



Sustainability Report

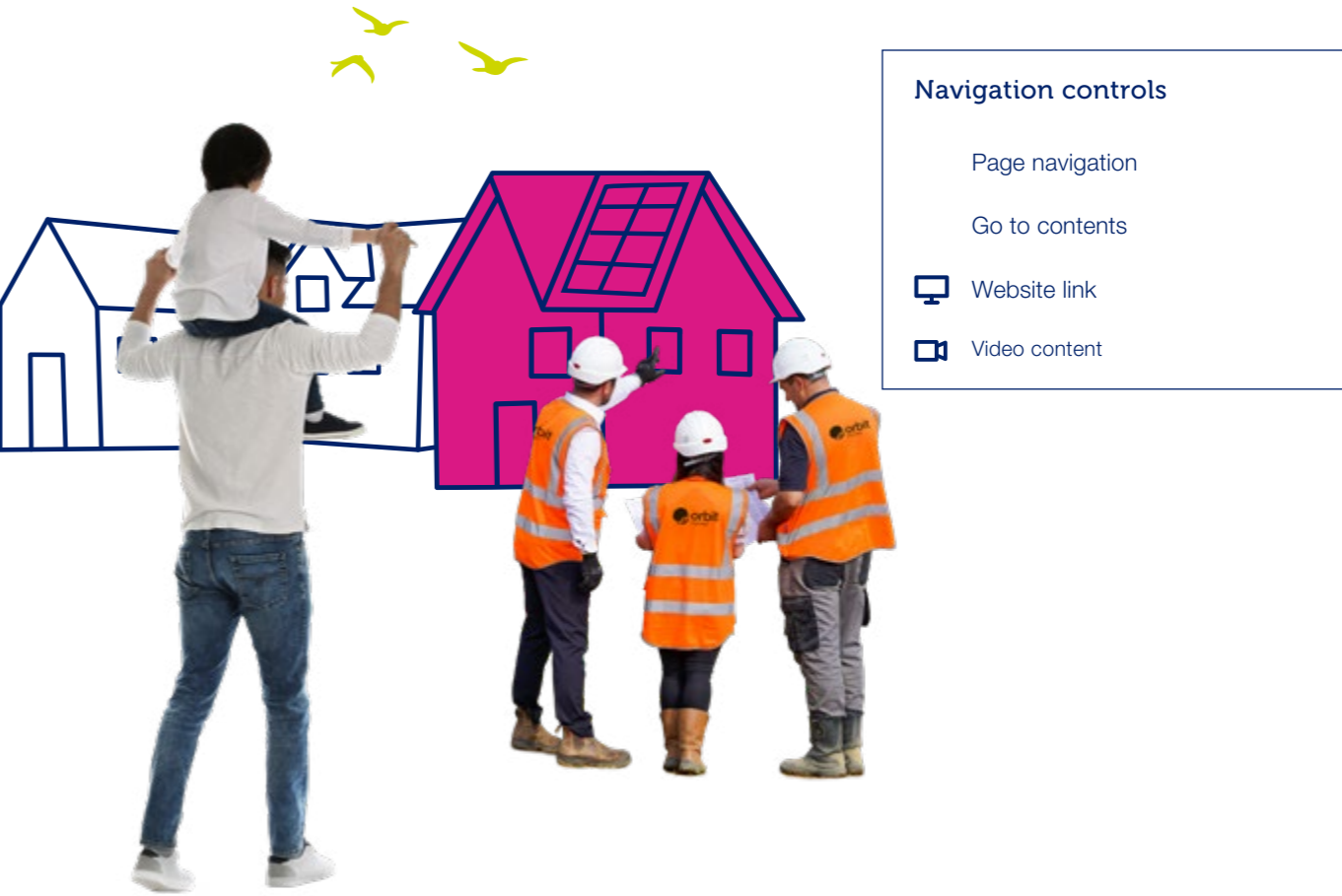
For the year ended 31 March 2025





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Key Highlights



£26.3m

Social value



781

New affordable homes



87.84%

Properties EPC C
or above



£1.1 million

Debt managed



1,093

Customers
engaged in Your
Voice activities



6,556

Customer
support
interventions



97.6%

Of customers
achieved a positive
outcome through our
Better Days service



36%

Reduction in carbon
footprint against
2018/19 baseline



18.7%

of outdoor
spaces supporting
nature's recovery



78%

colleague
engagement score



Introduction from our Chief Executive

As a socially driven and commercially minded organisation, I am proud that Orbit continues to be recognised as a leader in sustainability across the housing sector. Our commitment to sustainability alongside delivering meaningful social value, is deeply embedded in our purpose and is a passion shared by all colleagues throughout our organisation.

Over the past year, we have made further progress on the targets set out in our Sustainability Strategy, which underpins our wider 2030 Strategy. In particular, we exceeded our customer engagement, customer support intervention and social value targets. Whilst we are proud of what we have achieved, we know there is much more to do - particularly in continuing to support our customers with the cost-of-living and through the transition to net zero.

We have remained firmly focused on making a positive difference to our customers and doing what we can to help customers to maximise their potential and maintain their tenancies and wellbeing. We deliver social value by providing decent, safe and affordable homes to around 100,000 customers who would otherwise be at risk of living in lower quality private rented accommodation, but we don't stop there. We work to generate further social value through our frontline services and supply chain and are proud to have delivered a further £26.3 million in social value in 2024/25, all of which makes a demonstrable difference to thousands of our customers. Highlights this year include 99% of customers successfully maintaining their tenancy in their first year of renting following tenancy support and supporting 216 customers back into work, who are £702.52 on average, per month better off financially. We have also invested in three new community hubs and introduced a new team of Community Connectors.

Our environmental sustainability programme, Orbit Earth, continues to guide our work in taking climate action to become net zero carbon, enhancing outdoor spaces to improve biodiversity and natural resources, and adopting sustainable consumption practices. These aims are not only about protecting the planet, but creating better, healthier, and more resilient communities for today and tomorrow.

We've already made significant progress in these areas. We have continued to invest in the energy efficiency of our homes, with nearly 88% now EPC band C or above, and continued to play our part in tackling the UK's housing crisis, by delivering 781 new affordable homes. Key energy initiatives this year, such as securing Heat Network Efficiency Scheme funding and installing LED lighting, are helping us to decarbonise, improve energy efficiency, and reduce emissions in our own operations.

Although we saw a 5% increase in our scope 1 and 2 carbon footprint, primarily due to cold weather increasing gas consumption in our heat networks, our operational carbon footprint has reduced by 36% compared to our 2018/19 baseline, and we remain committed to becoming carbon neutral in our operations (Scope 1 and 2) by 2030. We are following a science-based approach to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% within the decade.

Aiding nature's recovery has also been a focus. Through our commitment to the 30by30 biodiversity target, we've created vibrant green spaces across our estates, planting thousands of native species, creating wildflower meadows, and installing Nature Arks that support biodiversity and resident wellbeing. Campaigns like 'No Mow May' have helped us rethink how we manage outdoor spaces to support pollinators and wildlife while enhancing the environment for our communities.

We also understand that sustainability must extend beyond carbon and nature. This year, we've taken important steps toward reducing waste and progressing our ambition to create a circular economy. Our Zero Waste Approach, launched in early 2025/26, will set out clear actions to improve how we manage materials and resources across our operations from construction to everyday services.

None of this is possible without the passion and engagement of our people. From mandatory e-learning and sector-first training on environmental sustainability, to peer recognition and bespoke workshops, we are continuing to equip our colleagues with the tools and knowledge they need to lead change from within. We have also continued to embed our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion framework, within which we support our colleagues to be themselves so that they in turn can ensure our customers feel valued and supported.

However, we cannot do all of this alone. We must continue to seek guidance and support from the Government in tackling climate change, decarbonising the grid and addressing the housing crisis. As climate change continues to impact lives around the world, the urgency of this work cannot be underestimated. At Orbit, we are committed to playing our part reducing our environmental impact, enhancing the places our customers call home, and building a sustainable, greener future for all.

Thank you to our customers, colleagues, and partners for your continued commitment and support on this journey.



Phil Andrew
Group Chief Executive



Our 2030 Strategy


In April 2024 we launched our 2030 Strategy, which outlines our ambitions including renewing our strategic approach, sharpening our operational focus, and continuing to play our part in tackling the UK’s housing crisis.


Our 2030 Strategy sets out how we plan to continue to provide safe, sustainable, and affordable homes that our customers are proud to live in, by delivering and regenerating new homes sustainably, investing in the safety, quality, and energy efficiency of our homes, and focusing on our customers’ priorities.

This includes working to:

- 

Become carbon neutral in our operations by 2030
- 

Become net zero carbon in our operations, homes and supply chain before 2050
- 

Attain an Energy Performance Rating of C or higher in all existing homes
- 

Achieve an ‘A’ Environmental Impact Rating for all direct build homes from April 2026

Our Vision

Socially driven and commercially minded, we strive to provide amongst the best customer experience of any housing association in the country by building and maintaining safe, quality homes that our customers love, both sustainably and at scale, supported by excellent customer service. All delivered by happy colleagues who jump out of bed each day to make a social difference.



[Click here to read our 2030 Strategy](#)



Our 2030 Strategy Overview



Everyday Excellence

To support us in realising our 2030 Vision to provide amongst the best customer experience of any housing association, we launched Everyday Excellence, a five-year transformation programme that turns the principles of what we want to achieve into actions.

Everyday Excellence defines our guiding principles for embedding operational excellence, skills and capabilities that will drive continuous improvement, so that our processes and service standards are always relevant and aligned to customer expectations. This continuous improvement ethos will sustain the high-quality delivery of excellent customer experience and establish our leading position by 2030.

Under Everyday Excellence, we will reshape how we work, putting in place the right structures, culture and capability, systems, processes, and technology, to ensure every area of the organisation has a laser-sharp focus on our customers’ priorities and enable us to be more consistent at being a great social landlord.

It includes a series of large scale projects that will transform and modernise our operating model and customer journeys, enabled by new and more powerful technology with clear operating structures and accountability taking decision making closer to customers, delivered by skilled and passionate colleagues.



Our Sustainability Strategy

Our updated Sustainability Strategy underpins our 2030 Strategy by ensuring that everything we do maximises our positive social and environmental impact. From achieving net zero carbon emissions and meeting our ambitious 30by30 biodiversity target, to improving energy affordability and providing energy efficient homes fit for the future, we are committed to building a sustainable and inclusive tomorrow.

Recognising that the sustainability landscape is constantly evolving, our strategy is designed to be agile and responsive, staying true to our role in securing a better future for all and supporting our customers through the transition to net zero. This second iteration of our strategy places customer satisfaction at its core, with initiatives such as 30by30 aimed at enhancing communal areas, an aspect many customers have highlighted for improvement.

We are working collaboratively with our customers at every step, whether retrofitting existing homes, designing efficient new builds, or helping them stay warm during the cost-of-living crisis. Central to our approach is the belief that sustainability must also deliver on our social purpose, putting customer warmth and wellbeing first. Additionally, we recognise that a passionate, well supported workforce is essential to delivering our goals.

By investing in a robust development framework for our colleagues, we aim to enhance both the customer experience and our positive impact on the planet.

[Click here to view our Sustainability Strategy](#)



2024/25 Performance

Our Strategy comprises four themes, each of which sets out our key objectives and is underpinned by a conscious approach to our supply chain:



Our Customers

- Work with our customers to shape our services and involve them in the decisions that affect their homes and communities
- Support our customers to maintain their tenancy and fulfil their potential
- Invest into our communities to deliver social value



Quality Homes and Places

- Provide high quality, affordable homes
- Invest in the decarbonisation of our homes
- Provide safe, healthy places to live
- Create sustainable living environments



Our Planet

- Environmental stewardship to drive positive change
- Climate action to become net zero carbon
- Enhancement of outdoor spaces to promote biodiversity
- Sustainable consumption to achieve a Zero Waste, circular model



Our People

- Create inspiring leaders and maximise our colleagues' career satisfaction
- Provide high quality, safe working environments
- Create a diverse and inclusive workplace
- Skill and capability development with the customer in mind

Our targets

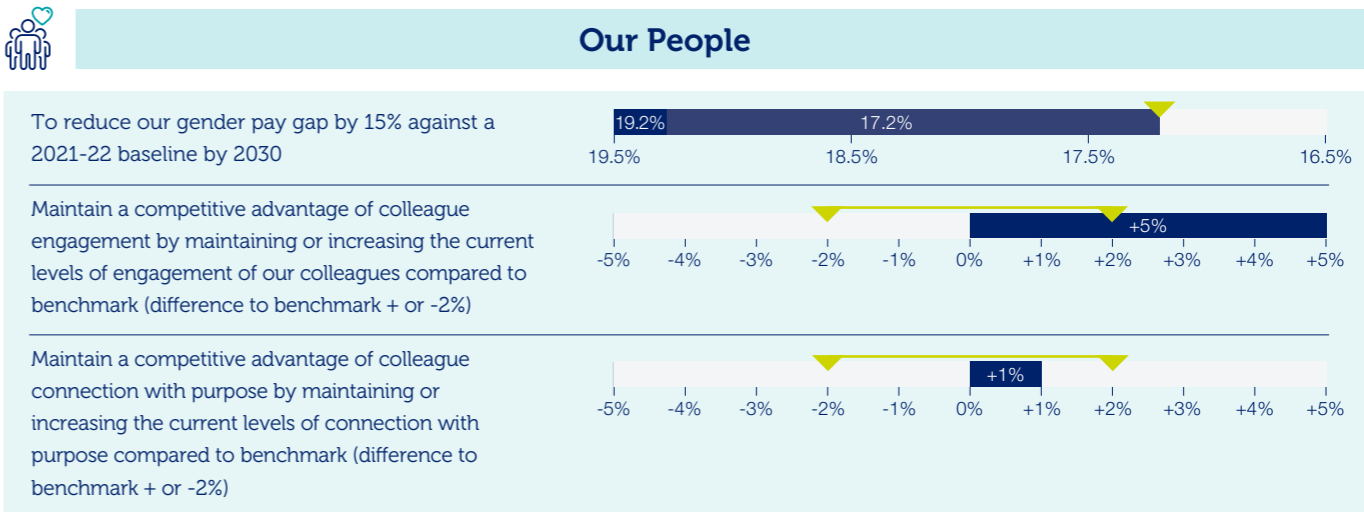
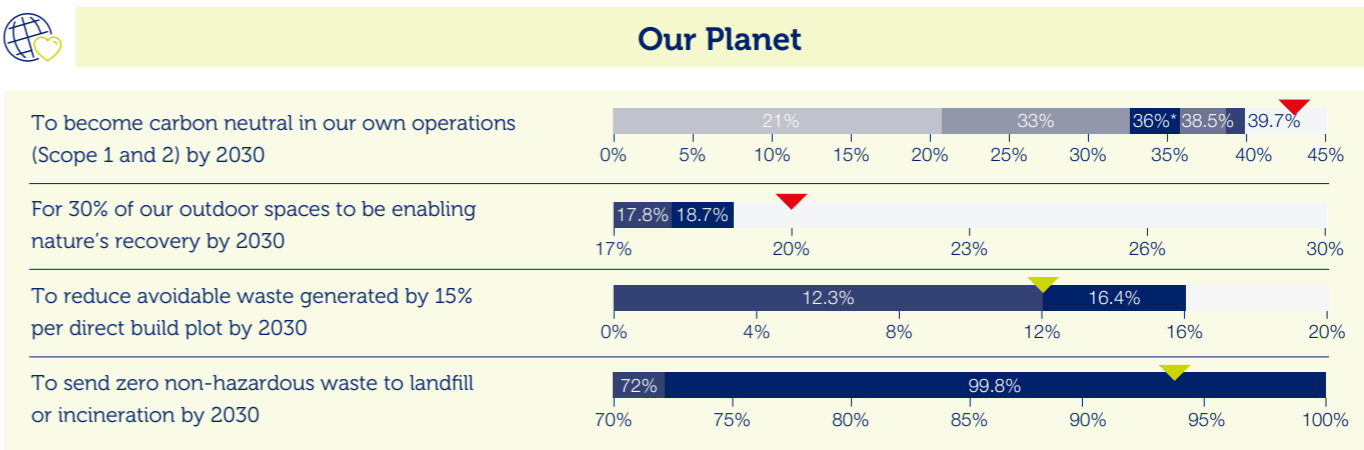
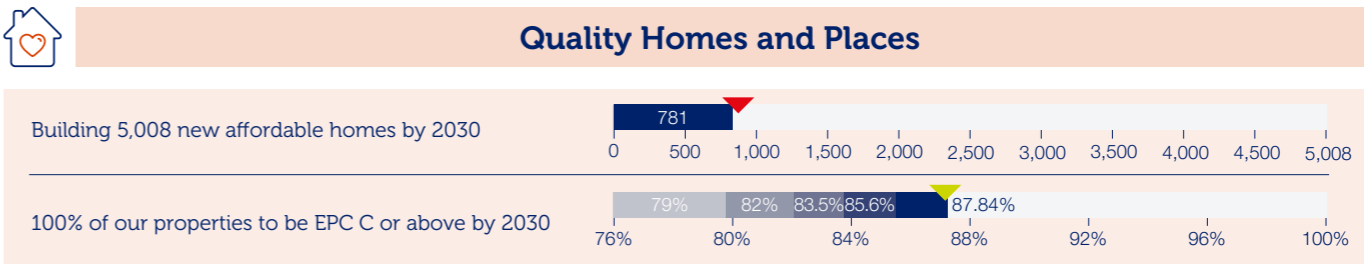
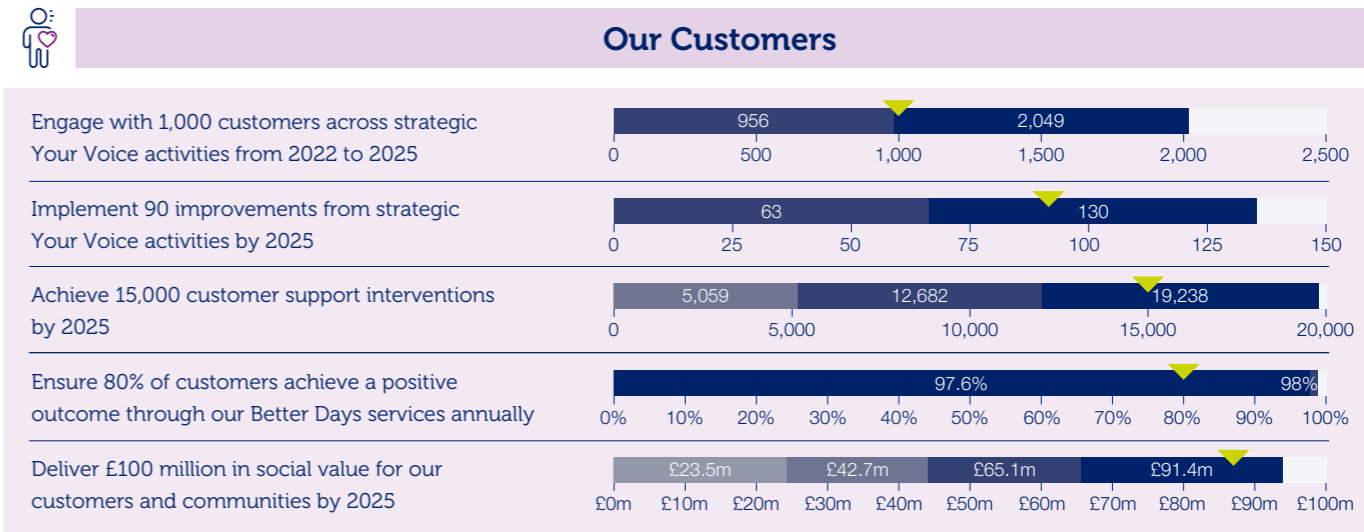
- Engage with 1,000 customers across strategic Your Voice activities from 2022 to 2025
- Achieve 15,000 customer support interventions through Better Days services by 2025
- Ensure 80% of customers achieve a positive outcome through our Better Days services annually
- Deliver £100 million in social value for our customers and communities by 2025

- Building 5,008 new affordable homes by 2030
- 100% of our properties to be EPC C or above by 2030

- To become carbon neutral in our own operations (Scope 1 and 2) by 2030
- For 30% of our outdoor spaces to be enabling nature's recovery by 2030
- To reduce avoidable waste generated by 15% per direct build plot by 2030
- To send zero non-hazardous waste to landfill or incineration by 2030

- To reduce our gender pay gap by 15% against a 2021-22 baseline by 2030
- Maintain the level of colleague engagement - +5%p compared to the engagement survey benchmark
- All of our colleagues have access to an individual development plan designed to raise their capability and ultimately their overall contribution to our purpose by 2030
- Maintain the level of connection with purpose - +5%p compared to the engagement survey

2024/25 performance tracking



* Orbit's scope 1 and 2 carbon footprint increased by 5% in 2024-25 relative to the past year. An explanation is provided on page 15.

2024/25 Summary

In 2024/25 we were pleased to exceed our 2025 customer targets but we recognise that there are areas which require continued focus to achieve our longer-term aims.

Our delivery of affordable homes was slightly behind target at 781 versus 826, as a result of planning delays and one of our contractors, Ilke Homes, going into administration.

Two of our environmental targets were also slightly behind target. Firstly, we saw a 5% increase in our scope 1 and 2 carbon footprint, which was caused primarily by increased gas consumption in our heat networks. This winter was an estimated 8% cooler than last winter using degrees days analysis and we have experienced faults with our building management systems. To combat this for the future, we have already upgraded a significant number of our building management systems, appointed a new commercial heat contractor with a 25% optimisation target over the contract term and bid for and won several more funding opportunities with the Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES).

Secondly, the proportion of our green spaces meeting the 30by30 standard also came in slightly behind target at 18.7%, against a target of 20.3%. Whilst we have delivered our 2024/25 planned improvements, unfortunately our surveys of existing estates identified a number that were at a lower standard than previously assumed, thereby reducing the starting point for the year. We are fully aware that this may arise again, and that improvements delivered will change over time. Therefore, in 2025/26 we are planning to scale up our improvements with the support of a larger network of colleague volunteers, contractors and supporting organisations.

Finally, our median gender pay gap increased slightly during this period. This figure is reflective of the greater proportion of women within our lower middle and lower quartiles and is influenced by our operating model, whereby our external partner organisations deliver a host of key maintenance services. We are committed to building on our effective positive practices already in place and working to embed new initiatives that will support us in closing our pay gap further.



Supporting our customers day to day

Making a positive difference to our customers and doing what we can to help customers to maximise their potential, and maintain their tenancies and wellbeing, sits at the core of our social purpose.

Which is why, this year, we launched our new Community Investment team. The team brings together our Better Days programme, place-making and Tenancy Sustainment offering, to enable us to better leverage our resources, teams, and assets, to provide more localised support and services that enable customers to feel safe and valued.

Through this team, we:

- Introduced new Community Connectors to work alongside our regional teams to provide face-to-face wellbeing support to customers, and connect them to support services through our Better Days programme, including assistance with finances, health, employability, and more
- Invested in three new community hubs to offer customers the face-to-face support they need to lead happy, healthy and fulfilled lives, and access free support on managing finances, health and wellbeing, employability and skills as part of our Better Days programme. The hubs also provide spaces for community run events and for other local providers to offer support services
- Installed defibrillators at our community hubs in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Northamptonshire to provide lifesaving support in cases of cardiac arrest. The defibrillators are placed outside the hubs, accessible to the public, and registered with The Circuit, the UK's national defibrillator network
- Continued to offer tailored coaching sessions on employment and money management to help customers sustain their tenancies, including introducing new digital skills sessions, helping some of our most digitally vulnerable customers gain essential skills for the future.

This has enabled us to make a demonstrable difference to the lives of thousands of customers this year.

The year in numbers:

- 6,367 customer support interventions
- 158 Better Days events, 461 drop-in sessions, 252 estate engagement visits and 150 ad-hoc support activities delivered face-to-face by our Place Team
- £4.4 million cash back to our customers to tackle affordability via our Welfare Benefits and Debt Advice Services, and Grants Provision
- 1,041 customers supported by our Mental Wellbeing Support Services
- £1.1 million debt managed including £443,000 debt written off and £215,000 debt repayment rescheduled
- £41,000 estimated savings from our Energy Advice Service bill reduction and behavioural changes
- 216 Customers supported into work, with 76% of customers moving to work sustaining employment at 13 weeks and 67% at 26 weeks
- £26.3m Social value** (via HACT & SWEMWEBs methodology).



“ I feel like a weight has been lifted just by speaking to you and knowing that the support is there if I need it again. ”

“ You don't realise how much your help means to me; my landlord has given me more help than anyone else. This phone call alone has been of more help than all the people I've spoken to in weeks. ”

“ I recently had the opportunity to participate in a coaching session. I'm extremely impressed with the experience. From the outset, the sessions were well-structured, engaging, and tailored to address my specific needs and goals to give me the confidence to work and study. ”

Orbit customers



Helping to tackle anti-social behaviour

In response to customer feedback about a lack of positive activities for young people and concerns over anti-social behaviour, we commissioned Guiding Young Minds (GYM) - a Rugby based organisation specialising in mentoring young people - to deliver a project to help young people develop a positive mindset in a safe space.

The first session was delivered by GYM from their mobile hub on the estate to build trust with Orbit customers and engage parents, and to provide Better Days support. Since then, the project has been a huge success with more than 700 young people from the wider area attending and breaking down barriers between Orbit customers and the wider community. Kids now attend sessions in the community centre, where they can access toilets and a warm place while having fun.

We hosted a fun-filled afternoon for families in Bexley, featuring free activities including a bouncy castle, face painting, bug hotel-making, and games. The event, supported by local partners, aimed to bring the community together. Families also learned about our Better Days programme and met local dignitaries, including the Mayor of Bexley, Daniel Francis MP and Bexley councillors.



Supporting customers through the cost-of-living crisis

We know from our annual Your Voice survey that almost half of customers worry about meeting everyday costs.

We've continued to improve and expand the support we offer through our Better Days programme to help customers manage day-to-day challenges as well as make long term improvements to their wellbeing. These have included:

- **Launching a new service with Citizens Advice Mid Mercia (Camm) to provide customers with free money management and general energy advice including debt, budgeting, and claiming relevant grants and benefits, as well as switching providers and applying for the Warm Home Discount. The service helps to empower customers to manage their finances and make informed decisions, helping them navigate immediate challenges and plan for the future**
- **Running our 'Winter Wellbeing' campaign for a third year, offering extra support to customers during the cold winter months. In partnership with Ethstat Ethical, we offered 1,000 support packs containing items such as blankets, hooded jumpers, and lanterns**
- **Entering a new partnership with Family Fund Business Services to offer support to those facing financial hardship with essential items including food, energy bills, clothing, school uniforms, and white goods. It also assists with barriers to employment, such as digital inclusion and travel costs. An award-winning social enterprise, Family Fund Business Services donates 100% of its profits to its parent charity, which supports families raising disabled or seriously ill children.**
- **Helping to tackle period poverty by offering customers access to free period products via their local Orbit community hub as part of a new partnership with social enterprise Hey Girls**
- **Introducing new personal care packs for customers who can't afford essential toiletries such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, shower gel and shampoo**
- **More than 1,000 books were donated by Orbit colleagues and customers, wrapped in festive paper and handed out to customers at community hubs and events to provide some Christmas cheer and help promote reading and literacy for people of all ages.**

Ageing Well


Along with local partnering agencies, we undertook a six month pilot in a number of schemes across the country to research how we can better support people to lead healthy and fulfilling lives as they age. We held face-to-face wellbeing sessions with residents to discuss issues such as welfare benefits and managing energy costs, NHS health checks and falls prevention guidance. The events were open to older residents who lived outside of the schemes to make the events accessible to a larger audience and increase the opportunity for greater social interaction.

348 customers attended an ageing well activity. We are reviewing the outcomes of the pilot alongside the recently published evidence from the Older Persons Housing Taskforce project to support future decision making in terms of our overall wellbeing offer for our older customers, not just within the schemes but in the local communities too.

Our Customer Commitments

You feel safe and secure

We provide you with a home you're proud to live in



You feel informed and trust us to do the right thing

We are honest, transparent and easy to deal with



You feel understood and supported

We listen and act



You feel valued and are treated with respect

We put things right when they go wrong



In partnership with our customers

Collaborating with customers to shape our services and policies is central to everything we do. We are passionate about championing and working in partnership with our customers to ensure their voices are heard, and more importantly, that we drive meaningful changes based on their feedback.

Last year, we launched our Customer Commitments, which outline what customers value from us and what we must deliver in return. Developed with our customers, these form the cornerstone of our customer-centric culture we want to deliver today and in the future. Over the past 12 months, we've been working to embed these commitments in all we say and do.

We were pleased to secure funding via social value contributions from our partners for a new Orbit energy advice service that will commence from April 2025. This will help to inform our approach to making our homes and estates more sustainable for the future and is helping to relieve some of the more immediate effects of the current energy crisis for our customers.

It's important that customers have a safe space to voice their opinions, thoughts, and concerns, and that we listen and act on these together.

All of our customer voice work is overseen by our Customer Engagement Strategic Committee (CESC), which was created with Engaged Customers to help develop the strategy and delivery of our Your Voice customer engagement programme. Acting as an invaluable critical friend, the Committee meets quarterly to review progress and ensure the customer voice is heard, represented and delivers meaningful change.

Some of the key areas they have been involved in this year include:

- Recruitment interviews and assessments
- Pride and Better Days events
- Ensuring increased transparency on our Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- Attendance at our leadership away days and board meetings.

Our wider Customer Voice activities play a large part in supporting this, offering safe and supportive platforms for us to collaborate with a range of customers.

Key stats:

- Net Promoter Score: 77
- No of Service improvements: 66
- No of customer voice activities: 135
- No of customers we engage with: 686

We are pleased to have exceeded our 2025 customer sustainability targets:

- Engaged with 2,049 customers across strategic Your Voice activities by 2025 (Target: 1,000)
- Implemented 130 improvements from strategic Your Voice activities by 2025 (Target: 90)
- Achieved 19,238 customer support interventions by 2025 (Target: 15,000)
- 97.6% of customers achieved a positive outcome through our Better Days service in 24025 (Target: 80%).

Since these were set in 2022, we have launched a new 2030 Strategy setting out our ambition to provide amongst the best customer experience of any housing association in the country by the end of the decade. With the completion of these targets, the Sustainability Strategy has now been updated to reflect this ambition. Our new customer targets will be measured using the sector's Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and aim to be in the top 10% by 2030 for:

- Overall customer satisfaction
- Keeping customers informed about things that matter to them
- Customers agreeing that Orbit treats them fairly and with respect
- Customers feeling their homes are safe.

Additionally, for our new build customers, we are aiming to receive an upper quartile Net Promoter Score.



Putting customers at the heart of strategic decision making

This year, we appointed two customers, Maxwell Doku and Sayo Ogundayo, as non-executive directors to our Common Board. The appointments followed an extensive recruitment outreach programme, to ensure we truly put the customer at the heart of our strategic decision making. We are confident that their passion for the housing sector and professional expertise, along with their lived experience as an Orbit customer, will enhance our capability to improve our customer experience and support the delivery of our 2030 Strategy and Sustainability ambitions.

Supporting our customers in the transition to Net Zero

We continue to invest in the energy efficiency of our homes and have committed that 100% of our existing homes will be EPC band C or above by 2030. We have made further progress towards this target with over 87% of our homes now rated EPC C or above.

This year, our Wave 2.1 project targeted energy efficiency improvements to 212 EPC D and below properties. A strong track record of delivery resulted in the award of an additional £580,000 of funding from the consortia lead, West Midlands Combined Authority, and enabled the delivery of improvements to a further 135 properties under the project. As of the end of March 2025, 203 of the 347 properties have been completed and the project is on target to complete within the project deadline of September 2025. We were also pleased to secure approximately £5 million of grant funding as part of the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund Wave 3. Via this programme we will be partnering with the Department for Energy and Net Zero (DESNZ), Midlands Net Zero Hub and the London Borough of Camden (London Councils) to improve the energy efficiency of around 600 homes across the Midlands and Bexley regions respectively. We will also be match-funding the programme with an additional £5 million investment.


Continuing our decarbonisation progress, over the past 12 months we have:

- Completed 258 retrofit assessments to ensure the right energy efficiency measures are installed
- Commissioned 179 solar photovoltaic systems
- Installed 66 air source heat pumps
- Installed 120 new roofs
- Fitted new windows at 145 homes
- Fitted decentralised mechanical extract ventilation extractor fans in 198 homes.



“ Thank you to you and your team for the work carried out on our home. Great communication from the start regarding what was being done and why, and the difference it should make to our energy usage. Shocked at the results; on average last winter the old system was costing between £50 to £60 per week for heating and other electrical usage. Having monitored the new system for one month on the same smart meter it is showing a cost of between £30 to £35 pounds per week. That’s a great saving per year on utility bills. The other thing I’ve noticed is the house is never cold as this system keeps the house at a very comfortable temperature throughout the day and night. ”

Orbit customer

 [Watch our retrofit film here](#)

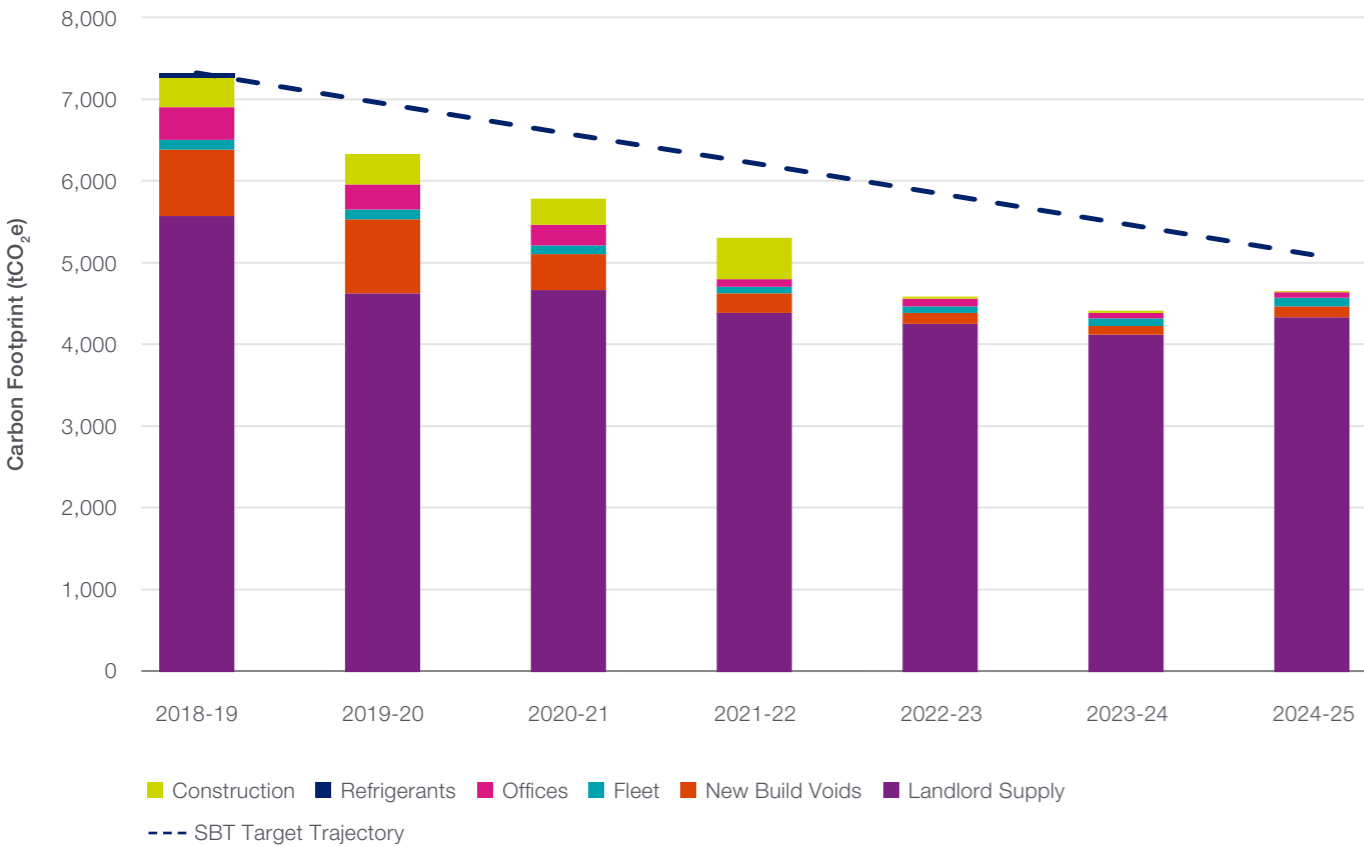
Our carbon footprint

We are committed to becoming carbon neutral in our own operations by 2030 and are following a science-based approach to reduce our direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by the end of the decade. Whilst we reported a reduction of 40% to March 2024, unfortunately in the past year we have seen a 5% increase in our scope 1 and 2 carbon footprint. This means our overall reduction since 2018-19 is still ahead of target, but has fallen slightly to 36%.

Whilst most of this increase can be attributed to a cooler winter, it is also a reflection of the challenges we have faced with aging heat network infrastructure and building management systems we use to control them. We have already taken significant steps to address this and get back onto a strong decarbonisation trajectory, aiming to halve scope 1 and 2 emissions by March 2031.

This has included upgrading the building management systems, bidding for and securing several grants from the Heat Network Efficiency Scheme, and appointing a new commercial heat contractor to achieve 25% energy savings over the contract term. A new Heat Network Working Group will oversee this ambitious programme to 2030 and beyond.

Net Zero Carbon journey 2018-2025



Improving energy efficiency

In 2024/25, our total carbon footprint was 4,638 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e), which captures our total scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions from our offices, fleet, landlord supply and new build voids, as well as our construction activities.

We are aware that work to tackle our remaining emissions is challenging, but we're committed to addressing them to both reduce our carbon impact and help save our customers money.

Key initiatives we have taken to support this over the past 12 months include:

- A competitive tender to determine our new energy broker for the next three years, to support us in procuring gas and electricity for our communal spaces at the best possible value
- Securing £60k of Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES) funding for optimisation studies at three of our Independent Living schemes, which have identified significant opportunities to partially decarbonise and save energy for customers on heat networks
- The use of 171,560 litres of HVO fuel by Orbit Homes to power plant and machinery in place of white diesel has avoided 424.99 tonnes of CO₂ emissions
- Undertaking a fleet tender, which will see more efficient vans entering our fleet and as well as the opportunity to undertake further pilots of hybrid and electric vehicles
- Relocating our Binley Court colleagues to our Garden Court office, enabling us to consolidate our office floorspace further, helping to reduce energy use and waste, as well as create a more engaging working environment for colleagues
- Preparing to launch our new energy advice service, which will provide one-to-one advice to customers, conduct energy audits and identify further opportunities to support energy efficiency.

We completed lighting upgrades at seven of our Independent Living schemes, replacing fluorescent lighting with more efficient LED lighting. Sensors were also introduced as part of the upgrade to help reduce energy usage when the communal spaces are unoccupied. To ensure lighting levels are adequate and compliant with regulation, we also used a specialised design, which has allowed for a reduction in the number of light fittings, saving further energy. We estimate that these upgrades will save approximately £30,000 per year in energy savings.



Improving the quality of our customers' homes and outdoor spaces

30by30

We are committed to ensuring that 30% of our outdoor green spaces support nature's recovery by 2030, in line with the Wildlife Trusts' '30by30' campaign as well as the UN Convention's goals on Biological Diversity. Our programme is designed with customers throughout, ensuring that our green spaces are not only attractive for nature, but provide spaces for customers to enjoy, explore and play in.

We have been strategically planning how and where to enhance habitats across our estates to maximise benefits for nature in our communities. Over the past year we have planted five UK native trees, 5,725 UK native hedge plants, 8,735m² wildflower meadow areas, 500 wildflower plugs, 7,500 bulbs and have involved 110 colleagues, customers and suppliers in improving estates for nature through volunteering opportunities.

These projects not only help us to create more sustainable and biodiverse environments for our customers, but they also enable us to provide better and more local access to nature for our customers, which in turn can help to improve wellbeing.

Councillor Jennifer Fradgley, former Chair of Stratford-on-Avon District Council, commented:

“ I was delighted to learn more about how Orbit is working to create more biodiverse and high-quality outdoor spaces. Access to local nature has such a positive impact on wellbeing, so it was wonderful to spend time with residents at Wattons Lodge and support in creating such a biodiverse area. ”

We are proud of the progress we have made in this area; managing 18.7% of a 1.5 million square metre estate to the '30by30' is already a huge achievement and we were pleased to deliver the planned improvements for the year. However, we recognise that we fell short of our target this year. Unfortunately, we have found that a proportion of our estates are not of the quality previously thought, increasing the work required to meet 30by30. We are completely up to this challenge and are focused on ways in which we can close the gap, such as increasing our volunteering efforts and utilising social value delivery with our partners more effectively.



No Mow May

We are committed to trialling new initiatives, and this year, supported Plantlife's No Mow May campaign by leaving 48,000m² of grass uncut across over 40 of our estates in Bexley and Erith to benefit wildlife, cut green waste and improve the quality of outdoor spaces for customers. Carefully selected areas of grass were left uncut to promote and protect pollinating wildflowers which provide a valuable food source for insects.

During the month we closely monitored the estates to build a picture of where wildflowers exist, identifying how relaxing or continuing mowing in the future can impact and improve the biodiversity of individual spaces.

We also utilised this time to focus on improving other recreational spaces, including additional maintenance of paved areas and walkways, verge sweeping, weeding and continuing to maintain grass margins.

We have gathered feedback from customers and will be using learnings to inform our approach. We recognise that only with clear engagement with customers throughout, will initiatives like this and 30by30 more widely, be a success.

The Green Partnership Accreditation

We worked with The Green Partnership to assess our progress against key biodiversity objectives.

The assessment included a thorough review of our processes and data management, site surveys, as well as interviews with key stakeholders. At the time, the verification process found we were already managing 18.5% of our green spaces for nature against a target of 30% by 2030.

The audit is an important step in maturing our approach and we have already started implementing their recommendations including the need to perform more post-enhancement visits to check on the performance of estates over time, and a need to further our engagement and controls with grounds maintenance contractors to ensure correct management of improved estates.

“Orbit’s work is a trailblazer in the social housing sector. By tying biodiversity targets to financial outcomes and undergoing independent verification, Orbit is setting a new standard for how housing providers can integrate nature into their operations. Their culture of continuous improvement, coupled with transparent monitoring and stakeholder engagement, offers a forward-thinking model that can be adapted and adopted by others in the sector.”

Sam Jones, Founding Director
of The Green Partnership

Eco Buddies

This year we launched Eco Buddies, our new educational programme to complement our existing Building Buddies initiative, which offers primary school children the opportunity to learn how they can support wildlife and the environment.

Through the programme we partner with schools close to our developments to carry out activities that support greater biodiversity within school grounds, whilst also demonstrating how students can make a positive impact in and around their own homes.

Our colleagues collaborate with the schools and volunteer their time to deliver a choice of sessions including building eco-friendly features such as bug hotels, bird boxes or hedgehog homes around school grounds to support greater biodiversity.

We also developed a series of supporting worksheets and activities in line with the national curriculum which can be used both at home and in school, including the chance for children to try their hand at a news report on ‘mini beasts’ and much more.

27 children participated in
Eco Buddies this year.



Homes for Nature

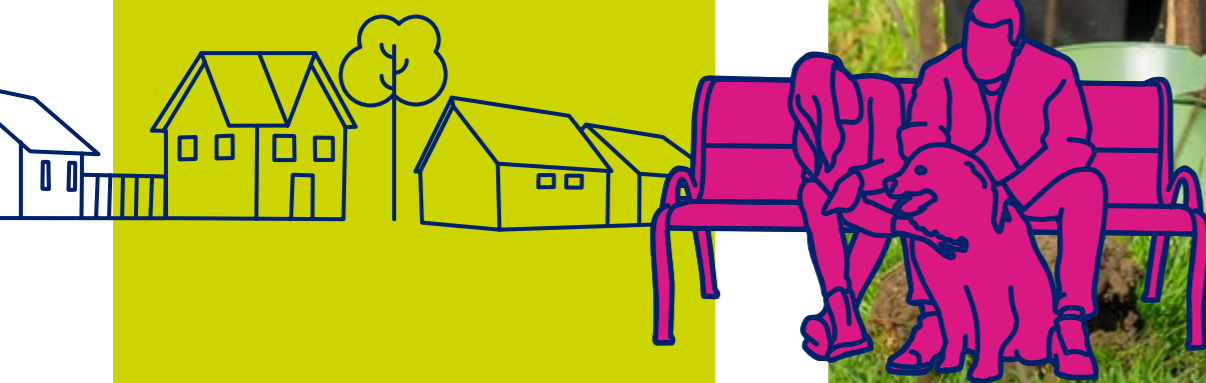
We support Homes for Nature, a major new initiative developed by the Future Homes Hub to encourage more wildlife on new developments.

As part of this commitment, we have pledged to install a bird-nesting brick or box for every new home built, and hedgehog highways as standard on every new development taken through planning from September 2024.

Donation to Warwickshire Wildlife Trust

We made a donation to local independent conservation charity Warwickshire Wildlife Trust to help in their mission to bring people closer to nature and create a land rich in wildlife.

We pledged the donation as part of our colleague campaign to gather data about how they travel to work in order to inform our work to achieve Net Zero Carbon in our operations before 2050.



Zero Waste

Reducing avoidable waste across our homes, services and offices can create a positive cycle of financial and environmental benefits, not only lowering costs and boosting the efficiency of our operations but also minimising our impact on the environment.

Through our Zero Waste Working Groups, we've already implemented a range of waste management initiatives across Orbit Homes, IT, facilities, estate and ground maintenance and are making some great progress on our waste targets including:

- 99.8% of Orbit Group waste diverted from landfill or incineration
- 75% reduction in green waste from our direct grounds maintenance provider
- 26% reduction in office waste
- 16.4% reduction of avoidable waste per directly new built plot within Orbit Homes.

This year, we published our Zero Waste Approach, which sets out our main areas of focus for managing resources, materials and products sustainably to ensure we meet our 2030 targets. These areas of focus include:

- Identifying our top 10 waste streams from construction waste
- Working with customers to raise awareness to support our zero waste ambitions
- Colleague training and education
- Sustainable procurement and supply chain engagement
- Complying with 2025 waste segregation regulations set by the UK Government.

We will review our Zero Waste Approach regularly to ensure these initiatives are completed and remain relevant.

 [Read our Zero Waste Approach document here](#)

Health and Safety

Building Safety

We remain at the forefront of efforts to implement the ‘Golden Thread’ of information required under the Building Safety Act for higher-risk buildings. This Golden Thread is a comprehensive, up-to-date digital record of a building’s design, maintenance, and safety-critical features - key to safeguarding residents and ensuring the long-term sustainability of our housing stock.

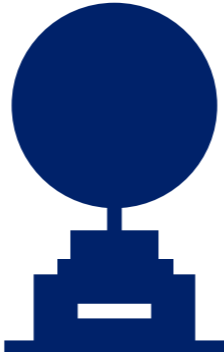
By integrating advanced Building Information Modelling (BIM) with the UK Housing Data Standard (UKHDS), we have developed a unified data framework that supports the accurate and standardised management of building information. This enables better decision-making, improves operational efficiency, and strengthens our ability to maintain safe, resilient homes.

For residents, this translates into safer, better-managed homes. In the event of any issues, our teams can act more quickly and effectively, reducing delays and ensuring any necessary remedial work is carried out without unnecessary disruption.

Building on this foundation, we have also introduced a new building works protocol and workflow tool. This provides clear, structured guidance for colleagues and partner contractors involved in building-related activity, ensuring full compliance with recent legislative changes and further embedding safety and accountability in our processes.

Key Highlights:

- 80.4% of our rented customers and 76.3% of shared ownership customers report feeling safe in their homes (Tenant Satisfaction Measures)
- Won Building Safety Initiative of the Year at the ASCP Awards
- Recognised by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) for best practice in both health and safety and customer safety for the seventh consecutive year.



Orbit’s Health and Safety Excellence Awards 2024

We have a legal duty to provide a safe working environment for our colleagues and anyone lawfully on our premises. One of the ways we aim to increase our colleagues’ health, safety and welfare awareness and understanding is via our annual Health and Safety Excellence Awards, which returned for their fourth year.

Colleagues were nominated across six categories with the winners demonstrating ongoing and focused commitment to keeping people and workplaces safe.



Press for Action

Press for Action was launched with the aim of getting better sight of health and safety concerns within our homes and communities. If colleagues spot an issue in one of our homes that needs investigation, repair or change, they can click ‘Press for Action’ on our Health and Safety app or via our intranet, the O-zone, to report it.

There have been 156 reports made in 2024/25, with 149 investigations concluded.



Building an inclusive business

Being fair and equitable to all, irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, caring responsibilities, religion/belief or sexual orientation sits at the core of our purpose. We work hard to create an environment where we are representative of the customers we serve and where colleagues can be themselves and remain resolute in this commitment. We will not be influenced by the changing direction of travel that has been occurring in some other areas of the world.

We aim to create inclusive, age-friendly communities where people feel safe and at home. Customer services and support will ensure everyone feels valued and heard, and this extends to our employment experience, so we provide great places to live as well as a great place to work.

Embracing a diverse and inclusive workplace, where colleagues feel motivated in their work, feel valued, respected and are united in achieving our purpose and mission, not only enables us to unlock our colleagues' full potential but allows us to deliver accessible services and equitable outcomes for the diverse communities we serve.



Supporting Colleagues

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) framework supports our customer-centric culture and is the foundation of our approach, designed to enable us to access the talent across our organisation, so we can deliver great outcomes for our customers. To support this, we have introduced a programme of initiatives for our colleagues to ensure everyone feels valued and heard, including:

- **Introducing colleague-led listening sessions and diversity networks focusing on Neurodiversity, LGBTQ+, Women in Business and Racial & Inclusion**
- **Celebrating the positive value our colleagues bring during International Women's Day and International Men's Day**
- **Updating our mandatory Diversity and Inclusion e-learning**
- **Healthy Mind First Aider team**
- **Supporting the Disability Passport scheme**
- **Offering courses designed from a range of different perspectives and experiences to address differing needs and ensure we all have access to learning opportunities that help build personal skills, confidence and impact.**

Mates in Mind

We hosted our annual 'buddy and brew' events for construction colleagues to raise awareness of men's mental health. The events offered interactive wellbeing sessions, as well as the chance for colleagues to talk openly about their mental health and share their neurodiverse experiences. Attendees were also shown how to access emergency mental health services should they, or colleagues ever need support, and given tips to manage their day-to-day wellbeing in the workplace.

LGBTQ+

We were proud to be awarded the LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge Pioneer status in recognition of our dedication to creating safe and welcoming environments for our LGBTQ+ customers. Awarded by HouseProud and delivered by Stonewall Housing, the LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge scheme provides a comprehensive framework for social landlords to demonstrate their dedication to eliminating discrimination and supporting LGBTQ+ individuals in their communities. The award was presented in recognition of how we listen to LGBTQ+ customers at an executive and strategic level, work to increase LGBTQ+ visibility, and invest in employee training.

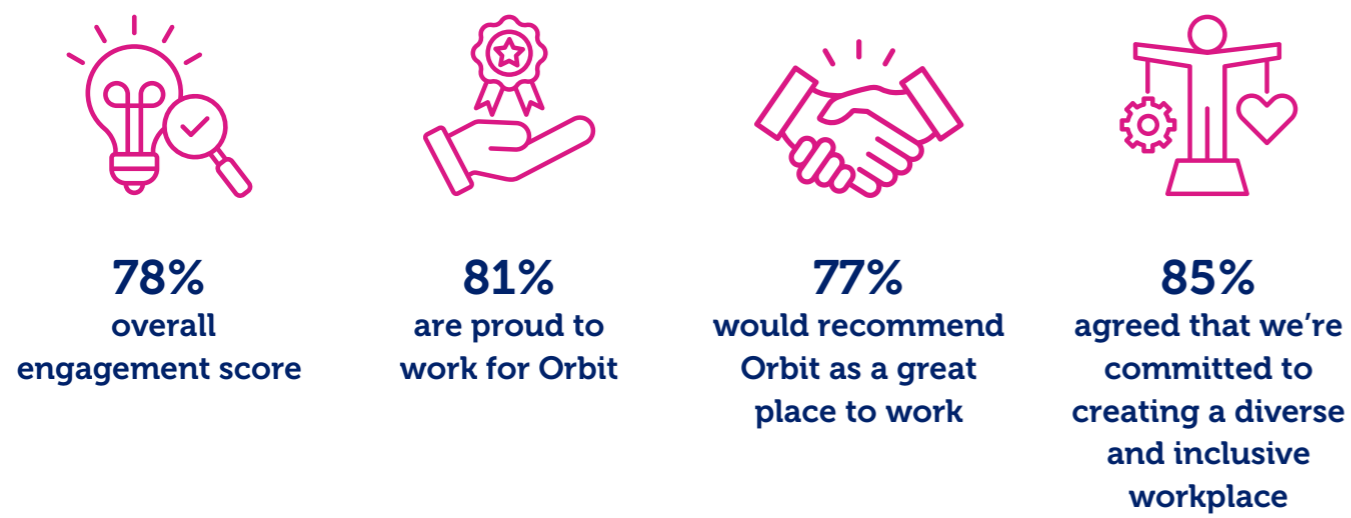


Colleague Engagement

Our people are central to delivering the services and support our customers expect from us. We cannot deliver one without the other, which is why it's important that we ensure everyone feels valued, supported and empowered.

A culture where colleagues have the chance to tell us what they think, how they feel and what they want us to improve upon is central to this. One of the ways in which we garner this understanding is through our in-depth colleague engagement survey, and we are proud to have an engaged workforce who are supportive of sharing their invaluable insights and experience to help us to continue to build a great place to work, together.

This year, 84% completed our annual survey which showed that:



We also have a team of Colleague Ambassadors who act as a critical friend in helping to ensure we continue to drive positive change and further improve our colleague experience.



Professional Development

Over the past 12 months, we have taken the first steps on our longer-term plan to invest in our people and culture, to ensure we have the right skills, tools, and commitment to deliver on our purpose. These steps will see us investing in and rewarding capability, to ensure our colleagues feel confident and able to do the right thing, with the skills they need to excel in a job they love. In doing this, our colleagues will be enabled and empowered to make a difference and will have the knowledge they need, together with a collective culture of responsibility and accountability to deliver a seamless experience for our customers.

In 2024, we also launched our new Leadership Development Framework, aligned with industry standards, the new Chartered Institute of Housing standards and our new Colleague Commitments. We also began to roll out our Professional Development Framework to help colleagues in our Customer Care team understand the requirements of their role and ensure they have clear pathways to attain and sustain higher levels of capability that, in turn, enable them to be more effective in their role and the support we provide for our customers.

We continued to support this with group-wide training for all colleagues, providing them with the opportunity to improve and develop their careers. During the 12-month period to April 2025:

- 15,000 hours of face-to-face development was delivered to colleagues
- Colleagues completed over 7,000 hours of online/ e-learning courses
- Support was offered to over 100 colleagues for professional qualifications
- Paid professional subscription fees for over 100 colleagues.

 [Read our full Gender Pay Gap Report](#)

We recently launched our racial, diversity and inclusion programme in partnership with The Network of Networks. Our Mid-Career Talent Accelerator course is designed to support talented racial minority professionals in building skills and accelerating careers, whilst our forthcoming Early Career Accelerator focuses on the experience of being a racial minority professional, with an emphasis on career planning, relationship building, communication skills and influencing strategies to help career growth.

Gender Pay Gap

We were pleased to see further positive closure across our pay quartiles, and in our overall mean gender pay gap in 2024. However, we still have more to do, particularly in closing our median gender pay gap, which has continued to sit around the same level. This figure is reflective of the greater proportion of women within our lower middle and lower quartiles, where roles typically include our customer service and support teams, and influenced by our operating model, whereby our external partner organisations deliver a host of key maintenance services. We are committed to building on our effective positive practices already in place and working to embed new initiatives that will support us in closing our pay gap further. These include increasing investment in training and development programmes to raise individual capability and provide more career opportunities to all, continuation of our scaled pay review, further embedding our Diversity and Inclusion Framework and empowering our colleagues through our wider Everyday Excellence 2030 Strategy delivery programme.

Delivering social value

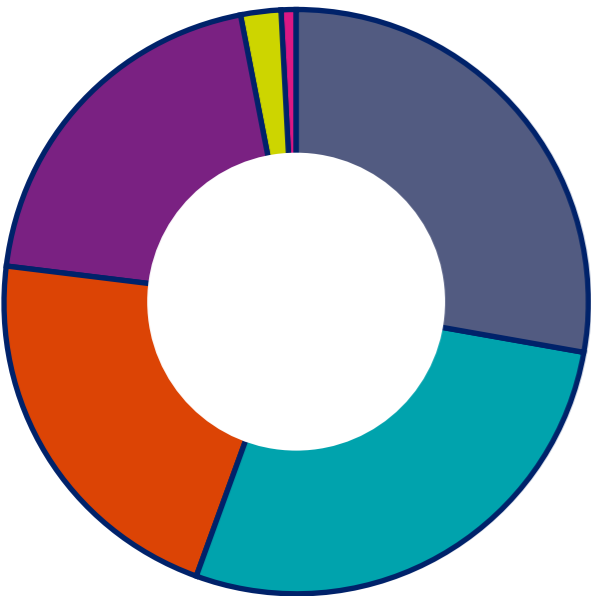
As a socially driven organisation, we deliver social value by providing decent, safe and affordable homes to 100,000 customers who would otherwise be at risk of living in lower quality private rented accommodation. In addition to this, we work to generate further social value through our frontline services and supply chain. Our commitment to make a positive impact and do more for our customers and society is entwined into our decision making at all levels and translated into action, creating a golden thread of social impact that is reflected in our corporate and sustainability strategies and grounded in the real experiences of our customers and communities.

We actively involve colleagues and customers in our social value activities and engage our supply chain and local partners to galvanise our efforts and ensure we make the biggest impact on the issues that matter most to our customers.

We're committed to delivering £100 million in social value by March 2026 and in the last year alone generated £26.3 million in social value.

We have expanded our social value capture across the business and with HACT's support, are making better use of the United Kingdom Social Value Bank (UKSVB) and new built environment measures to further inform our business decisions. This ensures we invest where it will have the greatest impact for our customers and deliver the greatest social return on our investments. We will be using this to set a future 2030 commitment for social value.

Social Value outcomes



- Health **£7,372,580**
- Financial inclusion **£7,310,828**
- Employment **£5,629,078**
- Local environment, environment, maintenance of the local area and community investment **£5,262,485**
- Youth, social groups and physical activity **£567,307**
- Homelessness **£213,580**



This year, one of our kitchen partners, Symphony, contributed £10,586 towards our customer programme as part of their social value contribution. This has supported the delivery of three Nature Ark Planters at our Independent Living Schemes in the South. The Nature Arks contains a number of habitats that enable multiple species to coexist and interact as they would in a natural ecosystem as well as providing a planting area for residents to grow plants. The donation has also supported the purchasing of materials for our Eco Buddies programme allowing us to inspire and educate the next generation.



Over the last 12 months, we have rolled out interactive social value training across our organisation, including our Common Board, to help colleagues understand the pivotal role they play in delivering a meaningful impact to our customers and ensuring customers are at the heart of our decision making, with social return on investment being used as a key indicator of success.

Through this training we have seen an increase to the social value being recorded, which helps us better understand the true impact we are having for customers.

“ The training greatly improved my understanding. Not only are we being told to record social value, but this training put the bits of the jigsaw together, explaining why and what happens with the results, and showed where the fruits of our labour were going. ”

Orbit colleague

Volunteering

Under our volunteering programme, 167 colleagues have been involved in volunteering this year, completing 1,254 hours. We've also continued to work in partnership with our commercial partners to support this. Initiatives have included:



Supporting foodbanks and food drives across our operating areas



Volunteering for the Samaritans 'Operation Christmas Child'



Planting trees, hedgerows and wildflowers across our estates as part of our commitment to ensure that 30% of its outdoor spaces support nature's recovery by 2030



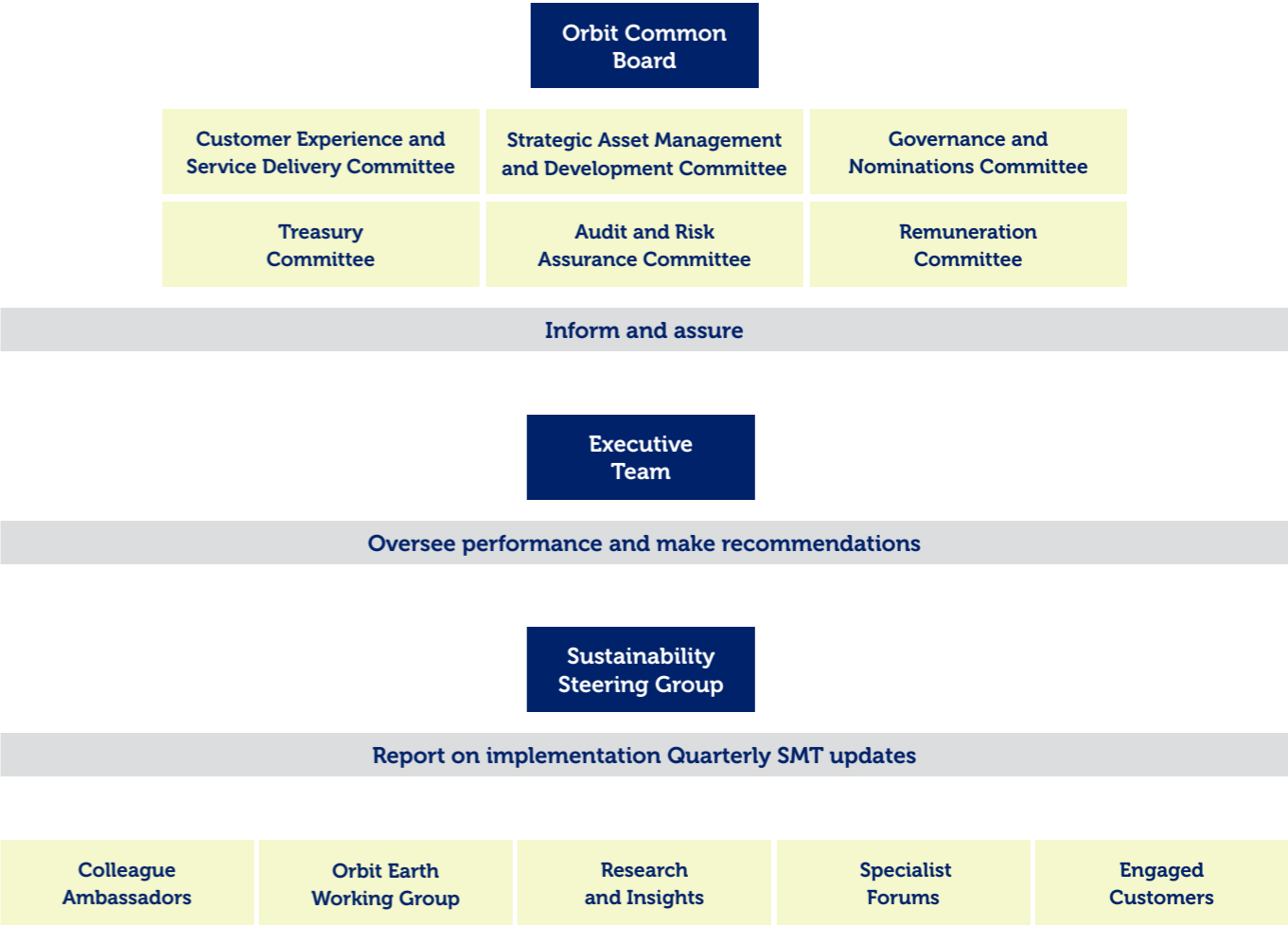
Governance

Our sustainability commitments adhere to our robust performance management framework and are overseen by both our Executive team and Orbit Common Board to ensure we stay true to our Sustainability Strategy. This is also supported by our Sustainability Steering Group which regularly reviews our Sustainability Strategy to ensure it evolves alongside our Vision and Values, stakeholder expectations and the external environment.

Regular engagement with stakeholders and specialist forums, such as our EDI Strategic Forum, Orbit Earth working group, Health & Safety Forum continue to evolve our commitments to ensure they remain relevant and sector leading, and provide input and oversight of our Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRS) and Business in the Community submissions.

In 2024/25, we further enhanced our engagement with senior stakeholders including:

- Holding a Sustainability Summit with the Executive Team to explore our journey to Net Zero Carbon before 2050 and make recommendations to inform our revised Orbit to Zero roadmap
- Facilitating a Social Value workshop with the Orbit Common Board to discuss the science and how future decision-making should account for social value and the return of our investments
- Conducting a Climate Risk Deep Dive with our Audit and Risk Assurance Committee to review Orbit’s management of risk associated with mitigating climate change, adapting to its likely effects and the associated regulatory reporting requirements.



2025/26 Focus

Climate risk modelling phase 1

We have commissioned a project to model the likely impacts of climate change on a range of property types and geographies. This will identify the climate hazards most likely to impact our homes, those likely to be most affected, and when any effects will be felt. We will use the results of this exercise to inform both the design and maintenance of our homes and the support we provide customers in adapting to climate change.

Scaling up 30by30

Over the next 12 months we will be looking at ways in which we can be more efficient with our 30by30 approach, so we can have a bigger impact on supporting nature’s recovery in more of our areas of operation. We will be looking to build on our own volunteering efforts as well as better utilising the social value delivered by our partners.

Zero waste

In 2025/26 we will be looking to embed our Zero Waste Approach, to make further progress towards a circular economy where resources are sourced, produced, used, and disposed of sustainably within Orbit.



Sustainable procurement

With the introduction of the new Procurement Act 2023, we will be continuing to develop our new partner social value framework with a focus on aligning with the Government’s Public Procurement Notice 002/25 and the Model Award Criteria. This framework will enable us to have increased focus on the areas where we know we can have greater impact in supporting customers and communities. It will also help our future partners with increased transparency, and a clearer identification of how we score our tenders and ensure a greater focus on social value delivery.

Section 20 dispensation and new energy advice service

Following the appointment of our first Energy Advisor, we will be focusing on founding and launching a new energy advice service for customers and colleagues. Funded via social value contributions from our partners, the omni-channel service will work to support the rising number of households experiencing fuel poverty. We’ll also be working to provide frontline colleagues with training on the service to ensure they can confidently support customers in need.

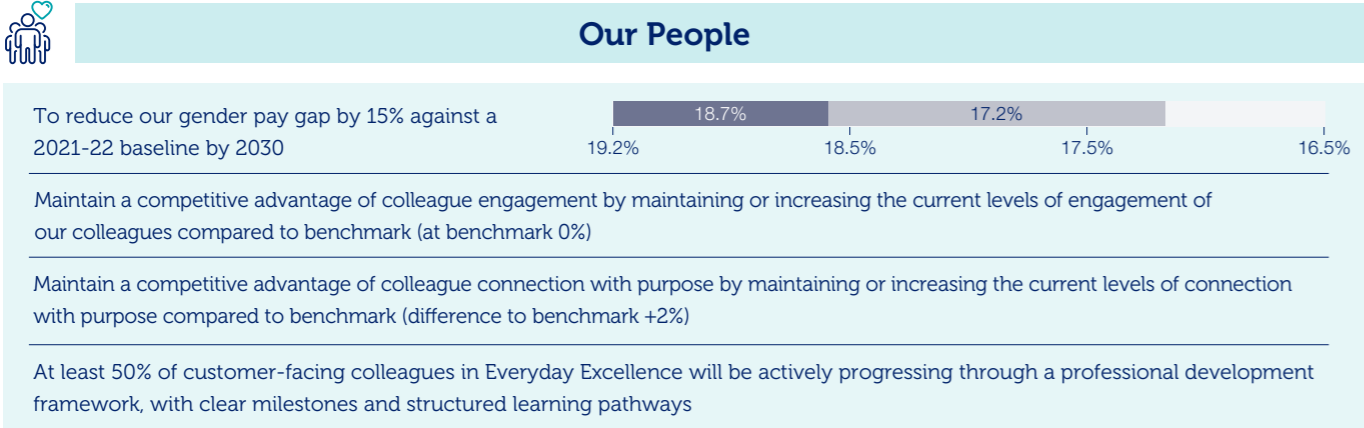
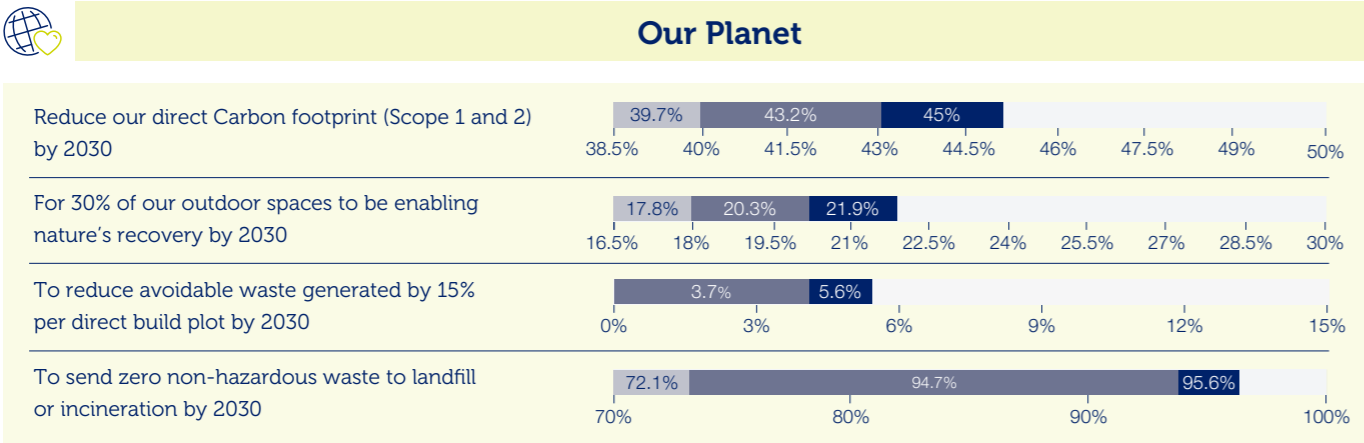
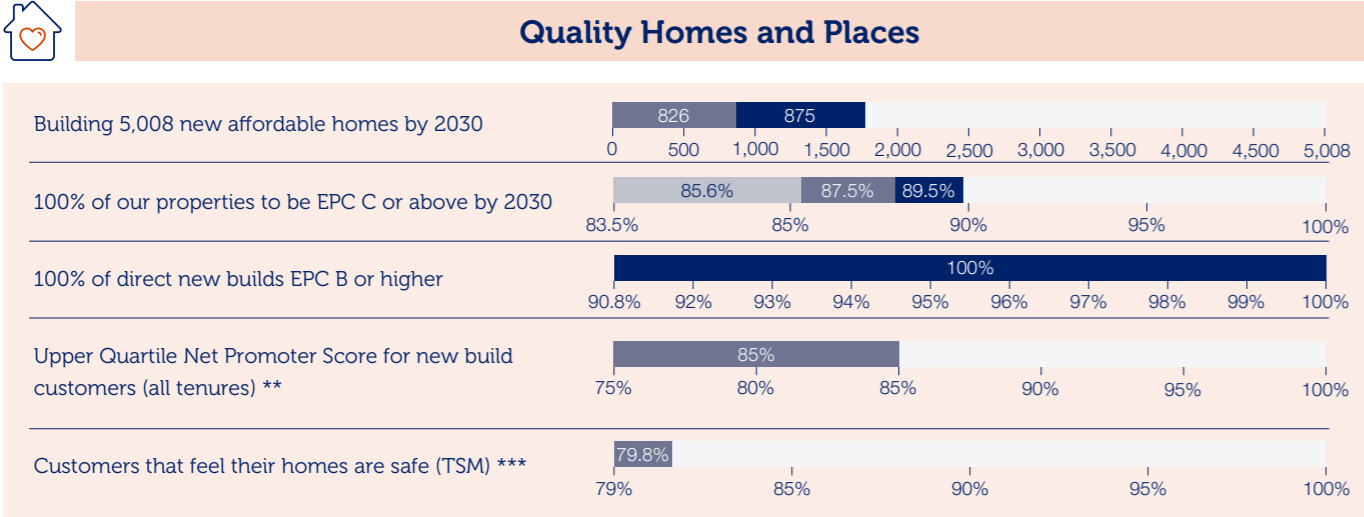
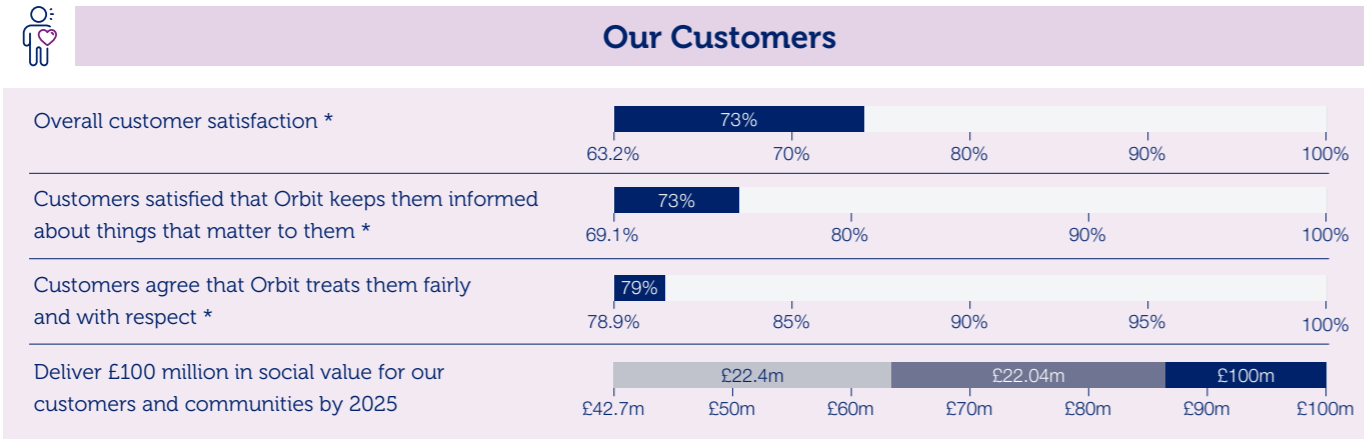


“ We are making good progress towards our targets in our Sustainability Strategy. However, we must remain focused on doing what we can to both maximise our positive social and environmental impacts and ensure we can effectively support our customers in the transition to net zero. It’s now more important than ever that we continue to work with our customers to tackle this transition together, and we remain firmly committed to playing our part in securing a sustainable future for all. ”

Afzal Ismail, Chair of the Orbit Sustainability Steering Group

2025/26 Targets

2023/24 2024/25 2025/26



* The target is to be at the median for the sector in 2025/26. These percentages are indicative based on what this would have required in 2024/25.
** 2025/26 target revised to 75% *** 2025/26 target revised to 79%



Glossary

Air source heat pump	A heat pump that can absorb heat from air outside a building and release it inside. It works much like air conditioning but in reverse. Heat pumps offer high efficiency and can be low or zero carbon depending on the electricity source. Click here for a handy introductory video by the Energy Saving Trust.
Biodiversity	The variety of plant or animal life in a particular area.
Carbon footprint	A measure of the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of an individual, organisation or country. Usually measured either in kilogrammes or tonnes of CO ₂ . When shown as CO ₂ e the “e” stands for equivalent and refers to the conversion of other greenhouse gases into CO ₂ for ease of accounting.
Carbon offsetting	The compensation for carbon emissions released into the atmosphere with activities that will absorb the equivalent about on carbon. An example of this would be tree planting.
Climate change	Refers to long-term shifts (usually 30 years or more) in weather patterns. Whilst these shifts can be natural, the impacts of humans particularly since industrialisation has seen climate change accelerate through the burning of fossil fuels and land use change.
Decarbonisation	Eliminating carbon from an activity, operation, or product.
Energy performance certificate (EPC)	A rating system to score energy efficiency and energy affordability of a home or building. The highest EPC level is A and lowest G. The certificate will include recommendations on how to make the building more energy efficient and save money.
Fossil fuel	A natural fuel such as coal or gas, formed from the remains of living organisms millions of years ago. Fossil fuels are non-renewable energy resources which are harmful to the environment because they release carbon emissions when they are burnt.
Global warming	The increase in the earth’s temperature generally due to the greenhouse effect caused by increased levels of GHGs and other pollutants in the atmosphere.
Greenhouse gases (GHGs)	Gases released into the atmosphere by natural or man-made causes that have an impact on our climate.
Net zero carbon (NZC)	The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible and the offsetting of any remaining emissions. Under the later international standards this is taken to mean a 90% or greater reduction in emissions by 2050.
Photovoltaics (PV)	Photovoltaics, also known as solar panels, or solar PV. A technology installed on a roof or on a self-standing structure (large-scale versions are often called solar farms) which enables sunlight to be converted into electricity. Solar power is a renewable source of energy.

Renewable resources	A natural resource or source of energy that can be repeatedly used and replaced naturally, such as water, wind, or solar power.
Science based targets	A target which aligns with a future global warming of no more than 1.5 degrees centigrade. Typically interpreted as a 90% reduction in emissions by 2050.
Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions	<p>GHG emissions are categorised into three groups, or “scopes”, by international reporting standards such as the GHG Protocol. Scope 1 and 2 cover our own operations, whilst Scope 3 covers our housing and supply chain.</p> <p>Scope 1 emissions: direct emissions from resources that Orbit directly controls (such as fuel used in company vehicles and natural gas in our buildings).</p> <p>Scope 2 emissions: indirect emissions from energy bought for use in Orbit’s operations (such as electricity in our offices).</p> <p>Scope 3 emissions: indirect emissions outside of the operational control of Orbit. This includes our customers’ energy use in their homes, purchased goods and services, business travel and employee commuting.</p>
Social housing decarbonisation fund (SHDF) / Warm Homes Fund	A government fund that aims to upgrade a significant amount of the social housing stock – currently below Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C – to increase energy efficiency, tackle fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions.
Sustainability	A balance between economic, social, and environmental needs to ensure the needs of today do not compromise those of future generations.
Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO ₂ e)	The total greenhouse gases emitted, measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide. Other greenhouse gases, such as methane, are converted to CO ₂ according to their global warming impact to allow for a single figure to be presented.
Whole house retrofit	A complete approach to making homes more energy-efficient and limiting their impact on climate change, focusing on the fabric of the house first, including the walls, roof, floors, windows and doors, to strategies for ventilation, heating efficiency and cooling in the summer months.

