



Metropolitan  
Thames Valley

# Sustainable Reporting Standards

2021

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# 1. Sustainability Highlights 2019/21

- Developed and adopted *MTVH – Our Sustainable Future*, MTVH's Sustainability Strategy and 2030 Action Plan.
- Early adopter of the Sustainable Reporting Standards for Social Housing.
- Agreed a £50m Revolving Credit Facility with BNP Paribas, with the margin linked to the CO2 emissions from the office estate and vehicle fleet, and the residential portfolio.
- Move to agile working, reducing office occupancy and travel, with office accommodation repurposed to better meet collaboration space requirements.
- Reduced CO2 from office and transport by >25% FY21 v FY20.
- Reduced CO2 from the residential communal energy portfolio by c 20% FY21 v FY20.
- Awarded the Ritterwald Sustainable Housing Certification with a Second Party Opinion (SPO) from imug.
- Issued £250m bonds via a £2.0bn EMTN Programme based on a Sustainable Financing Framework with an SPO from imug.
- Upgraded the Investors section of the corporate website to provide easy access for investors and stakeholders in terms of our Sustainability reports and news.
- Installed Cavity Wall insulation at over 1,500 homes and accessed over £4m of Energy Company Obligation grants.
- Re-procured our East Midlands Networks fleet with more fuel-efficient vehicles, with a selection of Mild Hybrid Electric Vehicles (MHEV) due in January 2022.

## 2. Executive Summary

Metropolitan Thames Valley (MTVH) is a significant owner of property and land in the United Kingdom and as such has a leading role in meeting not only the UK but world targets for increased Sustainability and the reduction of CO2 emissions. This will positively impact the lives of our current tenants and stakeholders and the society in which we live, as well as having a positive impact on the lives of future generations. The key themes of ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) are all at the core of what we do as a business and is part of our DNA.

The period 2019/21 has seen the increased profile of organisations supporting change in the way we work as employers, landlords, developers and responsible citizens, and this has become central to all our business activities.

The Board and senior management team of MTVH fully understand and appreciate the issues and the steps that the business can take to support the changes that we as a society need to make. We are responsible as leaders to support change and will engage with colleagues, residents and stakeholders as we start on this journey.

The Board have adopted the Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan and there have been immediate reductions in our Scope 1 and 2 emissions where we are in control, and we have third party validation and certification of the actions that we have taken to date.

The MTVH Board recognises that this is only the start of a journey, but one where the compounded benefits of small initial steps will deliver better energy performance of our housing stock, more low-carbon homes, more influence over our supply chain, better engagement with our residents, a more sustainable organisation that is Net-Zero by 2050.

This report signifies a major milestone for MTVH and will act as the ESG foundation to which we will build upon year after year. Like most organisations, the journey to a more sustainable future and Net-Zero will not be plain sailing and we face many challenges ahead such as the decarbonisation of our existing properties, data collection and interpretation, funding and the significant unknowns that still exist between now and 2050.

In this report you will see how we continue to perform strongly against the Social and Governance metrics, which goes hand in hand with our purpose as a social landlord.

Importantly, our Environmental performance is seeing gradual and incremental improvements. We understand the scope of this challenge and have outlined in our Sustainability Strategy and 2030 Action Plan what our initial improvement measures are. We know that environmentally we have a long way to go, and that this will remain a priority for some time.

## **Sustainable Reporting Standards (SRS)**

In 2019, The Good Economy came together with investors, housing associations, banks and treasury advisors to develop a set of criteria for the housing sector, to allow comparisons on progress delivering the wider ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) agenda. The methodology behind the criteria was designed to work for all housing associations irrespective of size, location and core business streams.

The criteria were developed following lengthy consultations by the key contributors centre around 12 key themes and 48 more detailed criteria that take as their base the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as agreed in 2015<sup>1</sup>. The UN SDGs resonate with the strategic aims and objectives of MTVH and social housing in general. The criteria are also aligned with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), the Sustainable Accounting Standards Board (SASB), the International Capital Markets Association (ICMA) and Loan Markets LMA) Principles.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

## The UN Sustainable Development Goals

These goals were announced back in 2015:

‘The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries – developed and developing – in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests’.






In summary the Goals covers a broader range of issues, but a number are specific to housing and the benefits accruing from good quality housing and the development of communities:

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## The Good Economy ESG Themes and Criteria

As noted, the Good Economy criteria are very closely aligned to the UN SDG, and need to be viewed in this global context.

Social	Theme#	Theme name	SDG Goal	Description
Social	T1	Affordability and Security	 	An assessment of the true affordability of the homes owned and managed, and the impact of new home delivery on the stock owned by to ensure type.
	T2	Building Safety and Quality		Information in respect of the statutory requirements on MTVH to ensure that residents are kept safe.
	T3	Resident Voice		An explanation of the role and engagement with residents to ensure that the corporate strategy of the business meets residents' needs and is aligned with their aspirations.
	T4	Resident Support		How the Community Investment Team interacts with customers to deliver on sustaining tenancies and creating neighbourhoods.
	T5	Placemaking		Ensuring that MTVH not only builds new homes, but also creates communities and infrastructure to make the homes great places to live.
Environment	T6	Climate Change		Initiatives to combat Climate Change, through the development of new homes, the planned repairs programme, and the emissions from the office estate and vehicle fleet.
	T7	Ecology		How the organisation sources staff, raw materials, as well as the management of waste materials, water and pollutants.
	T8	Resource Management		Actions taken to reduce waste regeneration through better procurement, ensuring key suppliers have a similar ethos and sustainable practices, as well as by reduction, recycling and re-use.
Governance	T9	Structure and Governance		Ensuring that MTVH is an effective, accountable and transparent organisation.
	T10	Board and Trustees		Ensuring that MTVH Board is effective, accountable and delivers on its Strategy of Serving People Better Every Day.
	T11	Staff Wellbeing		Managing rewards and benefits as part of being an aspirational employer, treating all staff fairly and honestly.
	T12	Supply Chain Management		Promoting sustainable procurement practices in line with national and supranational best practice and priorities.

MTVH is proud to be an early adopter of the Standards and in so doing has agreed to report compliance against these criteria on an annual basis. The basis of the criteria and the reporting enables organisations of differing sizes and location to report on key Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) themes on a transparent and consistent basis.

The report looks at compliance with the SRS and provides background to our achievements and sets targets for the future where MTVH either do not record data, or where we fall short of the standards expected of a leading housing association.

Additional information is available on the MTVH website at the Investors page (<https://www.mtvh.co.uk/about-us/investors/>), along with contact details for any specific queries.

### Ritterwald Certified Sustainable Housing Label

In parallel with the data collection and the preparatory work on the SRA, MTVH's has also been working with Ritterwald to achieve the "Certified Sustainable Housing Label". This was awarded by RITTER-WALD Consulting B.V. in early summer 2021). The "Certified Sustainable Housing Label" is the first tool used to measure the positive impact of affordable housing companies. imug | rating was commissioned as an independent party to examine and certify the legitimacy of the Certified Sustainable Housing Label awarded.

The initial evaluation used more than 30 individual criteria in the categories Green and Social to ensure a thorough assessment of the sustainability profile and strategy of a housing company. In late 2020, Ritterwald added a governance dimension as well as a status ranking for each dimension, ranging from "frontrunner", "ambassador" to "advocate".



The social criteria reflect the tenants' living conditions and the residential structure of a housing company, e.g. affordable housing with a rent level below the local market average and social activities for the tenants. In addition, environmental criteria should be integrated into the lifecycle of a building. This is done, for example, by installing renewable or alternative energy sources and increasing tenants' awareness of energy consumption and reduction measures.

Metropolitan Thames Valley is the second housing association to be awarded with the Certified Sustainable Housing Label under the refined criteria catalogue and has been ranked as a "frontrunner" in the social dimension and as an "ambassador" in the environmental and governance dimension.

The adoption of the criteria is closely linked to the Ritterwald Certified Sustainable Certification and the Second Party Opinion (SPO) provided by imug<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://thegoodeconomy.co.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.sustainable-housing.eu/#about>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.imug.de/imug-rating/service-fuer-emittenten/>



## 3. Social Criteria

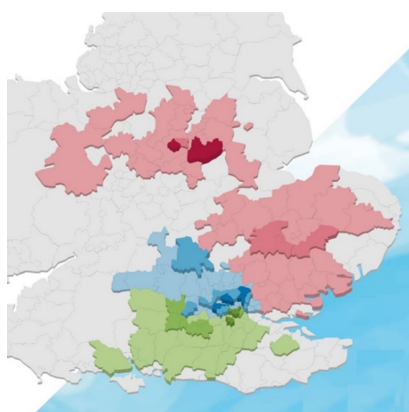
In line with the MTVH vision that ‘We believe everyone should have a home and the chance to live well’, delivery against the theses and social criteria is critical.



### Theme T1 – Affordability and Security

#### Criteria 1 – Rent compared to Median private rental sector (PRS) rent across the Local Authority

MTVH operates in over 120 local authority areas across London and the South East, East Anglia and the East Midlands with the key aim of supporting the economically disadvantaged.



**Top 10 Boroughs by Owned/Managed Stock (as at 31 March 2021)**

Lambeth	c 6,800
Rushcliffe	c 4,400
Derby	c 2,600
Brent	c 2,500
Haringey	c 2,400
Nottingham City	c 2,200
Sutton	c 2,200
Enfield	c 1,900
Hackney	c 1,500
Barnet	c 1,100

These groups, who cannot afford to rent or buy in the open market, are reliant on the social housing sector. Registered providers (RPs) charge Social and Affordable rents for homes that have been developed with the support of central government in the form of capital grants. MTVH monitors rents charged by local authority area as part of its annual submission to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and can compare this data to public information on the private rental market<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/privaterentalmarketsummarystatisticsinengland>

For FY21 the analysis demonstrates that the MTVH social rents charged are 52% less than the average market rents for properties of the same size in the same local authority area.

### Criteria 2 – The number of homes provided to get an understanding of scale and composition of tenure type

The MTVH stock portfolio as at 31 March 200 is as follows:

Category	Owned and Managed 2020	% of Overall
Low Cost Home Ownership	8,482	16%
General Needs	29,263	55%
Affordable Rent	1,895	4%
Intermediate Rent	356	1%
Supported Housing	2,300	4%
Care Homes	95	0%
Housing For Older Persons	3,237	6%
Leasehold	6,654	12%
Market Rent	1,064	2%
Total	53,346	

### Criteria 3 – The number of new homes provided to get an understanding of the intent and scale of growth plans

The additions to the MTVH stock portfolio as at 31 March 2020 is as follows:

Category	New Build in 2020	% of Overall
Low Cost Home Ownership	517	62%
General Needs	115	14%
Affordable Rent	196	24%
Intermediate Rent	–	
Supported Housing	–	
Care Homes	–	
Housing For Older Persons	–	
Leasehold	–	
Market Rent	–	
Total	828	

MTVH continues to deliver new homes in line with its core social objectives.

#### Criteria 4 – How is the housing provider trying to reduce the effect of fuel poverty on its residents?

MTVH has provided just under £10m of financial benefits to residents, with the mitigation of fuel poverty being a part of this support. The wider context is that:

- MTVH has a regulated Money Advice Service for residents in acute financial stress. This service generated £9m of financial benefits to customers.
- In response to growing in-work poverty and household pressures, MTVH shifted its wider Community Investment towards the most critical needs of residents. Starting with the base of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, Empowering Futures (MTVH Community Investment) concentrated on resident's ability to heat and eat.
- As a result, residents gained an additional £865,000 through new employment, increased hours, improved benefits and other payments.

Specifically in terms of fuel vouchers and the mitigation of fuel poverty:

- In 2020, MTVH provided 68 fuel vouchers to residents worth £4,753.
- In December 2020 MTVH launched a partnership with Pocket Power, a free phone service that helps residents save on their household bills (energy, water, internet, phone, car insurance etc.).
- Once referred to the service residents receive a one-hour phone call with someone from the Pocket Power team. Residents are supported along the way and fully in control throughout the process of switching. Pocket Power explain the jargon and technical terms, help residents to understand available options and support them with filling in the forms. The switching takes place immediately over the phone in an average call time of just 45 minutes.
- In December alone Pocket Power had 19 referrals and achieved a total of £3,481 in savings for our residents, with the highest saving of £579 for one of the families in London.
- MTVH has joined the Covid-19 Energy Redress scheme with the Energy Saving Trust to increase support to households in vulnerable situations during the remainder of the Covid-19 pandemic (increased delivery from January 2021).

In addition we have a clear commitment to bring all properties to EPC C by 2030

#### Criteria 5 – What % of rental homes have a 3 year fixed tenancy agreement (or longer)?

MTVH recognises the importance of sustaining tenancies and providing security for its residents. Security of tenure (and succession rights) makes a massive difference to people's lives and ability to find work, access to informal and formal local support networks and services, and helps build family lives. Good practice in the housing sector is now to offer long term tenancies to general needs residents where possible, and MTVH is in line with this good practice in that less than 11% of all our tenancies are for fixed terms, with these being either 'General Needs Probationary Fixed Term' or Assured Shorthold Tenancies (AST).

## Building Safety and Quality

### Criteria 6 – What % of homes with a gas appliance have an in-date, accredited gas safety check?

KPIs and Strategic Indicators	2020/21 Target	2020/21 Performance	2021/22 Target
<b>PROPERTY COMPLIANCE</b>			
Properties with a valid gas safety certificate	100%	99.6%	100%
Managed blocks with a fire risk assessment	100%	100%	100%
Managed blocks with a valid asbestos disturbance assessment	100%	99.3%	100%
Managed blocks with a valid electrical safety EICR certificate	100%	96.9%	98%
Lifts serviced within 12 months (new target)	100%	98%	100%

As at the 31 March 2021, 99.6% of properties had an in-date accredited gas safety certificate. Outstanding checks were due to refusals and access issues, and the organisation had instituted legal options to ensure full compliance.

### Criteria 7 – What % of buildings have an in-date and compliant Fire Risk Assessment?

As at the 31 March 2021, 100% of properties had an in-date and compliant Fire Risk Assessment

### Criteria 8 – What % of homes meet the Decent Homes Standard?

As at the end of the financial year MTVH had 46 units from a portfolio of over 30,100 which did not meet Decent Homes Standards (c 0.15%) predominantly in Rushcliffe, Nottingham.

## Resident Voice

As an organisation founded in the 1950s to provide safe and affordable homes to the Windrush generation, we work with communities to make places better and improve outcomes for our residents. This social purpose drives us to this day as we see every day what living well means to improving people's health and wellbeing, supporting people to gain skills and find employment opportunities, and the role it plays in tackling structural inequalities. Driven by our daily interactions with our residents and communities, we are also actively making the case for change on issues as diverse as domestic abuse, migrant rights, and the social security system.

At the heart of supporting residents to live well is delivering a quality customer experience in ways that work for our residents and the people we work with. To achieve this ambition, it is vital that we have a clear understanding as to what we, and our residents, consider good customer service to be. That's why resident voice is at the heart of our approach.

### Criteria 9 – What arrangements are in place to enable the residents to hold management to account for provision of services?

In 2020, we asked our involved residents for their views on how they would like to influence the direction of customer engagement at MTVH. From these conversations, survey responses and workshops, we developed a new, co-created resident governance structure with a strengthened focus on accountability, openness, and diversity.

The new structure includes a more empowered and robust Customer Services Committee, reporting directly to the Board, and a Customer Council to represent residents' perspectives on service delivery and to define and develop modern scrutiny practices, directly linked to our corporate plan priorities. The Customer Services Committee is made up of three residents, three Board members, and an independent member. In addition, we have introduced three new regional resident panels (supported by our Customer Engagement Team) to represent the interests of communities across each of our regions. We received interest from over 250 applicants to these new roles and have now recruited a diverse group of more than 40 residents through an accessible and open recruitment process.

Through this co-creation exercise we wanted to create a structure that added meaningful value and avoided the tokenism that can sometimes be created by simply creating a resident seat on the board. Through this new structure, residents have the platform to set direction on our organisational priorities, raise awareness of issues affecting communities at board level through their experiences being shared, and to influence improvements to residents' experiences. In September 2021 MTVH presented its Sustainability Strategy and 2030 Action Plan to the Customer Council for scrutiny and requested feedback to ensure we have captured all the elements that our customers want us to focus on.

Outside of this formal structure, residents are encouraged to influence key projects through steering groups, workshops and focus groups. We have a dedicated engagement team to provide support, development, and training to help make their involvement with MTVH teams successful.

The Board also receives quarterly performance reports and feedback on the CSC meetings is provided to the Board as a standing item for information.

### **MTVH Customer Charter**

MTVH is proud to be an early adopter of 'Together with Tenants' (TWT) and along with residents, took part in consultation events during 2019-20 to help shape the Charter commitments. More recently we have provided feedback from our new customer scrutiny groups for the Head of Research at the National Housing Federation (NHF), and we will continue this dialogue in the autumn 2021 with NHF colleagues. We have always been clear that we would wish that any published 'charter' was right for the vision and values of MTVH and this process to shape that MTVH Charter will take place in quarter 3 of 2021/22 and will involve colleague and resident consultation.

Our newly recruited Customer Council have worked with us to shape a forward plan for the next 12 months, and this specifically includes scrutiny of the MTVH approach to Standards, and this refers directly to TWT.

MTVH was part of the Housing Ombudsman's pilot on improving redress in 2019-20, including resident and colleague workshops. Through this pilot we contributed to the shaping of the Complaint Handling Code, and we continue to work closely with the Housing Ombudsman Service.

MTVH is pleased to have included our customers in two of our large procurement exercises. For the re-procurement of our national grounds maintenance contracts and our comprehensive Property Procurement project, we engaged five residents to be involved in the procurement and evaluation processes.

**Criteria 10 – How does the housing provider measure Resident Satisfaction and how has Resident Satisfaction changed over the last three years?**

MTVH launched its new 5-year strategy 'Serving People Better Every Day' in early 2021, setting out clear strategic priorities of how we will work towards our vision that everyone should have a home and the chance to live well. The first of these strategic priorities is Customer Experience, with a commitment to ensure residents' voices are heard as we work together to provide the services and support that matter most to them.

Part of this commitment is to check in with residents regularly, measuring satisfaction with a focus on our core services. The strategic measure for this priority is our customer satisfaction score, which is taken from an ongoing perception survey. Customer satisfaction is built into our key performance indicators that are monitored by the Board, Board Committees and Executive team.

Our customer satisfaction surveys are run by an independent company, IFF Research, to make sure we have an impartial view of customer satisfaction. This includes a perception survey as well as 10 transactional surveys, which are completed following service delivery. This was set up to replace previous satisfaction surveys in 2020 and to support its development, IFF ran resident workshops and identified three key areas of importance to residents – trust, communication, and ease of interaction with MTVH. These three key areas are checked in all surveys to monitor performance.

We have used the feedback from residents to shape our strategic priorities and corporate plan activities. There is a focus on communication and improving our services to make MTVH easier for customers to interact with. This includes our 'Right Side Up' organisational design work. Once implemented, Right Side Up will see all processes start with a customer outcome as the driving purpose. To support that, customer-facing colleagues will become the focal point of delivery, with everyone else in the business, including managers and the Executive Team, thinking about how our work supports those colleagues. Services must be designed to be easy to access and to limit hand-offs, directing customers to the person or place where they can have their issue or query dealt with simply and efficiently. This will help us to be clearer about what our customers should expect from us and then deliver that expectation every time.

We are also moving forwards with various technology projects such as customer relationship management (CRM) systems, website redesign and digital services improvements, which are all focused on making improvements as well as including residents within the specific projects.

Our primary channels for residents to contact us and provide feedback, in addition to the formal structures outlined above, are through telephone, face to face, and increasingly through our online portal. Our customer experience change programmes will continue to streamline processes designed around reduced hand-offs and touchpoints for customers.

Our plan is to further develop a multi-channel approach to customer contact, and project resources are directed to improve the customer experience across these channels, whether online, through our contact centre, and with significant IT investment to create a single view of customer feedback and enquiries. The results of all customer satisfaction surveys are included in our key performance indicators (KPIs), which are monitored monthly. A quarterly deep-dive review looks at trends and themes including the difference in feedback based on tenure, region, and other factors. Where there are significant changes in satisfaction levels, we carry out additional analysis looking at different filters. Operational teams also use this to look at any feedback and take appropriate action. For example, where a resident was unsatisfied with a contact with us, the call is listened to for any learning and action taken as required.

In Quarter 1 2021-22, shared ownership and leasehold customers were more likely to express dissatisfaction; keyworkers and care & support customers more likely than average to express satisfaction. Satisfaction levels were more consistent across our three regions in quarter 1, although we recorded a temporary dip in general needs satisfaction for the Midlands region (in August had reached 93%). Resident Satisfaction is measured through an independent agency that complete surveys with our residents. A mixture of contact methods is used including phone calls and email surveys. MTVH also carry out surveys based on transactions, such as repairs, customer enquiries, planned works and moving home experience. We also carry out an overarching perception survey which asks a random, representative sample of residents about their general satisfaction with MTVH as a landlord.

Since MTVH was formed in September 2018 there has been a consistent level on customer satisfaction of around 70% satisfaction in terms of overall perception. This has increased slightly in the current year, and trends show that satisfaction is increasing. Transactional survey results vary, but are all showing trends of improvement. Our aim is to get this figure to above 80% by 2026.

Operational teams look at the feedback we get from residents via the surveys and use it to inform service improvement plans.



**Criteria 11 – In the last 12 months, how many complaints have been upheld by the Ombudsman? How have these complaints (or others) resulted in change of practice within the housing provider?**

Over the past 12 months we have investigated a total of 43 Housing Ombudsman complaints, 19 of which were 'Upheld' in favour of the customer, with the determination being either a service failure or maladministration, the main themes of which were around – delivering timely resolutions.

The other 24 were made up of no maladministration, redressed adequately, and outside of their jurisdiction.

Following these determinations we have instituted the following improvements:

- Housing Ombudsman orders & recommendations are tracked weekly and shared at all levels across the organisation to ensure compliance to timeframes and orders. We share learning to help drive changes to our ways of working.
- The complaints team have received significant training both in-house as well as through the Housing Ombudsman to help improve complaint handling and to reduce complaints referring onto the Ombudsman.
- Changes have been made to the ASB process so that Housing Officers can log reports without seeking clarity from Housing Managers and Regional Complaint Leads – this has reduced timeframes meaning a better service is provided to the customer.
- Improvements have also been made to our website<sup>6</sup> so that it is easier for a customer to complain. The website contains information and sets out timeframes and expectations on what the customer can expect throughout the complaint journey.
- We changed our publication of yearly complaints data<sup>7</sup> to make it easier for the customer to understand but also to share some of the changes we are making.
- We reviewed our compensation tariff to improve consistency in the payments being awarded, made the breakdown of compensation payments easier for the customer to understand and, encouraged the staff to apologise where necessary so that they don't feel the need to always provide monetary compensation.
- We introduced closing down the complaint with a resolution e.g repair booked in and a date agreed instead of waiting to close it down when the repair had been fully completed, this is to bring us in line with all other landlords and improve efficiencies in complaints management and a quicker resolution for the customer.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/contact-us/complaints/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/contact-us/complaints/complaints-performance/>

**Criteria 12 – What support services does the housing provider offer to its residents? How successful are these services in improving outcomes?**

- In 2020, MTVH worked with the Charities Aid Foundation to create an Impact Framework for Community Investment. This 'theory of change' maps over 150 data points from case management systems to short-term and long-term outcomes. MTVH residents and colleagues from across the business contributed to this development.
- In 2020, MTVH provided intensive support to over 800 residents. In the context of Covid-19, most impact centred on improved financial resilience followed by reduced vulnerabilities for residents.
- Financial outcomes were worth £865,000 in real gains to customers.
- Throughout the pandemic, MTVH has offered a Coronavirus Support Hub for residents.
- Both European Social Funded (MTVH match-funded) Employment Support programmes (Nottingham Youth Employment Initiative and Love London Working) met delivery targets.

## Placemaking

MTVH as a large property owner and developer has obligation to ensure that we do not just own assets, but own homes and recognise that these homes are an integral part of the communities in which they are located. Our asset management strategy (the Strategic Asset Management (SAM) Plan) looks at void units to determine whether the accommodation location, type, size and energy efficiency still meet our requirements and local demand.

New homes are developed on a similar basis, taking into account local needs, layout and accessibility, the local infrastructure (shops, transport, schools and healthcare), amenity and environmental considerations, as well as affordability. Completed schemes are reviewed for lesson learned and regular dialogue with customers and local authorities ensures that the housing offered evolves to meet ever changing requirements.

**Criteria 13 – Provide examples or case studies of where the housing provider has been engaged in Placemaking or Placeshaping activities.**

### National

- Invested in Regional Community Coordinator roles to coordinate local plans and partnerships.
- Engaged with specialist consultants to review Community Centres and create a plan for better quality spaces with more use.
- Our local estate-based plans have focussed on keeping people connected and including groups disproportionately affected by the pandemic.
- TVH provided hundreds of Christmas hampers across all regions to people affected by lockdown. MTVH colleagues, supply chain partners like Aaron services and resident volunteers helped to deliver these to people in a safe way.

## **London**

### **LB Brent – Chalkhill Estate**

In spring 2020 we co-developed a Youth Voice consultation with the Young Brent Foundation. Our aim was to explore the current challenges for young people living on Chalkhill Estate and better understand what activities, opportunities and services could support transformation for the local community both pre and post COVID-19. Young people from all backgrounds were supported to engage in the Youth Voice consultation.

We identified key challenges for young people including: lack of youth engagement and activities, no designated spaces to use, lack of awareness of their existence, lack of opportunities, and not feeling safe. Finally young people had raised that they did not feel safe on the estate and they have been enabled to co-design 'One Flow, One Brent' a project in response to the London Mayor's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) programme.

### **LB Barnet – West Hendon Regeneration Scheme**

In response to Covid-19 and the closure of key facilities, we co-designed a food bank service and drop in with MTVH colleagues and resident volunteers.

Funded residents to provide virtual wellbeing services (e.g. Yoga) to reach isolated people on the estate.

## **South London**

### **LB Lambeth – Brixton**

The Brixton Chamber Orchestra worked with local residents to deliver a free concert to residents around Christmas. Partnered with High Trees Estate, the St Martins Residents Association and MTVH colleagues to deliver socially distanced community event. 80 residents attended a socially distanced event with food provided for all to enjoy.

### **LB Sutton - 'Chips and Chat' to bring people together affected by Lockdown**

### **LB Lambeth – Clapham Park Regeneration**

To complement our intensive support offer and build a sustainable community, the Clapham Park Creative Co-Op is a visual storytelling project launched in 2019, which aims to tell the story of ‘change’ as people are experiencing it.

This collective has launched:

- Together at home art kits: Over 100 art kits distributed to help people do something creative while locked down at home.
- Community Corona Journal: residents received support to journal their own experiences and those of neighbours during the pandemic. This included outreach to the over 50s group.
- Creative tea: Twice a month residents and invited artists share the results of ‘together at home’ art kits via zoom calls.
- Photography club: A group who are building their skills and interest in photography.
- Postcards across the river: Over 50s residents in Clapham Park are connected to a similar group in Newham. Residents are collaborating in pairs to create visual postcards sharing cultural histories and experiences of the pandemic. These photos will be exhibited in Clapham Park then journey across the river to Newham as a gift from each estate to each other.

### **East Midlands**

Setup a homework support club for parents and children across the Midlands.

Detached youth workers remained visible and available on our estates during lockdown to support children cut off from school support.

### **Derby**

MTVH has provided funding for the next 2 years to the Jubilee Project who offer debt advice and support to residents in the Arboretum area of Derby.

### **Nottingham**

Partnered with ABL health to deliver zoom exercise classes in Rushcliffe.

Cotgrave Super Kitchen, founded with MTVH, grew and became an independent enterprise.

### **Cambridgeshire**

MTVH funded a local partner, Cambridge Housing Society to continue to deliver services like money advice.

## 4. Environmental Criteria



The UK government target of Carbon Neutral by 2050 will only be met by the housing sector playing a significant role in reducing emissions. MTVH owns and manages in excess of 58,000 homes and therefore need so take a lead in the protecting the environment. The recent Ritterwald accreditation and the creation of the Sustainable Financing Frameworks (see the corporate website: Investor Relations – Sustainable investment<sup>8</sup>) is an immediate demonstration of the Board’s commitment, and this will be further enhanced in the future as strategies and solutions are adopted by the business.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/about-us/investor-relations/sustainable-investment/>

## Climate Change

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

A 0% B 10.7% C 26.7% D 13.4% E 1.9% Not Available 47.7%

At MTVH we believe everyone should have a home and the chance to live well, this means providing our customers with high quality homes that reduce emissions, reduce costs and improve the quality of life for our residents. We are working to improve both the efficiency of our properties and the quality of our data and have set ourselves a target to get 75% of our directly managed properties to EPC C by 2026. We are also investing in our data and understanding by undertaking 500 EPC surveys each year to bridge the missing data gap.

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

All of the 902<sup>9</sup> homes we completed in 2020/21 were EPC B.

### Criteria 16 – Do we have a strategy to reduce Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions?

MTVH's 2030 Action Plan outlines a number of tasks that MTVH perform to reduce its scope 1, scope 2 and scope 3 emissions

#### Scope 1 – Direct Emissions

These emissions relate to the combustion of fuel from our Networks fleet and from our gas-fired boilers used for communal and corporate heating. MTVH's scope 1 emissions are included in our annual SECR report. We have made commitments to reduce the emissions of our fleet and both our communal and corporate gas portfolios.

#### Scope 2 – Indirect Emissions

These are emissions linked to the burning of fossil fuels used in the generation of grid electricity. Our communal and corporate electricity portfolio scope 2 emissions are included in our annual SECR report. As with our scope 1 emissions, we have made commitments to reduce the emissions from our communal and corporate electricity portfolios.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/about-us/investor-relations/sustainable-investment/>

<sup>9</sup> 229 General needs, 475 Shared ownership and 199 Joint venture properties.

### Scope 3 – All other indirect emissions

This covers all other emissions created as we carry out our business activities. These include emissions from activities that come from sources we do not own or have control over such as our supply chain, waste, the manufacture of goods, the building/demolition of property, staff commuting, business travel (non-fleet vehicles) and most significantly, from the properties we own. We do not report our scope 3 emissions in our SECR report. One of the most important elements of our Sustainability Strategy and key tasks from our 2030 Action Plan is to benchmark all of the activities that produce scope 3 emissions and to understand fully our comprehensive organisational carbon footprint. Once we have this we will set ambitious targets that will reduce our emissions.

We have begun engaging with our supply chain to capture the emissions linked to the work carried out on behalf of MTVH. Cavity wall insulation has been installed at over 1500 of our directly managed properties to improve the energy efficiencies of these properties and reduce emissions. We will be developing a new organisational travel policy to reduce unnecessary business travel and will be investigating ways of reducing energy demand across our communal and corporate electricity portfolios.

### Criteria 17 – What energy efficiency actions has the housing provider undertaken in the last 12 months?

#### Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) FY21

MTVH had completed its second SECR report for the year ended 31 March 2021, and this information is included in the Statutory Accounts (available on the website: Investor Relations – Financial overview)<sup>9</sup>. This reporting

This section summarises our energy usage, associated emissions, energy efficiency actions and energy performance, under the government policy Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR), as implemented by The Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability Partnerships (Energy and Carbon Report) Regulations 2018. It also summarises the methodologies utilised for all calculations related to the elements reported under Energy and Carbon. Organisational boundaries for reporting have been set to cover the majority of our operations, including sheltered housing schemes, as the organisation has ultimate responsibility for consumption in these properties.

The reported figures exclude consumption for properties that we own, but where residents undertake their own utility contracts, as this consumption is not part of normal business operations.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/MHT-annual-report-2021.pdf>



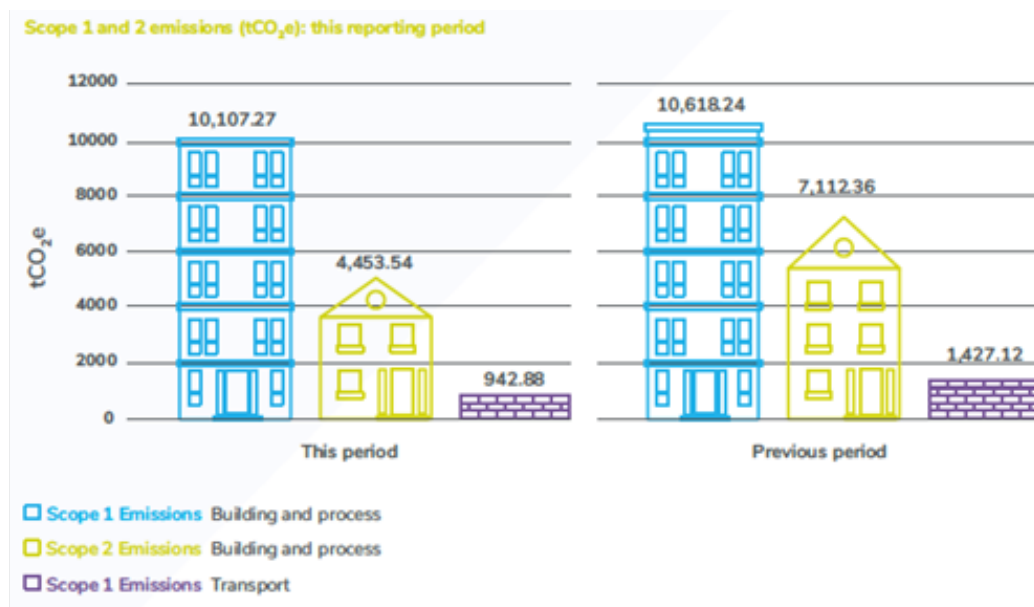
## Summary

In the second year of our reporting, our Scope 1 emissions (combustion of natural gas and transportation fuels, are 11,050 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) resulting from the direct combustion of 58,900,093 kWh of fuel. Of this, 9,968.26 tCO<sub>2</sub>e is billed to MTVH by consumed by customers.

These Scope 1 emissions figures represent a 9% decrease in emissions from last year.

Scope 2 indirect emissions (purchased electricity) for the second year of reporting are 4453 tCO<sub>2</sub>e resulting from the consumption of 19,102,415 kWh of electricity purchased and consumed in day-to-day business operations. Of this, 4,245.61 is consumed by customers.

These Scope 2 emissions figures represent a 59% reduction in emissions from last year.



MTVH has secured £4.3m of ECO (Energy Company Obligation) funding which is being used to retrospectively install cavity wall insulation at our properties. Between January and April 2021, 1,643 properties across 42 blocks have received cavity wall insulation with an estimated 745,000 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e saved (based on reduced heat demand in these properties).

**Criteria 18 – How is the housing provider mitigating the following climate risks: Increased flood risk and increased risk of homes overheating?**

MTVH undertakes initial flood risk assessments to determine the overall flood risk to proposed construction projects. MTVH utilise Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to ensure that no additional surface water run off occurs with our construction projects.

At MTVH's Wilford Lane construction project in Nottingham, SuDS drainage has been provided in the form of permeable paving to driveways and rear gardens, filter strips to divert surface water and a multi stage wet pond that stores water and discharges into the local adopted surface water drainage at a controlled rate, no higher than the existing flow rate before the construction project commenced.

MTVH is aware that overheating is a key issue that needs to be tackled whilst constructing new homes with the risk increasing due to climate change. MTVH has inserted measures within our Design Brief and the standard set of Employers Requirements, to ensure that materials and components built into our construction do not contribute to overheating and that built up heat can be purged from structures.

MTVH ask architects to create dual aspect properties to allow for cross ventilation through our assets. We ensure pipes and cylinders to individual hot water systems are correctly insulated to reduce heat emissions. We also avoid locating heating distribution pipework within communal areas where heat can be lost and circulate throughout buildings. Externally, we utilise trees within our landscaped areas to shade buildings and outdoor spaces and surfaces, so assets receive less solar radiation.

**Criteria 19 – Does the housing provider give residents information about correct ventilation, heating, recycling etc? Please describe how this is done.**

As a standard we provide all new residents with a Home User Guide. This outlines all elements within their property, including recycling, fire safety and how to use heating and appliances correctly.

We also carry out home demonstrations where residents are personally shown how to use items such as boilers and have the opportunity to ask questions regarding their individual properties. This ensures residents understand how to use items correctly and in the most efficient way.

## Ecology

### Criteria 20 – How is the housing provider increasing Green Space and promoting Biodiversity on or near homes?

#### South London

The St Martin's Community Gardening Group started the Huggins Corner to reduce isolation and improve the look of the estate. This project was led by residents and supported by 'Incredible Edible'. Residents were supported to access £2,000 'Grow back Greener' funding. 'Social landscapes' have provided a new design for the green space. MTVH supply chain partner Pinnacle has provided expert advice on how to maintain garden and offered to deliver planters for the community. It has brought in the Fenstanton schools and all the neighbours have come together in planning this.

MTVH has a design goal to produce public open spaces that promote biodiversity and increase the overall levels of satisfaction of residents and visitors who visit and play in them. The design goal is described to the Architects and other consultants that create proposal via the MTVH Design Brief.

Open spaces are design into projects in different forms. At our Bridge Road construction project in Welwyn Garden City, a centralised pedestrian walkway called 'The Weave' is a designated landscaped open space to integrate the six apartment blocks that are under construction throughout the project. 'The Weave' will feature specimen trees, ornamental and fruiting native shrubs to define pedestrian routes at different times of the year. The landscaped area will provide a formal pathway, formal play areas, informal play areas, a raised lawn, open green space and ornamental planting. Once the project is completed, over 4,000 m<sup>2</sup> of public open space will be provided.

**Criteria 21 – Does the housing provider have a strategy to actively manage and reduce all pollutants? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?**

MTVH's new Sustainability Strategy, "MTVH – Our Sustainable Future" and our 2030 Action Plan looks at managing and reducing pollution across much of our business.

We aim to benchmark solid waste pollution from our offices and development sites by October 2021 and January 2022 respectively. Once we have established these benchmarks, we will then look at implementing ambitious and achievable reduction targets. These targets will be communicated in our Annual Sustainability Report.

We have a target to develop an ICT/technology usage and waste strategy to ensure that our use of and disposal of ICT equipment, does not lead to heavy metal soil contamination or plastic pollution caused by inappropriate disposal of ICT equipment.

We have also set targets to reduce the emissions from our Networks (in-house contractor) fleet vehicles. With targets set for 5% by April 2021 (achieved), 10% by April 2022 and by 15% by 2023.

As we engage with our supply chain as part of our Sustainable Procurement Policy, we will identify where our supply chain are using pollutants and work with these suppliers to remove them from MTVH work streams.

## Resource Management

**Criteria 22 – Does the housing provider have a strategy to use or increase the use of responsibly sourced materials for all building works? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?**

Under our Sustainability strategy, we have set a target of April 2022 to develop a Construction Strategy for new developments. This will outline how we intend to move away from traditional building materials, to more sustainably sourced materials and methods of construction.

We have developed our sustainable procurement policy, which requires our new suppliers (and eventually our existing suppliers) to report to us on a number of sustainability metrics, such as resource use. We will then use this to help us understand how we can influence our supply chain to adopt more sustainable materials.

**Criteria 23 – Does the housing provider have a strategy for waste management incorporating building materials? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?**

We have a target of January 2022 to benchmark our demolition and construction waste and identify an improvement target by April 2022.

**Criteria 24 – Does the housing provider have a strategy for good water management? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?**

As mentioned in our Sustainability Strategy, we hope to benchmark our wastewater per annum by October 2021. Following this benchmarking we will look to identify reduction targets.

## 5. Structure and Governance



Strong corporate governance is at the heart of everything that MTVH does, and is critical given the size and financial complexity of the organisation. Whilst we operate in a highly regulated sector, the Directors have an obligation to ensure that the organisation upholds the highest standards.

MTVH has now adopted the 2020 National Housing Federation's (NHF) Code of Governance, for compliance certification in March 2022. MTVH currently complies with the requirements of the 2015 NHF Code of Governance and, in fulfilling its obligations under the Code, makes use of good practice drawn from guidance associated with the Code, the UK Corporate Governance Code and, where relevant, the Charity Commission Code of Governance 2020.

**Criteria 25 – Is the housing provider registered with a regulator of social housing?**

Yes – Both Thames Valley Housing Association (L0514) as the Group parent, and Metropolitan Housing Trust (L0726) as the primary charitable property owning entity, are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).

**Criteria 26 – What is the most recent viability and governance regulatory grading?**

The current Regulatory Grading for the Thames Valley Housing Group are G1/V2, which were reaffirmed by RSH following 2020 FFR submission and Stability Check in December 2020, with the last IDA being in February 2020.

**Criteria 27 – Which Code of Governance does the housing provider follow, if any?**

2020 NHF Code of Governance was adopted in February 2021. The 2015 version was previously adopted.

**Criteria 28 – Is the housing provider Not-For-Profit? If not, who is the largest shareholder, what is their % of economic ownership and what % of voting rights do they control?**

The Thames Valley Housing Association Group is 'Not-for-Profit'. TVHA entity is 'For-Profit' and MHT is 'Not-for-Profit', with TVHA transferring any surplus by Gift Aid to MHT. Both TVHA and MHT are Community Benefit Societies and have shareholders (the current Board members and a limited number of former members), and all surpluses are re-invested in the business. There are no dividends or other financial rewards for share ownership.

**Criteria 29 – Explain how the housing provider's board manages organisational risks.**

MTVH has a Risk Management Framework, which is reviewed by the Board on a periodic basis. This includes risk management policy, risk appetite, risk categorisation and strategic and operational risk registers. Operational registers are managed via Directorate SLTs, Operational and Strategic registers are reviewed quarterly by Exec. The strategic register is presented to Audit & Risk Committee and Board quarterly.

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

No.

## Governance – Board and Trustees

**Criteria 31 – What are the demographics of the board? And how does this compare to the demographics of the housing providers' residents, and the area that they operate in?**

The Board of MTVH is diverse in terms of its makeup, broadly reflecting the tenant base:

- 50% % of the board are women
- 40% of the board are BAME
- 0% of the board have a declared disability
- Average age of Non-Exec board members is 51
- Average tenure of Non-Exec board members is 2.2 years
- 80% of Board Members live in London/SE

The composition of the Board broadly reflects the make-up of the tenant base, in terms of Male/Female tenants, the ethnicity, and the geographical location of members being predominately London/South East focused.



## Board Members

Further information on our current board can be found at <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/about-us/board-and-executive/>

### Chair of the Board

Althea Efunshile CBE	Chair of the Board
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### Non-Executive Board Members

Lesley-Anne Alexander CBE	
Michael Dunn	
Gurpreet Gujral	
Grainia Long	
Ingrid Reynolds	
Tania Brisby	(Appointed 1 October 2020)
Nigel Ingram	(Appointed 1 January 2021)
Davinder Dhillon	(Appointed 1 January 2021)
Ofei Kwafo-Akoto	(Appointed 1 January 2021)
Stuart Beevor	(Retired 31 December 2020)
Paul Bridge	(Retired 30 September 2020)
Kathryn Davis	(Retired 31 December 2020)
Jerry Piper	(Retired 31 December 2020)

### Executive Board Members

Geeta Nanda OBE	Chief Executive
Ian Johnson	Chief Financial Officer

For the newly appointed Customer Services Committee and resident governance / scrutiny groups:

- 50% are women
- 42% are BAME
- 17% have a disability
- Average age is 39

**Criteria 32 – What % of the board AND management team have turned over in the last two years?**

The last two years have seen 60% turnover of Non Exec Board Members and 0% turnover of Exec Board Members.

Following merger in 2018, the end of a number of board members tenure fell due in 2020. A succession plan was developed and is being carefully managed to smooth succession over the next several years.

Executives and Directors (the Management Team) Overall turnover is 43% (14 FTE), of which 15.4% was Voluntary. Non-voluntary turnover was for reasons such as restructures, disciplinary, Deceased, End of Fixed Term Contract, Mutual Agreement or TUPE Transfer.

**Executive Directors**

Further information on our current executive team can be found at <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/about-us/board-and-executive/>

Guy Burnett	Executive Director – Development
Mark Everard	Executive Director – Property
Jane Long	Executive Director – Corporate Services
Anne Gibbons	Executive Director – Customer Services
John Baldwin	Executive Director – Business Transformation (resigned 2 June 2020)

**Criteria 33 – Is there a maximum tenure for a board member? If so, what is it?**

Yes – based on the National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2020, the maximum tenure is six years.

**Criteria 34 – What % of the board are non-executive directors?**

The MTVH Common Board comprises of 10 Non-Execs and 2 Execs, so the Non-Exec proportion is 83%.

**Criteria 35 – How many/ number of board members on the Audit Committee with recent and relevant financial experience?**

The MTVH Audit & Risk Committee has 4 members;

- 1 is a qualified accountant with extensive FD experience
- 2 have finance and treasury experience
- 4 have risk management experience
- 4 have governance experience
- 4 have strategic development experience

**Criteria 36 – Are there any current executives on the Remuneration Committee?**

No

**Criteria 37 – Has a succession plan been provided to the board in the last 12 months?**

Yes, succession is discussed annually by the Remuneration & Nominations Committee and shared with the Board

**Criteria 38 – For how many years has the housing provider's current external audit partner been responsible for auditing the accounts?**

BDO have been the current external audit partner for at least the last 10 years, although the Lead Partner on the Audit changes every 4 years.

**Criteria 39 – When was the last independently-run, board-effectiveness review?**

2019.

**Criteria 40 – Are the roles of the chair of the board and CEO held by two different people?**

Yes

**Criteria 41 – How does the housing provider handle conflicts of interest at the board?**

The handling of potential conflicts is set out in Code of Conduct and Board Member service agreements - MTVH holds a register showing any interests declared by members, and also requests declaration of interest in any item on agenda at the start of each meeting.

**Staff Wellbeing**

**Criteria 42 – Does the housing provider pay the Real Living Wage?**

No – We pay the National Living Wage. £8.91 per hour from 1 April 2021.

**Criteria 43 – What is the gender pay gap?**

17%.

**Criteria 44 – What is the CEO-worker pay ratio?**

10 to 1.

### Criteria 45 – How does the housing provider support the physical and mental health of their staff?

At MTVH, we aim to create an environment that provides and fosters a culture of wellbeing. Over the past year we have supported our colleagues through a variety of mechanisms, these include:

Medicash and BHSF – our two employee assistance providers that offer free and confidential advice including practical information, resources and counselling to help in our colleagues work and personal lives.#

A health cash plan available through Medicash that enables our colleagues to claim some of the costs of healthcare and wellbeing such as dental treatment, consultations, physiotherapy, discounted gym membership etc.

Manager workshops on ‘Caring Conversations’ – upskilling our people managers to have emotionally intelligent, psychologically informed conversations in pragmatic, utilisable ways.

Developing four bespoke colleague wellbeing support guides that offer strategies and techniques to raise awareness about how individuals can boost their own wellbeing or improve upon it. This is accompanied by a separate tool for managers to support identification of emerging staff wellbeing concerns.

Our mental health first aiders continue to provide support and signpost to external resources.

Financial wellbeing support and guidance is available through Nudge, a free resource provided to colleagues to help make money and financial decisions simpler.

Our digital community promotes peer support amongst colleagues. A regular programme of events supports wellbeing and promotes diversity and inclusion in a safe and open environment.

Colleague network groups provide a safe space to discuss experiences and access mutual support. These include: Metro and Allies (LGBTQ+); Female Form (women’s networking group); WREN (Working for Race Equality Now); DAWN (disability and wellbeing); #Flex (flexible workers and carers).

Self-led learning on health and wellbeing is available 24/7 on our digital learning platform Wisebox.

Our Agile Working Policy offers flexible working around personal circumstances – this has been especially important during Covid-19.

**Criteria 46 – Average number of sick days taken per employee?**

6.3x.

**Criteria 47 – How is Social Value creation considered when procuring goods and services?**

In 2020, MTVH invested in a new Social Value and Fundraising Manager post to work alongside suppliers/contractors to manage and monitor their Social Value obligations. This is supported by a new MTVH Social Value Policy (July 2020) which aims to deliver maximum social impact for our residents and communities.

Through working collaboratively with Procurement, Social Value is now embedded into all competitive tender processes where the contract value is expected to be over £100,000. Social Value has been given a 10% weighting score for all new contracts, making MTVH an industry leading housing provider when compared to our competitors.

MTVH has signed Social value commitments for delivery of Clapham Park D sites (a major stage of the regeneration), partnered with 'Volunteer it Yourself' to refurbish community spaces, train and mentor young people.

**Criteria 48 – How is Environmental impact considered when procuring goods and services?**

In line with our Sustainability Strategy, we have launched our Sustainable Procurement Policy, which requires companies to provide information on their environmental impacts (dependant on business size and spend), and in some cases commit to improvement/reduction targets set in collaboration with MTVH.