



Our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) statement

2021-2022



www.linc-cymru.co.uk

Introduction



Established in 1977, **Linc-Cymru Housing Association Ltd (Linc)** is a Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and a Registered Social Landlord regulated by the Welsh Government. All profits are reinvested for the benefit of our customers rather than being distributed to shareholders.

We are a Housing Association and Care provider, and our purpose is to create the right environment for people to flourish. The homes we build and the natural environments that support them contribute to improving people's quality of life, and as a care provider we work with Local Authorities and the NHS to address the needs of our ageing population.

We are a socially responsible business focused on building a prosperous and healthier Wales, working together with our tenants, residents, and stakeholders to create environments where people can flourish.

We recognise our responsibility in meeting the ambitions of Welsh Government and keep the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act

and its seven goals at the forefront of our minds as we shape our future ambitions and priorities. We have made pledges within the Welsh Governments All Wales Plan 2021 -2025 'Working Together to Reach Net Zero' and are in the process of training staff to become fully carbon literate.

As we build more affordable homes, we will be extending our use of modern methods of construction to create environmentally conscious and sustainable developments and utilise partnering to deliver solutions that meet health, housing, leisure, and workplace needs. This, our first ESG statement, provides us with a baseline from which we will create a continuous improvement plan which is both achievable and aspirational.

We have adopted The Sustainability Reporting Standard (SRS) for Social Housing which identifies a set of themes detailed in the table below, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). We have reported against each of the 48 criteria within these themes.

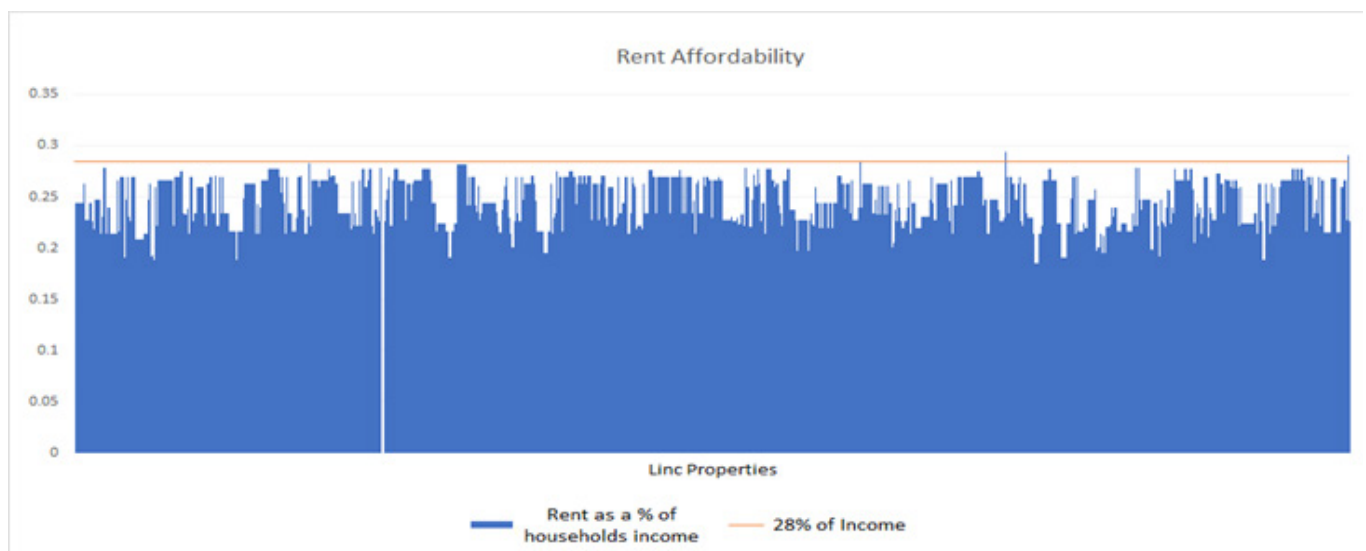
ESG AREA	THEME	THEME NAME	DESCRIPTION
SOCIAL	T1	Affordability and Security	This theme seeks to assess the extent to which the housing providers provide long-term homes that are genuinely affordable to those on low incomes. The theme is made up of five criteria including the tenure mix of new and existing properties, the security of tenure and fuel poverty.
	T2	Building Safety and Quality	This theme seeks to assess how effective the housing provider is at meeting its legal responsibilities to protect residents and keep buildings safe. The theme is made up of three criteria, disclosing gas safety checks, fire risk assessments and meeting Decent Homes Standards
	T3	Resident Voice	This theme seeks to assess how effective the housing provider is at listening to and empowering residents. The theme is made up of three themes that cover board scrutiny, complaint handling and resident satisfaction.
	T4	Resident Support	This theme seeks to assess the effectiveness of the initiatives that the housing provider runs to support individual residents. The theme is made up of two criteria that cover: What support is provided and how successful it is?
	T5	Placemaking	This theme seeks to highlight the wider set of activities that housing providers undertake to create well-designed homes and places that meet local needs and provide great places for people to live and enjoy. The theme is made up of one criterion, a space for the housing provider to give examples of their placemaking or place shaping work.
ENVIRONMENTAL	T6	Climate Change	This theme seeks to assess how the activities of the housing provider are impacting on climate change, and how they are mitigating the physical risks of climate change. This theme considers current practice, as well as the changes being made to improve performance in the future. The theme is made up of six criteria, including the distribution of EPC ratings, emissions data, climate risk mitigation plan and environmental strategy.
	T7	Ecology	This theme seeks to assess how the housing provider is protecting the local environment and ecology. The theme is made up of two criteria around managing pollutants and increasing biodiversity.
	T8	Resource Management	This theme seeks to identify the extent to which the housing provider has a sustainable approach to materials in both the construction and management of properties. The theme is made up of three themes that cover sourcing materials, water management and waste management.
GOVERNANCE	T9	Structure and Governance	This theme seeks to assess the housing provider's overall structure and approach to Governance. The theme is made up of six criteria covering the regulator, code of governance, risk management and ownership.
	T10	Board and Trustees	This theme seeks to assess the quality, suitability and performance of the board and trustees. The theme is made up of eleven criteria including demographics of the board and the experience and independence of the board.
	T11	Staff Wellbeing	This theme seeks to assess how staff are supported and how their wellbeing is considered. The theme is made up of five criteria including salary information, additional support for staff and average sick days.
	T11	Supply Chain Management	This theme seeks to assess if the housing provider procures responsibly. The theme is made up of two criteria assessing how social value and environmental impact are considered.

T1 | Affordability and Security

C1 For properties that are subject to the rent regulation regime, report against one or more affordability Metrics.

Rent affordability is assessed in a range of ways at Linc. For general needs and sheltered homes, rents are run through the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) Living Rent Model. This states that a living rent should be affordable for a household with someone in full-time employment, working the average number of hours per week (including overtime) and earning around the minimum wage. Within the model, rents are considered affordable if rent, as a percentage of gross lower quartile earnings, is below 28%.

The table/graph below compares our rents to the lower quartile income.



We sense check this work against our other measures. We consult with our tenants on an annual basis to make sure they continue to be satisfied rent offers value for money (88% were satisfied against a benchmark of 82% for 2021/22), and with our customer facing staff who are best placed to identify if tenants begin to struggle. As at end of March 2022, 62% of our tenants were in credit and we maintain low levels of rent arrears and evictions.



A comparison of our rents made against those in the private sector is shown in the table below by the local authority areas we operate in.

Weekly savings against median Private Sector Rents 2021/22:

Local Authority	General Needs*				Sheltered (incl. 55+)		
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed
Blaenau Gwent	£ -	£5.49	£9.00	£ -	£70.00	£5.96	£ -
Bridgend	£21.98	£13.87	£21.17	£31.69	£25.94	£25.74	£27.94
Caerphilly	£6.48	£13.27	£11.60	£23.80	£4.66	£24.03	£ -
Cardiff	£43.69	£49.92	£79.77	£125.67	£47.53	£71.24	£ -
Neath Port Talbot	£19.83	£24.59	£37.04	£86.73	£16.94	£36.91	£ -
Newport	£75.00	£6.96	£14.30	£23.15	£ -	£2.29	£ -
Powys	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Rhondda Cynon Taff	£ -	£27.33	£30.05	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Swansea	£ -	£1.12	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Torfaen	£9.60	£11.20	£19.08	£ -	£9.45	£ -	£19.48

*Excludes Bungalows

Our more specialist accommodation such as adapted properties, extra care, and bungalows, are not run through the JRF Living Rent Model. For these we use other measures to determine affordability including rent account balances and evictions (0), and satisfaction survey results on rent providing value for money.

C2 Share, and number, of existing homes (homes 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

Existing Properties as of 31 March 2021:

Tenure/Property Type	Number	%
General Needs (social rent)	3145	65
Intermediate Rent	304	6
Supported Housing	102	2
Housing for Older People	893	19
Low-Cost Home Ownership	80	2
Care Homes	208	4
Private Rented Sector	86	2

C3 Share, and number, of new homes (homes 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

New Properties post 1 April 2021:

Tenure/Property Type	Number	%
General Needs (social rent)	9	4
Intermediate Rent	8	3
Supported Housing	11	5
Housing for Older People	203*	88
Low-Cost Home Ownership	-	-
Care Homes	-	-
Private Rented Sector	-	-

* Linc merged with another Association in February 2022. The figure above is inclusive of these properties.

T2 | Building Safety & Quality

C4 How is Linc trying to reduce the effect of fuel poverty on its residents?

We have an on-going retrofit programme for our lowest energy and carbon performing properties.

Our New Build Grant Funded Developments are now all being delivered to EPCA/ Passivhaus standards which mean that all new homes are energy efficient and low carbon in terms of running costs and lower annual bills for residents. We are delivering homes to BREEAM Excellent and currently trialling the Well Building Standard in one of our schemes which focuses on the resident experience rather than the technical detail.

Our aim going forward is to target all homes under EPC B improving their energy consumption by a draft proofing programme of works, loft insulation, LED lighting and a fabric first approach in line with Government targets to achieve zero carbon by 2035.

We provide ongoing support to our tenants and have been working with the housing organisation HACT (Housing Association Charitable Trust) to directly deliver fuel poverty relief in the form of discount vouchers. The vouchers are redeemable against tenants' bills in the amount of £29 or £48. Dozens of tenants who identified as being in fuel poverty have been contacted and supported between December 2021 and March 2022. The total distributed is just under £7000.

In our Innovative Homes schemes, we are working with residents to monitor bills and assist them in changing practices and behaviours to help reduce their bills. This education and change piece are the backbone of our retrofit program going forward.

We are working with Welsh Government and stakeholders including Sero to deliver the retrofit surveys and subsequent grant to improve our stock to assist in achieving our carbon zero target

Our Neighbourhood Officers offer a money advice service providing advice on how to limit energy costs and assisting to secure available grants and access to money saving schemes.

C5 What % of rental homes have a 3-year fixed tenancy agreement (or longer)

0%

C6 What % of homes with a gas appliance have an in-date, accredited gas safety check?

As of 31 March 2022, 99.89% of our homes had an in-date accredited gas safety check in place.

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

As of 31 March 2022, 95.7% of our homes had an in-date and compliant Fire Risk Assessment in place.

C8 What % of homes meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS)

100% of our homes meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), the requirements of which are higher than the Decent Homes Standard.

In terms of building safety and quality, we also look at Lift Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) and Co2 and are about to commence work on radon monitoring across our estates.

T3 | Tenant Voice

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

Linc has a range of engagement opportunities for tenants to provide insight and feedback on our services. These are set on our website.

We have a comprehensive complaints management process with a dedicated Complaints Officer.

Linc has an active Tenant and Resident Strategic Group (TRSG) which comprises a body of skilled, talented, and diverse tenants operating at a strategic level. The remit of the group is to challenge how Linc engages with its customers and how it involves tenants in strategic decisions. It meets with the Board bi-annually. and has access to the organisations KPI's to assess the associations progress.

Over the past year, this group has challenged and influenced a number of strategies and policies which have led to tangible outcomes, including plans to redevelop and improve our website. Reports showing the impact this group has had are presented after each TRSG meeting and presented to the Board.

Annually, our tenants scrutinise a particular area of service provision, providing feedback and recommendations for improvement which are acknowledged and implemented.

Overall, tenants have an opportunity to engage in a range of informal, day to day methods right through to more formal, mutually agreed arrangements. Insight is also gathered from internal data sources and regular satisfaction surveys as well as other methods used to identify customer needs. Our next steps are to renew our Tenant Engagement Strategy to ensure we continue to capture tenant insight across a wider range of services, using a variety of methods.

C10 How does Linc measure Resident Satisfaction and how has Resident Satisfaction changed over the last three years?

We use the Welsh Government standard reporting questions for tenant satisfaction. We do not have data for 20/21 due to Covid-19 but the table below shows those that responded with either 'Very Satisfied' or 'Fairly Satisfied' with the service provided by Linc for 19/20 and 21/22. The results of these surveys are/will be published in our Self Evaluation Reports on our Website.

Question	2019/20	2021/22	Trend	Comparison to Benchmark (5% tolerance)
Service provided by landlord	76%	86%	↑	Comparable to benchmark
Rent provides value for money	87%	88%	↑	Better than benchmark
Service charge provides VFM	n/a	67%	n/a	n/a
The way repairs and maintenance are dealt with	61%	75%	↑	Comparable to benchmark
Overall quality of your home	76%	88%	↑	Better than benchmark
Provided with a home that is safe and secure	n/a	91%	n/a	n/a
Neighbourhood as a place to live	83%	88%	↑	Better than benchmark
The way anti-social behaviour is dealt with	59%	92%	↑	Better than benchmark
Listens to tenants' views and acts upon them	68%	61%	↓	Less than tolerance
I trust Linc	80%	85%	↑	Better than benchmark

We will be launching our new digital tenant surveys for transactional service touchpoints imminently.

C11 In the last 12 months, how many complaints have been upheld by the Ombudsman?

1 complaint has been upheld. All complaints are used as an opportunity for learning and a way to improve our services.

T4 | Tenant Support

C12 What support services does Linc offer to its residents. How successful are these services in improving outcomes?

We have specialist teams within Linc which provide a variety of services to assist our tenants and residents.

Our **Community Engagement Team** support and assist tenants to help us shape our services and strategies. It enables services and initiatives in local communities, obtaining grants and facilitating projects.

The team led on a Welsh Government bid that enabled 12 community pantries to be developed and sustained across the Bridgend area in response to food poverty, resulting in positive outcomes.



Further to a recommendation from one of our tenant scrutiny sessions, the team established a furniture recycling service bringing stakeholders together to support tenants in need when moving into a new home. We will measure who accesses the services and evaluate its impact.

Working with the University of South Wales, the team is currently evaluating the success of a pilot initiative it set up, 'Children in Wales 'Whole School Approach''. This involved a school uniform 'swap shop' and affordable food hub for the school community to reduce child poverty and improve recycling and reduce waste.

Working with the Open University Wales, it is developing a learning hub for Linc customers to access basic and more advanced free learning facilities across a variety of modules geared towards increasing people's skills and abilities.

The team recently supported two tenants with volunteer work placements at Linc, following which they have both secured employment in the housing sector.

Our **Neighbourhood and Income Teams** provide money advice, assist with benefit eligibility, claims and grants, and signpost to free, independent debt advice agencies. They have been successful in obtaining £48,000 in Discretionary Housing Payments to alleviate tenants' rent debt since January 2022. These teams also issue fuel and food bank vouchers and assist tenants in financial crisis with our own Hardship Fund.

Our **STRIVE Team** support our most complex tenants. They provide a strength-based support service and act as an enabler to enlist appropriate services to meet tenant need and sustain tenancies. The support plans cover all aspects including mental and physical health, tenancy management and social skills to community connections. They also provide budgeting, money advice and support through benefit appeals.

CASE STUDY:

A tenant's gas supply had been capped off due to no access for a gas service. We discovered our tenant's mental health was extremely poor and immediately arranged for one of our STRIVE Officers to visit. The tenant was unable to face work, the main source of income, and was ignoring several debts. We made several telephone calls to the gas supplier, resulting in a residual debt of £300 being cleared to enable a future gas supply to the property and the tenant was able to make an affordable repayment plan to clear the debt. We liaised with the Utility Company as the gas was not flowing properly. Finally, the tenant was able to heat the home and manage the payments. We assisted with a significant amount of arrears with the water supplier by completing a successful application for a Customer Assistance Fund. The tenant was then able to set up an affordable payment plan for water too. Assisting our tenant in a time of need helped to improve their wellbeing, resulting in a return to work to further assist in managing finances and prevent further debt from accruing.

Community Safety Team - our Community Safety Team tackle serious cases of anti-social behaviour and complex tenancy management issues. They work with Neighbourhoods and our Strive Team to resolve complex issues, offer support and informal approaches to prevent legal action and risk of homelessness.



T5 | Placemaking

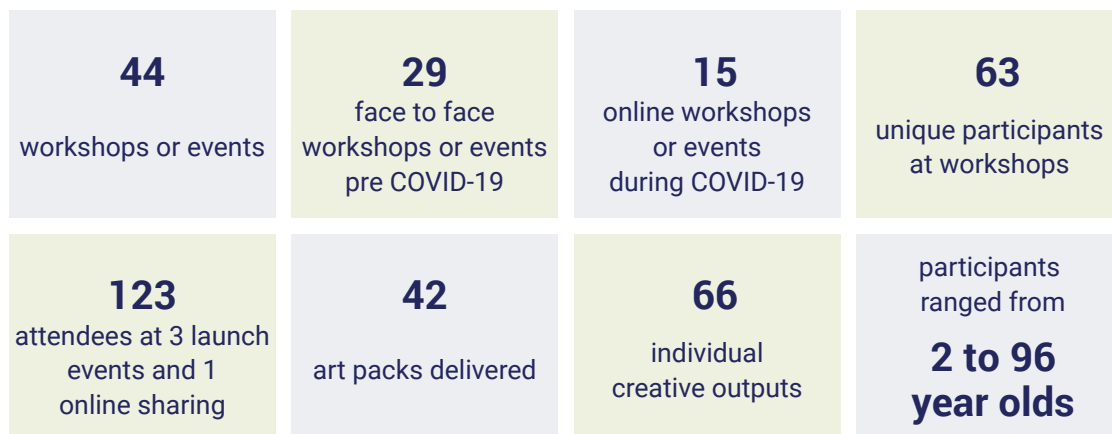
C13 Provide examples or case studies of where Linc has been engaged in placemaking or place shaping activities

We signed up to the Design Commission for Wales (DCFW) 'Placemaking Charter' in October 2021 and have pledged to:

- Involve the local community in the development of proposals
- Choose sustainable locations for new development
- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport
- Create well defined, safe, and welcoming streets and public spaces
- Promote a sustainable mix of uses to make places vibrant
- Value and respect the positive distinctive qualities and identity of existing places.

The following case study shows how we have worked towards the 'Value and Respect the Positive Distinctive Qualities and Identity of Existing Places' pledge.

Our Blaenau Gwent Reach Project is a co-produced place-based project between the Open University Wales, Linc and a local community which focuses on identity of place through wellbeing/ heritage/arts project in Blaenau Gwent. It involved running local sessions to explore place/identity and an exhibition in St Fagans Museum, Cardiff which highlights the results of the project. Some of the outcomes are shown below:



Additional outcomes achieved include Wi-Fi access, a digital whiteboard and solar panels being installed in a local community building. This is used regularly by hundreds of residents for 'happy café' sessions and community events such as hosting the regular park run. We are also supporting a community garden project where residents grow their own food.

Due to the success of this pilot project, Blaenau Gwent Reach will now be upscaled and delivered across Wales.

T6 | Climate Change

C14 Distribution of EPC ratings of existing homes (those completed before the last financial year)

As of 31 March 2021 (excluding shared ownership, supported housing and homebuy):

Rating	Number	%
A	0	0
B	1451	32
C	1905	42
D	1002	22
E or worse	149	4

Our older stone constructed properties account for most of our properties rated D or below. Our retrofit programme is aimed at improving our least energy efficient properties. Currently, we carry out EPC testing only when a property becomes void, with any energy efficiency improvement measures, for example, replacement doors, windows, boilers, not being recognised until that particular property becomes empty.

C15 Distribution of EPC ratings of new homes (those completed in the last financial year)

Post 1 April 2021 (excluding shared ownership, supported housing and homebuy):

Rating	Number	%
A	60	71
B	20	23
C	5	6
D	0	0
E or worse	0	0

Linc merged with another Association in February 2022, increasing its property portfolio by 19. The EPC ratings for those properties are shown separately below.

Rating	Number	%
A	0	0
B	2	10.5
C	15	79
D	2	10.5
E or worse	0	0

C16 Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions

At Linc, we recognise our responsibility in meeting the ambitions of the Welsh Government and we keep the Well-being of Future Generations Act, and its seven goals, at the forefront of our minds. Our role as a leading responsible business will be ensuring that our zero-carbon pathway is at the very centre of our business decisions. We've started our journey and have taken some positive steps to reducing our environmental impact and are up for the challenge of making our business zero carbon.

The carbon baseline assessment below, together with our SHIFT 2020 Assessment, are our first steps towards a more sustainable organisation. The data below shows our carbon baseline data as of 31 December 2020. Our data for 2021 is currently being assessed.

Scope	Emissions Source	Total Emissions (tCO2e)	% Of Total
1	Emissions from the combustion of fuel used for maintenance fleet	3 tonnes	0 (0.1)
	Emissions from gas bought for communal heating systems (even if recharged to residents)	1,247 tonnes	70
	Emissions from gas used in communal areas (even if recharged to residents)	35 tonnes	2
	Emissions from gas used in nursing homes	425 tonnes	24
	Emissions from gas used in office and conference centre	68 tonnes	4
Total Scope 1		1,778 tonnes	
2	Emissions from electricity used at offices and conference centre (Scope 2) including T&D losses (Scope 3).	78 tonnes	8
	Emissions from electricity used in supported housing, extra care, and communal areas (even if recharged to residents) (Scope 2) including T&D losses (Scope 3).	154 tonnes	16
	Emissions from electricity used in nursing homes (even if recharged to residents) (Scope 2) including T&D losses (Scope 3).	712 tonnes	76
Total Scope 2		944 tonnes	
3	Emissions from business mileage (Scope 3)	47 tonnes	1
	Emissions from independently heated housing stock (Scope 3)	12,160 tonnes	99
Total Scope 3		12,207 tonnes	

C17 What energy efficiency actions has Linc undertaken in the last 12 months?

Linc has been successful in securing four grants via the Welsh Governments ORP and climate collective initiatives. The works are targeting the lowest energy and carbon performing properties. Works range from installing PV, new MHRV heating, internal and external wall insulation works, new roofing including loft insulation, windows, and boilers to over 340 properties over the next 2 years.

C18 How is Linc mitigating the increased flood risk and increased risk of homes overheating?

Over 90% of Linc stock is positioned at high elevation above sea level with the likelihood of flooding reduced.

The main risk to Linc properties comes from fluvial flooding and we use Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SUDs) on new developments where we use permeable materials, reduce hard landscaping, and develop rain gardens and swales to reduce run off rates to provide a betterment to the local community. As part of our Planned Maintenance Programme, we are also looking to retrofit this as part of our estate improvement plans.

With new developments, we undertake an assessment of flood risk as part of the technical due diligence. The NRW (Natural Resources Wales) flood maps provide us with the category of the site and whether we can progress the development. We also undertake a full Flood Risk Assessment as part of the planning process to show what mitigation measures, if any, are required for the scheme.

Our development designers consider various matters in relation to potential overheating of homes and orientation and footprint can be designed to minimise solar gain and maximise opportunities for cross ventilation etc.

C19 Does Linc give residents information about correct ventilation, heating, recycling etc. How is this done?

Linc provides new tenants with a broad range of information as they move into their new home. Included in this is advice on preventing condensation, waste disposal and recycling projects.

In our new build development packs, ventilation and heating advice is also provided.

We are in the process of creating a digital information pack incorporating this information with the intention of making it accessible to all tenants.

C20 How is Linc increasing Green Space and promoting Biodiversity on or near homes?

One of the key principles of our Growth (Development) Strategy for 2022-27 is to 'Embrace biophilic design and maximise opportunities for green spaces and biodiversity.'

We are currently preparing a Biodiversity Framework to work alongside our Growth Strategy which will act as guidance for our Development Team and our Consultants/ Contractors to ensure that we maximise green spaces and opportunities to improve biodiversity on our developments.

Linc has received 900 free trees through the OVO I dig Trees schemes which are being planted on Linc owned sites and with local partners.

C21 Does Linc have a strategy to actively manage and reduce all pollutants? If so, how does Linc target and measure performance?

No, but we are planning to develop a strategy. We do not currently have a strategy for New Build Development specifically related to pollutants. All our new build developments will have, via planning, a CEMP (Construction Environmental Management Plan) which is usually prepared by the Contractor, and which sets out the approach the contractor takes to pollutants on site- this will include impact on surface water runoff from site, dust, noise, etc.

We recognise we also need to consider implications from existing uses on land that we acquire, e.g., garage sites, former works, etc for contamination, consider the risks in relation to contaminant sources and decide if those risks are unacceptable.

T8 | Resource Management

C22 Does Linc have a strategy to use or increase the use of responsibly sourced materials for all building works?

Our Growth Strategy includes a commitment to 'Extend use of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and off-site manufacturing techniques to speed up construction and encourage the use of more sustainable construction materials.' 20% of the programme is to use these methods. Going forward, we plan to enhance our work in this area, determine specific targets and measure our performance. In one of our schemes, we have undertaken a carbon calculation of the building which includes embodied carbon as well as operational carbon assessments and once the scheme is completed and reviewed, we are hoping to roll this out across all Linc developed schemes.

As part of delivering Optimised Retrofit Works, we will be conducting a test and learn study with WoodKnowledgeWales around greater use of sustainable Welsh timber within retrofit works. The learning from this will support Linc and the wider social housing sector to develop the approach to the use of sustainable local timber products.

C23 Does Linc have a strategy for waste management incorporating building materials

We do not currently have a strategy for New Build Development, but it can feature in BREEAM and Considerate Constructor visits.

We will be exploring this area in more detail moving forward.

C24 Does Linc have a strategy for good water management?

We are in the process of looking at preparing a Water Management Strategy for new build developments. This will be tied into our approach to phosphate/ nitrate management and how this affects the delivery of new developments in some local authorities.

T9 | Structure & Governance

C25 Is Linc registered with a regulator of social housing?

Linc is registered with and regulated by the Welsh Government.

C26 What is the most recent viability and governance regulatory grading?

Linc's last regulatory judgement was issued on 16 December 2020 and achieved the highest Welsh Government rating namely 'standard'. The rating related to both Governance (including Tenant Services) and Financial Viability.

C27 Which Code of Governance does Linc follow, if any?

Linc follows the Community Housing Cymru Code of Governance.

C28 Is Linc Not-For-Profit? If not, who is the largest shareholder, what is their % of economic ownership and what % of voting rights do they control?

Established in 1977, Linc-Cymru Housing Association Ltd (Linc) is a Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and a Registered Social Landlord regulated by the Welsh Government.

All profits are reinvested for the benefit of our customers rather than being distributed to shareholders.

C29 Explain how Linc's board manages organisational risks

Linc's Board owns strategic risks and delegates responsibilities to its various Committees, e.g., Audit, Development and Care Committees, its Business Leadership and Risk Management Groups. The Board defines a high-level statement on its appetite to risk taking and risk management within its Risk Management Framework.

Strategic and operational risks are reviewed quarterly by the Risk Management Group and reports provided to Board, Audit Committee, and other respective Committees.

Internal independent risk audits are carried out followed by in-depth risk assessments. Overall, our internal auditors carried out 39 audits across the organisation, over 114 days, during 21/22. External specialist audits were also carried out with a further 7 programmed for 22/23.

C30 Has Linc been subject to any adverse regulatory findings in the last 12 months (eg, data protection breaches, bribery, money laundering, HSE (Health and Safety Executive) breaches or notices) – that resulted in enforcement or other equivalent action?

Linc's nursing home Ty Coch in Cardiff was inspected by Care Inspectorate Wales in December 2021. The inspection resulted in four priority action notices that requires the provider to take corrective action prior to a re-inspection. The home will be reinspected after the 10 April 2022 to confirm whether the actions taken have been sufficient.

C31 What are the demographics of the board? And how does this compare to the demographics of Linc's residents, and the area that they operate in?

As of 31 March 2022, Lincs Board was made up of 12 Board Members and comprised:



60% men and
40% women



No board members
have disabilities



All board members
are white British



The average age of
the board is 57

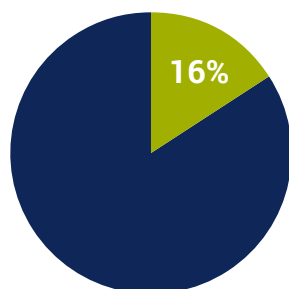


Increasing Board
diversity is included
in our Corporate
Plan for 2022-25.

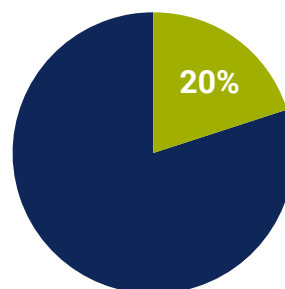
In partnership with four other Registered Social Landlords, we have created a Pathway to Board Programme which supports people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds into Board positions. A current Board vacancy is being held for a candidate via this Programme. We operate the Rooney Rule to guarantee interview to people from a BAME background and/or people with a disability, subject to meeting the role requirements.

C32 What % of the Board and management team have turned over in the last two years?

In the last two years:



Our Board turnover has
been 16% (2 out of 12)



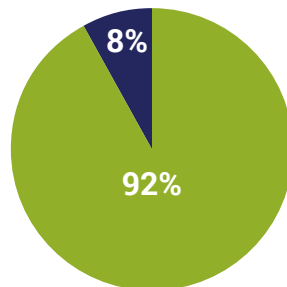
Our Management Team
turnover has been 20%
(1 out of 5) following
a re-structure.

C33 Is there a maximum tenure for a board member? If so, what is it?

Yes, three terms of three years, with a maximum tenure of 9 years.

C34 What % of the Board are non-executive directors?

Our Board is currently made up of:



Non-Executive Directors 92% (11)
Co-optee Non-Executive Director 8% (1)

C35 Number of board members on the Audit Committee with recent and relevant financial experience

3 members of our Audit Committee have recent and relevant financial knowledge, qualifications and/or experience:

- 1 Over 40 years banking experience including specialising in the Healthcare (15 years) and Social Housing (5 years) sectors.
- 2 Senior Manager in a Building Society
- 3 Chartered Accountant (ICAEW)

C36 Are there any current executives on the Remuneration Committee?

Our Remuneration Committee consists entirely of Non-Executive Directors.

C37 Has a succession plan been provided to the Board in the last 12 months?

An annual assessment of Non-Executive Director core skills is undertaken by the Nomination Committee and reported back to Board outlining strengths, weaknesses, learning/development, and skills/experience requirements. This defines succession requirements. An Executive Succession Plan was reported to Linc's Board in January 2022.

C38 For how many years has the Housing Provider's current external audit partner been responsible for auditing the accounts?

One year. Our recent external auditors appointed were appointed in 2021.

C39 When was the last independently-run, board- effectiveness review?

Facilitated governance reviews are undertaken annually as part of the Boards strategic planning events.

An extensive third-party report on Linc's governance and Board skills assessment was also undertaken as part of a merger Due Diligence in November 2020.

C40 Are the roles of the chair of the board and CEO held by two different people?

Yes.

C41 How does Linc handle conflicts of interest at the board?

Declarations of Conflicts of Interest are recorded at the start of each Board Meeting. Where a conflict is declared, Non-Executive Directors will withdraw from the discussion and decision.

A Non-Executive Director Code of Conduct is in place.

T11 | Staff Wellbeing

C42 Does Linc pay the Real Living Wage?

Our aim is to be a living wage employer in the future, but as we operate three nursing homes and several extra care schemes, we must carefully balance this ambition against the financial viability and the impact on service charges to our tenants. Within these establishments, our care staff are paid above the Real Living Wage and our domestic and catering staff are paid above the National Living Wage.

All other staff are paid above the Real Living Wage.

C43 What is the gender pay gap?

Our Mean Gender Pay Gap is 20.8 and Median is 17.3.

Our intention is to have parity in pay and to reduce the gap and support the recruitment and promotion of women at managerial and senior management levels. Our ratio of male/female staff in managerial roles is Male (31) 55% Female (25) 45%

We plan to review our recruitment process and succession planning to ensure women are not at a disadvantage at any of the stages. Our new approach to agile working and the future introduction of family friendly policies will support this.

C44 What is the CEO-worker pay ratio?

This is 7.32 and is recorded in the Community Housing Cymru CEO Pay Transparency Report.

C45 How does Linc support the physical and mental health of their staff?

We have a Wellbeing Strategy which focusses on the four pillars of wellbeing, Financial, Physical, Emotional and Societal and an active wellbeing group, made up of staff from across Linc, who consider how best we can support all aspects of employee wellbeing. The group is supported by our wellbeing champions who encourage staff to talk about their concerns and how they are feeling.

Most of our managers have been trained in iAct, which is an accredited training programme which helps managers recognise indicators of stress and support their staff members when they might need it.

We have a dedicated Wellbeing Officer, who is available for staff to talk to if they have any worries that may be affecting them at work or home. This role is also to look at wellbeing issues and emerging themes and how we can best help all our colleagues with their wellbeing.

We embrace diversity and seek to create a sense of belonging for staff and this is supported by our Race Equality and LGBTQ+ working groups. We have been awarded the Investors in Diversity accreditation and are Disability Confident.

We have an Employee Assistance Helpline which is a free service available to all staff 24/7.

C46 Average number of sick days taken per employee

8.8 days

T12 | Supply Chain

C47 How is Social Value creation considered when procuring goods and services?

We are committed to ensuring the use of social clauses in all contracts regardless of value. The use of targeted recruitment and training, as well as the community benefits menu of options across all procurement activity, will be utilised on all procured contracts as a core requirement by:

1. Engaging and working closely with key stakeholders, residents, community groups, private, statutory & voluntary sectors to create community benefit plans for each development from concept through to completion.
2. Creating opportunities for employment, training, volunteering, and apprenticeships.
3. Engaging with educational programmes
4. Supporting anti-poverty initiatives and support local SMEs.
5. Embracing foundational and circular economy initiatives.
6. Increasing access to green spaces and improving biodiversity.
7. Improving community connections, outdoor amenities, and spaces for play that contribute to improved physical, mental health and wellbeing and personal development.

We will have a business wide approach to social value which will have a minimum of 10% weighting during the scored tender process for community benefits/social value. This will enable us to:

- Utilise procured spend in all departments to provide community, social clauses and community investment sums and encourage local employment, apprenticeships, training and the sourcing of sustainable goods and services.
- Work with programmes and partners to assist the long-term unemployed and economically inactive back into work.
- Utilise local community groups, partners, shared apprentice schemes
- Deliver and promote training and career opportunities by working in partnership with schools, educational establishments, and existing local training providers.
- Support and develop local supply chains and develop longer-term working relationships and contract opportunities for local businesses.
- Assist local businesses promote themselves and win contracts
- Work with residents, local groups, partners, and public bodies to help local communities tackle problems and improve the quality of life.
- To develop community projects that support local need.

C48 How is Environmental impact considered when procuring goods and services?

We are working to introduce Sustainability Risk Assessments for all procurements over £25,000 in value using the Welsh Government promoted sustainability risk assessment tool. The use of the SRAs will embed environmental considerations into contract specifications before procurement commences.

We are also including scored questions within relevant procurement processes focused around the environmentally beneficial actions or outcomes participating economic operators will commit to deliver or achieve in and through their delivery of the specific contract being procured.

