

**Plus Dane Housing**

**Environmental,  
Social &  
Governance  
Reporting  
2023**

# Plus Dane Housing

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# Plus Dane Housing

## About us

We are a housing association with a strong social purpose. We employ almost 600 people and have more than 13,500 homes across Merseyside and Cheshire. We are an ambitious organisation striving to provide the best possible services to over 30,000 customers who live in our homes. We are passionate about our social purpose, and the positive impact that we can have on the communities our customers live in.












We have a strong track record as a specialist in affordable home ownership through HomesHub by Plus Dane, the home sales arm of our organisation.

Our ambition is to tackle social inequality by enabling individuals and communities to thrive and our three-year corporate plan outlines how we will deliver that ambition. In 2023 we will review our plan working with customers, colleagues, our Board and a range of key stakeholders to review and develop our future ambition and plans.

For Plus Dane, ESG reporting which describes an organisation's impact in terms of its environmental, social and governance activity, aligns directly with our core social purpose therefore this report, despite us not previously having ESG targets, shows within an organisation. ESG reporting will help us strengthen how we demonstrate the value we bring to key these key areas.

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## The story of 2022/23

Social		
 <p>10% of homes let to people that were homeless</p>	 <p>Supported 637 customers through our hardship fund</p>	 <p>Built 148 much needed affordable homes for rent and shared ownership</p>
 <p>Supported 75 customers with employment, training or development opportunities</p>	 <p>479 Plus Dane customers helped us to improve eight service areas</p>	 <p>88% of our homes are general needs or supported housing with long term agreements</p>
Environmental		
 <p>96% of our homes have an EPC rating</p>	<b>69.2</b> Average SAP rating of our homes, EPC rating C	 <p>£1.7m of net zero works supported by the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund</p>
Governance		
 <p>Plus Dane pays the real living wage</p>	 <p>5-10% of our scoring in the procurement of goods and services is based on delivery of social value</p>	 <p>Achieved the Liverpool City Region Fair Employment Charter</p>

The above demonstrates some of our key ESG performance in 2022/23. Some qualitative examples of performance are detailed below:

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## Cost of living group

In 2022 we launched a cost-of-living group with membership drawn from Board, Executive and colleagues to support both customers and colleague to mitigate the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. An action plan was approved by Board in December 2022, some of the key deliverables from this plan are:

- Continuing to tailor messages to most exposed customers
- Supported 637 customers through our £100k hardship fund
- Introduced two mental health contracts with 53 customers supported
- Launched Pocket Power which achieved savings of £28.8k for 105 customers since October 2022
- Funded over 15 partners to deliver further support in our communities and allowed community partners to access the grantfinder service
- Recommissioned two employability services in Merseyside and Cheshire
- Created a dedicated section of our website to cost of living themes which were also promoted on our social media platforms
- Introduced a new process to provide enhanced support to customers who choose to 'cap off' their gas supply to identify support requirements
- Mapped customers most exposed to cost of living challenges to our asset database so energy efficiency works can be targeted by property and customer type
- Installed loft insulation top ups and fitted low energy lightbulbs in empty properties to support incoming customers
- Put a flooring procedure in place in empty homes as we know this can be a challenge for new customers

The work of the group will continue throughout 2023/24 with one of its key focuses to be on heat metering.



The Bromley Farm HUB **Community plant day...**

Come & join the bloomers & watch us transform the community garden, & help us to decide a name.

**Saturday 17 June from 11am**  
at the **Hilary Venue garden** near The Bromley Farm Hub, 17 Parnell Square, CW12 3EQ

FREE plant swaps for residents & we welcome volunteers to plant up our community garden with flowers, fruit & vegetables.

Cakes & refreshments available!

For more info get in touch by email [bromleyfarmhub@gmail.com](mailto:bromleyfarmhub@gmail.com) or text/phone 07873 653 408

## Bromley Bloomers

The Bromley Bloomers are a small band of volunteers supported by the Congleton Partnership, local Councillors, Plus Dane Housing and Trees for Congleton. They are in the process of transforming a blank space into a community growing project. The land up until recently was used for social housing but the flats were considered not fit for purpose and were demolished.

The Bloomers, as they call themselves plan to use the space to grow fruit and veg that the local community can use to reduce food costs which they have seen rise significantly over the past year. The first event planned for June 2023 is a

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community plant swap day to encourage the community to come and see their plans, get involved and begin planting and sharing plants.

They have big ideas for the future, including helping those residents who are unable to maintain their own gardens and seeing if residents would be interested in handing over their gardens for more food growth.

Congleton has a long history of competing in the Cheshire in Bloom competition. This year the Bromley Bloomers will enter their new community growing project and hope to be recognized by the judges for their efforts to combat food poverty through maximizing the local environment.

## Norwood & Gordon retrofit



We were successful in the first wave of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) and targeted some of our most challenging blocks.

Norwood and Gordon Courts are three blocks containing 44 homes. Homes which were EPC D and E rated therefore a challenge from a customer perspective in terms of running costs.

£2m has been invested in the block with £0.6m support from SHDF.

The work included the following measures:

- External wall insulation
- New windows & doors
- Ground source heat pumps
- Works to meet compliance with PAS2035 such as ventilation upgrades
- New energy efficient communal lighting and fire signage
- Enhanced fire rated doors

At an average cost home of £35k, the homes now achieve EPC rating C. The heating system is expected over a 40-year period to reduce running costs by 50% compared to the previous storage heater. Some of the other benefits to the work are:

- Improve the living experience for customers
- Help to combat climate change
- Improve the energy efficiency of the homes whilst making them warmer
- Reduced fuel bills whilst allowing the new heating system to be fully programmed and controlled by each individual household

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## Future targets

Plus Dane Board has agreed the following key targets for the next five years.

Five-year view	E, S, G	Link to corporate plan
All new homes built to EPC average B	Environmental	Sustainable organisation
£1.75m investment in community activities	Social	Customer experience
500 customers supported with learning, development & training opportunities	Social	Customer experience
Reduce homelessness by allocating 10% of homes annually to homeless cases	Social	Customer experience
All colleagues paid at least the real living wage	Governance	Colleague experience
Continued compliance with LCR Fair Employment Charter at Aspiring level and moving to Accredited level	Governance	Colleague experience

## How do we assess our performance?

As we continue to deliver our approach to ESG, we also have a Net Zero project running alongside it. The purpose of the project is to develop a holistic approach to sustainability at Plus Dane which reduces our environmental impact as a business. In terms of other roles and responsibilities within Plus Dane:

**Executive Management Team** – review performance monthly and are responsible for ensuring that our external accreditation performance is maintained.

**Board** – approve the five-year ESG targets and monitor performance against the targets quarterly.

**External audit** – as part of the annual audit process, Plus Dane demonstrate evidence of performance against targets for their inclusion in the financial statements.

In addition to internal processes, external accreditation is used to support continuous improvement. Two examples are detailed below.

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## External accreditation

### **SHIFT**

An annual independent assessment and accreditation scheme is completed which helps Plus Dane demonstrate our delivery against challenging science based environmental targets.

### **Sustainability for Housing**

Sustainability for Housing has launched the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRS) – ESG standard designed to help the housing sector measure, report and enhance its ESG performance in a transparent, consistent and comparable way.

Plus Dane has adopted the standard after self-assessing and confirming compliance with almost all of the criteria with some areas for improvement identified and to be taken forward as part of our Net Zero project.

Sustainability for Housing report the six key benefits of adopting the SRS as:

- Join a growing community that is supporting the sector and its residents on the ESG journey
- Help to lead and shape the reporting of the sector's sustainability performance
- Enable lenders and investors to assess the ESG performance of housing providers, enabling access to finance
- Support work with residents and other stakeholders to create positive social and environmental outcomes
- Feature in the SRS Directory to enhance visibility and connectivity in ESG and social housing
- Gain access to our exclusive series of webinars and events