



ESG Report

2024/25

Environmental | Social | Governance

hillcrest.org.uk



Hillcrest

Foreword

Welcome to Hillcrest's third annual Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) report.

Our ESG journey continues to be shaped by key milestones. Since adopting the Sustainability Reporting Standard (SRS) for Social Housing in 2022/23, we have continued to build on our commitments. We are delighted that this year's report has been graded as "Exemplary" through a rigorous and independent external assessment process. This is a great indicator of continuous improvement over the last year. As the SRS adopter community grows, we look forward to using the SRS benchmarking tool to measure our progress, share learning and draw on best practice from across the sector. We will also explore enhanced ESG certification to further strengthen our transparency and drive continuous improvement.

Over the past year, we have delivered initiatives that make a tangible difference to the people and communities we serve. In Arbroath, our first whole-house retrofit project transformed 22 homes, with £1.15M invested in new windows and doors, air source heat pumps, external wall insulation, solar PV, and battery storage. At Rose Terrace in Perth, Hillcrest Maintenance demonstrated its growing expertise, by installing 97 hardwood sash and case windows. These improvements delivered enhanced energy efficiency and comfort of our tenants' homes while preserving the character and integrity of this historically important building.

The housing emergency has reinforced the urgency of our work. Over the past year, Hillcrest Homes and Hillcrest Enterprises have delivered nearly 300 new homes. In Dundee, these included modular construction at Victoria Quay, the transformation of a prominent gap site at Murraygate, and the final phase of development at Derby Street. Beyond Dundee, we have helped regenerate the former Strathmartine Hospital site in Angus, created 25 new homes at Western Tomaknock, Perth and Kinross and brought forward our first Aberdeenshire development at Westhill.

Looking ahead, we will publish our first Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy in Autumn 2025, setting out our commitment to becoming a net zero and climate resilient organisation. This will cover every part of our operations, from the way we build and maintain homes, to our fleet and landscaping, ensuring we reduce our carbon footprint and adapt to a changing climate.

Our commitment to building stronger communities goes beyond bricks and mortar. In February 2025, Hillcrest Futures Drug and Alcohol Recovery services in Dundee received the Welcoming Women Award for creating a safe space for women. Hillcrest Futures also became the service provider for the Beacon in Arbroath, a new wellbeing centre offering emotional and mental health support.

Our Financial Wellbeing team secured £4.7M in gains for tenants and the people we support, as well as providing essential advice on benefits, energy use, and household finances. Through the Hillcrest Foundation, we have also been able to extend our reach, supporting initiatives like Feeling Strong,

which engaged 1,849 young people in Dundee to tackle isolation and improve wellbeing.

We know the pressures facing our communities are also felt by our staff. Through our Health & Wellbeing Strategy, we have continued to promote a supportive workplace, with initiatives including fundraising events, Mental Health First Aiders, Menopause Champions, and a comprehensive benefits scheme.

As we reflect on a year of progress, it is important to acknowledge the leadership that has guided us through this journey. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank Angela Linton, our recently retired Chief Executive, for her exceptional commitment to Hillcrest. She has led the organisation through both challenges and opportunities, leaving a legacy of growth and resilience rooted in our ESG values.

We now welcome John Alexander, our new Chief Executive. With his leadership, the commitment of our staff and the support of the Board, I am confident that Hillcrest will continue to build on our achievements and remain guided by our mission of helping people live better lives.



Dave Boyle
Hillcrest Chairperson



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About us

Hillcrest was established in 1967 and is now one of Scotland’s largest Housing Associations, employing over 1,100 people across our operating areas in Scotland.

We are a diverse and forward-thinking organisation, offering services in housing, care, support, training, maintenance, and employment.

We currently have four business areas providing different services to our communities:

- > Hillcrest Homes: with over 8,000 homes across Dundee, Edinburgh, Angus, Perthshire, Fife, Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.
- > Hillcrest Enterprises: approaching 1,300 Mid-Market Rent (MMR) homes to suit a variety of household needs.
- > Hillcrest Maintenance: Providing a comprehensive trades service across a variety of void, cyclical, planned and property maintenance works.
- > Hillcrest Futures: Provides a range of care and support services to around 5,000 people covering learning disabilities, young people, homelessness and drug and alcohol recovery.

Our mission is: Helping people live better lives.

Key pillars	Our objectives
Financial resilience	Implement robust financial planning to achieve short and long-term financial stability.
Growth	Enable sustainable growth across all companies.
Impact	Maximise our positive impact on communities through a partnership approach to achieve meaningful and lasting outcomes.
Service excellence	Deliver outstanding customer service and person-centred support through effective investment in our people and resources.
Sustainability	Transition to a net zero and climate resilient organisation.

Our ESG reporting approach

Our ESG report demonstrates our commitment to sustainability and is a comprehensive approach for identifying and assessing how we manage our impact on the environment (Environmental), the communities we serve (Social), and how we operate (Governance).

Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing

To measure our ESG performance, we adopted the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRS). Developed by Sustainability for Housing and The Good Economy, the SRS provides a wide range of quantitative and qualitative criteria across twelve ESG themes which we report against on an annual basis.

This approach enables us to provide an overview of our sustainability performance over the past year and demonstrates how we are progressing towards achieving our sustainability goals.

The SRS was released in 2020, and our 2025 SRS return aligns to version 2.0. Our latest SRS performance return can be found at the end of this report.

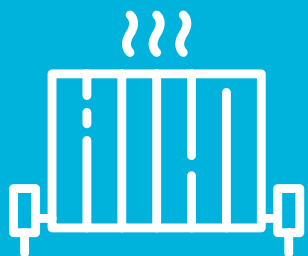
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Our ESG activity continues to be guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a set of seventeen goals aimed at driving change at government, business, and societal level to end poverty, fight inequality and protect the planet. Our work here at Hillcrest has a direct impact and contribution to achieving many of these goals and through use of icons in this report, we have linked our ESG progress to the relevant SDGs.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Our 2024/25 ESG at a glance



298

**energy efficient
new homes built**

Down from 331



22

**whole house
retrofits
completed**

Up from 0



180

**solar
photovoltaics
installed**

Down from 208

56.9%

**rent compared
to private sector**

Down from 59.4%



£4.7M

**financial gains achieved
by Tenant Services**

Up from £1.2 M



£225,348

**funding awarded by
Hillcrest Foundation**

Up from £180,858



94.1%

**homes at EPC
Band C or above**

Up from 92.9%

Environmental

Climate change

Our Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy 2025-30

The Scottish Government has set a target to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. In alignment with this objective, Hillcrest, in collaboration with local authorities and other public sector bodies, remains committed to delivering effective and sustainable initiatives over the coming decades.

Our Net Zero Delivery Group (NZD) provides strategic leadership, guidance, and oversight in achieving our commitment to becoming a net zero organisation. Our NZD group led the development of our Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy 2025-30, which is due to be published in Autumn 2025.

The Strategy is aligned with the Science Based Target initiative and details our aims, objectives and actions required to deliver net zero by achieving a 90% reduction in carbon emissions by 2045.

The Strategy also outlines our intention to explore more sustainable construction practices aimed at reducing the embodied carbon associated with the materials we use. We have updated our design brief to promote materials, products and components that are used as part of the day-to-day maintenance and replacement programme, which will ensure consistency and quality of product.

Reducing our Carbon Emissions

To achieve our carbon reduction targets, we regularly assess where we stand with emissions. Our carbon footprint has been calculated for 2024/25, with priority on Scope 1 and 2 emissions as these are directly under our control. At present, our Scope 3 emissions reporting is limited to water-related emissions data. Calculating our carbon emissions helps us refine our data, identify pinch points and plan strategically for reduction in line with our targets.

UN SDG:



Scope 1

1,557.6 tCO₂e

168.9 kgCO₂e per home

Scope 2

451.3 tCO₂e

48.9 kgCO₂e per home

Scope 3

11.4 tCO₂e

1.2 kgCO₂e per home

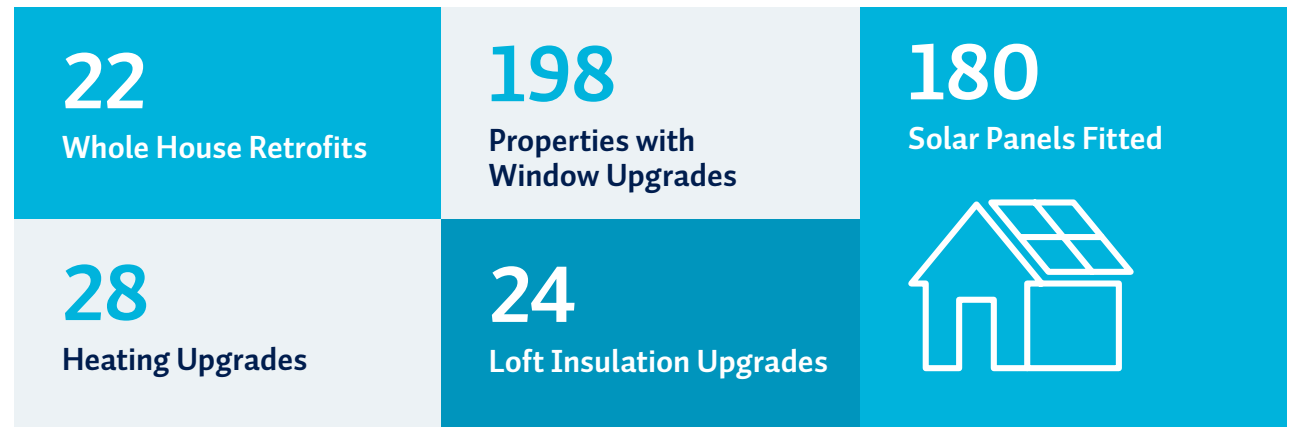
Working with our contractors, we have successfully installed 180 solar panels in 2024/25, at a cost of £1.2M which was fully funded through the ECO4 Grant scheme. This exceeded our expectations, as we had initially anticipated achieving less without a dedicated budget. From 2025/26 onwards, solar panels will be installed by Hillcrest Maintenance, and we have allocated £1M per annum to install at least 125 units per annum for the next seven years. This strategic shift will accelerate our transition to renewable energy, improve control over delivery and long-term maintenance and create opportunities to upskill staff.

We have recently completed a “whole house” retrofit for 22 properties at Cairnie, Arbroath, which included the installation of new windows and doors, air source heat pumps, external wall insulation, solar panels, and battery technology. The total value of this retrofit project was £1.15M and over £600k was match funded via the Scottish Housing Net Zero Fund (SHNZF).

We have also installed Quantum High Heat Retention heaters in 28 properties, replacing ineffective storage heating systems. There are still 170 properties where we would like to replace traditional storage heating with more efficient heating types.

24 properties had 300mm loft insulation installed as ad hoc works.

Property Retrofit Highlights



Property EPC Ratings

Band	Existing Homes	New Homes
A	0.8%	0.0%
B	38.8%	75.5%
C	54.3%	24.5%
D	5.8%	0.0%
E	0.3%	0.0%
F	0.0%	0.0%



Solar Energy for Affordable Living

We are delighted to be a part of the Scott Court Allume Energy's SolShare project in Dundee, which is a pioneering example of sustainable housing innovation. This technology physically splits the energy from a single rooftop solar system and divides it between multiple dwellings. The integration of the SolShare solar PV system has enhanced energy efficiency in the historic listed building at Scott Court, marking an innovative shared initiative within the industry.

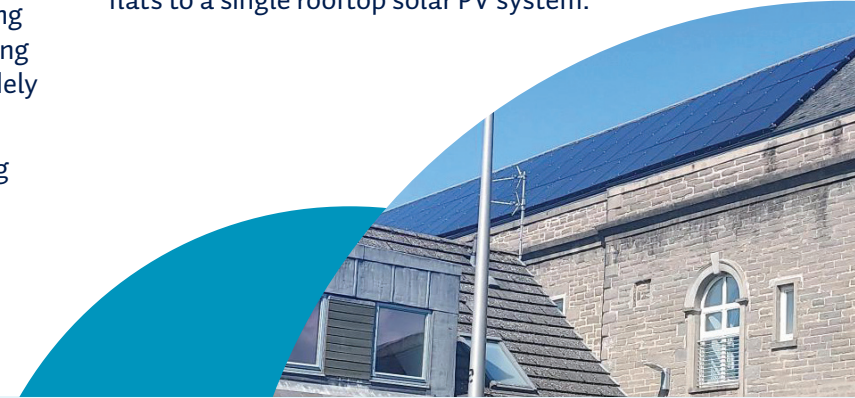
This system allows multiple tenants to benefit from a single rooftop solar array, reducing reliance on grid electricity and lowering energy costs. Many residents have already reported noticeable savings, demonstrating meaningful progress in tackling fuel

poverty. Tenants' electricity bills have reduced by 45% since the installation.

We will be closely monitoring the performance of this technology to assess how effectively it operates, what percentage of demand is met directly by solar, and, importantly, how much our tenants are saving on their fuel bills. Furthermore, we will be exploring opportunities to deploy this technology more widely across our housing stock.

We are delighted that The Old Mill Social Housing Solar project was recently awarded the Regional Small-Scale Project of the Year at the Energy Efficiency Awards 2025.

Allume Energy's SolShare technology was also the winner of the Most Innovative Product (Hardware) at the Housing Digital Innovation Awards 2023. The technology was noted as the world's only solution for connecting multiple flats to a single rooftop solar PV system.



Case Study

Rose Terrace, Perth

Our Hillcrest Maintenance team is proud to have successfully completed a major window replacement project at the historic Georgian building at Rose Terrace, Perth.

Spanning three months and involving the installation of 97 new hardwood sash and case windows, the project has delivered both visual improvements and significant energy efficiency gains. While the new windows are nearly identical in appearance to the old ones, their modern double-glazed design and improved insulation have transformed the comfort and sustainability of the homes.

Planning permission for the project took several years to secure due to the building's conservation status. Once granted, Hillcrest Maintenance worked

closely with local joinery manufacturer, who also provided specialist training for the Hillcrest team in advance of the installation.

To preserve the building's character while meeting modern standards, the new windows feature slimline double-glazing and structural astragals. The project also included upgrades to kitchen and bathroom ventilation, as well as improved insulation around the window frames using sustainable materials such as breathable hemp wool and airtightness tapes.

Originally constructed in the 1800's, Rose Terrace remains one of Perth's most architecturally significant Georgian streets. The project highlights Hillcrest's ongoing commitment to improving homes while maintaining the integrity of historically important buildings.

Tenants were surveyed on their satisfaction with the project, with 92% of the respondents saying that the new windows had improved the energy efficiency of their homes.



Ecology

Greenspaces and Biodiversity

As part of our Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy, we are working to build resilience by enhancing greenspaces and supporting biodiversity across the communities we serve. Through partnerships with environmental organisations, local authorities, our tenants and the people we support, we are advancing climate resilience, trialling sustainable landscaping practices, and expanding access to community growing projects.

Our Therapeutic Gardening service continues to provide our tenants and the people we support with the opportunity to transform communal areas into greener, welcoming spaces. These activities not only improve the local environment but also promote health and wellbeing, skills development, and social connection.

In summer 2024, the Hillcrest Engagement Team launched an annual Photography Competition, inviting tenants to capture the beauty of gardens, nature, and outdoor spaces in their communities. In 2025, we partnered with our technology park colleagues to take part in Plantlife's 'No Mow May' campaign at our Explorer Road headquarters in Dundee. This initiative promotes biodiversity and low-impact land management by allowing grassland areas to grow naturally during May. We plan to expand this approach to more sites in the coming years, supporting healthier ecosystems across our estate.

All our new build developments include greenspace as a key design feature, helping to manage surface water and enhance

local biodiversity in line with the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Strategy. These actions reflect our wider commitment to Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 and to creating greener, healthier, and more resilient neighbourhoods for the future.

As partners in the Sustainable Dundee Network, Hillcrest was gifted two bat boxes by a local construction company. These have been installed by Hillcrest Maintenance at our Dundee offices, strategically placed near nature networks and along wildlife corridors to support local bat populations. The initiative provided a valuable learning opportunity for our property and maintenance teams, who were actively involved in selecting suitable locations and gaining awareness of urban biodiversity enhancement. However small these actions may seem, they represent meaningful steps in our progression towards climate resilience and the enhancement of greenspaces and biodiversity.

Whilst Scotland does not currently have an agreed Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) metric, our intention is to adopt appropriate measures once these have been defined. Under National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), major developments are already required to deliver positive effects for biodiversity, including the enhancement of nature networks.



UN SDG:



Resource Management

Waste Management and Recycling

Our Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy also provides an overview of our plans to conduct a full waste management audit, divert all operational and construction waste from landfill, transition to paper-free operations, introduce an Environmental Impact Assessment process to consider waste management as part of all projects, and explore local recycling and reuse partnerships.

A key highlight is our partnership with SMI (formerly Lion Safety) to trial a workwear recycling scheme for Hillcrest Maintenance Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). With this scheme, all redundant workwear will be repurposed, shredded for stuffing, used for clean energy production, or incorporated into other products like dog beds, ensuring it avoids landfill and contributes to a circular economy. If successful, this initiative could expand to benefit Hillcrest Futures, amplifying its impact.

UN SDG:



Empowering Communities and Youth for a Greener Future

Social impact is central to our sustainability efforts. Through our Community Toolbox Partnership Initiative with Wellbeing Works, Dundee-based tenants can access tools for home and garden improvements at minimal cost. Hillcrest covers the annual membership fee and contributes to tool hire, helping residents maintain their homes affordably and sustainably.

We are proud to support youth-led innovation as part of the Circular Tayside partnership. In collaboration with Zero Waste Scotland, we set a challenge for our Young People's Group to tackle real-world sustainability issues. With support from

the Hillcrest Sustainability Team, the group focused on waste management in Dundee void properties left unoccupied between tenancies.

Void properties present a significant challenge due to leftover waste. This project allowed young people to explore reuse and recycling options and propose practical solutions. Their work has sparked valuable conversations with local community recycling partners, highlighting the role of youth in driving environmental and social change

Social

Affordability and Security

Rent Consultation

We pride ourselves on providing high quality affordable and sustainable homes that meet the ever-evolving needs of our tenants and people we support.

As a non-profit organisation, Hillcrest Homes must ensure that it takes enough rent to allow us to maintain and upgrade our properties and continue to deliver the services that are important to tenants and those in housing need.

Any proposed rent increase is always checked for affordability to ensure tenants can sustain their tenancies. As such, we carry out an extensive rent increase consultation with tenants each year to present them with the proposed increase options, clearly outline the benefits and effects of each option, and provide an opportunity for all tenants to give us their opinions.

The options usually include a base increase, which would allow Hillcrest Homes to continue operating to its current level,

as well as further increases which would provide the company with further funding for wider upgrade and new-build programmes.

We endeavour to ensure that all increase options are the minimum possible amount while still allowing us to operate our services and reach goals that are in the best interests of our tenants.

Following compilation of tenants' responses, a rent increase decision is reached by the Hillcrest Homes board based on affordability and feasibility, and this outcome is communicated to tenants at the earliest possible opportunity. Rent increase consultations also include extensive awareness raising of our Tenant Services teams, and the financial and energy support available if they are struggling with bills and housing costs.

The rent increase is then implemented each 1st April.

High Quality New Housing

Over the course of 2024/25, Hillcrest Homes and Hillcrest Enterprises took handover of almost

300 new homes across our geographical area

Some examples include

12 flats for social rent at Logie Green Road in Edinburgh

25 houses for social rent at Buttars Loan, Charleston, acquired from Blackwood

A stunning refurbishment of the listed building including the adjacent gap site at the Murraygate in Dundee, with

31 homes for social rent

The award-winning regeneration at Derby Street in Dundee, which provides

58 homes for social rent + **22** for mid-market rent

We are also delighted to have completed the remaining units at Falkland Avenue, in Cove, offering

23 homes for social rent + **44** for mid-market rent





New Development Burnland Drive, Westhill, Aberdeenshire

Hillcrest Homes struck a new milestone with the completion of 12 high quality, energy-efficient, affordable homes in Westhill's Burnland Drive, marking our first foray into the Aberdeenshire region.

The development, completed in February 2025 by CHAP Construction, offers a variety of accommodation options to meet local demand, comprising 1-bed cottage flats, as well as 2 and 3-bed houses. Each property is equipped with an electric vehicle charging point. The new homes are located within a short distance of our Straik Road development, which is scheduled for completion later this year and will deliver a further 63 homes across a variety of property types to the Aberdeenshire area.



New Development Burnside Mill, Dundee

In Autumn of 2024, Hillcrest, in partnership with George Martin Builders Ltd, commenced the regeneration of the old Jute works at Burnside Mill in Dundee. This project will conduct a regeneration of the existing buildings and will maintain the original façade and Victorian slate roof.

The completed project will provide 54 homes for social rent and will include

high performance cladding, windows, and doors. The project has been supported by the Scottish Government, who provided £5,483,162 in funding. The project will also benefit from contributions from both Dundee Historic Environment Trust and the Architectural Heritage Trust.



New Development Victoria Dock, Dundee

In collaboration with Culross Ltd and Enevate Homes, we are proud to have completed phase one of Scotland's largest development of modular affordable homes. Located at Victoria Dock in the heart of Dundee's Waterfront redevelopment, the £13M project will deliver in total 119 affordable apartments using a specially developed 'off site modular' construction method, where housing pods were constructed at Enevate Homes Wishaw facility as fully completed sections of the apartment block including wiring, plumbing, interior finishing and even some white goods.

The pods were then transported to the Victoria Dock site and lifted by crane in a specific order and position before being secured into place. This pioneering method of construction has several benefits. Construction materials are used much more efficiently, meaning hugely reduced construction waste and less demand on raw materials, with overall construction time also drastically reduced.

In addition, this method also allows for the straightforward installation of additional floors should the need arise.

The properties will be spread over two apartment blocks, one consisting of 53 homes for social rent, and one of 66 homes for mid-market rent. The homes offer a mixture of one and two bedrooms and have balconies giving outstanding views over the city or the river.

Completion of the 119 affordable homes will provide Dundee with further high-quality availability for those in housing need, with the Scottish Government providing £7.8M towards the project.

UN SDG:



Tackling High Energy Costs

We are actively working to reduce fuel poverty through several key strategies. We are upgrading fabric insulation, installing new double or triple glazed windows, and high-performance doors to reduce heat loss.

Additionally, we have installed clean heating systems on a small scale, such as heat pumps and heat networks, through initiatives like the Social Housing Net Zero Heat Fund. To reduce reliance on the national grid, we are also incorporating renewable technologies, particularly Solar PV.



Reducing Poverty Together

Our Tackling Poverty Together Strategy and Action Plan (TPTS) was shaped with help from our Tenant Feedback Forum, who are regularly consulted on how we can improve upon the services and support we provide. We are also involved in initiatives such as the Dundee Fairness Leadership Panel, supporting a broader local authority wide approach to supporting people and tackling poverty through collective efforts.

The TPTS provides a framework aimed at reducing poverty and improving the financial wellbeing for our tenants and service users. The action plan is updated yearly to ensure we are taking the right steps.

Some examples of what our tenants told us over the last year, and what we have done in response, include:

They said: Provide more help and support for tenants

We did: Secured over £4.7M for tenants, including £150,000 in external grants, distributed by our Tenant Services teams.

They said: Help those who find it hard to ask for support

We did: Visited under-25s with older electric heating and secured over £100,000 in grants to reduce their energy costs.

They said: Help us with fuel bills

We did: We helped 907 tenants learn to use their heating more efficiently. We also reached out about the Warm Home Discount and supported 272 tenants in understanding how to fully utilise their solar panels to derive maximum benefit for their household. We have installed new energy-saving tech in some homes – saving tenants over £1M last year.

The Hillcrest Energy Advice Team (HEAT), offer a range of services designed to help our tenants lower their energy bills and deal with energy debt. In 2024/25, our HEAT achieved the following financial gains:

Total financial gains

£1,002,548

£144,202

in energy top ups

1,134 tenants

received energy advice

£75,446

in fuel debt write offs

907 tenants

received heating/solar PV demonstrations

£45,000

in Octopus funding (24/25)



Meeting our Tenants' Needs

Our housing portfolio demonstrates a significant commitment to providing long-term, secure tenancies across all our areas of operation.

On average, our tenants remain with us for

8.3 years

95.63%

of social tenancies are sustained for more than 12 months

This highlights our commitment to providing secure homes, community stability and the prevention of homelessness.



The specialist teams within our Housing Services provide dedicated support for our tenants on a range of tenancy related matters. Our Tenant Services teams include:

- > **Financial Wellbeing Team**
providing a range of benefits advice, money management and budgeting services, available to all tenants.
- > **Social Wellbeing Team**
offering support to people with mental health or addiction issues - available to Hillcrest Homes tenants in Dundee and Angus and Hillcrest Enterprises tenants in any area.
- > **Hillcrest Energy Advice Team (HEAT)**
this service provides energy advice and can help tenants lower energy bills and deal with energy debt - available to all Hillcrest Homes tenants and staff.
- > **Helping Our People Engage (HOPE)**
a Dundee city-wide service providing advice, support and linking up people with services in the community.
- > **Hillcrest Engagement Team**
providing opportunities for tenants to give feedback and suggestions on improving service delivery.

Our specialist teams deliver integrated support and advice to improve the lives of our tenants. Several projects in 2024/25 provided support to some of our most vulnerable tenants and involved a multi team approach to ensure successful outcomes. Some examples of the help we provide are highlighted in the case studies detailed below.

Tenant Services Financial Gains 2024/25

Team	Financial gains achieved for tenants
All Tenant Services	£4.7M
Financial Wellbeing Team	£3.1M
Hillcrest Energy Advice Team	£1.0M
Hillcrest Enterprises (Tenant Services Officer)	£0.6M

Case Study

Pension Credit Campaign

The Winter Fuel Allowance was withdrawn from many pensioners, leaving them with the possibility of a very cold winter. We reached out to the 1,200 tenants who were of relevant age to offer them a benefit check with a view to getting as many onto Pension Credit and to subsequently access the Winter Fuel Allowance. Using external funding from Octopus Energy, we were able to work additional hours to increase our capacity to deliver this service.

One example of how this helped our tenants:

A mother and daughter were of pension age with no Pension Credit entitlement and had lived in the

property since 1994. They were found to be living very sparingly and just making do.

Members of HEAT visited the tenants to provide a heating demonstration and offer much needed energy advice. This resulted in a Warm Home Discount application being made on behalf of both the tenants, who then received a subsequent payment of £150 each from the Octopus energy fund, giving them a total of £300 towards their fuel bills.

Repairs were also arranged through our Maintenance team to the windows of the property

which had been found to be draughty.

Our Financial Wellbeing Team also provided advice to help the tenants make Housing Benefit and Council Tax benefit claims, resulting in a Housing Benefit award of over £100 per week.

In total, around £8K in financial gains were achieved for the tenants and they have advised they are now more comfortable in the home and more financially stable.

This example of collaborative team working demonstrates our commitment to improving our tenants' lives.

Case Study

Supporting Tenants in Crisis

One of our Enterprise tenants, who worked within the care sector, unexpectedly found herself pregnant and had to leave her job due to domestic abuse from the baby's father.

Despite securing a new part-time job, she was not entitled to any occupational or statutory maternity pay. Her income was now very low, and her outgoings remained high.

Our Financial Wellbeing Team helped the tenant to apply for Universal Credit and Discretionary Housing Payment for her rent shortfall. We assisted the tenant on budgeting her finances, so they became more manageable.

We were also able to secure some food vouchers for the tenant from our Food & Fuel project, to help keep her going whilst waiting for Universal Credit.

The tenant was also given a Tesco voucher from our Helping Household fund, which went towards her purchasing new maternity clothes and a winter coat.

Once she became a new mum, the tenant was also referred to Barnardos for extra support such as vouchers for baby clothes and food.

Finally, our HEAT advisers were able to secure £150 Octopus funding to help the tenant have extra heating for her newborn baby. The tenant is now working with Woman's Aid; her home is secure, and she can live in financial comfort whilst on maternity leave.



Building Safety and Quality

The safety and security of our tenants and the people we support is paramount, and we ensure that our portfolio of homes and buildings not only meet but significantly exceed the minimum compliance and safety requirements.

100%

of relevant premises are fire risk assessed (FRA)

We carry out FRAs in relevant premises including care facilities, supported accommodation, high-rise buildings or where there is a requirement to upgrade a fire alarm. We conduct these FRA's on an annual basis and 100% were completed in 2024/2025.

99.99%

of homes have undergone gas safety checks

As of 31st March 2025, 99.99% of gas services were conducted on time and prior to their anniversary deadline. Only one property missed its gas safety check, because of difficulties gaining access.

99.85%

of homes have had electrical safety checks conducted

As of 31st March 2025, 99.85% of properties were compliant with Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) legislative requirements. 13 homes remain outstanding and are awaiting entry access or building warrants.

Dealing with Damp and Condensation

When conducting damp inspections, we use advanced technology such as the FLIR MR277 Building Inspection System, which integrates a thermal imaging camera, hygrometer, laser-assisted IR thermometer, and moisture meter. We can accurately assess building physics during the inspections, including measuring humidity, surface temperature, and moisture content within materials. By combining these tools, we can effectively identify hidden issues contributing to mould growth and condensation, ensuring a more precise diagnosis and targeted remedial action.

In addition, we use a Testo anemometer to measure airflow and ventilation rates within the property. This helps assess whether inadequate air movement is contributing to excess humidity or condensation issues, supporting a more complete understanding of indoor environmental conditions. Support from other departments is also available, such as advice from HEAT to help address any fuel poverty concerns. Our integrated

system ensures the appropriate department contacts the tenant to provide the necessary support.

We conduct a 'post-damp' follow-up to evaluate the effectiveness of the solutions. If the issue is resolved, we close the contact, creating a comprehensive timeline of interactions, actions taken, and saved inspection reports. If the issue persists, a second damp inspection is scheduled, potentially involving advanced technologies and specialised professionals to diagnose and resolve the problem thoroughly.

Tenants can also access advice on how to prevent condensation and mould by visiting our website and reading the information provided.

Through this diligent, proactive approach, we aim to create healthier living environments, minimising mould occurrences and ensuring all our tenants feel safe and supported in their homes.

UN SDG:



Resident Voice

Our tenants' perspectives are extremely important to us, and we provide many opportunities to enable them to have their say in decisions that affect their homes, communities, and services.

Listening to and acting on our tenant feedback is essential for us to be able to deliver fair, responsive, and sustainable housing services. It is also a core part of building trust, accountability, and community wellbeing.

UN SDG:



Hillcrest Engagement Team

Our Hillcrest Engagement Team have led several innovative projects to connect with tenants in more meaningful ways. These efforts have deepened our understanding of tenant needs and directly informed the development of more responsive strategies to meet them.

> Project Rebrand

Learning from the pandemic, the team embraced an innovative approach to engagement, offering tenants modernised and inclusive ways to get involved. They are now delivering a range of opt in/opt out engagement opportunities, using new CX Feedback software, whilst maintaining traditional methods for those without digital access. A second aim was to reinvigorate the

Handling Complaints

Our annual Complaints Report provides an overview of the type of complaints we receive and addresses the areas where we need to improve upon. This year, we are pleased that no complaints were classed under maladministration by the Ombudsman.

During the last year we made several improvements to our services as a direct result of the complaints we received.

We are continually looking for ways we can improve the quality of our complaint handling and last year launched a new e-learning training course for staff. This course provides an understanding

of how to manage complaints effectively, and shares tools and techniques to support staff whilst dealing with challenging situations. We also launched customer complaint satisfaction surveys which helps us analyse how well we manage complaints, and act on any areas of concern.

Our Complaints Report 2024/25 is available via our website.



team's profile within the organisation, featuring a new brand identity, a suite of 'How To' guides, and a new e-learning module.

> Engagement & Consultation

The Engagement Team delivered several innovative projects in the past year, including Estate Based Initiatives designed to involve tenants in improving their outdoor space. Tenants were consulted on the Tackling Poverty Together Strategy and on the Annual Performance report. The Digital Scrutiny project queried tenants on how we could improve digital communications, and our Photography Competition encouraged tenants to celebrate gardens, outdoor spaces, and nature. A 'Rent First' Campaign ran throughout November and December 2024, using targeted push notifications covering Hillcrest

Tenant Services teams, Lightning Reach Money Advice Portal, and tips for managing money at Christmas. Our e-mails and text messages had a 'click rate' of between 50 – 75%.

> Feedback Forum

The team consulted tenants on changing the name of the Interested Tenants Register to the more relatable Feedback Forum. Through phone calls and push messaging on our Hillcrest tenant app, we have increased the membership of the Feedback Forum from around 600 at the start of the year, to over 900 tenants.



Placemaking

Award Winning Regeneration at Ellengowan, Dundee

As well as achieving a Silver Award in the Affordable Housing category at the Scottish Design Awards in June 2024, our renowned Ellengowan redevelopment project was named as an 'exceptional' project at the 2025 Annual Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland Awards. The project was praised for its inclusive and contextual approach, open space planning, augmentation of its natural landscape, and for balancing modern community needs and aspirations with heritage preservation.

The vibrant and sustainable neighbourhood that has been created was another key factor in the Ellengowan redevelopment scooping these top accolades. The development has maintained the welcoming, community feel that residents previously cherished, and offers a range of homes to suit different households. The redevelopment project is replacing 128 homes, which had been built in the 1920s and were only intended to have a lifespan of 20 years, with 130 modern energy-efficient homes.



UN SDG:



Providing Safe Places

We are committed to ensuring our services support healthy, thriving communities where people in need can access the right resources at the right time.

In February 2025, our Futures Drug and Alcohol Recovery services in Dundee were recognised for their commitment to supporting women by receiving the Welcoming Women Award for their work at our South Ward Road premises.

The services were commended by the Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership for their efforts in creating a welcoming and supportive environment for women in crisis.

Earlier this year, Hillcrest Futures was appointed as the service provider for The Beacon, a new Community Wellbeing Centre that opened in Arbroath in Summer 2025.

Developed in collaboration with Angus Health & Social Care Partnership, the Beacon provides vital support for people aged 16 and over, offering a compassionate response to people suffering from mental health and wellbeing distress. Everyone, including family members and carers can access support in person, over the phone, via text, email or via social media channels.



Young People in the Community Peer Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol Services

Our Hillcrest Futures Young People's services provide support to children, young people, and their families across Angus. Our dedicated team offers personalised support to help young people thrive, including one-to-one support, group education and workshops and community events and outreach.

We have four main service areas delivered from the Forfar office:

- > Early Intervention and Family Support
- > Drug and Alcohol Support
- > Peer Mental Health Support
- > Relationship, Sexual Health, and Parenthood

"This is what I needed to clear my head - a drive and a chat with you."

Young person aged 13

"Thank you for today. I needed that chat more than I thought."

Family member

"From starting to work with Hillcrest, to now, I see the change in the way I manage my emotions. I think more before reacting and I will use coping strategies to my advantage."

Young person aged 14

"I am so happy that my grandson has a safe place to go, and I find it comforting that he has a person he can trust outwith the family ...it's not always easy to speak to the people you love about things."

Family member

"I understand Kyle's* problems and conditions so much more now. I'm not afraid to seek out and ask for help anymore. I feel that I can voice my concerns in a more controlled way at meetings now, and I'll be making sure that Kyle gets the best support available for the next chapter of his life."

Family member

"Thank you for all your support and taking the time to listen to my problems. I am now in a much better position to move on with my life."

Young person aged 16

*Names have been changed to maintain confidentiality

Helping the Homeless

Hillcrest Futures: In October 2024, our Futures' homeless services in Edinburgh and Glasgow received high praise in the Care Inspectorate report, which rated the services as 'Very Good' for supporting people's wellbeing and for leadership. The report, based on an inspection carried out in September 2024, highlighted the positive impact the service has on residents' health and wellbeing.

The services, which provide housing support and care at home for individuals who have experienced homelessness, were recognised for creating a safe and supportive environment. Residents described staff as being knowledgeable, skilled, and empathetic, helping them to feel respected and listened to.

A key strength of the services, as noted in the report, is the strong partnership collaboration with community and healthcare services. This joint approach ensures that residents can access the help they need, from securing permanent housing to receiving healthcare and mental health support.

One resident shared:

"The staff are respectful and see me as a person. They help me focus on my strengths and what I can do to bring about changes. They are good at listening, never judgemental or patronising."

Hillcrest Homes: A significant proportion of all property lets, ranging from 30% to 75%, depending on local authority agreements, are prioritised for people experiencing homelessness.

In 2024/25, we let a total of 277 properties to households identified as statutorily homeless across our areas of operation. Additionally, we provide temporary homeless accommodation on behalf of Angus Council for adults and families in Forfar, Angus.

To help prevent homelessness and support tenancy sustainment, we provide a range of tailored support services to our tenants. We also carry out targeted interventions to assist individuals who may be at greater risk of not sustaining their tenancy.

Our Development Team works in close collaboration with our Local Authority partners and our own Housing and Enterprises Teams to ensure our new homes are built in communities where there is a demand for housing.

Hillcrest Foundation and Community Benefits Programme (CBP)

The Hillcrest Foundation was established in 2020 to support local communities and to help people live better lives. Each year, Hillcrest staff, service users and supporters participate in fundraising challenges such as staff quiz, the Kiltwalk and the Banchory Beast Race to raise money for the Hillcrest Foundation. These funds are then allocated by our Trustees to internal and external projects each year.

The Foundation also includes a Community Benefits Programme, and through generous funding/donations from our partnership agencies, we have been able to increase our impact and extend our reach to a wider audience:

CBP Key Statistics 2024/25



We awarded a total of
£123,212
of funds in 2024



We supported a total of
20 community groups
and charities



Our awards will support
an estimated
38,936
people



Localities supported include
Angus, Aberdeen, Dundee,
Fife and Perth & Kinross



Case Study



Hillcrest Foundation Feeling Strong

Amount Awarded from Foundation:

£5,000

People Supported:

1,849

meaningful engagements
with young people in Dundee.

Feeling Strong is a Dundee-based charity with the ambition to improve the lives of young people living with mental health and wellbeing challenges. At Feeling Strong, the goal is to use skills development, mentoring and confidence building to promote positive outcomes for young people.

The funding was used to deliver a range of activities to reduce loneliness, social isolation and improve wellbeing among young people. Activities included Art Night, Games Club, and Knitting Night. For many young people, these activities offer important opportunities to address their mental health and wellbeing struggles, while in a relaxed and supportive environment.



Responding to Housing Sector Challenges

We are proud of our ongoing commitment to providing high-quality housing to fit the needs of all our tenants throughout their lives.

Last year, the Scottish Government declared a housing emergency. In response, Hillcrest, in partnership with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA), met with the First Minister of Scotland, the Rt Hon John Swinney MSP, to emphasise the critical role housing plays in tackling poverty.

The sector welcomed the Scottish Government's recognition of this issue, which was reflected later in the year by significant increases in both the Social Housing Investment grant and funding for housing adaptations.

The difference that a suitable home can make is huge and Hillcrest remains committed to maintaining suitable and sustainable homes for life at affordable rent levels.

However, with increased Government funding, organisations like ours would be able to change more lives, more quickly, and we continue to encourage Scottish Government and Local Authorities to provide higher levels of funding.

Governance

Structure and Governance

How We Operate

We are governed by a voluntary Governing Body composed of individuals with a diverse range of skills and professional experience. This body meets regularly to provide strategic oversight and direction for the organisation.

To support its work, the Governing Body has two established Sub-Committees with delegated authority to consider specific matters. One of these, the Audit & General Purposes Sub-Committee, is responsible for:

- > Overseeing all aspects of internal audit, compliance, and the organisation's annual reporting obligations.
- > Reviewing reports and matters relating to Hillcrest's core corporate functions.

Our Operations Sub-Committee is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operational management of Hillcrest's Housing, Property, and Development functions. Its remit includes:

- > Monitoring operational policies and procedures, reviewing departmental performance, and addressing tenant complaints.
- > Providing oversight of the Property Strategy, including the ongoing maintenance of Hillcrest's housing stock and the delivery of the organisation's development programme.

We are fully compliant with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Standards of Governance and Financial Management.



Board and Trustees

Our Governing Body Membership

In addition to the main governance structure, there are dedicated subsidiary boards for each of our three companies: Hillcrest Futures, Hillcrest Maintenance, and Hillcrest Enterprises. These boards hold delegated authority for key decision-making in relation to the operational activities specific to each subsidiary.

The Hillcrest Foundation is overseen by a board of voluntary Trustees. The Foundation is proud to be a member of the Scottish Grantmakers, a network of independent funders working to strengthen communities across Scotland. Its members are committed to sharing learning, building good

practice, and contributing to a more impactful funding sector.

Each year, we review the Governing Body membership and conduct a recruitment exercise to address any gaps in areas such as gender balance, ethnic representation, and age.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy details our commitment to ensuring equality within all levels of the organisation, ensuring the needs of skills, knowledge, diversity, and objectivity are all met.

Our Board Membership Statistics* for 2024/25 are:

What % of the board are women? 18.2%	What % of the board have a disability? 0%
What % of the board are BAME? 9.1%	Average age of the board 53.1 years
What % of the board are residents? 9.1%	Average tenure of the board 4.5 years

*These statistics are based on the results of surveys of the Governing Body Members of Hillcrest Homes. As not all Members provide a response, the results may not reflect the actual diversity of the Governing Body.

Board Effectiveness

Our internal auditors carried out an independent board effectiveness review which concluded in 2024/25. The objective of the review was to obtain reasonable assurance that the arrangements in place across Hillcrest comply with the principles of good governance.

The review was carried out in line with the UK Corporate Governance Code and all Board members were invited to take part. The Hillcrest Foundation had recently appointed several new Trustees, and it was not deemed appropriate to include this area of the business.

The review concluded that Hillcrest demonstrates high levels of compliance with the general principles set out in the UK Code of Governance, where it is applicable. Several areas were identified for improvement, and an action plan has been developed to address them.

Regular updates on the progress of the actions are presented to the Audit and General Purposes Sub-Committee.

UN SDG:



Staff Wellbeing

Inspiring Initiatives

The wellbeing of our staff is central to everything we do and is championed by our leaders, embraced by our managers, and part of our everyday culture.

Guided by our Health & Wellbeing Policy, we take a collaborative approach to ensure our people remain happy, healthy, and engaged. We offer a range of initiatives designed to support our employees and foster a positive, resilient workplace environment. We have a dedicated wellbeing group of volunteers and key departments across the business responsible for ensuring that our wellbeing offering meets the needs of the workforce. This group has been re-launched and refreshed this year to help ensure that staff wellbeing remains a key focus for everyone.

Every year, our staff can take part in fundraising physical challenges such as the Kiltwalk and the Banchory Beast, with all funds raised going to the Hillcrest Foundation and invested into impactful community projects.

Our Mental Health First Aiders are available to any employee experiencing mental health issues or distress, and we also have a team of Menopause Champions who provide guidance and advice on all matters related to Menopause.

All employees have access to our staff benefits scheme including an HSF health plan with 24-hour GP line, virtual doctor, counselling, legal helpline, and commercial discounts. With effect from 1 July 2025, staff currently on the V1 benefit scheme automatically transferred to the V2 scheme, doubling the value of the benefits at no additional cost to staff.

Our Staff Representative Group enables employees to have a meaningful voice in shaping workplace policies. This group comprises of volunteer members of staff and members of the leadership team who help identify and address any issues that could impact staff health and wellbeing and ensures our commitment to a supportive and inclusive work environment.

Through regular training, we ensure that line managers have the key skills, knowledge, and ability to support their people to improve their health and wellbeing.

An Employer of Choice

Our vision is to build on what already makes Hillcrest a great place to work - by continuing to invest in our people and ensuring they consistently feel valued, supported, and heard. We are committed to fostering a culture where staff have a meaningful voice and feel empowered to share their views on the organisational matters that affect them.

Our recent employee engagement survey received a response rate of 66% - our highest to date. We are happy that the overall employee engagement score for 2025 is 75%, reflecting a strong level of connection and commitment among our workforce. This score is derived from the average responses to three key questions in the survey that reflect pride, purpose and advocacy at Hillcrest, and is not only an indicator of workplace satisfaction, but also a critical driver of retention, performance and our ability to attract top talent.

We are proud to have been accredited with the Investors in People Gold Award, Investors in Young People Silver and Investors in Wellbeing Silver. We are also recognised as a Living Wage Employer, and employees have access to flexible working practices with a salary sacrifice scheme, optional purchase of annual leave and hybrid working.





Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

We have an EDI Policy that is shared with all staff. This policy outlines our legal and regulatory responsibilities, affirms our commitment to fostering equality of opportunity, and promotes a diverse and inclusive workplace. It also sets clear expectations for staff conduct, including a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination, prejudice, harassment, or victimisation.

Our intranet includes a page for EDI which provides staff with access to various resources, including:

- > Key definitions such as harassment, victimisation and direct discrimination
- > Details of who is on our EDI Strategic Board and EDI Action Group and the remits of these respective groups
- > A calendar of EDI related events
- > Training videos and guides for completing EQIAs

In addition to all staff EDI training which was rolled out in 2023/24, we have developed new Unconscious Bias training. This new training will support staff to understand unconscious bias, recognise their own bias, and put in place measures to prevent this from affecting their decision-making.

We have added in functionality for staff to add their pronouns to their profiles in Microsoft Teams and encouraged staff to add pronouns to their email signatures.

We continue to regularly publish articles to our intranet and social media about EDI related matters and events. For example, articles about World Down Syndrome Day, Autism Acceptance Week, and International Women's Day.

Recently, we recruited an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer to further drive forward improvements and initiatives in this area.

Professional Development

We support the professional development of all staff from day one. Starting at induction, we identify training needs and build on these through regular workload meetings and annual reviews. This ongoing process helps set clear objectives and strengthen skills, with colleague feedback forming a vital part in shaping development and continuous improvement.

We follow a rigorous change management policy, with support from our Human Resources and Organisational Development Teams, to ensure that our staff are trained to adapt to any modern technologies and changes to process.

Additional learning and courses are referenced against our Training Needs Analysis and Role Profiles to ensure that all staff have access to what they need to fulfil their duties, all supported by access to ongoing support through, mentoring, coaching, shadowing, self-directed learning, and accredited courses.

In the last year, several governance strategies were approved including those for Organisational Development, Young People, Communications and Corporate. These strategies provide a framework for ensuring we maintain high levels of employee satisfaction and overall service delivery.

Apprenticeships and Young Workers

At Hillcrest, we believe in supporting young people to build their skills, find rewarding jobs, and develop fulfilling careers. Preparing young workers for the world of work is essential for their personal growth and for the future success of our organisation.

As a Young Person's Guarantee employer, we are committed to offering a wide range of opportunities, including apprenticeships, work experience placements, and graduate programmes. We are always looking for new and innovative ways to help our young workforce thrive and find that our Young Person's Voice Group provides an excellent opportunity for our young people to share their thoughts and opinions on matters impacting on them.

Over the past year, three of our Modern Apprentices have successfully completed their apprenticeship and have now been retained in full time roles within the organisation. We also have two Graduate Apprentices who have just completed the first year of their apprenticeship and have returned to university for the start of their second year, whilst also working full time. Our current 4th year trade apprentices are in the process of undertaking their skills tests and will hopefully be able to secure future roles within our Maintenance team.

We are delighted to be offering a total of 5 Trades and 7 Modern Apprenticeship opportunities across Hillcrest over the coming year.



Supply Chain

Sustainability is embedded in our procurement process from the outset. Before any tender is published, we consider the whole-life costs of the goods and services being procured.

Specification requirements are drafted with sustainability in mind, and, where appropriate, we request environmentally friendly alternatives from suppliers. We prioritise contracting suppliers who demonstrate a commitment to environmental performance, including clear policies and procedures to minimise waste and address environmental issues.

All suppliers must meet defined minimum sustainability criteria and provide supporting evidence. Our Procurement Team works closely with the Sustainability Team, who offer expert guidance, such as advising on relevant sustainability questions to include during supplier assessments. Current practices and guidance support our endeavour to give Environmental/Sustainability a 10% weighting of the overall tender scoring criteria where appropriate and proportionate.

Ongoing contract management ensures accountability and continuous improvement. Beyond initial evidence submission, we monitor suppliers' progress against their own sustainability targets, including their journey toward achieving net zero. This oversight extends to approved subcontractors, who are expected to provide the same level of sustainability information. Agreed key performance indicators (KPIs), tailored to each contract, help track performance in specific areas and ensure our suppliers continue to meet our environmental expectations throughout the life of the contract.

UN SDG:



How we manage ESG risk

Our Risk Register contains identified risks which are categorised under Reputation, Operational Delivery, Financial, Compliance, Data & Information Management, and Major Change.

Each individual risk is also categorised as an Environmental, Social and/or Governance risk. Our risk appetite is set on an annual basis and any variance to the risk appetite is reported.

Risks are regularly reviewed by the Executive Team and are reported to the Governing Body through the Audit and General Purposes Sub-Committee on a quarterly basis. All subsidiary risks are monitored in terms of any impact to Hillcrest Homes and are reported to subsidiary Boards on a quarterly basis. All risks have identified control measures in place which are regularly reviewed by senior members of staff. Where required, additional actions are in place, and these are also assigned to senior members of staff with timeframes for completion.

Additionally, we conduct a risk assessment for any new business, employ Treasury Management specialists and have an internal audit programme that provides further reassurance. In response to the external assessment of our 2023/24 report, we have expanded the information we provide in relation to our management of risk. This includes a breakdown of the risks in place (accurate as of May 2025) alongside our categorisation of risks and further information about our approach.

Social Value

Regardless of the value of the contract that we are procuring, social value or community benefits are considered and, where appropriate, included within the tender documentation.

We ensure that these are proportionate, reasonable and achievable based on the value and type of work being procured. This can take a variety of forms from training opportunities to added value services to tenants. Our preferred approach is for the successful bidder to donate to the Hillcrest Foundation based on a percentage of the contract value for the year.

Suppliers can access the Hillcrest Foundation report from our website and a link is included in the tender documents so they can access this information before making a bid. We also ask

questions about social value and added value that can be delivered from the contract within the quality questionnaire which forms part of the selection criteria for suppliers.

We collect the Community Benefit donations on an annual basis or at other agreed intervals depending on the duration of the contract.

The Foundation produces an annual report showing how much has been given out to local initiatives and projects, and this year, the Foundation generated just under £50K in Community Benefit funding.



£225,348

**funding awarded by
Hillcrest Foundation**

Up from £180,858

External Assessment

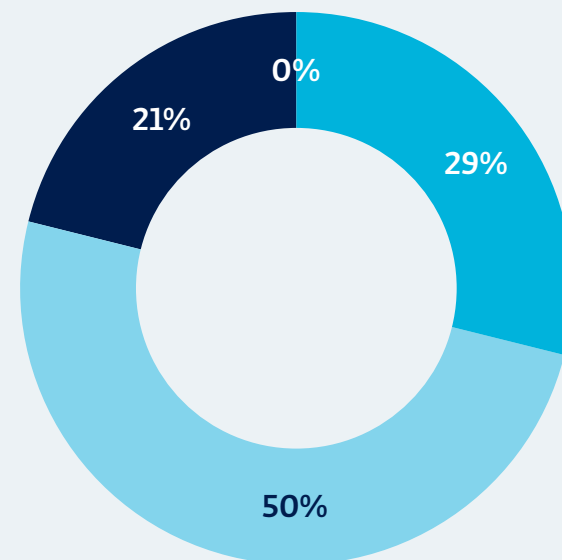
We commissioned RITTERWALD to perform an external assessment of this ESG Report to provide quality assurance, transparency of our disclosure and to identify areas where our reporting could be improved. The exercise assessed how detailed our responses were against 14 of the SRS criteria and

attributed an evaluation level per criterion: insufficient, sufficient, good, or great according to the granularity level of the disclosed information. We reached a sufficient level of disclosure in 3 criteria, a good level in 7 criteria, and a great level in 4 criteria.

We are delighted our ESG report for 2024/25 has received an overall grade of Exemplary.

Overall performance:

Strengths noted for energy performance on existing stock and new construction, retrofit and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). RITTERWALD has recommended improvement actions around carbon emissions reporting, Net Zero target and strategy, and ESG risk. We will explore options to improve the detail of our reporting in each of these areas for next year.



SRS Data Return 2024/25

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025
Environmental	Climate Change	C1	Distribution of EPC ratings of existing homes (those completed before the last financial year).	Average SAP rating of existing homes (those completed before the last financial year).	A 0.77% B 38.80% C 54.34% D 5.80% E 0.29% F 0.01% ENHANCED Average SAP - 78.05 We are focussing on Scottish governments upcoming “Fabric Efficiency Metric” which is to be introduced in the upcoming Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHNZ). The target ratings are still under consultation, however we are preparing for the space heating demand targets which will require a better understanding of our buildings heat retention performance. We plan to carry out more building performance measurement testing, e.g. air tightness testing, thermography, and U-value testing to fully understand the energy demand requirement for our buildings.
Environmental	Climate Change	C2	Distribution of EPC ratings of new homes (those completed in the last financial year).	Average SAP rating of new homes (those completed in the last financial year). Energy use intensity [Kwh/m²/yr] of new homes	B 75.50% C 24.50% ENHANCED Average SAP - 83.69 We are focussing on Scottish governments upcoming “Fabric Efficiency Metric” which is to be introduced in the upcoming Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHNZS). The target ratings are still under consultation, however we are preparing for the space heating demand targets which will require a better understanding of our buildings heat retention performance. We plan to carry out more building performance measurement testing, e.g. air tightness testing, thermography, and U-value testing to fully understand the energy demand requirement for our buildings
Environmental	Climate Change	C3	Does the housing provider have a Net Zero target and strategy? If so, what is it and when does the housing provider intend to be Net Zero by?	Is the housing provider’s net zero commitment in line with the Science Based Target (SBT) initiative? [Yes/No] Does the housing provider have a costed transition plan? [Yes/No]	Yes. Our Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy 2025-30 was published in Autumn 2025. It details our target to deliver net zero by achieving a 90% reduction in carbon emissions by 2045, and offsetting the remaining emissions. ENHANCED These targets will be validated with the SBT initiative in the future. We have a retrofit budget of £217M.

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025
Environmental	Climate Change	C4	What retrofit activities has the housing provider undertaken in the last 12 months in relation to its housing stock? How do these activities align with, and contribute towards, performance against the housing provider's Net Zero strategy and target?	Number of homes that have been retrofitted in the last financial year [# homes] Homes that have been retrofitted in the last financial year as a percentage of the total homes the housing providers is aiming to retrofit [%]	Over the past 12 months we have carried out retrofit measures on 454 properties, including: 22 properties received whole house retrofits including air source heat pump, external wall insulation, solar photovoltaics and battery technology. 198 properties received replacement high performance windows. 166 properties received solar photovoltaic installations. 28 properties received quantum high heat retention heaters. 24 properties received 300mm of loft insulation top-up. 16 properties received replacement high performance doors. % of properties at EPC Band C or above: 2023 91.0% 2024 92.9% 2025 94.1%
Environmental	Climate Change	C5	Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 Green House Gas emissions Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 Green House Gas emissions per home If unable to report emissions data, please state when the housing provider is expected to be able to do so.	Does the housing provider qualify for SECR reporting? [Yes/No] SECR Intensity Ratio for Total Emissions (Scope 1-3) [kg CO2e/m²]	2020.3 tCO₂e (last year 1923.2 tCO₂e) 219.1 kgCO₂e per home (last year 211.0 kgCO₂e per home) Scope 1 – 1557.6 tCO₂e, 168.9 kgCO₂e per home Scope 2 – 451.3 tCO₂e, 48.9 kgCO₂e per home Scope 3 – 11.4 tCO₂e, 1.2 kgCO₂e per home (NB these figures exclude electric vehicle emissions (Scope 2) due to an issue with the tracking system)
Environmental	Climate Change	C6	How has the housing provider mapped and assessed the climate risks to its homes and supply chain, such as increased flood, drought and overheating risks? How is the housing provider mitigating these risks?		As part of our Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy, we are exploring national data sources to map flood risks and reviewing our design brief and development strategy to strengthen climate resilience. We are also assessing the need for flood resilience studies across all retrofit and new build projects.

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025
Environmental	Ecology	C7	Does the housing provider have a strategy to enhance green space and promote biodiversity on or near homes? If yes, please describe with reference to targets in this area. If no, are you planning on producing one in the next 12 months?	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of new homes (those completed in the last financial year). What is the housing provider's Biodiversity Net Gain target for new and existing homes? Does this exceed minimum requirements?	As part of our Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy, we are working to build resilience by enhancing greenspaces and supporting biodiversity across the communities we serve. Through partnerships with environmental organisations, local authorities, our tenants and the people we support, we are advancing climate resilience, trialling sustainable landscaping practices, and expanding access to community growing projects. Our Therapeutic Gardening service continues to provide our tenants and the people we support with the opportunity to transform communal areas into greener, welcoming spaces. These activities not only improve the local environment but also promote health and wellbeing, skills development, and social connection. In summer 2024, the Hillcrest Engagement Team launched an annual Photography Competition, inviting tenants to capture the beauty of gardens, nature, and outdoor spaces in their communities. In 2025, we took part in Plantlife's 'No Mow May' campaign at our Explorer Road headquarters in Dundee, an initiative we plan to roll out to more sites in the years ahead to encourage biodiversity and low impact land management. All our new build developments include greenspace as a key design feature, helping to manage surface water and enhance local biodiversity in line with the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Strategy. These actions reflect our wider commitment to Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 and to creating greener, healthier, and more resilient neighbourhoods for the future. As partners in the Sustainable Dundee Network, Hillcrest was gifted two bat boxes. These have been installed at our Dundee offices, strategically placed near nature networks and along wildlife corridors to support local bat populations. The initiative provided a valuable learning opportunity for our property and maintenance teams, who were actively involved in selecting suitable locations and gaining awareness of urban biodiversity enhancement. However small these actions may seem, they represent meaningful steps in our progression towards climate resilience and the enhancement of greenspaces and biodiversity. ENHANCED: Whilst Scotland does not currently have an agreed Biodiversity Net Gain metric, our intention is to adopt the appropriate measures once these are clarified by the Scottish Government.

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025
Environmental	Ecology	C8	Does the housing provider have a strategy to identify, manage and reduce pollutants that could cause material harm? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?		No, no plans to develop a strategy. However we take a range of actions to identify, manage and reduce pollutants, such as: Environmental sensors We are adopting environmental sensors in our properties to identify dwellings with poor air quality and inform decisions around emissions reduction. We use indoor air quality sensor data to support behaviour change, identify properties where ventilation is inadequate or where the building fabric needs improved, or where our customers need our assistance and support with fuel poverty. Asbestos We have an Asbestos Coordinator (AC) responsible for identifying Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) within our properties. All surveys are carried out by a competent UKAS accredited asbestos surveyor and all samples analysed at a UKAS accredited asbestos-testing laboratory. A Risk Assessment Score is recorded after each survey, determining what action will be taken. Where it is possible and safe to do so, we will remove the asbestos. Where asbestos has been detected but not removed the AC will arrange for the property and the ACM to be re-inspected in accordance with the risk assessment. All licenced ACM work will always be carried out by a licensed Asbestos Removal Contractor. Lead Pipework We understand that buildings constructed pre-1970 may have lead pipework. Recently, we have received a delivery of water sample bottles for testing. Our Maintenance Department will obtain samples of water in void properties. These properties will be identified via our weekly tentative voids report. Once the samples are obtained, they will be returned to our Environmental contractor who provide analysis in a UKAS lab before providing results. Any positive result will lead to the planning of replacing the necessary pipework. As part of new build developments, instructed site investigation / building studies identify any contaminants in the existing ground conditions and/ or retained buildings. Remedial works are instructed as part of the build contract to ensure we are in receipt of clean and cleared site / buildings free of contaminated materials. As part of the resulting verification reports, land waste certificates are requested to ensure the contaminants are dealt with in a responsible and controlled manner. No materials are installed in new build properties that are harmful to the tenant with external wall make-ups achieving a non-combustibility status in accordance with Scottish Technical Standards.
Environmental	Resource Management	C9	Does the housing provider have a strategy to use or increase the use of responsibly sourced materials for all building and repairs works? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?	% of materials from responsible sources	Yes. Our Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy 2025-30, which will be published in Autumn 2025, sets out our plans to explore more sustainable methods of building practice to reduce the embodied carbon of our materials. We have updated our design brief to promote materials, products and components that are utilised as part of the day-to-day maintenance and replacement programme, to ensure consistency and quality of product.
Environmental	Resource Management	C10	Does the housing provider have a strategy for waste management incorporating building materials? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?	% of materials that are recycled and/or diverted from landfill.	Yes. Our Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy 2025-30 details our plans to carry out a full waste management audit, divert all operational and construction waste from landfill, transition to paper-free operations and introduce an Environmental Impact Assessment process to consider waste management as part of all projects. As part of our employers requirements we require contractors to follow ISO14001, including the separation of waste material for recycling and appropriate disposal. From April 2025, reporting from our waste contracts includes data on waste and materials recycled.
Environmental	Resource Management	C11	Does the housing provider have a strategy for water management? If so, how does the housing provider target and measure performance?		No, but planning to develop a strategy. Following the appointment of a utilities company to manage our water billing, we have identified the need for a full audit of our water sites to ensure accuracy and gather more detailed data on the sites. Once this is complete we will be able to develop a comprehensive water reduction plan with objectives and targets to reduce consumption levels.

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025		
Social	Affordability and Security	C12	For properties that are subject to the rent regulation regime, report against one or more Affordability Metric: 1) Rent compared to median private rental sector (PRS) rent across the relevant Local Authority 2) Rent compared to the relevant Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	Report against both Affordability Metrics.	Rent compared to PRS: 56.9% Rent compared to LHA: 82.1%		
					Hillcrest Rent as % of LHA/PRS Rent		
					Local Authority	LHA	PRS
					Aberdeen City	78.23%	66.54%
					Aberdeenshire	98.76%	84.11%
					Angus	72.86%	56.31%
					Dundee City	78.09%	59.66%
					Edinburgh City	99.84%	46.98%
					Fife	79.53%	63.93%
					Perth and Kinross	80.97%	66.39%
Overall	82.11%	56.90%					
Social	Affordability and Security	C13	Share, and number, of existing homes (owned and/or managed) completed before the last financial year allocated to: > General needs (social rent) > Intermediate rent > Affordable rent > Supported Housing > Housing for older people > Low-cost home ownership > Care homes > Private Rented Sector > Other		General Needs - 7052(79.04%) Supported Housing - 397(4.45%) Housing for Older People - 73(0.82%) Intermediate Rent - 1175(13.17%) Low-cost Home Ownership - 225(2.52%) Care Homes - 2(0.01%)		
Social	Affordability and Security	C14	Share, and number, of new homes (owned and/or managed) that were completed in the last financial year, allocated to: > General needs (social rent) > Intermediate rent > Affordable rent > Supported Housing > Housing for older people > Low-cost home ownership > Care homes > Private Rented Sector > Other	Number homes disposed of in the last 12 months, by tenure type Number of homes acquired in the last 12 months, by tenure type	General Needs - 198(66.44%) Intermediate Rent - 100(33.56%)		
					ENHANCED		
					Disposals General Needs - 3 Intermediate Rent - 4		
					Acquisitions General Needs - 3		

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025
Social	Affordability and Security	C15	How is the housing provider trying to reduce the effect of high energy costs on its residents?		We are actively working to reduce fuel poverty through key strategies, including upgrading fabric insulation, installing energy-efficient high- performance windows and doors, and introducing clean heating systems such as heat pumps and heat networks via the Social Housing Net Zero Heat Fund. We are also incorporating renewable technologies like solar PV to reduce reliance on the national grid. Fuel poverty is influenced by three main factors: household income, energy efficiency, and fuel prices. While our focus has been on improving building performance, we also recognise the positive impact of income maximisation and fuel support services in helping residents manage energy costs and improve financial resilience.
Social	Affordability and Security	C16	How does the housing provider provide security of tenure for residents?		Our housing portfolio demonstrates a significant commitment to providing long-term, secure tenancies across all our areas of operation. On average, our tenants remain with us for 8.3 years and over 96% of social tenancies are sustained for more than 12 months. This highlights our commitment to fostering secure homes, community stability and the prevention of homelessness.
Social	Building Safety and Quality	C17	Describe the condition of the housing provider's portfolio, with reference to: % of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out. % of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out. % of homes for which all required electrical safety checks have been carried out.	% of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out. % of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out. % of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out.	Gas: 99.9% (1 property outstanding due to access issues) Fire: 100% Electrical: 99.85% (13 properties outstanding due to access issues and building warrants) ENHANCED: Asbestos: 100% Legionella: 89.77% Lifts: 100%
Social	Building Safety and Quality	C18	What % of homes meet the national housing quality standard? Of those which fail, what is the housing provider doing to address these failings?	What is the target date for bringing homes that do not meet the standard into compliance?	As of 31st March 2025, 96.97% are compliant with SHQS. In total, there are 122 that are non compliant: 114 are in abeyance due to owner refusal of door entry system upgrade installations. We are actively engaging with owners to address these barriers and reduce the number of non-compliant properties.

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025
Social	Building Safety and Quality	C19	How do you manage and mitigate the risk of damp and mould for your residents? What % of the housing providers portfolio do these homes account for?	How many cases of damp and mould were reported in the period that required action? What % of the housing providers portfolio do these homes account for?	We use advanced technology during damp inspections to quickly identify issues causing mould and condensation. This allows for efficient diagnosis, prompt repairs, and clear communication with tenants. Where needed, other teams, such as the Hillcrest Energy Action Team (HEAT) are involved to address related concerns like fuel poverty. Our system ensures the right support reaches tenants promptly. A follow-up inspection checks the effectiveness of the solution. If resolved, we close the case with a full record of actions taken. If not, a second inspection is arranged and if appropriate involves further technology and specialist input. This proactive approach helps us create healthier homes, reduce mould, and ensure tenants feel safe and supported. Using advanced technology such as the FLIR MR277 Building Inspection System, which integrates a thermal imaging camera, hygrometer, laser-assisted IR thermometer, and moisture meter. We can accurately assess building physics during damp inspections. This includes measuring humidity, surface temperature, and moisture content within materials. By combining these tools, we can effectively identify hidden issues contributing to mould growth and condensation, ensuring a more precise diagnosis and targeted remedial action. In addition, we use a Testo anemometer to measure airflow and ventilation rates within the property. This helps assess whether inadequate air movement is contributing to excess humidity or condensation issues, supporting a more complete understanding of indoor environmental conditions. ENHANCED: 371 cases from 371 properties (4.05% of portfolio).
Social	Resident Voice	C20	What are the results of the housing provider's most recent tenant satisfaction survey? How has the housing provider acted on these results?		Our overall tenant satisfaction for 2024 was 88.7%. A comprehensive report is provided on the conclusion of the tenant satisfaction survey which allows us to identify any specific areas of low satisfaction and / or common themes that may come through from tenants and their answers. Following analysis of the report an action plan was created to pick up on key areas where improvements can be made, this action plan is presented to the Operations Sub-Committee for approval with quarterly updates given on its progress.
Social	Resident Voice	C21	What arrangements are in place to enable residents to hold management to account for the provision of services?		Our Tenant Participation Strategy ensures tenants have a voice in shaping the housing services, policies, and conditions that affect them. This inclusive approach strengthens community ties and supports equitable service delivery. We conduct annual Tenant Satisfaction Surveys and Rent Consultations, with outcomes reviewed by senior management and the board. Where feedback indicates the need for improvement, action plans are developed and progress is monitored to ensure accountability. To support ongoing engagement, we use digital tools to survey tenants and maintain a Feedback Forum, now comprising 922 members. Recent consultations have focused on issues such as fly-tipping, bin stores, and estate improvements. In response to lower satisfaction levels in Aberdeen, we are launching a targeted survey through CX Feedback to better understand and address local concerns. CX Feedback is also used for ongoing transactional surveys, including repairs and complaints satisfaction. Annual tenant events further promote inclusion and wellbeing. Our most recent event at Brown Constable Street followed an estate consultation that resulted in outdoor space enhancements. The event featured contributions from our Therapeutic Gardener, Energy Advice Team, and Tenancy Sustainment Service, encouraging community use of shared spaces and improving social cohesion. Additionally, we aim to complete one in-depth Scrutiny Project annually. Our last project focused on Digital Engagement and gathered insights through online and in-person feedback sessions. Planning is now underway for the next topic of focus.

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025
Social	Resident Voice	C22	In the last 12 months, in how many complaints has the national Ombudsman determined that maladministration took place? How have these complaints (or others) resulted in change of practice within the housing provider?		0, no complaints were classed under maladministration by the Ombudsman. During the last year we made a number of improvements to our services as a direct result of the complaints we have received. This includes the creation of a kitchen survey so we can monitor tenant satisfaction when they receive a kitchen upgrade. We are continually looking for ways we can improve the quality of our complaint handling and last year launched a new e-learning training course for staff. This course provides an understanding of how to handle complaints effectively, and shares tools and techniques to support staff whilst dealing with challenging situations. We also launched customer complaint satisfaction surveys which helps us analyse how well we handle complaints, and act on any areas for concern.
Social	Resident Support	C23	What are the key support services that the housing provider offers to its residents? How successful are these services in improving outcomes?		We have a highly successfully energy advice team (HEAT). In the last financial year the financial gain achieved for Hillcrest Homes tenants was £1,002,548.44. We have a highly successful Financial Wellbeing Team. In the last financial year the financial gain achieved for Hillcrest Homes tenants was £3,106,382.80. We provide a highly successful service combining both energy and financial wellbeing services for Hillcrest Enterprises tenants. In the last financial year the financial gains for Hillcrest Enterprises tenants was £648,718. We also have a very successful Social Wellbeing Team who support tenants with mental health and addiction issues.
Social	Placemaking	C24	Describe the housing provider's community investment activities, and how the housing provider is contributing to positive neighbourhood outcomes for the communities in which its homes are located. Provide examples or case studies of where the housing provider has been engaged in placemaking or placeshaping activities.	Social Value calculations (including monetisations) of placemaking activities [£]	Hillcrest Foundation funding provided to internal and external community projects: £225,348 Hillcrest's subsidiary company Hillcrest Futures operates a large range of support services in the areas of physical and learning disabilities, autism, young people and older people. Hillcrest Futures works in people's homes, in the community and in temporary and supported accommodation. Services provided also cover mental health and wellbeing, homelessness and drug and alcohol recovery. The Hillcrest Homes Engagement Team have been involved in a number of Estate Based Initiatives (EBI). These projects involve engaging with tenants at local level to find out what would make their outside space work better for them, or looking at specific housing management issues and asking tenants for ideas on what the solutions could be. CASE STUDY: Yeamans Lane/ Kirk Street, Lochee, Dundee- Estate Based Initiative Hillcrest has actively engaged in placemaking through its Estate-Based Initiative at Yeamans Lane/Kirk Street, a 47-home development experiencing environmental decline, including abandoned items, broken infrastructure, and inconsistent fencing. The project demonstrates a tenant-led, place-shaping approach that delivered meaningful improvements to the quality and character of the shared environment. A key strength of the initiative was the cross-team collaboration that enabled its rapid and effective delivery. Housing staff led tenant engagement, issuing a feedback survey that achieved a 51% response rate. The survey results informed clear priorities, which were then actioned through close coordination with the Asset Management and Maintenance teams. Maintenance operatives supported tenants with the removal and dismantling of bulky items, while Asset Management provided costings, logistical planning, and operational oversight to ensure that improvements could be delivered efficiently. The resulting actions, including power washing of communal areas, removal of waste, and assessment of fencing, directly addressed resident concerns and visibly uplifted the development. The project not only enhanced the physical environment but also strengthened relationships between tenants and Hillcrest, and between internal teams. This joined-up working model showcases how coordinated, multi-departmental collaboration can deliver successful, resident-led placemaking outcomes that improve quality of life and community pride.

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025
Governance	Structure and Governance	C25	Is the housing provider registered with the national regulator of social housing?		Yes
Governance	Structure and Governance	C26	What is the housing provider's most recent regulatory grading/status?		Compliant
Governance	Structure and Governance	C27	Which Code of Governance does the housing provider follow, if any?		We comply with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Standards of Governance and Financial Management.
Governance	Structure and Governance	C28	Is the housing provider a Not-For-Profit? If not, who is the largest shareholder, what is their % of economic ownership and what % of voting rights do they control?		Yes
Governance	Structure and Governance	C29	Explain how the housing provider's board manages ESG risks. Are ESG risks incorporated into the housing provider's risk register?	Is the housing provider required to report against TCFD? If yes, is the housing provider doing so?	See Appendix 1
Governance	Structure and Governance	C30	Has the housing provider been subject to any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months (data protection breaches, bribery, money laundering, HSE breaches etc.) - that resulted in enforcement or other equivalent action?	If yes, describe.	No
Governance	Board and Trustees	C31	How does the housing provider ensure it gets input from a diverse range of people, into the governance processes? Does the housing provider consider resident voice at the board and senior management level? Does the housing provider have policies that incorporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into the recruitment and selection of board members and senior management?		See Appendix 2 > What % of the board are women? 18.2% > What % of the board are BAME? 9.1% > What % of the board are residents? 9.1% > What % of the board have a disability? 0% > Average age of the board - 53.1 years > Average tenure of the board - 4.5 years *These statistics are based on the results of surveys of the Governing Body Members of Hillcrest Homes. As not all Members provide a response, the results may not reflect the actual diversity of the Governing Body.
Governance	Board and Trustees	C32	What % of the housing provider's Board have turned over in the last two years? What % of the housing provider's Senior Management Team have turned over in the last two years?		Governing Body - 27.3% ELT - 20%

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025
Governance	Board and Trustees	C33	Number of board members on the housing provider's Audit Committee with recent and relevant financial experience.		1 > 35 years of experience in surveying, banking and property finance > MA (Hons) degree in Geography and a post graduate diploma in Land Economy > Trained and worked as a surveyor with Knight Frank in London > Joined the Royal Bank of Scotland in 1996 to specialise in property finance > Over a period of 19 years, fulfilled several senior property finance roles and brings extensive knowledge of property investment and development, debt finance and equity funding for both commercial and residential property > Since 2015, they have acted as a director for several companies in the property and debt finance sectors
Governance	Board and Trustees	C34	What % of the housing provider's board are non-executive directors?		100%
Governance	Board and Trustees	C35	Has a succession plan been provided to the housing provider's board in the last 12 months?		No (temporary answer as advised may change in coming months)
Governance	Board and Trustees	C36	For how many years has the housing provider's current external audit partner been responsible for auditing the accounts?		1 Year. New external auditors were appointed in 2024
Governance	Board and Trustees	C37	When was the last independently-run, board-effectiveness review?		The internal auditors carried out an independent board effectiveness review which concluded in December 2024.
Governance	Board and Trustees	C38	How does the housing provider handle conflicts of interest at the board?		There is a Code of Conduct which all Governing Body Members must sign and adhere to. All Members must declare any interests and these are held and published in a Register of Interests, which Members must keep updated. During meetings, Members must declare any interest in a matter and are required to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed. Any interests declared during a meeting are recorded in the minutes.
Governance	Staff Wellbeing	C39	Does the housing provider pay the Real Living Wage?		Yes. Apprentices are included with the exception of Trades apprentices who align with trade bodies. Our tender process explicitly states that contractors must pay the Real Living Wage
Governance	Staff Wellbeing	C40	What is the housing provider's median gender pay gap?		39.7% in favour of men
Governance	Staff Wellbeing	C41	What is the housing provider's CEO:median-worker pay ratio?		6.18:1
Governance	Staff Wellbeing	C42	How is the housing provider ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is promoted across its staff?		See Appendix 3
Governance	Staff Wellbeing	C43	How does the housing provider support the physical and mental health of its staff?		See Appendix 4

Area	Theme	Criteria #	Criteria	Enhanced Reporting Option(s)	Hillcrest Draft Response 2025
Governance	Staff Wellbeing	C44	How does the housing provider support the professional development of its staff?	What % of employees have received qualification that are relevant for their professional development, within the last year? Split result by demographic.	For all staff we support professional development from the beginning of their career with us, starting at induction, where we identify training needs, through regular workload meetings where we build upon knowledge and skills, to annual reviews where we discuss and review this again when setting clear objectives. Feedback from colleagues and service users alike forms a vital part of this constant review process. We follow a rigorous change management policy, with support from our HR and OD Teams, to ensure that our staff are trained to adapt to new technologies and changes to process. Additional learning and courses are referenced against our Training Needs Analysis and Role Profiles to ensure that all staff have access to what they need to fulfil their duties, all supported by access to ongoing support through, mentoring, coaching, shadowing, self-directed learning, and accredited courses. Enhanced option = 6.3 % (68% female, 32% male)
Governance	Supply Chain	C45	How is social value creation considered when procuring goods and services? What measures are in place to monitor the delivery of this Social Value?	What is the relative weighting of Social Value considerations in procurement policies? How much Social Value has been delivered from the housing provider's supply chain in the last 12 months?	See Appendix 5
Governance	Supply Chain	C46	How is sustainability considered when procuring goods and services? What measures are in place to monitor the sustainability of your supply chain when procuring goods and services?	What is the relative weighting of environmental impact considerations in procurement policies? How does the housing provider monitor supply chain risks, and what initiatives has the housing provider taken to drive higher sustainability performance across its supply chain?	See Appendix 6

Appendices

Appendix 1 – C29

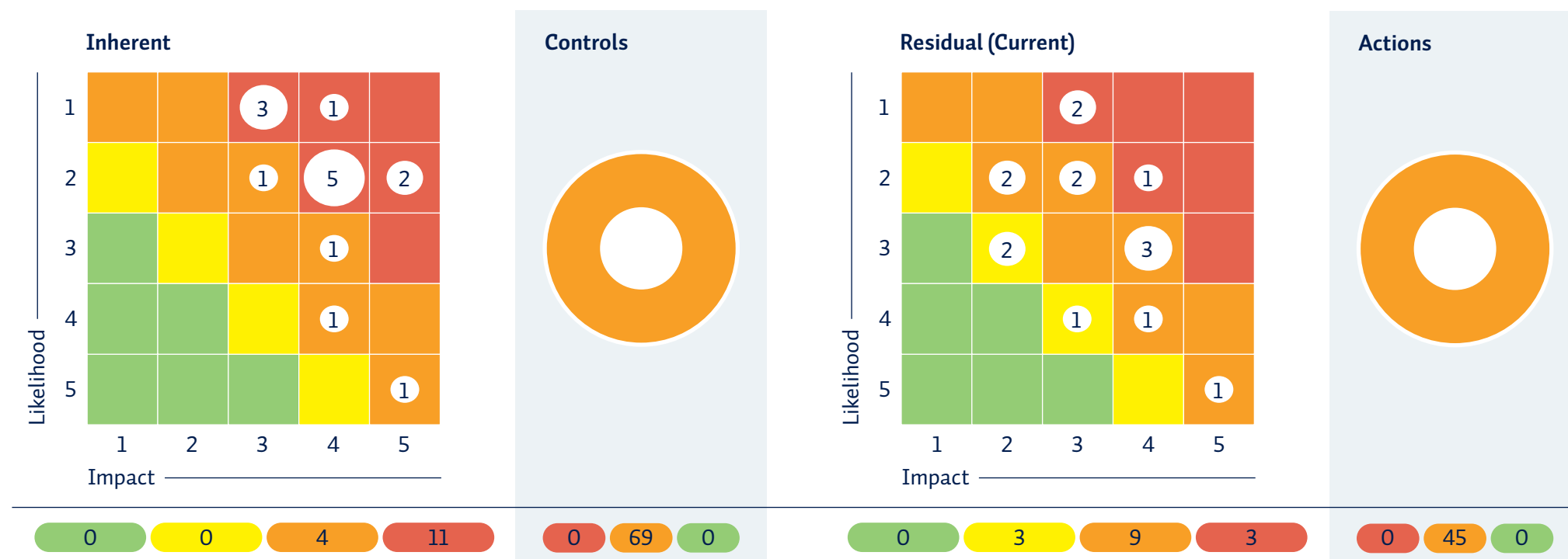
Our Risk Register contains identified risks which are categorised under Reputation, Operational Delivery, Financial, Compliance, Data and Information Management, and Major Change. Each individual risk is also categorised as an Environmental, Social and/or Governance risk. Our risk appetite is set on an annual basis and any variance to the risk appetite is reported.

Risks are regularly reviewed by the Executive Team and are reported to the Governing Body through the

Audit and General Purposes Sub-Committee on a quarterly basis. All subsidiary risks are monitored in terms of any impact to Hillcrest Homes and are reported to subsidiary Boards on a quarterly basis. All risks have identified control measures in place which are regularly reviewed by senior members of staff. Where required, additional actions are in place and these are also assigned to senior members of staff with timeframes for completion.

Additionally, we carry out a risk assessment for any new business, employ Treasury Management specialists and have an internal audit programme that provides further reassurance.

The below Risk Matrix notes the inherent risks identified and the residual risk based on the control measures we have in place. This matrix relates to the risks under Hillcrest Homes and similar matrices are in place for the subsidiaries.



The risks identified are noted in the table below. These have been split across the risks for Hillcrest Homes, which include overarching risks for all of Hillcrest, and the subsidiaries of Hillcrest Futures, Hillcrest Enterprises and Hillcrest Maintenance.

Category	ESG Category	Risk	Residual Risk Score (1-25)
Homes			
Financial	E, S, G	Financial risk due to delays in contract handover of new developments	16
Major Change	G	Loss of knowledge and experience due to retiral of Chief Executive	15
Financial	G	Financial impact due to increase in interest levels	15
Financial	S	Inability of Hillcrest Futures to deliver services within budget	12
Financial	E, S	Risk of loss of key contractors	12
Financial	E, S	Financial risk due to a delay in resolution with landowner and local authority regarding the road infrastructure of the new development at Ury Estate	12
Data and Information Management	E, S, G	Risks arising from system failures, unpatched vulnerabilities or misconfigurations of security tools	12
Data and Information Management	E, S, G	Risk arising from human error, non-compliance with security protocols and susceptibility to social engineering attacks	12
Financial	E, S, G	Unable to carry out adaptations to properties due to cut in government funding	8
Operational Delivery	E, S	Risk to tenants from damp and condensation in properties	8
Financial	G	Pension Deficit contribution payment required as part of the new actuarial valuation. The results are not known yet but early indications are that the deficit will continue beyond the current repayment plan	8
Financial	S, G	Financial impact due to government rent controls across social and mid-market housing sector	6
Operational Delivery	S	Recruitment and retention of staff within Hillcrest Homes	6
Data and Information Management	E, S, G	Financial loss and reputational damage arising from data loss	6
Compliance	E, S, G	Materials on exterior of the building at Colonsay View no longer regarded as compliant in terms of combustability	5
Futures			
Financial	S	Inability of HF to deliver services within budget	12
Operational Delivery	S	Inability to recruit and retain staff across Hillcrest Futures services	9
Operational Delivery	S, G	Inability of staff to complete mandatory and service specific training	9
Compliance	S, G	Financial and reputational risks resulting from poor compliance and quality of service failings within services	9
Operational Delivery	S, G	Lack of accurate and timely data to enable the effective and efficient delivery of services	9
Operational Delivery	E, S	Residential accommodation for the people Hillcrest Futures support is no longer fit for purpose	9
Enterprises			
Financial	S, G	Housing Bill Rent Control	16
Data and Information Management	E, S, G	Risk arising from human error, non-compliance with security protocols and susceptibility to social engineering attacks	12
Data and Information Management	E, S, G	Risks arising from system failures, unpatched vulnerabilities or misconfigurations of security tools	12
Financial	S, G	Financial loss arising from lack of demand for MMR properties in Aberdeen/shire	10
Financial	E, S, G	The external cladding on the building at Colonsay View catching fire and spreading quickly due to the now understood presence of some combustible materials within the cladding.	5
Maintenance			
Financial	E, S	Financial risk due to material price increases and material availability. Although material prices have not risen through Q3 and Q4 the BCIS forecast that they will rise 13% over the next 5 years	12
Financial	S, G	Risk of cost increases above budget due to the NI increase	10
Operational Delivery	S	Risk of new development primary contractor failure	6
Operational Delivery	S	Skilled labour shortage	6

Appendix 2 – C31

We have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy in place which sets out the organisation's commitment to ensuring equality within all levels of the organisation.

An annual review of the Governing Body membership takes place, considering areas such as skills and knowledge, gender balance, ethnic representation and age. We believe having a range of perspectives and lived experiences on our boards helps make sure decisions are fair, and that we continue to be innovative and agile.

The Governing Body also adheres to the following regulatory standard, as set out by the Scottish Housing Regulator:

"The governing body annually assesses the skills, knowledge, diversity and objectivity it needs to provide capable leadership, control and constructive challenge to achieve the RSL's purpose, deliver good tenant outcomes, and manage its affairs. It assesses the contribution of continuing governing body members, and what gaps there are that need to be filled."

Key recruitment principles for all roles in Hillcrest include making reasonable efforts to accommodate the needs of any prospective candidate who may require support and assistance, as well as a guaranteed interview for disabled applicants who meet the job requirements. As with all staff, senior management are required to complete mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training. Senior management refers to our Executive Leadership Team.

Hillcrest's Tenant Participation Strategy sets out how tenants and other customers can take part in their landlord's decision making. This includes how tenants can influence decisions about housing services, policies and procedures, and housing conditions. This strategy complies with the requirements under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes and Standards of Governance and Financial Management for RSLs.

During the last 12 months, key tenant consultations have included a tenant satisfaction survey and a rent increase consultation with results shared at board and senior management meetings for consideration. Where further action is required in response to tenant feedback, an action plan is created and progress against this is also monitored by the relevant board.

Hillcrest has a tenant 'Feedback Forum' which regularly surveys tenants and currently has 906 registered members. These tenants have been asked for their opinion on the Hillcrest Tackling Poverty Together Strategy and told us what action points were most important to them. We also consulted on the Annual Performance Report to ask tenants about style and presentation; this was positively received. A Scrutiny Project carried out an in-depth look at Hillcrest's Digital Engagement using CX Survey Software to survey tenants. A total of 361 responses were received to two surveys. Recommendations put forward by tenants for improvements to communication and content were approved by the Board. An action plan is now being implemented.

Tenants in a number of individual developments have been asked about improvements to outside space and how better to manage estate issues. As a result, work has improved bin stores, fencing, drying areas, outside play areas and communal spaces.

We use tenant feedback, complaints and experiences to identify learning outcomes that form action plans that are tracked and reported on.

Tenants can apply for membership of our Governing Body as per our Hillcrest Homes Rules and, currently, our Hillcrest Maintenance Board has a tenant board member.

Appendix 3 – C42

We have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy which is shared with all staff. This policy notes our legal and regulatory obligations, our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion and our expectations of staff. This includes a clear statement that we will not tolerate any form of discrimination, prejudice, harassment or victimisation. Also noted are the various measures we have in place to support our EDI Journey such as:

- > Our EDI Strategic Board, supported by an EDI Action Group made up of volunteers from across the organisation
- > Our Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process
- > Data Collection and Monitoring
- > Training and Development

Our EDI Action Group meets every two months with the core purposes of:

- > Developing and progressing EDI related actions
- > Raising awareness of EDI across Hillcrest
- > Supporting the organisation with the collection and analysis of equalities data

Our intranet includes a page for EDI which provides staff with access to various resources, including:

- > Key definitions such as harassment, victimisation and direct discrimination
- > Details of who is on our EDI Strategic Board and EDI Action Group and the remits of these respective groups
- > A calendar of EDI related events
- > Training videos and guides for completing EQIAs

In addition to all staff EDI training which was rolled out in 2023/24, we have developed new Unconscious Bias training. This new training will support staff to understand unconscious bias, recognise their own bias and put in place measures to prevent this from affecting their decision-making.

We have added in functionality for staff to add their pronouns to their profiles in Microsoft Teams and encouraged staff to add pronouns to their email signatures.

We continue to regularly publish articles to our intranet and social media about EDI related matters and events. For example, articles about World Down Syndrome Day, Autism Acceptance Week and International Women's Day.

Recently, we recruited an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer to further drive forward improvements and initiatives in this area.

Appendix 4 – C43

Our Health and Wellbeing Policy aims to create a positive working environment through the integration of health and wellbeing into everyday activities with initiatives developed by our Wellness@Hillcrest Working Group.

Current initiatives in place over the last twelve months include:

- > Accreditation to Investors in People Gold, Investors in Young People Silver and Investors in Wellbeing Silver.
- > Flexible working practices with salary sacrifice scheme, optional purchase of annual leave and hybrid working.
- > Staff benefits scheme including health plan, 24-hour GP line, virtual doctor, counselling, legal helpline and commercial discounts.
- > In-house mental health first aiders.
- > HSG65 health and safety model with full staff training, lone worker alarm system, and stress management policy and risk assessments.
- > Opportunities to participate in fitness challenges such as local Kiltwalk events.
- > Regular staff surveys which incorporate wellbeing questions to identify risks and common themes.
- > Stress workshops to support and educate staff on managing the symptoms of stress.
- > Regular updates in our staff bulletin about financial support available to those who may require assistance.
- > Occupational Health intervention for staff, where required, including referrals for mental and physical health support.

Appendix 5 – C45

Regardless of the value of the contract that Hillcrest is procuring, social value or community benefits are considered and, where appropriate, are included within the tender documentation. We ensure that these are proportionate, reasonable and achievable based on the value and type of work being procured. This can take a variety of forms from training opportunities to added value services to tenants. Our preferred approach is for the successful bidder to donate to the Hillcrest Foundation based on a percentage of the contract value for the year. Suppliers can access the Hillcrest Foundation report from our website and a link is included in the tender documents so they can access this

information before making a bid. We also ask questions about social value and added value that can be delivered from the contract within the quality questionnaire which forms part of the selection criteria for suppliers.

We collect the Community Benefit donations on an annual basis or at other agreed intervals depending on the duration of the contract. This is carried out as part of the contract management process. We monitor and record all donations and other community benefits achieved. The Hillcrest Foundation produces an annual report showing how much has been given out to local initiatives

and projects. Delivery of other community benefits/social value are discussed during contract management meetings where the supplier will provide us with progress and evidence of these initiatives.

ENHANCED: Weightings can vary depending on the scope of the tender and value of the contract. Social Value is given at least 5% weighting within the quality questionnaire which is part of the tender. We have just introduced a new Social Value platform within Hillcrest, therefore we would expect to report on Social Value derived from the groups Route 3 Regulated procurement exercises at the time of the next report.

Appendix 6 – C46

Sustainability is considered before the tender is published. When drafting any specification requirements, we look at the whole life costs of the goods/services we are procuring. Where appropriate, we ask for environmentally friendly substitutes for certain products. We contract with suppliers who are concerned about their environmental performance and who can demonstrate policies and procedures to address environmental issues and work to minimise waste. Suppliers will be asked to meet minimum criteria and provide evidence to support. Procurement staff within Hillcrest work alongside the Sustainability Team who provide guidance, for example, relevant questions for suppliers as part of the procurement process.

In addition to the minimum evidence of providing policies and documentation, we monitor progress towards the supply chains' own sustainability targets through our contract management process.

Progress and evidence related to how suppliers are working towards net zero will also be discussed and monitored at this time. We also look for the same information to be supplied for any sub-contractors where any were approved. Agreed key performance indicators allow us to monitor specific areas, these differ by contract. We adopt a Fair Work First approach and encourage our suppliers to work towards this. Sustainability Audits can be carried out.

ENHANCED: The weighting for environmental considerations can vary depending on the type of contract and the value and duration of the contract. We give at least 10% weighting to environmental considerations within the quality questionnaire. In terms of risks, we ask suppliers awarded or bidding for high-risk contracts to submit contingency plans to mitigate any loss of service or supply. Poor performance will be dealt with through our contract management and improvement processes.

Our robust selection criteria, at the tender stage, ensures that suppliers are financially sound and technically capable of fulfilling the contract. In terms of driving improved sustainability across the Supply Chain, our Procurement and Sustainability teams work together as part of the company's overall Net Zero and Climate Change Strategy 2025-30 with a view to implement a new Sustainability Supplier Code of Conduct to include within the appropriate policies and, where appropriate, track the individual emissions footprints of contracts. Alongside these measures, we use the Scottish Government Sustainability Framework, and associated tools, to assess our current level of performance and use the subsequent action plan to embed good practices to realise the intended sustainable outcomes.

Helping people live better lives

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