

Annual Review



2023/24

Welcome

As we celebrate our 50th year in housing, we are excited to unveil our 2023/24 Annual Review, outlining our vision and strategic priorities. The hard work from every member of our dedicated team will make our new vision a reality and positively impact the communities we serve.

We had a successful year across our four pillars: residents, homes, people, and business. Highlights include:

- **Excellent STAR survey results:** 84% overall satisfaction rate, with higher satisfaction across all indicators compared to last year.
- **Neighbourhood plans:** Increased visibility and welfare visits appreciated by residents.
- **Service charge review:** Confirmed affordability, quality, and value for money, leading to an in-house cleaning service from April 2024.
- **Support during the cost-of-living crisis:** Increased Income team resources, launched a hardship fund, and provided significant financial aid to residents.
- **New housing and finance systems:** Progress on 'Prosiect Gwella,' aiming to launch in 2024/25.
- **Development and investment:** 56 new homes delivered, with 99 more on-site, and significant investment in existing properties and decarbonisation efforts.
- **Awards and recognition:** Gained the QED award for equality and diversity and achieved a one-star rating from Best Companies to work for.

Financially, we strengthened our foundations with a £4.5m operating surplus and increased reserves by £1.2m, despite economic challenges. This success was achieved without compromising on service delivery.

The Board of Management is pleased to present its report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.



Catherine Dixon
Chair



Helena Kirk
Chief Executive



Building New Homes

Our Development Programme at North Wales Housing has seen significant growth, driven by the expansion of our team to meet ambitious targets. We are thrilled to have acquired 12 properties in Flintshire during 2023-24, marking our first homes in this county. With this expansion, we are proud to now provide homes in all six North Wales counties.

New affordable
homes handed
over
56

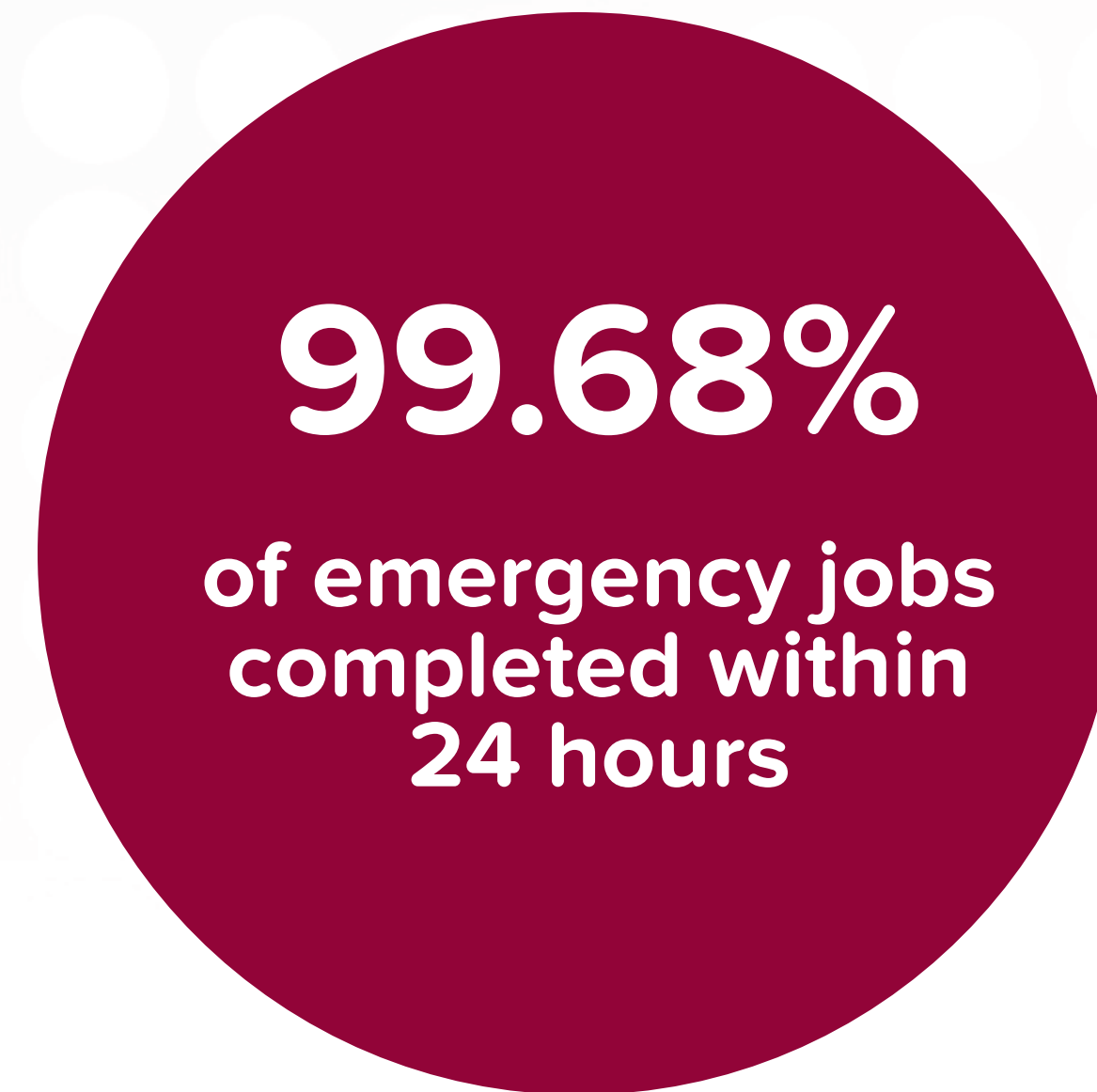
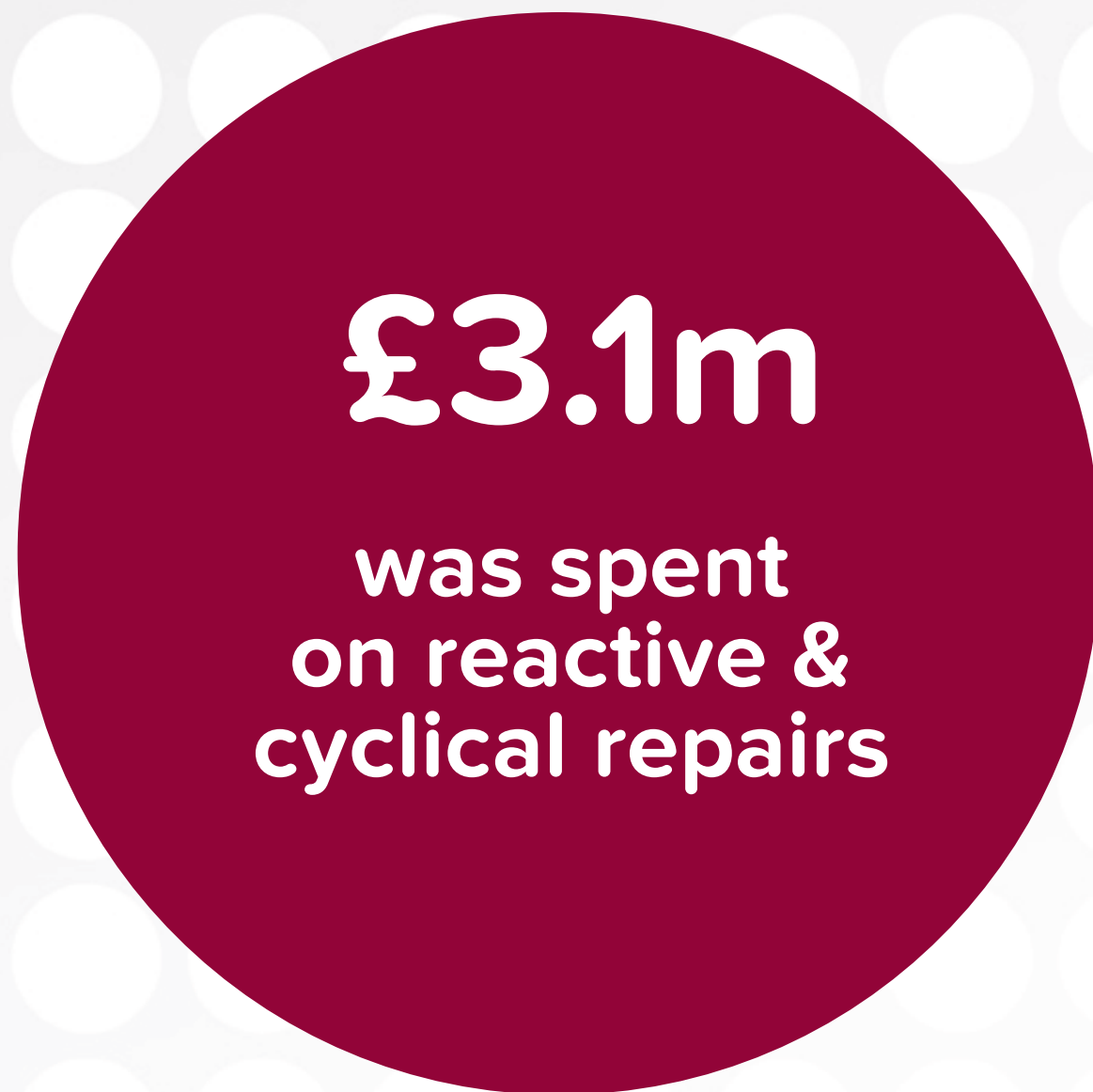
Under
construction
99



A Good Home

We are committed to providing you with a home that's a great place to live, whether it's brand new or one of our established properties. To ensure this, our in-house repairs team is dedicated to maintaining and improving our homes, handling everything from routine repairs to planned replacements and upgrades.

So, how did we do in 2023 – 2024?

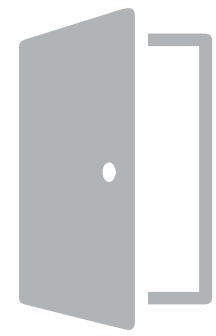


Investing In Our Homes

Planned Work Renewals

We spent over £2 million on improving your homes in 2023-2024. Here's how it was invested.

Doors



£565,520

Windows



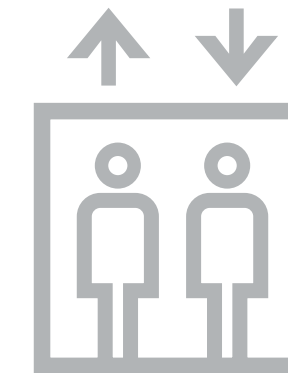
£356,157

Structure



£299,452

Lifts



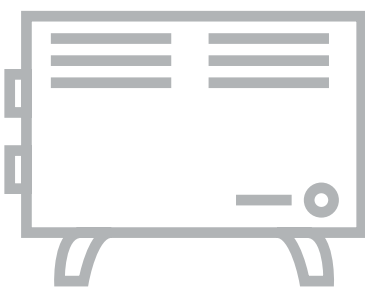
£23,700

Fencing



£59,584

Heating (including boilers)



£180,203

Bathrooms



£353,107

Kitchens



£601,072

Roofing Fascias/Gutters



£358,457

Transforming Lives Through Decarbonisation

Over the past three years, NWH has undertaken a comprehensive range of decarbonisation initiatives across all properties.

359 homes have benefitted from energy-efficient upgrades including cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, in-room insulation and solar panel installations. This has had the dual impact of reducing carbon emissions and improved the energy efficiency of these properties, thereby reducing utility consumption and bills for the residents.

8 Llewelyn Road, Colwyn Bay

The large 3-storey property had a poor EPC rating of D with a SAP rating of 65 points. We decided to install external wall insulation to the property.

As the 2nd floor is formed by the roof structure, we also installed room in roof insulation to all pitched areas combined with additional loft insulation. Although works to this property were not restricted by any planning issues - in relation to it being in a conservation area - we decided to retain some aesthetic features of the period property. Liaising with our approved installation team, they created a design specifically for this property so we have been able to retain the quoining to corners of the building to give the illusion of the period feature. The SAP score on this property following the work is 75 EPC band C.

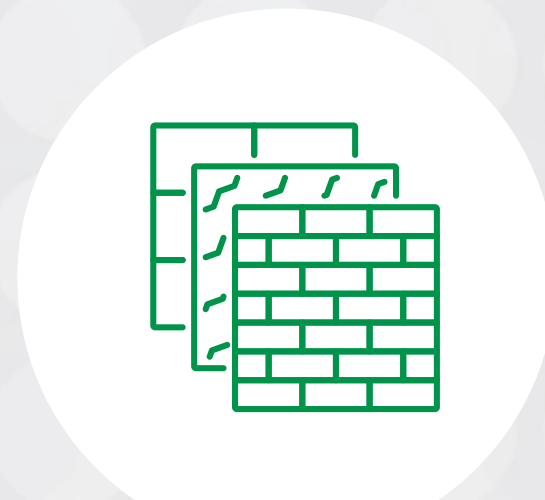


Energy Performance Certificates (EPC)

An up-to-date EPC helps us to understand the current condition of our properties. We can then decide the best course of action to improve its performance for the resident, as well as the planet.

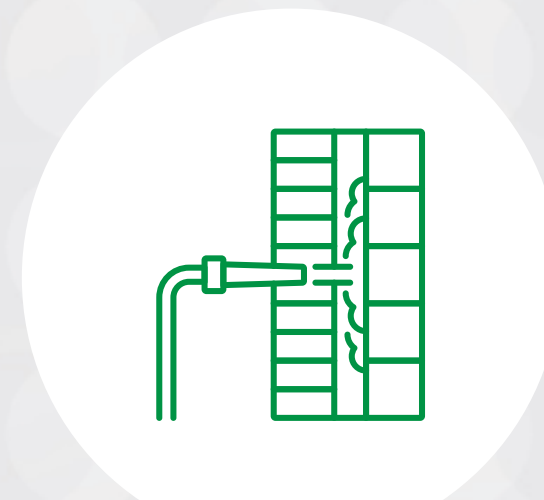
We installed:

External wall insulation



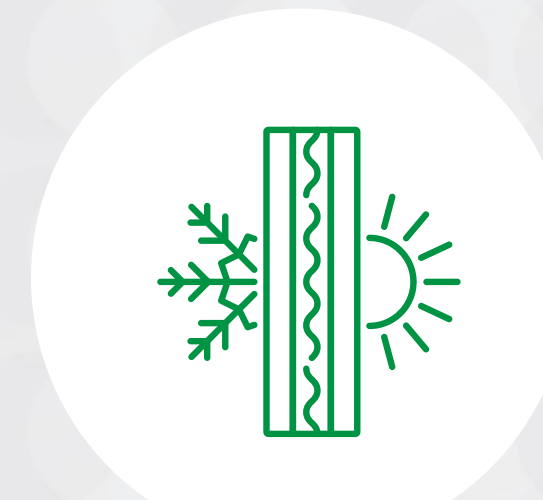
7

Cavity wall insulation



3

Internal wall insulation



12

Room in roof insulation



3

Loft insulation



13

Air Source Heat Pumps



9

Solar PV Panels



9

Battery backup facility



9





In 2023-2024 we completed a further 75 EPCs giving us the following results overall:



The Welsh Government's new Welsh Housing Quality Standard requires all properties to achieve SAP 75 by 2029.



Aids And Adaptations

A little help can go a long way to making life easier for you. It just needs the right thing, in the right place, at the right time. From handrails and ramps to door handles and key safes, we can install these for you and help you apply for funding for bigger works.

Funded by NWH



48

Grab rails



2

Shower seats



17

Stair handrails



1

Key safes



2

Lever taps

Grant funded adaptations



27

Level access showers



6

Stair lifts



4

Hoists



3

Intercom/door release system



1

Specialist toilets



6

Ramps/primary access work



1

Kitchen adaptations

Keeping Our Residents Safe

Your safety in your home is our number one priority. Our Community Safety Officers support the Compliance and Neighbourhood teams to ensure we keep you safe by carrying out regular safety checks and reviewing our compliance figures.

At the end of March 2024, our compliance with health and safety responsibilities was:

Gas safety certificates



99.96%

Water hygiene testing



100%

Asbestos re-inspections



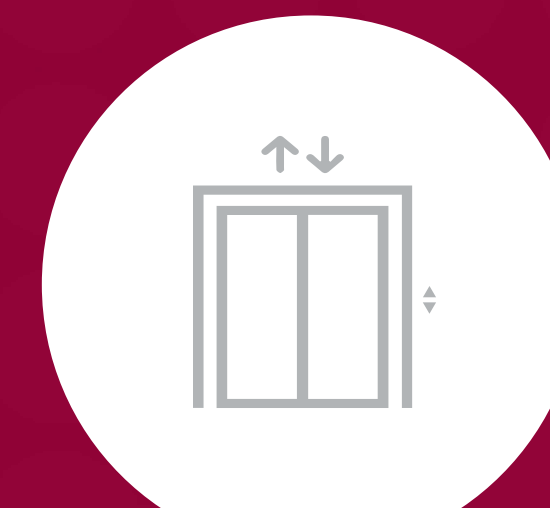
100%

Fire risk assessments



100%

Lift maintenance inspections



97.23%

Properties with valid electrical inspection



99.90%



Neighbourhood Plans

NWH is proud to be among the first North Wales landlords to adopt a Neighbourhood Planning Approach. Now in our second year, we're excited to share our achievements and improvements over the past year:

STAR survey insights



We reviewed resident feedback to understand their views and target resources effectively.

The STAR Survey (Survey of Tenants and Residents), conducted annually and based on a standard survey from the Welsh Government, is used by landlords across the country to measure and compare tenant satisfaction. Using STAR survey data, we tailored our priorities and budget allocation to address each neighbourhood's unique needs. We also purchased 'Grantfinder' software to identify funding opportunities for resident-driven services.

Green space improvements



Collaborated with our in-house gardening team, Rakes and Ladders, to enhance planting areas.

Community initiatives



Organised litter clean-ups, family-friendly activities, and financial advisory sessions.

Our partnerships have significantly improved communities, including collaborations with Youth Shedz, Colwyn Bay Together, Actif North Wales, Denbighshire Employment Network, Age-friendly Gwynedd, Ty Hapus, and the Flying Start Programme.

We continue to innovate and evolve, seeking new ways for residents to shape the priorities in their neighbourhoods.

Collaborative events



Partnered with other Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to coordinate events in high-housing areas.

Residents Participation – Collaboration & Community

Project Gwella

In seeking to purchase a new housing management system, our residents participated in the demo sessions provided by potential suppliers. Participants were invited to provide feedback. 5 residents participated in the process.

The outcome/changes to the which were service made following resident participation was:

- Feedback was used in the tendering process to appoint the chosen supplier.
- A session was held to inform participants how feedback was used and to confirm the chosen supplier.
- Participants advised us further input is likely to be required in the future, potentially in respect of improvements to the new Resident Portal.
- The consultant assisting in the tendering process and appointing the new system said in his experience he has not seen other landlords involving residents in the process of choosing and testing a new Housing Management System.

Customer Portal

As part of Project Gwella, a workshop was arranged in March 2024 to give interested residents an opportunity to have a look at the forthcoming new Customer Portal. They reviewed the look and feel, and usability. Participants were able to log in via pc, tablet and mobile to explore the system. Residents told us it was easy to navigate and they liked the layout.





Residents Panel

At NWH, we believe every resident's voice deserves to be heard and is valued. We currently offer different levels of involvement so we can ensure you have an opportunity to actively get involved in decision-making as well as influencing our services.



Residents Forum

This meets regularly and provides an informal space for our residents to obtain information, influence decisions and strengthen services. The Forum has led to NWH committing to holding an event each month where our housing officers, customer support staff and community leaders can meet with our communities to discuss their needs. Meetings are currently held in the evenings.

Sounding Board

This enables our residents to provide us with feedback. It has enabled us to make significant changes, such as offering financial inclusion advice and improving our approach to arrears management and service charges.



What's It Like To Take Part?



I feel it's important that residents should be involved in the decision making that could affect their lives and that of other residents. I hope my efforts are making a positive impact on behalf of residents.

Alan Beardow,
former Resident Panel Vice-Chair.

These new corner flags represent the cornerstone of North Wales Housing and Bangor Saints FC assisting each other in taking care of the young people in our community. We are grateful for funding received from the Community Fund which helped us replace our old corner flags.

Daf Roberts, FA Wales Coach of the Year and Coaching Co-Ordinator at Club Bangor Saints FC

Funding from North Wales Housing has made a massive difference to our young people. We're grateful for your help in getting our booklet printed. Over 70% of our members are either diagnosed neurodiverse or are on the pathway awaiting diagnosis so this booklet is going to be so useful to put them at ease as to what to expect.

Eirian Williams Roberts,
Maes G Show zone Co-founder and Director.

Wow, what can we say. This experience has been amazing, we have been looking for a home for just under a year now and North Wales Housing came to the rescue. We're so grateful for the help and experience in obtaining this perfect home. I'm 30-weeks pregnant and this couldn't have come at a better time for us. Thanks to the team for all the help and support. We can't wait to start our own little family in this precious home.

Chanise and Ben, residents.



Supporting Our Community

Hardship Fund

The Hardship Fund made financial awards of £71,740.26. 294 applications made, with 265 approved and 3 pending approval at the end of the financial year.

Applications made:

Poverty/Hardship

- Payment towards rent arrears
- Assistance with ongoing rent during terminal illness or loss.

Tenancy Sustainment

- Purchase of essential household goods where other grants had been unsuccessful
- Payment towards utility bills to allow reconnection of services for vulnerable residents
- Removals costs for those fleeing domestic violence
- Essential carpets for those in severe fuel poverty
- Skips to help dispose of garden/household waste.

Emergency payments

- Essential costs like food, utility Bills; travel for work, school, or court
- Assist with transport for visiting ill relatives and maintaining contact with children
- To manage during delays in benefits, restricted bank access, or cost-of-living crisis
- Maintain communication for essential services like Universal Credit.





Women Prison Leavers' Project

We are excited to announce the opening of a new supported accommodation project in Llandudno Junction for women prison leavers who would otherwise face homelessness. This initiative, developed with Conwy Council and key partners like the Probation Service and Women's Aid, is the first of its kind in Wales.

We've hired two experienced staff members in domestic abuse and homelessness, adding valuable expertise. The first residents have settled in well, achieving positive outcomes. Without this project, they would likely have been placed in insecure temporary accommodation. Stable housing and support have been shown to significantly reduce re-offending, helping women rebuild their lives.

New Shared Move-On Pilot Project

At Noddfa, our homeless hostel in Colwyn Bay, we manage 8 'move-on' flats where residents gain independence with support. After consulting with residents, many expressed interest in smaller shared accommodation due to benefits like shared bills and companionship.

We partnered with Conwy Council to launch a pilot project in a property from Social Services, using a 2-bedroom flat as shared supported housing for those moving on from Noddfa, including residents with mental health needs. Utility costs are managed by North Wales Housing to prevent disputes. Initially, staff provided more support, which reduced as residents settled in.

The project has been a success, with one resident moving on to independent housing. We expect more positive outcomes as Conwy Council explores shared housing for single homeless individuals, and we will share our learnings from this pilot.

Our People



Best Companies 2023-24

Our annual Best Companies survey helps us understand our employees' sentiments and identify areas for improvement. In 2023, we achieved a 2-star rating, marking us as an 'outstanding employer.' Actions taken based on the previous year's survey included:

- **Reviewing pay and benefits**
- **Setting up engagement channels for employee feedback**
- **Investing in learning, development, and wellbeing initiatives**
- **These actions significantly contributed to our achievement.**

AD People Appointment

Alison joined NWH in January 2024 as Assistant Director for People. With over 30 years of experience in senior HR and managerial roles in the public sector, including Health, Social Care, and Policing, Alison brings a wealth of knowledge. Though new to housing, Alison is dedicated to improving services for those who access and deliver them. A resident of North Wales for over 45 years, she is passionate about living and working in the region.





Staff Conference 2024

The Staff Conference on St David's Day was a great opportunity for colleagues to reconnect, celebrate, and come together for a day of learning, sharing, and looking to the future.

It was an inspiring day that left us all motivated and focused on what's ahead.



Key Training - Colleagues and Board

Throughout the year, key training focused on mandatory health & safety, job-specific training, and wider professional development, including:

- **ILM level 3 and 5**
- **CIH qualifications level 3 and above**
- **Attendance at professional conferences**

Personal learning budgets saw increased uptake, enabling employees to explore various learning opportunities from crafts to topics like positive thinking, artisan bread making, yoga, forensic science, and mountaineering.

Our Rising Stars had opportunities to shadow others, attend conferences, participate in Women In Leadership events, and develop skills through secondments, academic courses, and engagement with corporate projects.





Hwyl Initiative

Hwyl was established to create opportunities for our people to connect and socialize, based on feedback from the Best Companies survey. Events organized include:

- **Monthly Golf**
- **Crochet Classes**
- **Bouncin' Bingo**
- **Park Runs**
- **5-a-side Football**
- **Euro Sweepstake**

These events have received fantastic feedback, offering a wide range of activities to cater to different interests.

QED 2023

We are delighted to have received the prestigious and nationally recognized QED (Quality in Equality and Diversity) award. This makes us the first social landlord in the North Wales region to earn this honour.

The QED Award, developed by Tai Pawb, provides a framework for enhancing an organization's equality and diversity impact. An independent panel assesses strategic areas like governance, leadership, and culture, as well as customer-facing services, access, and Resident involvement.

The 12-month accreditation process involved staff and board members, Residents, contractors, and partner organizations. It included staff surveys, Resident engagement, on-site visits, policy reviews, and the development and implementation of an action plan.

We are committed to making North Wales Housing a place where colleagues can be themselves, enjoy their work, and enhance the experiences of residents in our homes and communities.



Staff Diversity

Ethnic Group

White	83%
BAME	2%
Prefer not to say	2%

Disability

Yes	13%
No	56%
Prefer not to say	9%
Not answered	22%

Welsh language

Level1	17%
Level2	16%
Level3	16%
Level4	8%
Level5	34%
Other	9%

Gender

Male	46%
Female	53%
Not answered	1%

Sexual orientation

Heterosexual/ Straight	76%
Bisexual	3%
Gay/Lesbian	0.5%
Not answered	13%
Prefer not to say	7.5%



Charity Fundraising

We have a charity panel run by members of staff of the Association who raise money for our nominated, independent charities.

During 2023/24, a total of

£5,924

was raised to provide defibrillators in our communities following on from the **£35,174** raised over the previous **9 years** for various local and national charities.

Contributions were also made to **St David's Hospice** through participation in the Dragon Boat race and to local foodbanks. Our Older persons residents also raise funds for various charities throughout the year.



Governance

The Association is governed by our Group Board and complies with the CHC Code of Governance. Group Board meets bi-monthly to set the Group's strategic direction, review performance against corporate plan objectives, agree on policies and strategies, considers ongoing business, and examines financial and operational performance. To ensure effectiveness, the Board periodically reviews its own performance to identify areas where additional expertise may be needed. All Board members sign a service agreement to acknowledge their responsibilities and adhere to a Code of Conduct.

The Board is supported by three key committees:

- **Residents Panel** Formerly the Residents' and Communities Panel, represents the interests of residents.
- **Audit and Risk Committee** Oversees internal and external audits and internal control.
- **Governance Committee** Formerly the Remuneration and Membership Committee, focuses on governance matters.

While the Board is ultimately responsible for the Association's strategy and control, day-to-day operational control is delegated to the Chief Executive and the Executive Team, who are appointed on standard employment contracts.



Catherine Dixon
Chair



Tal Michael



Neill Anderson



Ian Alderson



Dylan James



Sian Williams



Sarah Davies



Derwyn Owen





Board Diversity

Gender

Male	55.6%
Female	44.4%
Other	0%
Prefer not to say	0%

Age

15-29	0%
30-44	22%
45-59	45%
60 - 74	33%
Aged 75+	0%
Prefer not to say	0%

Sexual orientation

Bisexual	0%
Gay	0%
Heterosexual	100%
Other	0%
Prefer not to say	0%

Disability

Yes	11.1%
No	88.9%
Prefer not to say	0%

Ethnicity

BAME	0%
White	100%
Other	0%
Prefer not to say	0%

National identity

British	55.6%
Welsh	44.4%
English	0%
Scottish	0%
Irish	0%
Prefer not to say	0%





In January 2024, we reviewed our compliance with the CHCymru Code of Governance to ensure we're meeting the standards. Reflecting on the improvements we made last year around Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and the actions we've taken since earning the QED Award, our Board reaffirmed its commitment to diversity. We've also signed up for the 2024-2025 Pathway to Board Programme, which aims to help Black, Asian, and minority ethnic community members gain the skills and experience needed to join any Board as a Non-Executive Director.

To keep our Board strong and diverse, we regularly review the skills of our members. Over the past year, we recruited three new Board Members and assessed their technical skills, knowledge, and experience. While the review showed that we have a wide range of expertise, it also highlighted areas where we can improve and focus on succession planning. This feedback has shaped our recent recruitment, and we expect the diversity of our Board in the 2024-2025 Annual Review to show our ongoing commitment to EDI.

Board Members as of end of Financial Year 2023 - 2024

Residents Panel Members

Sian Williams – Chair

Gwenllian Hughes

Resident members

Audit & Risk Committee Members

Dylan James – Chair

Sarah Davies – Vice Chair

Derwyn Owen

Tal Michael

Neill Anderson

Governance Committee Members

Ian Alderson – Chair

Catherine Dixson

Sarah Davies

Older Persons Services

We are proud of our dedicated accommodation for older persons, providing affordable housing options for individuals over 55 and promoting independent living with support available.

Our services include Sheltered Housing, which offers residents security and access to a Warden, and Extra Care, featuring self-contained apartments with on-site care. Additionally, we offer well-being visits, resident meetings, and community events to foster connection and support.

The Older Persons Team actively engages in charity fundraising, raising over £2,700 for Alzheimer's and Macmillan Cancer Support in 2023, reflecting our commitment to both our residents and the wider community.



Affordable Housing

During 2023/2024, we provided 29 beautiful new homes in Wrexham and Flint. Residents are delighted with their new homes, expressing great satisfaction and happiness. This is what one resident told us:

“Mum and I want to say how settled and happy we are in our new home. It is well-appointed and warm and our dogs already love the generous garden. We do appreciate our lovely home after a very difficult few years.

It is especially lovely to see my 93-year old mum looking relaxed and happy knowing that we finally have peace and security. Thank you!”



Safeguarding

We have a legal duty to report concerns about any child or adult at risk of abuse or harm. This applies to all our contract holders. Our teams, especially those working directly with residents, receive regular training on recognizing and reporting concerns.

Financial abuse, emotional abuse, self-neglect, and neglect of essential needs can lead to safeguarding issues. Our dedicated teams work hard to assist anyone at risk and collaborate with local authorities and other agencies to improve their situations.

Safeguarding cases are monitored monthly in our Health & Safety and Senior Leadership meetings.

Our policies and procedures are working well with increased reporting this year and regular Safeguarding bulletins are published.



Total number of safeguarding disclosures received 23/24



Number of safeguarding reports issued to Local authority



Number of safeguarding cases closed in 23/24



STAR Survey (Survey of Tenants and Residents)

558 residents took part in our 2023 Resident Satisfaction Survey, either by completing a telephone or postal survey. This survey, known as the STAR Survey, is conducted annually and is based on a standard survey from the Welsh Government.

It's used by landlords across the country to measure resident satisfaction and allows for benchmarking against other landlords in Wales.

We are delighted that the improvements we made in 2022 have been maintained, with significant increases in several satisfaction measures, including resident engagement and value for money. Additionally, there has been a **modest 1% increase** in overall satisfaction, bringing it to **84%**, which keeps this score above the average for Wales.

Overall Satisfaction



84%

of residents said they are satisfied overall

Engagement



76%

of residents feel they are listened to and their views acted upon





Customer service



85%

of residents found us easy to deal with

The home



86%

of residents said they feel safe and secure in their homes

Value for money



87%

of residents said they are satisfied with rent value for money

Repair and maintenance



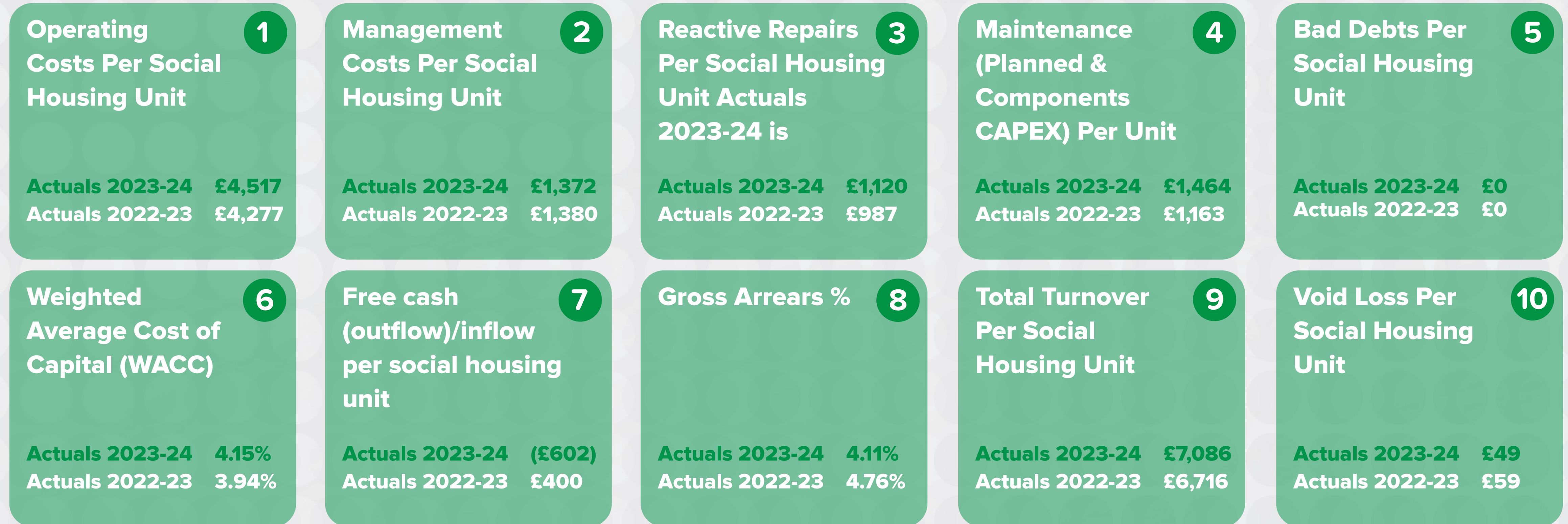
89%

of residents said they were satisfied with their last repair

Finance

Value for Money

NWH has collated VFM key performance indicators as set out by the regulator, below is a table of current progress:



We have not received all-Wales figures since 2021/22. To make Welsh comparisons, we would need to estimate based on inflation figures. However, due to the subjectivity and the fact that not all indicators are solely influenced by inflation, no Welsh comparative figures are provided.

The indicators show that our costs per unit have increased in most areas compared to last year, mainly due to inflationary pressures reflecting the economic conditions of the period. We have experienced significant rises in energy costs, materials, and staffing expenses, all of which are included in the figures. Despite an increase in stock numbers, turnover per unit has risen as the majority of our rents were uplifted by 6.5%.





Results for the Year

Financial highlights covering the last five years for the Group are set out in the following table:

For the Year Ended 31 March Financial Performance	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Turnover	19,581	18,254	17,781	17,446	17,119
Operating Surplus	4,451	3,794	4,317	4,999	4,936
Net Operating Income (Operating surplus adding back net housing property depreciation)	6,175	5,366	6,088	6,679	6,653
Net Interest Payable (Including financing costs)	2,646	2,417	2,481	2,557	8,622
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	1,861	1,425	1,836	2,442	(3,686)
Intangible and Tangible Fixed Assets	194,700	173,660	171,964	169,310	166,030
Social Housing and Other Grants	92,340	88,724	89,056	88,295	88,974
Long and Short-Term Loans	78,705	61,383	61,362	57,845	57,386
Revenue Reserves	22,303	21,108	20,134	18,024	17,366



Statistics					
Operating Margin	22.7%	20.8%	24.3%	28.7%	28.8%
Operating Surplus per Property Owned	£1,610	£1,396	£1,580	£1,834	£1,842
Interest Cover					
(Net operating income divided by net interest payable)	2.33	2.22	2.45	2.61	0.77
EBITDA/MRI (excluding Break costs)	1.04	1.18	1.50	1.97	1.75
EBITDA (excluding Break costs)	2.14	2.03	2.37	2.49	2.30
Average Interest Rate					
(Net interest payable divided by average loans)	3.36%	3.94%	4.04%	4.42%	15.02%
Gearing Ratio					
(The ratio of Net Debt to Historic Cost of Housing Properties)	34.8%	30.1%	30.6%	29.6%	30.5%
Accommodation Figures			As restated		
General Needs Properties (including shared equity)	2,192	2,227	2,242	2,229	2,188
Extra Care and Older Persons schemes	196	195	195	195	195
Supported Housing Units	295	295	296	302	297
Total Stock	2,764	2,717	2,733	2,726	2,680

The Group's turnover is £19.6m (2022: £18.3m). This represents an increase of 7.3% on our core activities mainly due to the 6.5% rent increase applied to the majority of tenancies. We've also collected £112k of rental income from new properties acquired during the year and collected a whole year's rent for those acquired part way through 2022/23.





Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 31 March 2024

		2024	2023
	Notes	£'000	£'000
Turnover	3	19,581	18,254
Operating costs	3	(15,171)	(14,458)
Pension valuation adjustment	3	-	-
Surplus on sale of housing properties	5	41	16
Deficit on revaluation of investment properties		-	(18)
OPERATING SURPLUS		4,451	3,794
Interest receivable and other income	6	56	48
Interest payable and financing costs	7	(2,646)	(2,417)





SURPLUS BEFORE TAX		1,861	1,425
Taxation	8	-	-
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		1,861	1,425
Other comprehensive income:			
Actuarial loss in respect of pension scheme		(666)	(451)
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR		1,195	974



**NORTH WALES
HOUSING**



**TAI GOGLEDD
CYMRU**



01492 572727



customerservices@nwha.org.uk



North-Wales-Housing



@northwalesha



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Gold
Rydym yn buddsoddi mewn pobl Aur