

# Metropolitan Thames Valley

## Sustainable Reporting Standards

### 2023



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## Sustainability Highlights 2022/2023

- Continued to deliver the sustainable actions and targets set out in **MTVH – Our Sustainable Future**, and **2030 Action Plan**.
- Issued our **Annual Sustainability Update Report**, showing progress against our sustainability targets and introducing new targets.
- **Sustainable Financing Framework** - issued our 2023 **Use of Proceeds report**. This report demonstrates how we have allocated the full £250m raised via the 2021 EMTN issue, towards sustainable projects at MTVH.
- Sustainable Housing Certificate 2023 refresh. **Ritterwald improved the MTVH rankings to Frontrunner for Social and Governance and Ambassador for the Environmental criteria**.
- **Reduction of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions** from our offices, community centres and communal energy supplies **by 12%**.
- Benchmarked Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions at 57,949t CO<sub>2</sub> e (based on Equipoise data)
- Early adopters of the Future Home Standards, with one development set to achieve a 20% reduction in emissions through enhanced building fabric specifications, air-source heat pumps and solar photovoltaics on each house (reducing demand from the National Grid).
- Implemented new leadership and management programmes, specifically designed to develop managers and leaders at MTVH for the benefit of our colleagues and residents.
- Launched our Mental Health and Well-being policy to establish, promote and maintain the mental health and well-being of all colleagues.
- Introduced our colleague recognition programme – MTVHs Value in Practice (VIP) awards, looking to thank our colleagues who bring MTVH values to life.

# Executive Summary

## Our Approach to Sustainability

Metropolitan Thames Valley ('MTVH' the trading name for the Thames Valley Housing Association Group) is a significant owner of property 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 continues to positively impact the lives of our current tenants and stakeholders and the wider society in which we live, as well as having a positive impact on the lives of future generations. The key themes of sustainability and 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 2022/23 has seen the increased profile of organisations such as MTVH and its peer group supporting change in the way we work as employers, landlords, developers and responsible citizens.

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. We have appointed various dedicated Sustainability roles across the business which are co-ordinated in our Sustainability Committee, chaired by the CFO and including the Board champion as a member. The Committee leads the business on this journey and which will champion and encourage MTVH to be a more sustainable organisation.

The Board have adopted the Sustainability Strategy and 2030 Action Plan and there have been year on year reductions in our combined Scope 1 and 2 emissions where we are in control, and we have third party (Inspired Energy) validation and certification of the actions that we have taken to date. The Use of Proceeds Report was issued updated for 2023.

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 builds on the MTVH report for 2021/22.

Like most organisations, the journey to a more sustainable future and Net-Zero will not be plain sailing and we will face many challenges such as the decarbonisation of our existing properties, data collection and interpretation, funding and the significant unknowns that still exist between now and 2050.

The report demonstrates our performance against the Social and Governance metrics, key to our purpose as a social landlord and our Environmental performance is seeing gradual and incremental improvement. The Board and SLT understand the scope of this challenge and have outlined in our Sustainability Strategy and 2030 Action Plan targeted improvement measures and deadlines.

MTVH is a strong, dynamic and well-managed social business in a highly regulated sector. The Regulator of Social Housing has awarded ratings of G1/V2 for governance and financial viability. In addition, MHT has independent credit ratings of A- (Negative outlook, December 2022) from S&P Global Ratings, A Stable from Fitch Ratings and is rated NAIC1.

This report should be read in conjunction with other documents within the Sustainable Investment section of the Investor Relations pages on the corporate website<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/about-us/investor-relations/>

# MTVH & United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

## Sustainable Reporting Standards (SRS)

This report is based on the criteria developed by The Good Economy in 2019, with input from investors, housing associations, banks and treasury advisors. The criteria for the housing sector allow comparisons on progress delivering the wider ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) and Sustainability agenda. The methodology was designed to work for all housing associations irrespective of size, location and core business streams.

The criteria take as their base the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as agreed in 2015<sup>2</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 (all as updated from time to time).

## The UN Sustainable Development Goals

These goals were announced 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 recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go together 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 cover 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:

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<sup>2</sup> <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>















## Sustainable Development Goals



## The Good Economy ESG Themes and Criteria

The Good Economy criteria are very closely aligned to the UN SDG and can 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 generation 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 was proud to be an early adopter of the Standards in 2020/21 and this report is the annual update on performance against the criteria ensuring that we can report on key Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) themes on a transparent and consistent basis.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> <https://thegoodconomy.co.uk/>

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 Sustainable Housing Label

MTVH continues to work with Ritterwald and refreshed the “Certified Sustainable Housing Label” in the summer of 2023. The Certification was first awarded by RITTERWALD Consulting B.V. in July 2021. The “Certified Sustainable Housing Label”<sup>4</sup> is the first tool used to measure the positive impact of affordable housing companies.

MTVH provided Ritterwald with updated information for FY23, and following the review and evaluation process, the Certification was refreshed for 2023 on the following basis.

Metropolitan Thames Valley was ranked as a “frontrunner” in the social and governance dimensions and as an “ambassador” in the environmental dimension representing a stronger outcome than in 2022.



<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sustainable-housing.eu/cshl.html>

The evaluation looks at more than 30 individual criteria in the categories Green, Social and Governance to ensure a thorough assessment of the sustainability profile and strategy of the housing company. A status ranking for each dimension, ranging from “frontrunner”, “ambassador” to “advocate” is awarded.

**Social** - 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.

**Environmental** - 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.

**Governance** - governance criteria looks at sustainable leadership, compliance training, Non-Discriminatory Working Conditions and Tenant Information & Representation.

## Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) & Sustainable Finance

### Social



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

## T1 - Affordability & Security

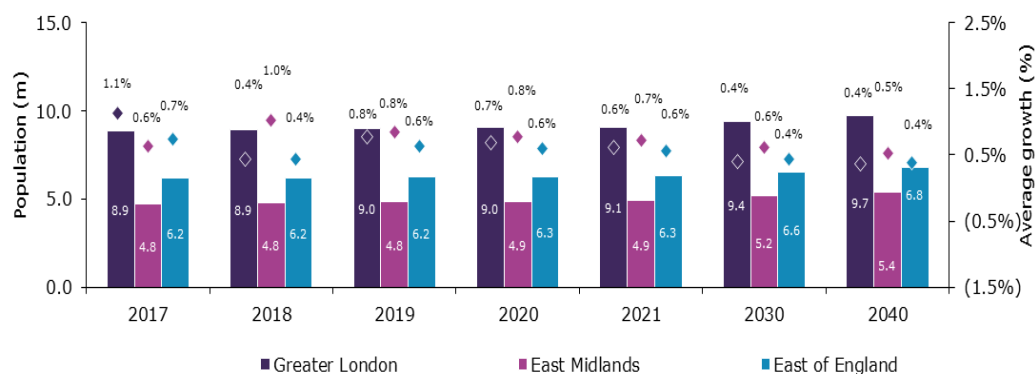
‘These difficult times have underscored my core belief in two things. Firstly, the difference that a good home and quality supportive services can make. A good home can transform lives. It can be the stable platform upon which people can build decent careers and nurture loving families.

Secondly, the importance of us doing our best to listen to residents. If we are to make a difference, we must understand their concerns, their challenges and their hopes and adapt our work accordingly.’

**Althea Efunshile CBE, MTVH Chair**

### Criteria C1 - 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 Southeast, East Anglia and the East Midlands with the key aim of supporting the economically disadvantaged. These are regions with some the highest levels of projected population growth and waiting lists.



Local authorities (top 10)	Waiting lists in 000's
Lambeth (L)	33.6
Rushcliffe	0.6
Derby	6.6
Sutton (L)	2.6
Brent (L)	25.2
Haringey (L)	11.8
Nottingham	8.2
Cambridgeshire	6.6
Enfield (L)	5.6
Barnet (L)	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>104.1</b>

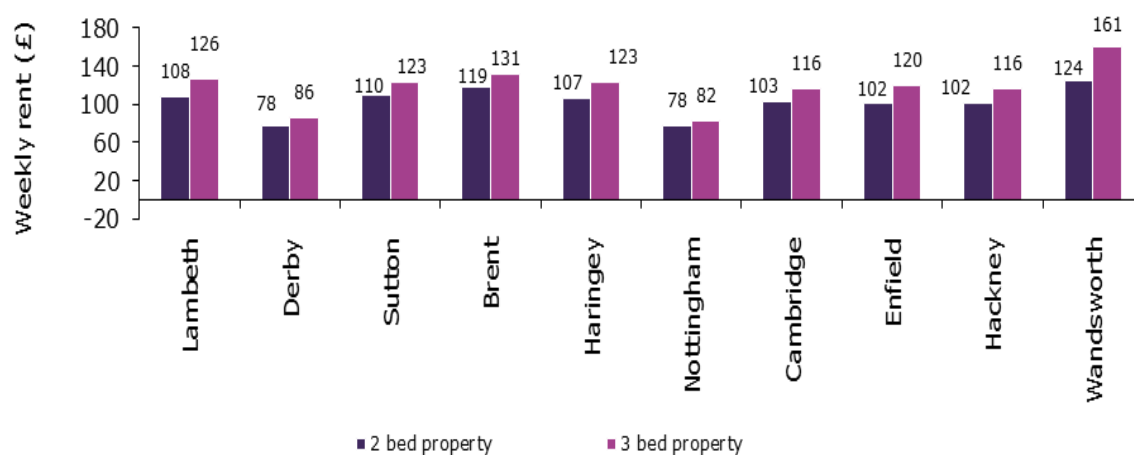
These groups, who cannot afford to rent or buy in the open market, are reliant on the social housing sector. Registered providers (RPs) charge Social and Affordable rents for homes that have been developed with the support of central government in the form of capital grants.

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.

### Social and market rents in areas of operations



### Average Social Rent in MTVH Top 10 local authorities





Criteria C2 - The number of homes provided to get an understanding of scale and composition of tenure type.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Owned and Managed 2022/2023</b>	<b>% of Overall</b>	<b>Owned and Managed 2021/2022</b>	<b>% of Overall</b>
Low Cost Home Ownership	8,933	16%	9,949	19%
General Needs	29,178	54%	29,623	56%
Affordable Rent	2,333	4%	2,336	4%
Intermediate Rent	211	1%	133	0%
Supported Housing	2,484	5%	1,953	3%
Housing for Older Persons	3,247	6%	3,387	6%
Leasehold	7,185	13%	6,968	13%
Market Rent	658	1%	905	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>54,229</b>		<b>55,254</b>	

This analysis clearly demonstrates the social nature of the business with 86% (2022 88%) of the homes meeting the Affordable criteria (rented and Shared Ownership), when combined with Supported, and Housing for Older Persons.

MTVH is a RP with scale and operates a range of social and affordable homes based on a wide geographical footprint. The size of the organisation is stable with the continuing delivery of new homes, particularly LCHO offsetting any disposals.

The organisation regularly reviews its geographical footprint to ensure that it can provide residents with the high-quality, cost-effective services that they require. In some instances, it is deemed that this can be better achieved by a more local social landlord and MTVH will therefore look to sell these non-core properties.

### Criteria C3 - The number of new social homes developed.

Category	New Build in 2022/2023	% of Overall	New Build in 2021/2022	% of Overall
Low Cost Home Ownership	185	28%	165	23%
General Needs Rented	308	47%	161	23%
Private Sale	33	5%	30	4%
Joint Venture Partnership	131	20%	356	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>657</b>		<b>712</b>	

### Criteria C4 – How is the housing provider trying to reduce the effect of fuel poverty on its residents?

#### Fuel Poverty Actions

We know that times are tough and that the last year has been a difficult one for many. Residents told us about the financial challenges associated with the rising cost of living and having received a third more applications for hardship assistance this year, we increased our Tenant Welfare Fund by 50% to over £520,000, providing help for those that need it most.

In addition, 2,000 residents were supported with emergency cash, supermarket and home energy vouchers and essential home appliances. We match-funded external contributions from local authorities and community action groups to invest £15,000 in community kitchens, cafés and warm hubs in the communities we serve, contributing to five spaces in total.

MTVH has partnered with energy switching firm Pocket Power (who offer a free phone service) to identify residents who could benefit from this service and makes referrals. Pocket Power contact our residents and work with them to identify where those residents can reduce their monthly outgoings by switching energy/phone/broadband suppliers. Social housing residents can apply for discounts and switch to affordable providers for their household bills. £100,000 in financial savings has been achieved in total since December 2020. During 2022/23, for every £1 invested by MTVH, Pocket Power saved residents £18.

MTVH worked with our energy broker (Inspired Energy) to create a fact and advice sheet to be circulated to our local customer services teams and residents, providing practical advice on how to deal with the rising costs of energy and how to reduce bills.

Last year MTHV was successful in bidding for £6m programme funded through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1 opportunity, with works completed by June 2023. The programme, focused in Lambeth and the Midlands, saw retrofit energy efficiency improvements being carried out to bring more than 1,000 homes up to EPC level C, saving over £193,000 in energy bill costs for residents and over 885 tonnes of carbon annually. Drawing on our experience of the Wave 1 programme, a bid for Wave 2 funding was submitted in November 2022 at a total value of £18m. This bid was successful and the Wave 2 programme is scheduled to launch in August 2023 and include fabric measures as well as heat decarbonisation works, bringing an additional 2,000 homes up to EPC level C. This will save nearly £350,000 in resident fuel bills and over 2,000 tonnes of carbon annually.

MTVH remain committed to continuing to make improvements to the fabric of our homes as part of our decarbonisation programme, with commitments to bring all properties to EPC C by 2030.

#### Criteria C5 – 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 4% of all our tenancies are for fixed terms, with these being either 'General Needs Probationary Fixed Term' or General Needs Fixed Term.

## T2 – Building Safety & Quality

### Criteria C6 What % of homes have an in-date, statutory compliance check?

	<b>2022/2023 Performance</b>	2022/2023 Target	2021/2022 Performance
Properties with valid gas safety certificate	<b>99.9%</b>	99.5%	99.6%
Managed blocks with a fire risk assessment (FRA)	<b>99.9%</b>	99.5%	100%
Managed blocks with a valid electrical safety EICR certificate	<b>99.9%</b>	98%	98.7%

As of the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, 99.9% of properties had an in-date accredited gas safety certificate. Outstanding checks were due to refusals and 'no access' issues, and the organisation had instituted legal options to ensure full compliance.

### Criteria C7 – What % of buildings have an in-date and compliant Fire Risk Assessment?

As at the 31 March 2023, 99.9% of properties had an in-date and compliant Fire Risk Assessment

### Criteria C8 – What % of homes meet the Decent Homes Standard?

MTVH has 18 homes that did not meet the decent homes standard, this represents 0.03% of our managed and owned stock.

## T3 - Resident voice

### Criteria C9 – What arrangements are in place to enable the residents to hold management to account for provision of services?

MTVH launched a 5 year strategy in 2021 with the aim of improving the day to day experience of our residents. We have worked to improve the opportunities for our residents to get involved with the decisions that affect them. As an organisation that exists for our residents, we want our residents to be heard.

We have set up new MTVH Regional Panels to give a voice to residents across the country. There was a positive response from residents wanting to be involved was profound, and we will be working to recruit more residents as we work to create more opportunities for the sharing of views.

In May 2022, informed by comments and suggestions from our Customer Council, our Customer Voice Framework was launched to establish a new approach to the way we will listen to residents, act on their feedback and amplify their voices across MTVH. Running from 2022 to 2025, the Framework will ensure residents can influence the way we deliver our services and can see the impact of their voices reflected right across the organisation.

Last year, residents asked us to share more about what's happening in MTVH communities and how they can get involved, so with support from our Customer Council, September saw the launch of YourVoice. This new online platform is designed to help residents find out about MTVH in their local area, enabling them to provide feedback and participate in local activities. To help residents stay informed about the different ways to access our services, our new resident bulletin, 'Here to Help', was launched in November. The first edition contained information about the services we provide, how to access them and the front-line colleagues delivering each service. Future editions of the bulletin will continue to feature the topics highlighted as being most important to residents.

Customers have continued to be involved in procurement decisions. Residents in varying capacities have been engaged in our procurement activities such as 'bidders days interviews and tender scoring for our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and our property contractors and estates services.

We have worked hard to enhance the service residents receive through our website and MTVH Online, our customer service portal, with a particular focus on improving residents' ability to self-service. On both platforms, new resident-focused content, tools and forms have been added on the topics of complaints, anti-social behaviour, refunds, damp and mould, service charges and more.

This has helped to streamline residents' experience, making it faster and easier for them to access information and services. The result of these upgrades has been a 59% increase in the volume of service requests logged through our website or MTVH Online; a 21% increase in the volume of online payments; a 16% increase in instances of self-service; and a 26% increase in sessions on MTVH Online.

36% of all MTVH households are now actively using MTVH Online, an increase from 30% this time last year.

### Criteria C10 – How does the housing provider measure Resident Satisfaction and how has Resident Satisfaction changed over the last three years?

Our overall customer satisfaction stands at 71%, just below the target of 75% we set ourselves. As an organisation we appreciate that there is much more to do.

Upon completion of repairs and maintenance work by our in-house contractor (MetWorks) we ask all residents to provide feedback, and our feedback level for residents currently stands at 75%. As part of the ongoing work within our communities, our Empowering Futures team often engage with residents to understand their views, this includes senate surveys, focus groups and customer satisfaction surveys as well as more informal discussions with residents.

As part of our drive to improve customer satisfaction, we now have a dedicated central complaints team – helping us to monitor complaint handling to ensure we are delivering the best service we can to our residents.

### Criteria C11 – 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?

Last year MTVH had 96 complaints referred to the Housing Ombudsman (2022 94 complaints).

2	Withdrawn
8	No jurisdiction
16	No maladministration
39	Early resolution offering adequate redress
35	Maladministration
43	Service failure
3	Severe maladministration

Of those referred to the Ombudsman, 81 of the cases were upheld (58.2%) compared to 73 upheld in 2022 (77.7%). On the remaining 15 cases the Ombudsman decided that 8 cases were not within their jurisdiction and 16 cases showed no signs of maladministration.

We take all customer complaints very seriously and act on the feedback given by the Ombudsman and residents. We have been working hard to make sure we do everything we can to get things right first time and have implemented the following measures:

- Our feedback helps support the wider Property Team in their new Damp and Mould policy

Monthly risk meetings continue to take place between our Complaints and Executive teams, ensuring that MTVH is consistently delivering a better service to residents. Complaints data is also shared with our regional panels every quarter so that any emerging themes or concerns can be raised with the relevant operational leads.

The revised corporate website has clear links for residents to follow when they feel the need to make a formal complaint to MTVH<sup>5</sup> and we are very clear in our reporting of complaints and referrals<sup>6</sup> to the Housing Ombudsman Service<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/contact-us/report-a-problem/make-a-complaint-about-mtvh/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/contact-us/report-a-problem/make-a-complaint-about-mtvh/complaints-performance/complaints-results-2021-2022/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>

## Resident Support

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

MTVH continues to support its residents in a variety of ways.

We know that times are tough and that the last year has been a difficult one for many. Residents told us about the financial challenges associated with the rising cost of living, and having received a third more applications for hardship assistance this year, our we increased our Tenant Welfare Fund by 50% to over £520,000, providing help for those that need it most.

In addition, 2,000 residents were supported with emergency cash, supermarket and home energy vouchers and essential home appliances. We match-funded external contributions from local authorities and community action groups to invest £15,000 in community kitchens, cafés and warm hubs in the communities we serve, contributing to five spaces in total.

Our Empowering Futures team continue to take every opportunity to provide much needed help and assistance to our residents.

Our Empowering Futures and Assessment and Support teams have offered direct assistance to more than 7,500 residents and customers in all sorts of ways, from advice on debt or benefits problems to coping with food and fuel poverty. We work with external partners including charities and other funders, as well as using our own funds. As a result, around £3m of financial gains were delivered directly to residents in 2022/23, compared to £2m in 2021/22. £180,000 was also secured in contributions from local authority household support funds and Children in Need grants.

MTVH provides other practical assistance and guidance to residents on the Support & Opportunities section of our website (<https://www.mtvh.co.uk/support-and-opportunities/>). This includes money advice, how to deal with anti-social behaviour in communities, training and employment support and assistance finding supported living, and how to get involved to make a difference.

## T5 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.

We continue to develop and grow the business, 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.

For MTVH building communities is just as important as building homes. Our core belief is that everyone should have a home and the chance to live well, so we strive to build communities that are full of homes, rather than neighbourhoods full of houses.

#### Clapham Park (South London)

The Clapham Park estate in Lambeth is MTVHs largest regeneration development which includes building new homes and refurbishing older properties. The Clapham Park masterplan which was given planning permission in 2019, was created in collaboration with residents. The refurbished estate will include 4.18 hectares of high quality open public space and will include:

- The Linear Park
  - Community allotments
  - Play area
  - Woodland garden
  - Outdoor gym
  - Sun lawn
- Market Square with retail opportunities for local businesses, start ups and high street names.
- Public art will be woven into the Clapham Park landscape and public areas.
- The Clapham Park Cube – brand new community space
- **In 2023, 50 new homes were completed, and in conjunction with our Joint venture Partner Countryside, we are now on site developing the next 520 homes. These units are due for completion in 2025 and 2026.**

All these spaces are designed to develop and cultivate a strong sense of community and belonging.

#### Manor Road Quarter, Canning Town, London

MTVH has signed an agreement with the English Cities Fund (ECF) and the Mayor's Homes for Londoners for an Affordable scheme for 804 new homes in the Manor Road Quarter, Canning Town.

The 'jewel in the crown' of the new development at Canning Town, is a linear park that will provide residents with a cycling and walking route through the scheme, delivering a vibrant and connected place.



### **Westthorpe Gardens (Northwest London)**

MTVH appointed award-winning developer Hill to help deliver the regeneration of 1960s housing in Westthorpe Gardens and Mills Grove in Hendon.

Sustainability is being prioritised, with the developer incorporating green roofs and energy efficient air source heat pumps. Landscaping is also at the heart of design of the Westthorpe Gardens regeneration, with green spaces, play areas and garden areas that incorporate the existing mature trees.

We engaged with the local residents via a ballot, prior to commencement and over 75% were strongly supportive of the proposals.

Over the course of the next five years, it will provide over 250 genuinely affordable new homes – including over 100 rented homes for existing residents, 100 shared ownership homes and nearly 50 homes for the over-55s.

The end of 2022 saw completion of Phase 1 of the regeneration, and the first 80 residents have now moved into their new homes at the same rent levels they were paying previously. Phase 2 of the project, which will include demolition of the old homes and delivery of new shared ownership homes and homes for the over 55s, is due for completion by 2025.

## Environmental



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 57,000 homes and therefore needs to take a lead in the protecting the environment. The 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.

### T6 Climate Change

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

Rating	2023 Units	2023 Percentage %	2022 Units	2022 Percentage %
EPC rating of A	57	0.2	64	0.2
EPC rating of B	5,971	21.5	6,412	17.6
EPC rating of C	14,343	51.5	12,289	33.7
EPC rating of D	5,637	20.3	5316	14.6
EPC rating of E	1,718	6.2	1,338	3.6
EPC rating of F/G/H	101	0.4	72	0.2
Not Available	10,038	26.5	11,026	30.1
Total	37,865	100	36,517	100

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 moving residents out of fuel poverty, whilst improving the overall quality of life for our residents. We are working to

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

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).

Of the 657 (356<sup>9</sup>) homes we completed in 2022/23 over 85% were EPC B or better, and 99% were EPC C or better. In 2022/23 all new units 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.

##### **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 data, we will set ambitious targets that will reduce our emissions.

We have started to engage with our supply chain to capture the emissions linked to the work carried out on behalf of MTVH. 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.

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<sup>9</sup> 161 General needs, 165 Shared ownership, 30 Private Sale.

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

### Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) FY23

MTVH reports annually in the Statutory Accounts (available on the website: Investor Relations – Financial overview)<sup>10</sup>.

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.

#### Summary

For 2022/23, our Scope 1 emissions (combustion of natural gas and transportation fuels), are 7890.73 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (9,988.87 tCO<sub>2</sub>e 2021/22) (tCO<sub>2</sub>e tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) resulting from the direct combustion of 41,806,006 kWh (53,258,248 kWh 2021/22) of fuel. This represents a 21.0% decrease on 2021/22 emissions on top of the 18.6% reduction in emissions achieved in the previous 2 years.

Scope 2 indirect emissions (purchased electricity) are 4686.89 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (4290.82 tCO<sub>2</sub>e 2021/22) resulting from the consumption of 24,236,665 kWh (20,208,263 kWh 2021/22) of electricity purchased and consumed in day-to-day business operations. The Scope 2 emissions figures represent a 9.2% increase on 2022/23 emissions offsetting 9.55% reduction in emissions achieved in the previous 2 years.

Our ECO3 partnerships delivered more than £5.7m of fully funded insulation works to 3,790 of our homes. These warmer homes have all reached EPC C and have saved a total of £388,000 in energy bill costs for the households. The work has reduced the carbon emissions from our portfolio by a further 1,535 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

We were successful in bidding for a total £6m programme funded through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1 opportunity. These programmes, focused in our heartlands of Lambeth and the Midlands, will see us carry out retrofit works to bring more than 1200 homes up to EPC C, and save over £230k in energy bill costs for customers and save over 3,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. Works commenced in summer 2022 and completed in March 2023.

Following on from the Fund Wave 1, we made a successful £9.0m bid for Wave 2 funding with MTVH required to match-fund so totalling £18m, for the multi-year programme opportunity from BEIS. As well as fabric measures, we will be starting to focus on heat decarbonisation and widen our work across other areas of London and the East Midlands. This will bring a further c. 3,000 homes up to EPC C making a significant contribution to our target to have 75% of our homes at EPC C by 2026 and to reduce residents' energy bills.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/MTVH-Annual-Report-2021-22.pdf?ver=2>

In addition to the fabric measures we will be starting to focus on heat decarbonisation and widen our work out across London and the East Midlands. We continue to build our internal and external capability and adding specialist skills and roles to our technical delivery teams, using long term partnerships with consultant and contractor supply chain.

We have partnered with Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) on a project to map the potential for Heat Networks by analysing our property data and that of some of our peer organisations and overlaying this latent heat demand with anticipated heat network generation sites.

#### 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 multistage 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 risks 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 can ask questions regarding their individual properties. This ensures residents understand how to use items correctly and in the most efficient way.

Additionally, information and support is provided by way of the regular resident's newsletter and on the website.

## T7 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 the garden and offered to deliver planters for the community. It has engaged with the local Fenstanton Primary School, and neighbours and other stakeholders 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 proposals 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 m2 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 Sustainability Strategy, "MTVH – Our Sustainable Future" and our 2030 Action Plan targets the management and reduction of pollution across much of our business.

We aim to benchmark solid waste pollution from our offices and development sites by 2024. 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.

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.

## T8 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?**

The Development Directorate has created a Construction Plan in line with the targets set within the MTVH Sustainability Strategy. The document outlines how we intend to move away from traditional building materials to more sustainably sourced materials and methods of construction. This document also provides timescales and is reported back to board members, demonstrating progress, on an annual basis.

We have developed our sustainable procurement policy, which requires our new suppliers (and eventually all our 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 invested in software which allows contracting partners to collate and report on data relating to the environmental impact of each construction project in one location. The software will be rolled out to all construction projects by 2024.

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

The reduction in the volume of wastewater remains a key target for MTVH and we will look to fit water efficient products into new homes and as part of the cyclical upgrade of kitchens and bathrooms. This primarily involves low volume/dual flush toilets, showers and aerated taps. New homes are fitted with meters, and we provide advice to support residents to save water and to pay for only what is used.

The formulation of Water Management Strategy in conjunction with developers and water suppliers remains work in progress and should be introduced in 2024.

## 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 MTVH operates in a highly regulated sector, the Directors have an obligation to ensure that the organisation upholds the highest standards.

MTVH has adopted the 2020 National Housing Federation's (NHF) Code of Governance, for compliance certification in March 2022 (previously complying with the 2015 NHF Code of Governance). In fulfilling its obligations under the Code, MTVH 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.



## T9 Structure and Governance

### 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 a Stability Check in December 2023, with the most recent IDA being in February 2022.

### 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 (TVHA) is 'Not-for-Profit'. TVHA entity is 'For-Profit' and Metropolitan Housing Trust (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). 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 Senior Leadership Teams (SLTs), Operational and Strategic registers are reviewed quarterly by Executive Committee. 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

## T10 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 as at 31 March 2023:

- 33% (42%) of the board are women
- 42% (42%) of the board are BAME
- 0% of the board have a declared disability
- Average age of Non-Exec board members is 57
- Average tenure of Non-Exec board members is 1.4 years
- 83% 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/Southeast focused.

## Board Members

### CHAIR



Althea Efunshile CBE

### NON-EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS



Gary Admans  
(appointed 20 June 2022)



Tania Brisby  
(retired 15 June 2022)



Helen Cope



Davinder Dhillon



Gurpreet Gujral



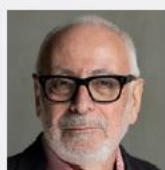
Dennis Hone CBE



Nigel Ingram



Ofei Kwafo-Akoto



Trevor Moross



Ingrid Reynolds  
Senior Independent Director

### EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS



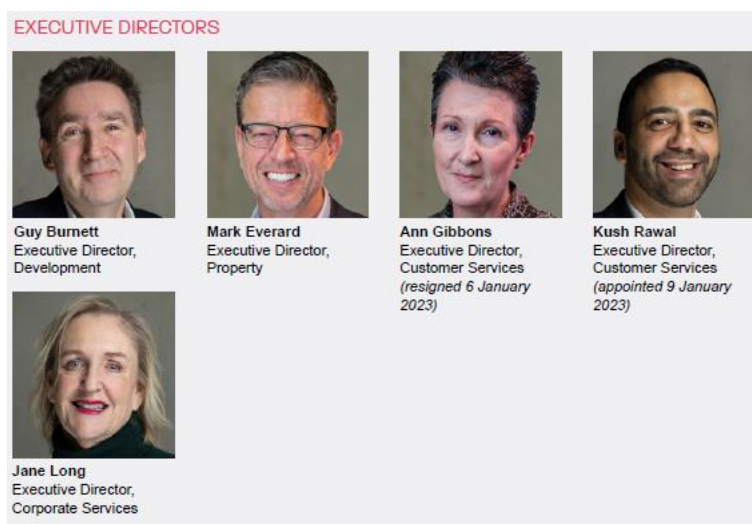
Geeta Nanda OBE  
Chief Executive



Ian Johnson  
Chief Financial Officer

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

The last 2 years have seen 10% turnover of Non Exec Board Members and 0% turnover of Exec Board Members. The high turnover within the Non-Exec Members is due to managing succession within the maximum 6-year term of office following the merger between MHT and TVHA in October 2018. No further Non-Exec turnover is anticipated until late 2024.



There has been one change in the membership of the Executive Team between April 2022 and March 2023.

**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. The Board reserves the right to review tenure and to offer extensions where this is in the best interests of the business and to ensure continuity.

**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
- 1 is an Independent

**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?

2021

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 the Chair also requests declarations of interest in any item on agenda at the start of each meeting.

## T11 Staff Wellbeing

### Criteria 42 - Does the housing provider pay the Real Living Wage?

No – We pay the National Living Wage. £11.95 per hour paid from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. £13.15 from 1 April 2023.

### Criteria 43 - What is the gender pay gap?

16.5%

### Criteria 44 - What is the CEO-worker pay ratio?

8:1 (10:1)

### 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 (LGBTQIA+); 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 was especially important during the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns. The corporate IT platform continues to be upgraded with the rollout of Office365, Teams and OneDrive systems to enhance collaboration between colleagues and to deliver on operating efficiencies.

#### Criteria 46 - Average number of sick days taken per employee?

12.2 (4.9)

## T12 Supply Chain Management

### 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/contactors to manage and monitor their Social Value obligations. This is supported by the MTVH Social Value Policy (July 2020) targeting the delivery of the 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 represents 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), and 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.

We have initially engaged with our Strategic and Preferred suppliers to complete a Sustainability Impact Questionnaire (SIQ). Moving forward, we will include the SIQ within tender packs and ensure any new suppliers complete the form alongside other documentation relating to contract & supplier set-up.