also have staff health and wellbeing days that include essential advice, support and signposting.

We recently introduced a subsidised health plan for all staff which gives them employment assistance and a free advice line for any issues they might be facing.

We have a dedicated human resources staff member for staff to speak to in confidence and an external consultant who supports us with changes in regulations and law for human resources policies.

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

Staff training, including courses that will lead directly or indirectly to more professional qualifications, is written into daily schedules.

All members of the team have a tailored training plan which we deliver both in person (in house and externally) and via on online learning portal.

In 2023/24, one member of staff gained new professional qualifications.



SUPPLY CHAIN

45 How is social value creation considered when procuring goods and services?

We are actively seeking to get better social value from our contracts. We are a very small landlord so work closely with three or four very small local contractors.

We are therefore realistic about what we can deliver. However, in 2023/24 we retendered our grounds maintenance contract, involving residents in the process.

Included in the selection criteria was a requirement that the new contractor provide social value opportunities for residents.

The contractor appointed committed to a number of constructive offers (*see right*).

46 How is sustainability considered when procuring goods and services?

What measures are in place to monitor the sustainability of your supply chain when procuring goods and services?

Our procurement strategy includes a commitment to:

promoting and specifying the use of environmentally sustainable components

lowering the environmental impact of construction and maintenance work

when evaluating tenders including environmentally sustainable criteria.

For example, the contractor who bid successfully for our grounds maintenance work pledged to compost leaves and vegetation, use non-toxic herbicides and organic mulches, plant drought tolerant plants where needed and use electric, rechargeable tools.

Our facilities management considers environmental factors when ordering supplies, making best use of available products sourced from ethical providers.

We also are making better use of resources through collaboration, for example in 2022 we moved into a shared office space.

We are mindful that given our size, and that we work mainly with other local small to medium enterprises, there are limitations to our role. However, our medium-term goal is to push our core contractors to improve their contribution to sustainability, in turn helping us deliver our sustainability goals.



Groundscapes successfully bid for our grounds maintenance contract earlier this year. Among the social value benefits we secured from the deal were environmentally responsible materials and practices and a commitment to first bring up to a higher standard planting across our estates, unpaid. The company has also without charge jet-washed moss and green algae from paving stones and steps.

Barnsbury Housing Association is registered as a charitable association and governed by a board of volunteers supported by two committees.

Registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA): 18135R

Registered with the Regulator for Social Housing (RFSH) L2518

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BARNSBURY
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