

Hightown

SHIFT Environmental Report

2026

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August 2026

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Executive summary

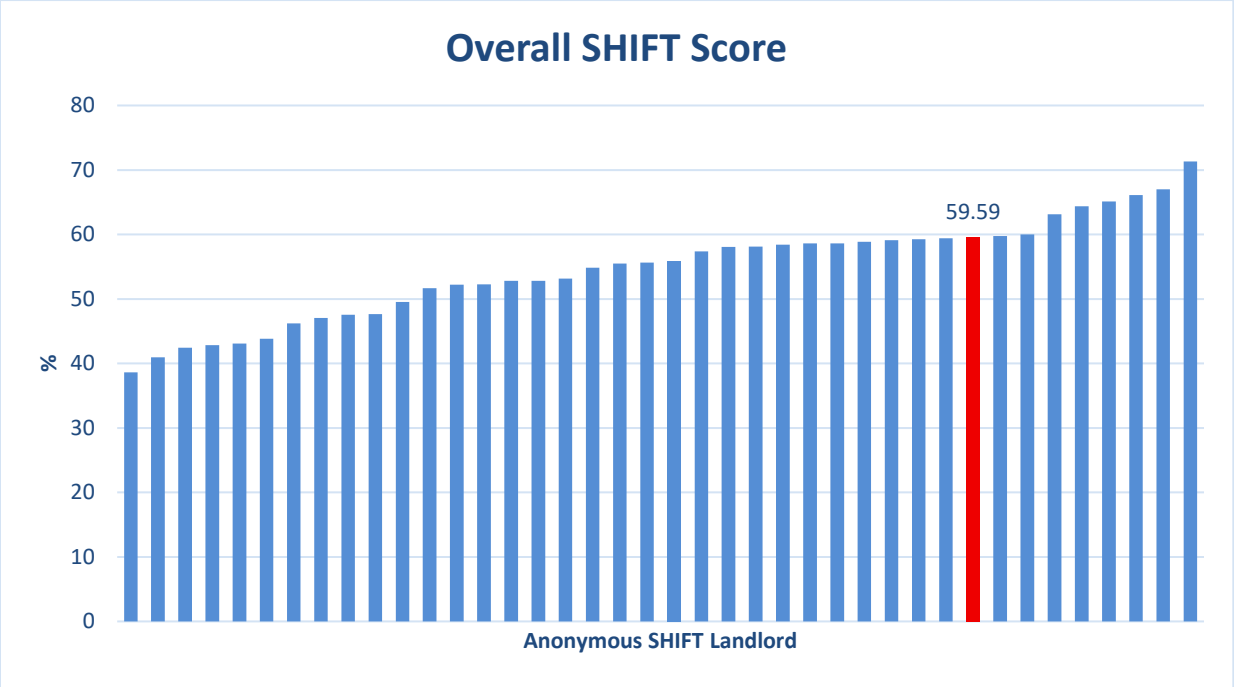
Environmental issues continue to be a priority for the sector. Timely intervention is essential if UK social landlords are to reduce residents' energy costs, strengthen homes against the impacts of climate change, and create sustainable communities. Data-driven decision making enables landlords to take effective action, while the increasing number of reporting frameworks means that management data also supports robust external reporting. Clear, reliable data further helps communicate progress to staff and stakeholders.

Collecting environmental data is only the first step; the next is understanding how to use it to improve the housing stock and operations. This report presents Hightown's performance in a format that allows comparison with peers. Where peers perform better, it demonstrates that similar improvements are achievable. Each metric is accompanied by recommendations designed to support the development of a focused and effective sustainability strategy.

Hightown owns and manages over 7,500 homes across Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Berkshire. The results of this assessment will show, as best as the data allows, the gaps between Hightown's current environmental performance and environmentally safe levels of impact.

The report outlines Hightown's most recent environmental performance. It is based on primary data supplied by the organisation, which has been processed using nationally recognised methodologies where applicable. In cases where such methodologies are unavailable, we have applied SHIFT's own approaches, developed through our specialism in the social housing sector and the best available scientific knowledge. The audit trail for this assessment can be accessed on the SHIFT online customer portal.

Each environmental issue for each part of the organisation has been assessed and the results, including carbon emissions, are detailed in the report and the Summary Statistics section. For the purposes of this executive summary there is a scoring system which combines overall performance into a single SHIFT score. The score is based on historic weightings derived by social landlords. As a caveat, the scoring is purely a convenience and should not be taken as anything other than that. The priority of the SHIFT assessment is to provide environmental metrics, backed by a defendable audit trail. The chart below shows Hightown's score and comparison against peers in UK social housing.



Hightown has achieved the SHIFT Gold status, with a score of 59.59%. It ranks 9th out of the 40 most recent SHIFT assessments. We strongly encourage Hightown to take the steps outlined in this report to ensure effective management of resources, leading to a sustainable stock and operations. Beyond the environmental necessity, there is significant evidence demonstrating the financial advantages of these actions[1]. As well as driving action, clients use the data in their SHIFT report for:

- Effective environmental strategy development
- ESG reporting
- Annual progress monitoring on environmental targets
- Compliance reporting – including SECR reporting

SHIFT also has the bronze, silver, gold and platinum status element. Clients find this useful for having a single corporate aim for all directorates and for easy communication with stakeholders. However, clients are reminded that this is not the purpose of SHIFT. SHIFT is designed to provide reliable, actionable data that supports strategic decision-making and

[1] SHIFT Environment | Financial benefits of sustainability

enables organisations to effectively manage their way towards a sustainable housing stock and sustainable operations.

Summary statistics

Carbon

Environmental issue	Absolute[1]	Intensity[2]	Intensity target for SHIFT platinum 2026[3]	Long term intensity target (by 2050)
SAP – all homes	SAP 81.30	99.20% of all homes SAP 69 or higher	SAP 74.18 ✓	SAP 85
Individually heated homes, regulated emissions Scope 3	15,641.26 tonnes CO_2e	2,259.65 $kgCO_2e$/ independently heated home		
Heat networks Scope 1 Scope 2 Scope 3	576.84 tonnes CO_2e 20.04 tonnes CO_2e 2.10 tonnes CO_2e	9,335.61 kWh/ home managed	11,305.92 kWh/ home managed ✓	3,600 kWh/ home managed
Other landlord supply Scope 1 Scope 2 Scope 3	114.68 tonnes CO_2e 396.15 tonnes CO_2e 41.47 tonnes CO_2e	75.96 $kgCO_2e$/ home managed		0 kg CO_2e/ home managed
Offices Scope 1 Scope 2 Scope 3	52.77 tonnes CO_2e 5.52 tonnes CO_2e	22.41 $kgCO_2e/m^2$	28.07 $kgCO_2e$ /m^2 ✓	0 $kgCO_2e/m^2$
Business mileage Public transport (Scope 3) Employee-owned (Scope 3)	10.82 tonnes CO_2e 87.88 tonnes CO_2e	13.57 $kgCO_2e$/ home managed	7.67 $kgCO_2e$/ home managed ✗	0 $kgCO_2e$/ home managed
Maintenance activities DLO (Scope 1) Scaled to 100% of spend	85.27 tonnes CO_2e 1,375.36 tonnes CO_2e	189.16 $kgCO_2e$/ home managed (scaled to represent 100% of repairs and maintenance spend)		0 $kgCO_2e$/ home managed
Embodied carbon Maintenance (Scope 3) New Build (Scope 3)	283.57 tonnes CO_2e 9,714.10tonnes CO_2e	39.00 $kgCO_2e$/ home managed 35,196.00 $kgCO_2e$/ new home		0 $kgCO_2e$/ home managed 0 $kgCO_2e$/ new home

Other environmental performance

Environmental issue	Absolute[1]	Intensity[2]	Intensity target for SHIFT platinum 2026[3]	Long term intensity target (by 2050)
Water – homes	0.86 million m^3	140.21 lpd	139.11 lpd ×	110 lpd
Water – offices	1,510.00 m^3	9.44 m^3/employee/year	13.46 m^3/ employee/year ✓	3m^3/employee/ year by 2030
Waste – homes	24.62% homes with internal recycling bins	5.58% increase in residents diverting waste from landfill		17.6% increase in residents diverting waste from landfill
Waste – offices	5.86 tonnes	100.00% of waste diverted from landfill	71.38% waste diverted from landfill ✓	100% diverted from landfill
Fly tipping – number of incidents	477.00 incidents	65.60 incidents/ 1,000 homes managed	170.83 incidents/ 1,000 homes managed ✓	0 incidents
Promotion of sustainable transport facilities – homes	30.92% homes with cycle storage	8.27 % increased likelihood of resident use		100% increased likelihood of resident use
Responsible materials – maintenance & capital works	58.00%	58.00%	58.43% responsibly sourced ×	100% responsibly sourced
Responsible materials - offices	35.00%	35.00%	39.22% responsibly sourced ×	100% responsibly sourced
Resilience to climate change – flooding	83.33% low risk 000% medium risk 16.67% high risk	83.33% of homes resilient to flood risk	87.23% adapted to flood risk ×	100% adapted to flood risk
Resilience to climate change – overheating	46.80% low risk 48.51% medium risk 4.69% high risk	46.80 % of homes resilient to overheating risk	84.28% adapted to overheating risk ×	100% adapted to overheating risk
Biodiversity value	139.13 habitat units	1.58 habitat units per hectare		

1 – In line with best practice environmental reporting, the absolute environmental impact is given here – this gives an overall assessment of impact.
2 – In line with best practice environmental reporting, the intensity is given. Intensity is the environmental impact per meaningful unit, such as *per home managed* or *per m^2 of office space*. Intensity allows organisations to monitor progress towards long term aims, even if they change in size, for example by gaining more homes or office space. Intensity is used for SHIFT scoring and benchmarking.
3 – When '✓' is displayed, you are achieving or exceeding the platinum intensity target for the year stated. When '×' is displayed, the platinum intensity target has not been met.

Priority actions

Throughout this report, actions are listed under the relevant part of your organisation and environmental issue. To help identify the most important actions we have graded each action against a set of criteria. The more criteria that are met, the higher the priority for the action. Suggested criteria are:

- Cost
- Staff resources
- Importance – based on likelihood of being regulated
- Peer comparison – if lower in the benchmark, then this would indicate that this is more urgent

The actions are described in ways that departments can implement. The efficacy of the actions will be demonstrated in future SHIFT reports (for example, carbon emissions will decrease). Implementing an action does not necessarily translate to more SHIFT points. However, landlords that take time to improve data quality and monitor their environmental performance tend to perform better in terms of their SHIFT scores. We suggest that monitoring of actions is carried out in normal business processes (e.g. appraisals, quarterly reports).

To help you focus on priority actions, your SHIFT assessor can extract the following information, based on this report:

- The actions described in this report
- Where data allows, a ranked breakdown of the energy efficiency of your heat networks
- An indication of which part of your organisation is contributing most to sustainability

If you require this in any other format or wish to amend any suggested actions, please let your assessor know as this may require extended consultation work.

Existing Homes

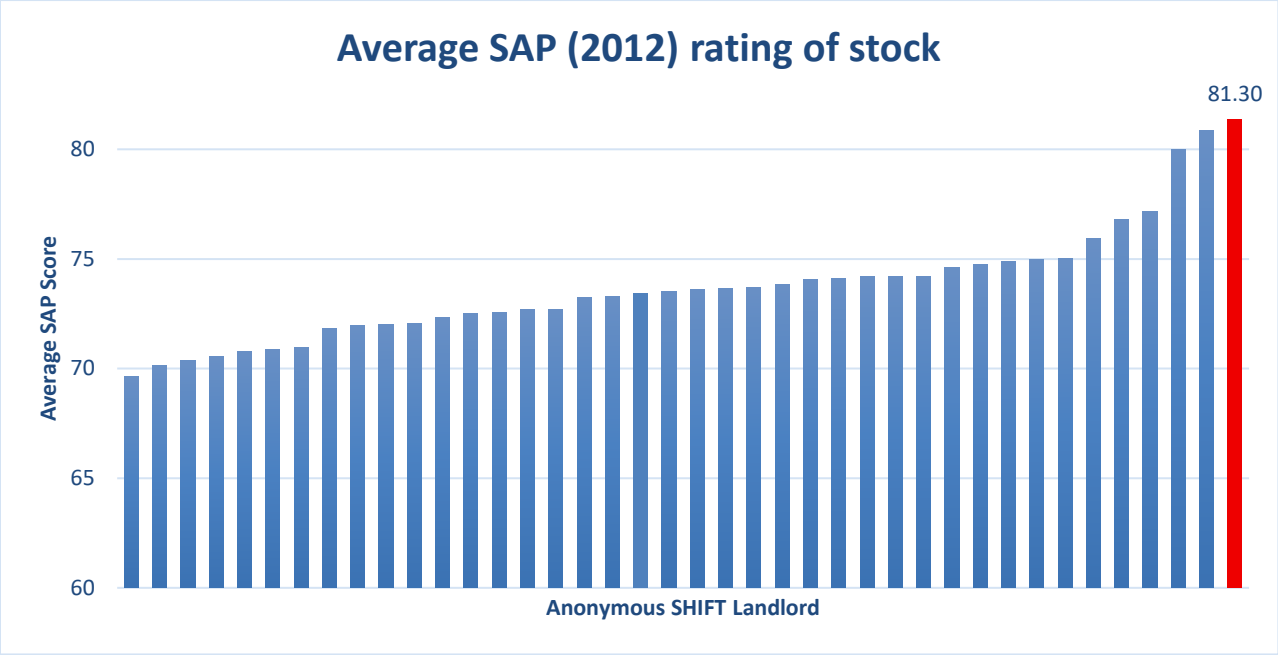
Most of the homes that exist now will be in use in 2050 and it is essential to ensure that existing homes are truly sustainable. Key issues remain energy efficiency, adaptation to climate change and biodiversity and green spaces. Your performance in each of these areas, and others, is presented below.

Energy and average SAP

SAP remains the UK's standard measure for energy efficiency of homes. Higher SAP scores indicate lower running costs for homes and correlate with lower CO_2 emissions. Despite well-known inaccuracies in the SAP methodology, it is a good proxy for CO_2 emissions and SAP remains the Government's favoured method for assessing energy efficiency. The full impacts of SAP 10 introduced in 2025 are not yet fully known but early data suggests a degree of comparability with SAP 2012 and hence both formats are collected for this report.

The net zero plan for UK homes is a combination of achieving EPC C or above for all properties, shifting to non-fossil fuel heating (with corresponding changes to SAP methodology) and expected energy efficiency standards for new builds up to 2050. Other changes to the energy efficiency reporting regimes (Home Energy Model (HEM) and Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)) are under consultation and this may impact decision making in the future.

Energy performance data was extracted by Hightown's Social impact and insight officer from its asset management database which indicated an average SAP of 81.30 has been achieved across its housing stock.

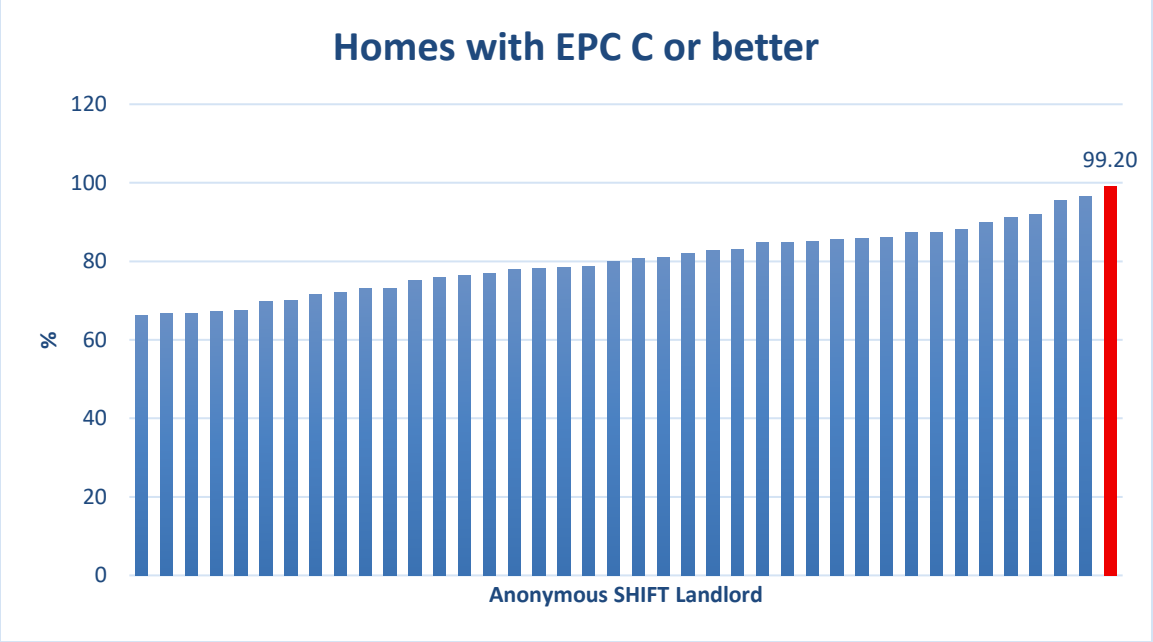


Peer Comparison: Good

Fuel poverty

Tackling fuel poverty aligns with the UK's net zero pathway. As well as significantly improving environmental performance, achieving EPC C / SAP 69 or better will dramatically improve the lives of residents in both health and financial terms.

According to data held within Hightown's asset management database, 99.20% of properties are believed to be EPC C or above. While the inclusion of leasehold and shared ownership properties may increase this figure, these properties have been excluded from the SHIFT assessment as Hightown does not have responsibility for major works to them.



Peer Comparison: Good

Recommended Improvements:

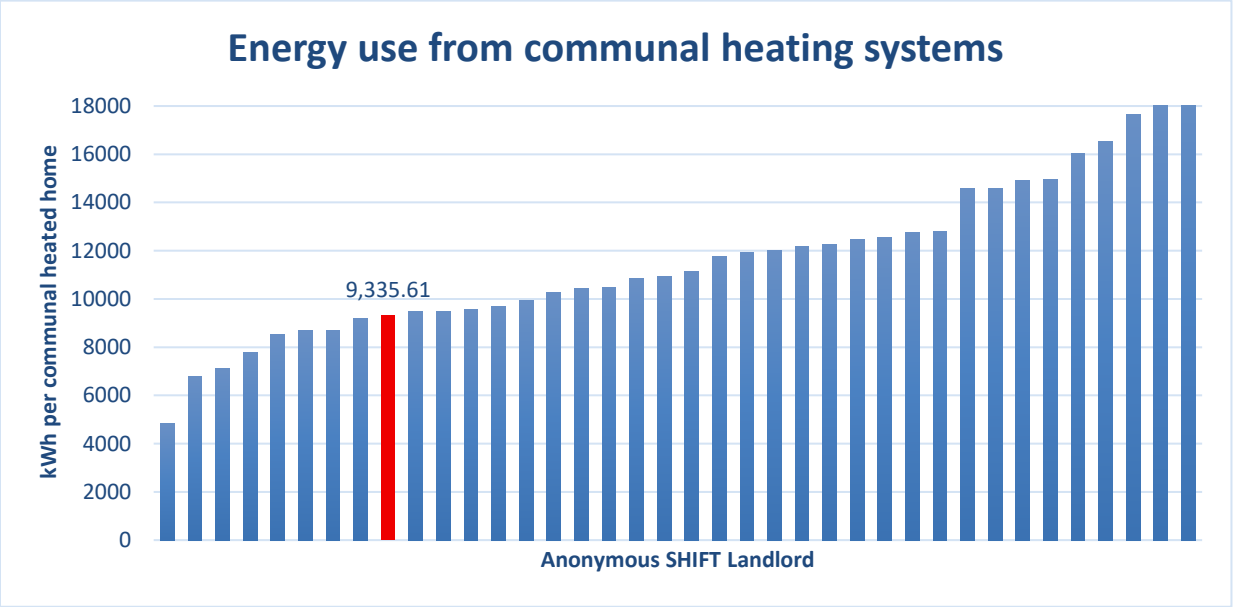
Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources * High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Develop long term, detailed, address-level plans that align with the UK's net zero pathway for homes, namely EPC C by 2030 then gradually upgrade to non-fossil fuel heating systems up until 2050. 3rd party software is available to allow you to do this. See Completing an EPC analysis of your housing stock for more information.	Low	Low	High
Devise and implement a first-year plan: 1. Divide the number of homes lower than EPC C by 4 to get the annual number of homes that need to be upgraded by 2030. 2. Select ~80% of the annual number from the worst performing homes in the stock and carry out the interventions necessary to get them to EPC C as identified in the long-term plan. Ensure completion by end of the year.	Medium	Medium	High
Upgrade ~10% of the annual upgrade number when triggered by component replacements and/or voids. The aim is to get teams used to doing opportunistic upgrades at the same time as other works. The most obvious example is to install solar PV at the same time as a roof replacement.	Low	Medium	High
Upgrade ~10% of the annual upgrade number with a heat pump, EWI and/or solar PV where appropriate as identified in the long-term plan. The idea here is to start spreading examples of the technologies throughout the stock so that residents get used to it and share positive experiences with other tenants. This is essential to gain access to other homes in future upgrade programmes.	Low	Medium	High

Repeat the actions for the first year plan each year until 2030 and monitor performance by tracking the % of homes that are EPC C or better. This should be 100% by 2030.	High	High	High
Monitor policy changes for beyond 2030 in readiness for upgrading heating systems to non-fossil fuel versions that do not add extra cost for residents.	Low	Low	High

Heat networks

Energy for heat networks is a huge cost to landlords and is highly visible. The heating systems are known to be very inefficient and are not adequately reflected in the SAP rating. In addition, there have been significant changes in Heat Metering regulations which will impact what landlords do. SHIFT research indicates that an efficient communal heating system would require only 3,600 kWh of heating and hot water energy per home.

Hightown identified 349 properties on heat networks. These should be clearly documented under the requirements of the Heat Networks (Market Framework) (Great Britain) Regulations 2026. The relevant 2025 Defra conversion factors have been applied to the total 3,258,126.35 kWh of energy used in Hightown's heat networks. This equates to 9,335.61 kWh per home and 598.98 tonnes CO_2e. The table below shows the average kWh values per home on a heat network compared with other SHIFT landlords.



Peer Comparison: Good

Recommended Improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Identify worst performing heat networks by calculating kWh/unit and benchmarking against other blocks or against SAP estimates of what the kWh/unit should be.	Low	Low	Medium
Install individual meters in properties where viable.	Medium	Medium	High
Devise and implement upgrades to the worst performing block. Aim for EPC C or better homes with non-fossil fuel heating.	Medium	Medium	High
Improve databases to show a clear link between communally heated homes and the addresses on energy broker data. E.g. have the block UPRN appear on broker lists of energy usage. This allows more accurate reporting and monitoring of energy and CO_2 emissions.	Low	Low	High
Devise a plan to upgrade all heat networks such that they do not use non-fossil fuel heating by 2040.	Low	Low	Medium

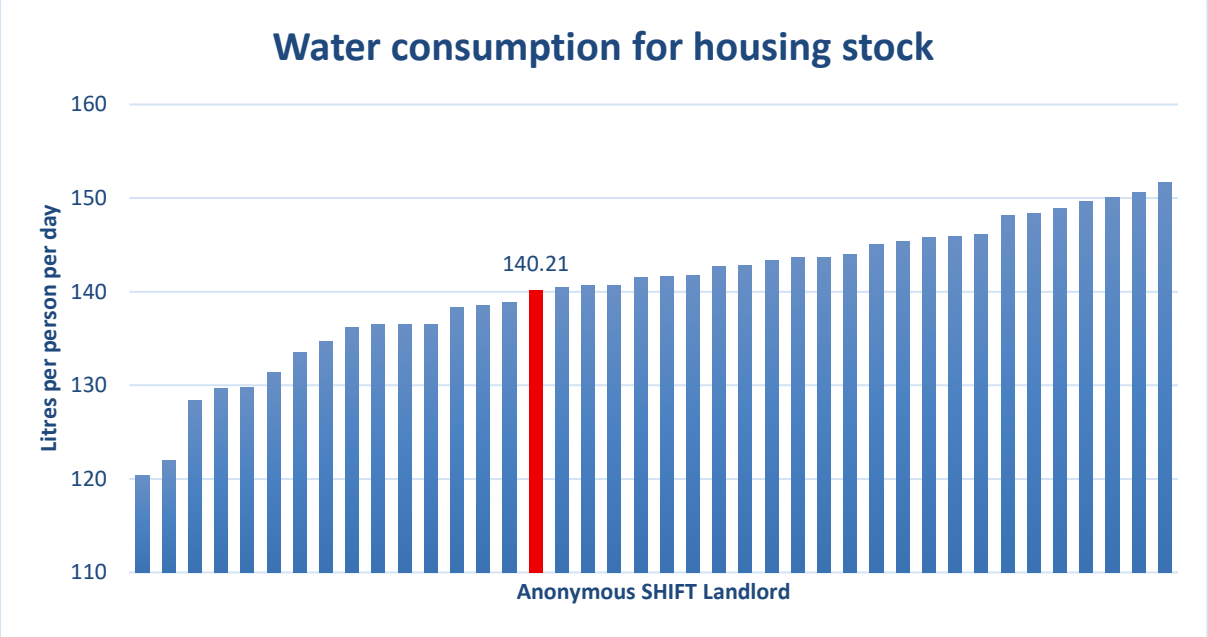
Water

Water is a basic human need and therefore its sustainable supply is hugely important. In addition, water bills are rising which means that this is an increasing cost for residents. Water efficiency is key to helping with both these issues. Furthermore, we know that some new developments are being held back by water stress in areas, so being able to demonstrate water efficiency in existing stock can only help. At the time of writing there are emerging targets for water efficiency. In England the target is 110 litres per person per day by 2050.

As is common across the sector, a full assessment of water efficiency has not been completed across Hightown's housing stock. Therefore, the SHIFT water efficiency estimator tool has been used. This uses build age data to identify the likely water efficiency measures in place. For Hightown this estimates 140.21 litres per person per day (lpd).

Hightown should refer to **"Hightown_tool_output.xlsx"** uploaded to section 1.1 of the SHIFT portal. This contains the water efficiency estimates for each home.

Hightown also provide water saving tips on their webpage "Be sustainable and save". This includes advice such as filling the kettle with the amount of water you need and installing water butts to collect rainwater for your garden. The water saving tips can save residents money and should be promoted to residents regularly. Hightown also divert their customers to Anglian Water's 'water saving quiz' that gives everyday tips and information on a household's water usage.



Peer Comparison: Comparable

Recommended Improvements:

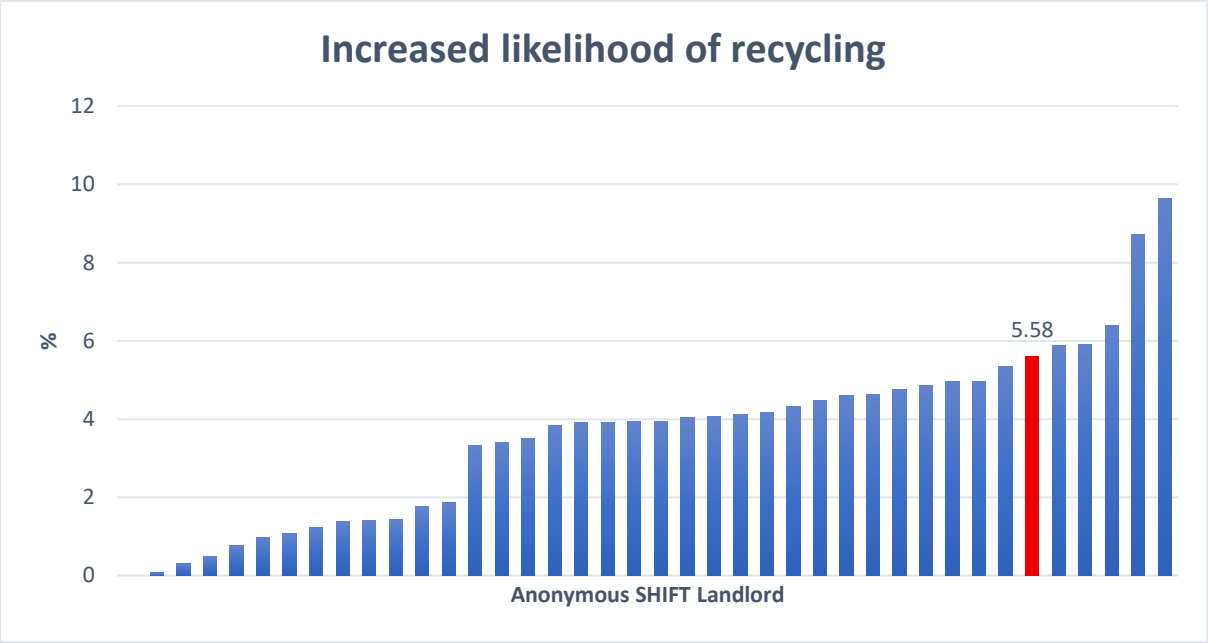
Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Create a database which shows the water efficient fittings for each home. SHIFT can give you first pass assumptions to help populate the database. As well as showing data for existing homes, the database can be populated with information from new build.	Low	Low	Low
Update all retrofit specifications for water fittings. Suggested values are: • WC 4/2.6 litres dual flush • Shower 8 litres/minute • Bath 170 litres • Basin taps 5 litres/minute • Sink taps 6 litres/minute • Water meter	Low	Low	Medium
For 100% of bathroom and kitchen upgrades install water fittings to the new specification and record upgrades on the water efficiency database.	Medium	Medium	Medium
For at least ~5% of voids with a shower flow rate of 8 litres/minute, retrofit an aerating shower head/fitting and record upgrade on the database.	Low	Low	Medium
For at least ~5% of voids with a non-dual flush toilet, retrofit a water displacement device to reduce flush volume.	Low	Low	Medium

Contact your local water supplier and explore ways to get meters retrofitted in voids.	Low	Low	Medium
Put water saving tips for residents on Green Pages. Tips could include: • Shorter showers • Water displacement devices in baths and large toilet cisterns • Get a water meter installed • Buy water efficient appliances • Install a water butt in the garden (if applicable)	Low	Low	Low
Devise a plan to ensure that all homes have water efficient fittings by 2050.	Low	Low	Low
Implement the water efficiency plan.	Medium	Medium	Medium

Domestic recycling

This SHIFT metric reflects the measures that landlords can take to encourage additional recycling by residents, above and beyond what local authorities are doing to boost recycling rates.

SHIFT estimates that 24.62% of Hightown's homes are fitted with internal recycling bins, based on assumptions derived from property build dates. Due to a lack of data, it is assumed that residents were not actively or passively engaged in domestic or bulky waste disposal during the reporting period. Based on the assumed internal recycling bins installed, a 5.58% increase in the likelihood of residents diverting waste from landfill is estimated.



Peer Comparison: Good

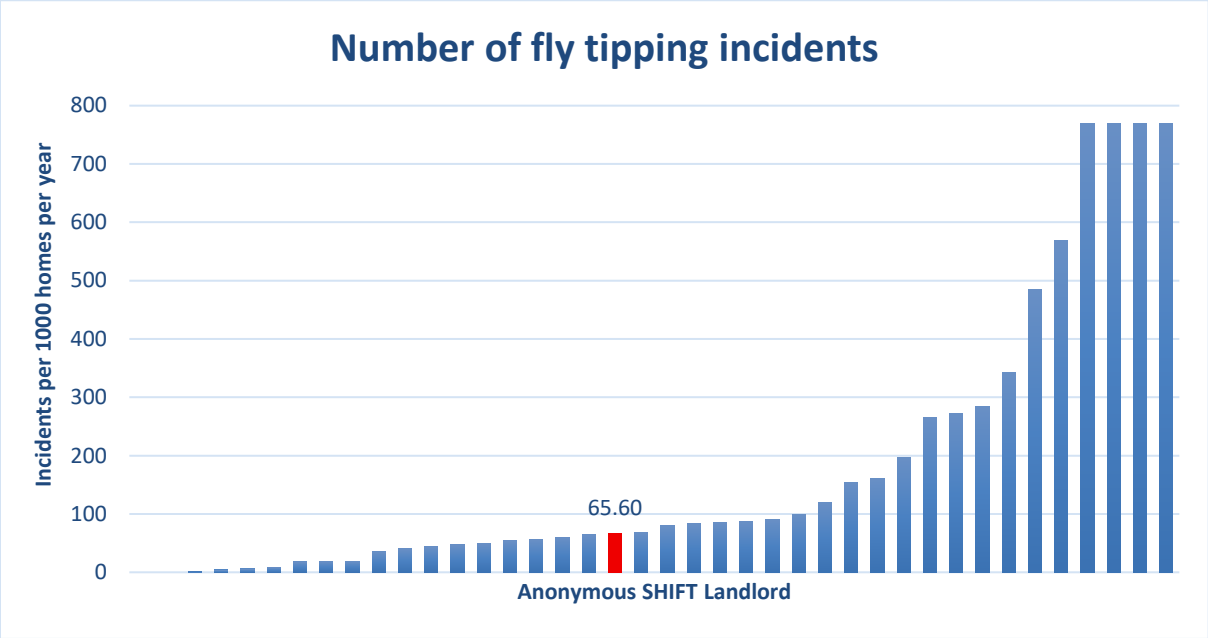
Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Include internal recycling bins in your asset database. SHIFT can give you first pass assumptions to help populate the database. As well as showing data for existing homes, the database can be populated with information from new build.	Low	Low	Low
Update kitchen retrofit specifications to include internal waste recycling bins.	Low	Low	Low
Ensure new build specifications include recycling bins as standard	Low	Low	Low
For 100% of kitchen upgrades install internal waste bins to the new specification and record upgrades on the internal waste bin database.	Low	Medium	Medium
Put waste reduction and recycling tips for residents on Green Pages. This should include details on bulky waste.	Low	Low	Low
Deliver an active engagement programme on waste management and ensure all interactions are recorded for environmental reporting.	Low	Medium	Low

Fly tipping

Fly tipping is unsightly, presents a potential fire hazard and is costly for landlords to deal with.

477 fly tipping incidents were recorded by Hightown over the reporting period, equating to 65.60 per 1000 homes.



Peer Comparison: Ahead

Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Put instructions on how residents can deal with bulky waste appropriately on Green Pages.	Low	Low	Low

Devise a strategy to reduce fly-tipping to zero incidents per 1,000 homes by 2050, including interim monitoring targets and milestones.	Low	Low	Low
Implement the strategy to reduce fly-tipping and monitor impact.	Medium	Medium	Low

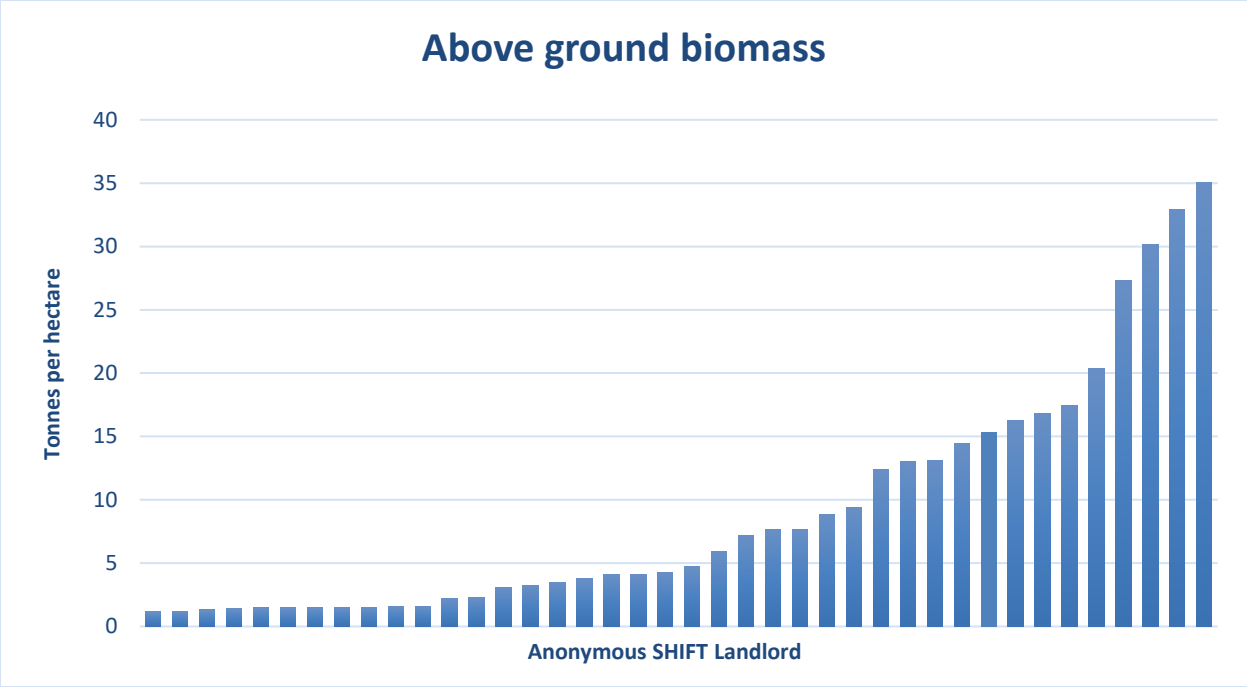
Biodiversity and green spaces

Green spaces and biodiversity can deliver major benefits to our health and wellbeing. These include air quality improvement, flood attenuation, cooling during heatwaves, recreational value and carbon sequestration. As such biodiversity is rising up national, international and ESG agendas. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is beginning to impact new build developments, and the methodology provides a good way to measure biodiversity in general. Therefore, SHIFT Environment has adopted the methodology. What is very clear is that all methodologies, targets, and initiatives on biodiversity require knowledge on the amount of land owned by landlords.

For the time being, SHIFT research indicates that there should be 1.02 habitat units per hectare of land owned land by 2043. This metric aligns with ESG reporting and provides an estimate of biodiversity per hectare from land coverage data on all land holdings, including gardens as well as communally maintained land.

Using property type information provided on Hightown's asset database and tree survey data supplied by Hightown, the SHIFT biodiversity tool estimated 1.58 habitat units per hectare of land owned, which equates to 139.13 total habitat units across Hightown's stock.

As we have updated our methodology for 2026, we have no benchmarking data this year. The chart below shows results for SHIFT 2025 where the unit of comparison was "tonnes above ground biomass / hectare". As a rough indicator 11.9 tonnes above ground biomass / hectare equates to 1.02 habitat units per hectare.



Peer Comparison: not applicable for 2026

Recommended improvements:

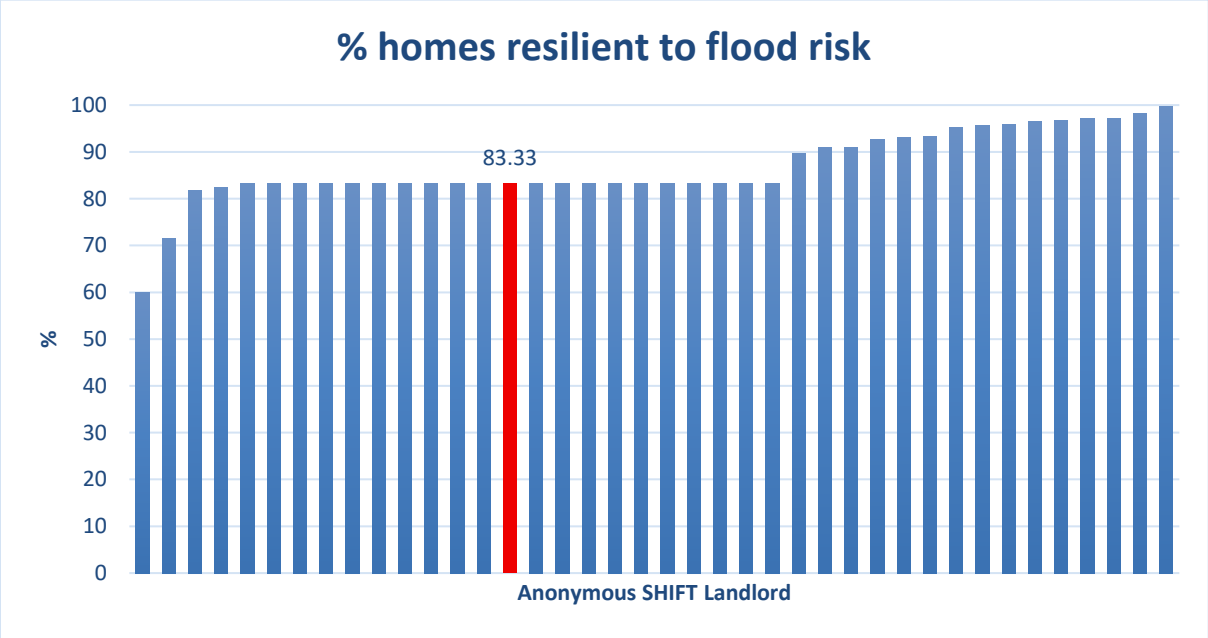
Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Create a database which shows the m^2 total land area for each property (including vegetation types for private gardens). Include other land owned beyond buildings and tree locations and canopy sizes. SHIFT can provide a first pass assumption. As well as showing data for existing homes, the database can be populated with information from new build.	Low	Low	Low

Devise a biodiversity and greens spaces plan to achieve 1.02 habitat units per hectare by 2043, with the caveat that this may be superseded if new guidance emerges. Include milestones and interim monitoring targets. Innovative ways to increase biodiversity should be included (e.g. green roofs/walls, street trees).	Low	Low	Medium
Implement biodiversity and green spaces plan and monitor progress against milestones and habitat units /ha interim targets.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Convert 6% of mown grassland to biodiverse areas – this enhances biodiversity and reduces maintenance costs.	Medium	Low	Low

Homes resilient to flooding

New data from the Environment Agency[2] shows that around 18% of homes in England are at risk of some kind of flooding. Wales and Scotland are likely to have similar risks. The ideal is to have 100% of homes at low risk or adapted to flooding. For SHIFT purposes, we define adapted as homes that are in locations at very low risk of flooding or homes that have responsive actions in place to quickly react to a flood event or flood warning. Homes may still flood, but they can be quickly occupied again after a flood event.

Hightown could not provide flood risk data on their stock, SHIFT defaults have been added. It is recommended that Hightown gain up to date flood risk data on their housing stock and that this is updated at least every 3 years going forward, as well as implementing a flood risk plan that ensures residents are able to return to their homes shortly after a flooding event.



Peer Comparison: SHIFT default was used

[2] SHIFT Environment: Flood risk for English homes – a new dataset

Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Assess flood risk and include this in your asset database. This should include fluvial and surface flood risk, be address specific and assessed within the most recent 3 years. As well as showing data for existing homes, the database can be populated with information from new build.	Low	Low	High
Devise a flood resilience strategy including interim monitoring metrics, with the end goal to have 100% of homes resilient to flood by 2050.	Low	Low	High
Implement flood resilience strategy and monitor against interim targets.	Medium	Medium	High

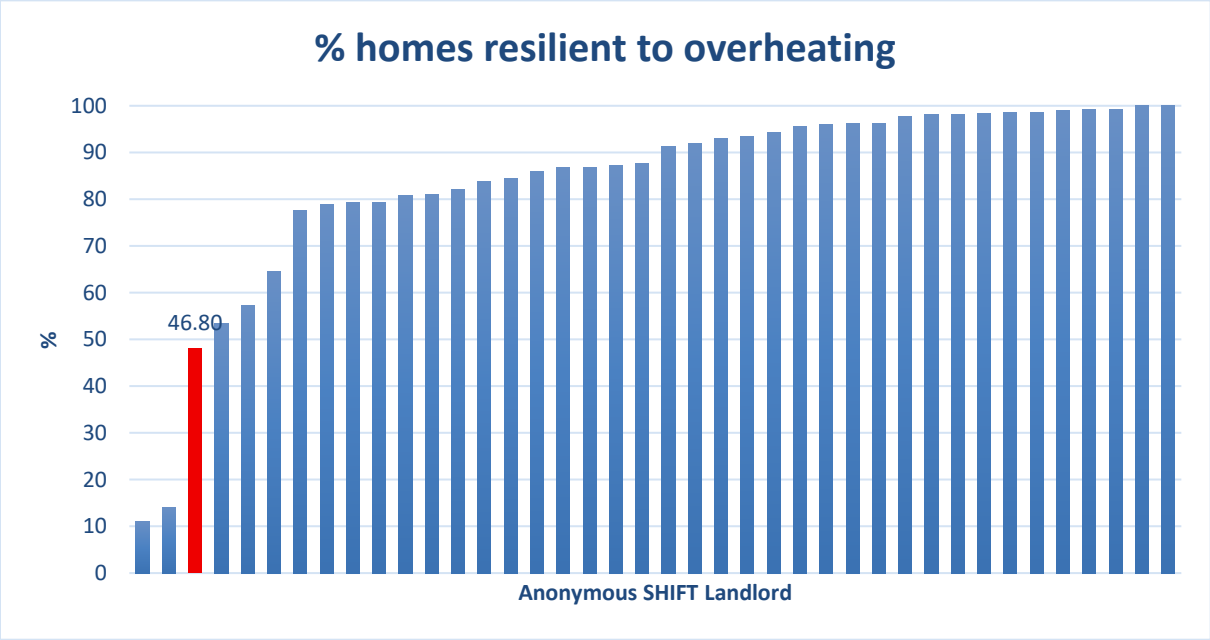
Homes resilient to overheating

Met Office data (and recent experience) indicate that heat waves will become more prevalent in coming years. Landlords will need to adapt and manage their stock such that residents are protected from adverse effects. For SHIFT purposes, we define adapted as homes that are either at low risk of overheating or homes that have responsive actions in place to quickly react to overheating events or overheating warnings. Homes may still overheat, but they can quickly be occupied again after a heat wave event.

Poor ventilation is a risk factor for both overheating and for damp and mould. Therefore, providing adequate ventilation in all homes may go some way to tackling both issues.

The SHIFT overheating risk assessment uses information on housing stock property types, postcodes, communal heating and build dates along with SHIFT sourced data on risk factors such as the urban heat island effect and population density to estimate overheating risk in Hightown's housing stock. It is estimated that 46.80% of Hightown's homes are resilient to overheating.

Hightown should refer to **"Hightown_Tool_Output.xlsx"** uploaded to section 1.1 of the SHIFT portal which contains the overheating risk assessment.



Peer Comparison: Poor

Recommended improvements:

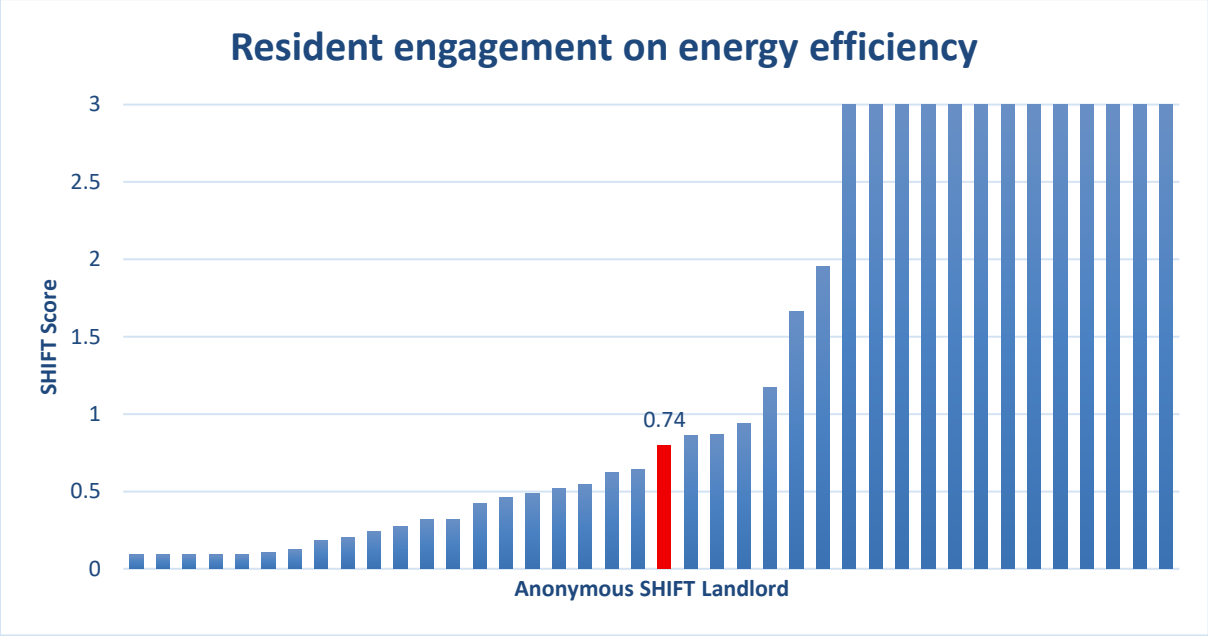
Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Create an overheating resilience database to UPRN level. As well as showing data for existing homes, the database can be populated with information from new build. Whether homes are single aspect should be included.	Low	Low	High
Devise an overheating resilience strategy including interim monitoring metrics, with the end goal to have 100% of homes resilient to overheating by 2050.	Low	Low	High
Implement the overheating resilience strategy and monitor against interim targets.	Medium	Medium	High

Resident engagement

Energy Efficiency

Resident engagement is an important way of encouraging residents to lead more sustainable lives and to save both energy and money. There is an emerging nuance with resident engagement as it is recognised that there will be huge disruption as each home is transformed to net zero. Explaining and demonstrating the benefits of net zero will also be vitally important.

100% of residents have access to energy efficiency advice through Hightown's website assuming internet access. With energy saving information, water and waste tips and help on their website, Hightown could further include information on sustainable transport options in their communities. While it is important for residents to have access to this information, it is difficult to monitor the effectiveness/interaction of this engagement. It is considered that more active engagement with residents can have the greatest impact. Hightown have actively engaged with 7.56% of households over the reporting period. The majority of active engagement comes from new tenant visits and audits. These measures resulted in a SHIFT score of 0.74 out of 3 for performance on resident engagement on energy efficiency. This is benchmarked against other SHIFT landlords below.



Peer Comparison: Comparable

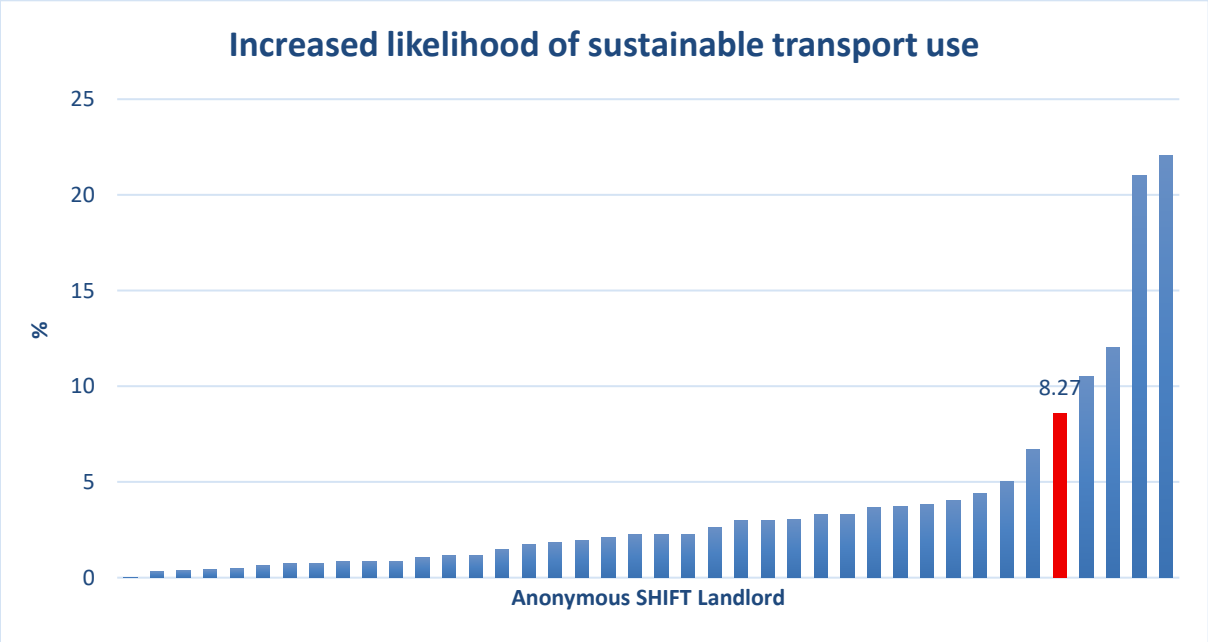
Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Create a green pages website which residents can refer to for tips on greener living. These should include energy efficiency, water efficiency, reducing waste, coping with flood risk and heat waves, sustainable transport.	Low	Low	Low
Promote the green pages to 100% of residents each year.	Low	Low	Low
Design an active engagement programme that ensures that residents have an opportunity to learn first hand, from sufficiently knowledgeable people, how to lead a more sustainable life. Ensure the programme has milestones and meaningful targets and contact with residents is recorded.	Low	Low	Low
Implement the active engagement programme.	Medium	Medium	Low
Include engagement in your contracts with installers. As homes are retrofitted it will be important that residents are shown how to use heating systems correctly and efficiently. Requiring contractors to provide this advice helps residents and contributes to the installers' social value obligations.	Low	Low	Low

Sustainable transport

Transport facilities and initiatives for residents can help to encourage sustainable travel choices which reduce carbon emissions and improve local air quality. This metric is based on the provision of cycle storage facilities as well as transport advice, from travel maps and timetables to cycling and eco-driving training. The national plan for transport is to encourage everyone to switch to walking and cycling, coupled with moving to electric vehicles. It is recognised that poor air quality is an issue to residents across the UK and that inequalities exist; air pollution can disproportionately impact less affluent areas. Attempts to improve local air quality will be essential and promoting active transport and low emission travel is a priority.

For sustainable transport facilities it has been estimated that 30.92% of Hightown's homes have cycle storage facilities provided, based on build date assumptions. Hightown has EV charging installed at 7.11% of its properties according to their asset data based on the reporting period. Currently, no address specific sustainable transport advice is provided to residents. As a result of Hightown's sustainable transport interventions, the increased likelihood of residents using sustainable transport is 8.27%. Below you can see how this performance compares to other SHIFT landlords.



Peer Comparison: Ahead

Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Create Green Pages for residents which provides transport information. This will include cycle path maps and public transport options. Car clubs and other sustainable transport options can be included.	Low	Low	Low
Create a database which shows sustainable transport features that are included in each home. This can be an add-on module to asset management database. It should have fields for noting the presence of cycle storage, nominated parking and EV chargers. As well as showing where current cycle storage is located, the database can be populated with information from new build. SHIFT can provide first pass assumptions of which homes may have cycle storage to start the database.	Low	Low	Low
Retrofit at least 1% of homes with EV chargers and record in the database.	Low	Low	Medium
Retrofit at least 1% of homes with cycle storage units and record in the database.	Low	Low	Medium

New build

There seems to be growing recognition that more sustainable new homes will result in lower whole-life costs for the landlord. Retrofitting non-sustainable homes at a later date incurs higher whole life costs for the landlord. In addition, when good quality new homes are added to the asset register, they improve the average environmental performance in a cost-effective manner. The new Future Homes Standard will accelerate energy efficiency improvements. But landlords should bear in mind that there are many other environmental impacts of new homes.

The SHIFT metric factors in a range of measures to determine the sustainability of new builds, including energy efficiency, green spaces and biodiversity, flood risk, overheating risk, recycling support, use of responsibly sourced materials and sustainable transport support.

We also encourage the use of some form of third-party verification to ensure that the so-called performance gap between design and final home, is minimised. There is no intention to create an industry out of this and our new Environmental Quality Management System (EQMS) [3] will enable very easy and meaningful checks.

Hightown reported that 21.01% of homes achieved an EPC A (SAP 92+), and 32.97% a high EPC B (SAP 86-91). 46.01% of homes were rated as a low EPC B (SAP 81-85), with no new homes being below a low EPC B rating. It is highly recommended that Hightown builds more homes to an EPC Grade A (SAP 92+ minimum). Hightown recognises that this will help bring up its average energy efficiency closer to environmentally safe levels and reduce the level of investment needed in its existing stock in order to achieve the net-zero 2050 target.

Hightown provided figures for the following sustainability features: 51.09% have internal recycling bins. 94.20% and 89.89% are low risk of flooding and overheating respectively. 57.60% meet Biodiversity Net Gain requirements or have biodiversity enhancements. 100% have cycle storage, and 11.23% use responsibly sourced materials.

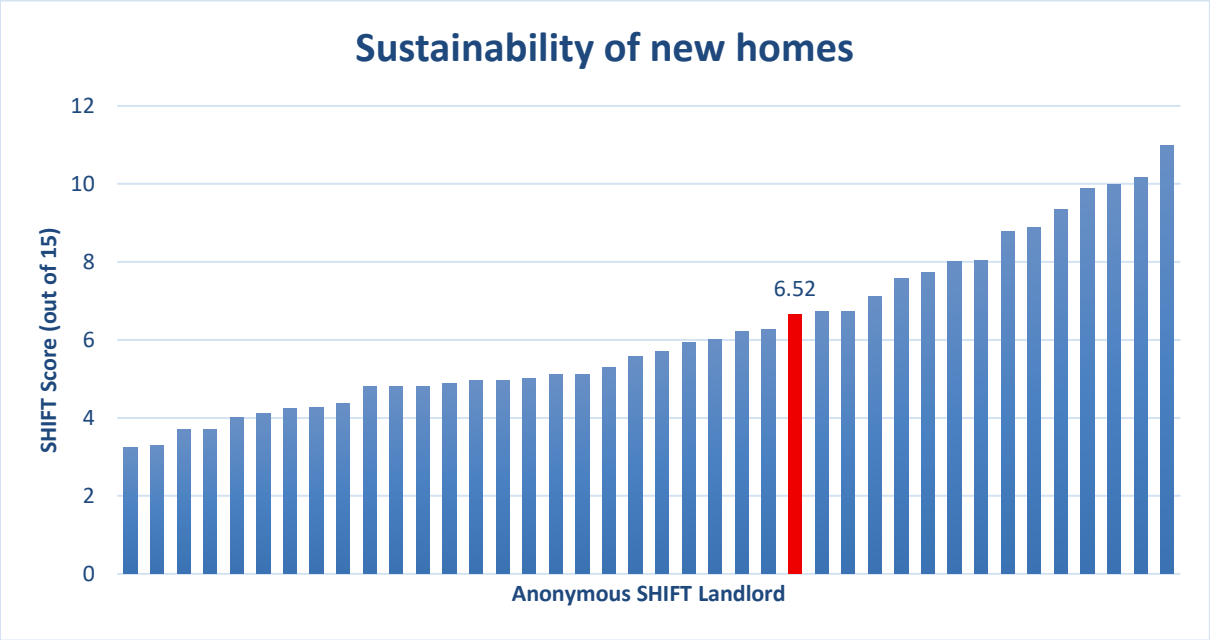
Hightown have supplied the above figures in regards to their new build properties during the reporting period, 3rd party verification of sustainability features has not been carried on any of the schemes to indicate that desired sustainability features are present according to build

[3] Download a copy from here: https://shiftenvironment.co.uk/publications/

plans. We strongly suggest this becomes part of Hightown's future practice when new homes are handed over to help manage the performance gap between build plans and actual build.

Hightown could not provide detail regarding the embodied carbon of its new build homes, therefore the SHIFT default of 35,196 kg CO_2 e per home has been applied to estimate a total of 9,714 tonnes CO_2 e for the 276 homes built.

Using the SHIFT calculator for new build and the data above, the sustainability score for Hightown's new build homes is 6.52 out of 15.



Peer Comparison: Comparable

Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Develop an environmental quality management system (EQMS) for new builds that includes net zero homes, in addition to other environmental issues, a design specification, independent on-site checks and post-	Low	Low	Low

handover checks. The system should enable easy data collection for a variety of reporting and hand over to asset management colleagues[4]. SHIFT has produced a draft EQMS ask your SHIFT assessor for a copy.			
Implement the EQMS.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Create your own sustainable design specification that includes building to FHS. Ideally it will also include meeting EPC A , low flood and overheating risk, cycle storage, minimum 10% BNG and internal waste recycling bins. There should also be a requirement on contractors to respond to an environmental survey which will include them reporting the embodied CO2 of the materials they used.	Low	Low	Low
Implement the new sustainable design specification on at least one scheme before 2028.	Medium	Medium	High
Install MVHR space heating and heat-pump hot water heating in ~5% of new builds.	Medium	Low	Low
Conduct a supply chain survey of your new build contractors to ensure that they are working to the same sustainability goals as you. You can contact your SHIFT assessor for our supply chain survey but the main issue will be embodied CO_2 in the materials used.	Low	Low	Low

[4] SHIFT: Data to transfer from the new build department to asset management

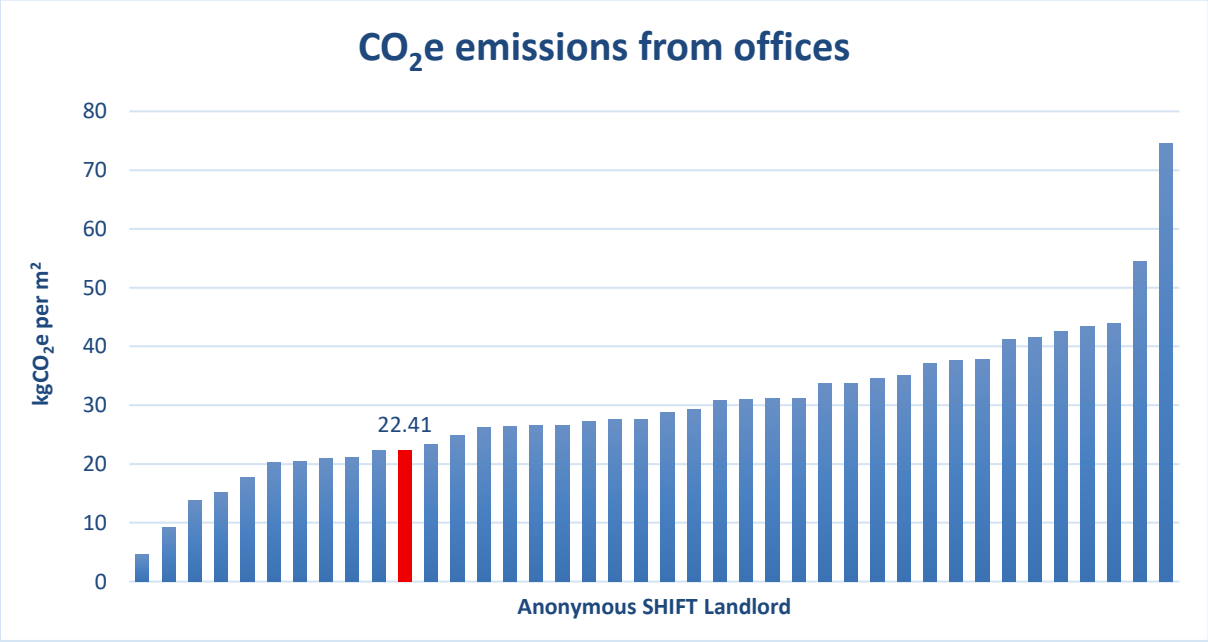
Offices & Operations

Offices and operations have a minor impact on the organisation's overall environmental performance but there are several advantages to focusing on improving their environmental qualities. Utility bills reduce, staff can see a tangible commitment to sustainability, and facilities teams gain first-hand experience in environmental technologies. In addition, new regulations are emerging which will impact on building performance.

Energy usage

The ultimate target is net zero emissions by 2050 through low energy demand buildings and a decarbonised grid. The Government states a target of rented, non-domestic properties to be EPC B by 2030. Similar to homes, office buildings are expected to have non-fossil fuel heating systems.

Hightown provided updated energy data for its office spaces. Office emissions have been calculated using the relevant 2025 Defra carbon conversion factors for their Hightown House offices. In total, it was estimated that 58.29 tonnes of CO_2e were emitted in the assessment period which equates to 22.41 kg CO_2e per m^2 of office space.



Peer Comparison: Ahead

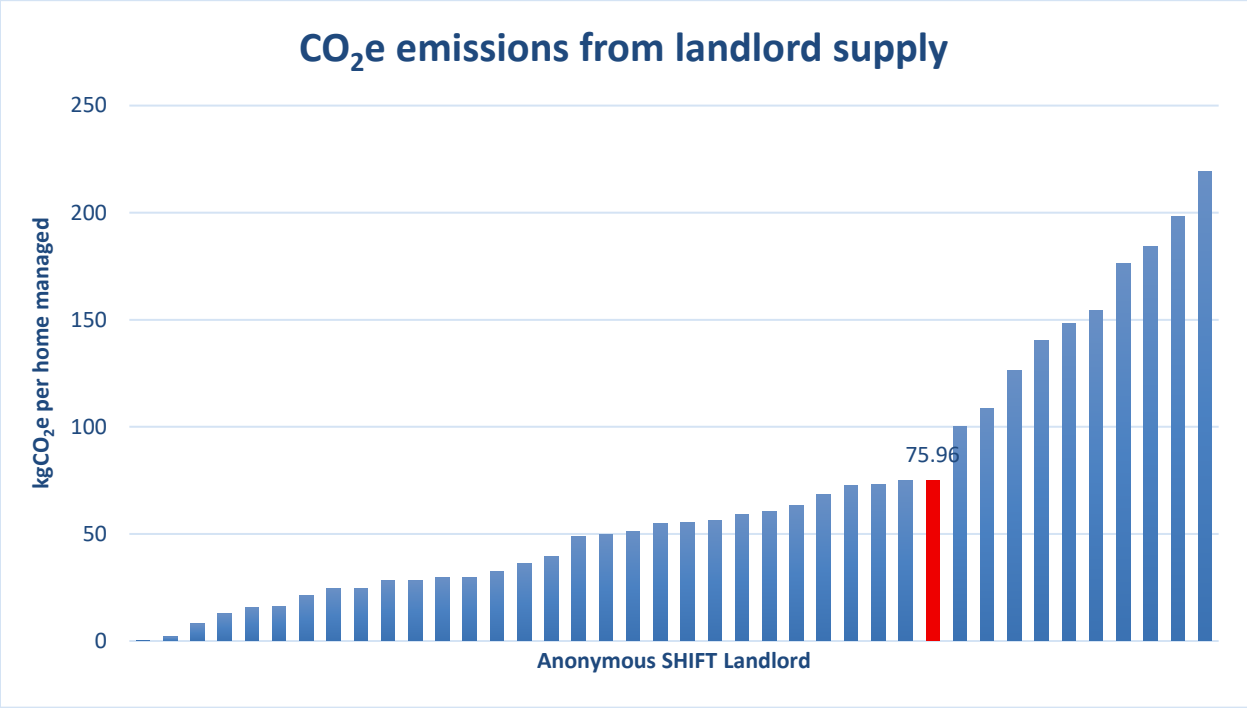
Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Devise plans to improve office energy efficiency – this can be by commissioning an EPC Recommendations Report and/or an ESOS[5] style review of each office. Ensure plans include transition to non-fossil fuel heating. This will most likely be electricity, but biomass and/or heat networks are also possible.	Low	Low	High
Implement the office energy efficiency plans.	Medium	Medium	High
Engage with staff annually to ensure energy efficiency is optimised through behaviours. Good housekeeping includes switching of computers, printing equipment, and lights when not in use.	Low	Low	Low

[5] SHIFT ESOS reporting

Other landlord supply

For SHIFT this is made up of communal areas in homes as well as 'other landlord supply' such as community centres. Hightown identified 2,864,901.79 kWh of communal area energy usage during the reporting period. The associated CO_2e was calculated using the relevant Defra conversion factors. This totalled 552.30 tonnes CO_2e or 75.96 kg CO_2e/home managed.



Peer Comparison: Comparable

Recommended improvements

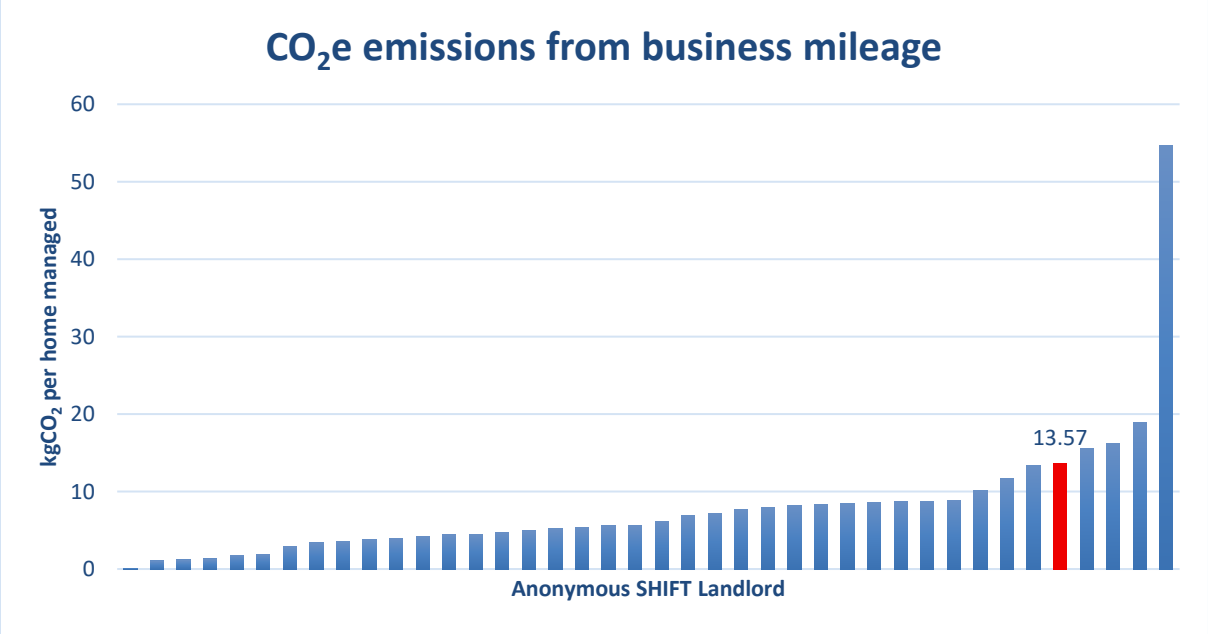
Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Devise and implement net zero plans for each site not already captured elsewhere in this report – typically street lighting and other non-domestic sites like community centres or sewage treatment plants	Medium	Medium	High

Set up regular (at least quarterly) monitoring of non-domestic properties by kWh/entity. The monitoring should incorporate broker data and report anomalies to asset management to rectify. Monitoring saves energy and easily provides data for compliance reporting. Ensure other fuel types (e.g. biomass, oil, heat and steam is also captured).	Low	Medium	Low

Business mileage

Controlling business mileage expenditure can make a real difference to landlords. The SHIFT metric for business mileage looks at claims for the use of employee-owned vehicles, public transport and air miles (if applicable).

Hightown provided business mileage figures for their employee-owned vehicles and public transport. Public transport spend data is converted to kilometres using SHIFT methodology. This allows the relevant Defra carbon conversion factors to be applied. It is estimated that 98.70 tonnes CO_2 e or 13.57 kg CO_2 e per home managed was emitted through business travel in the 25/26 financial year



Peer Comparison: Below average

Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low

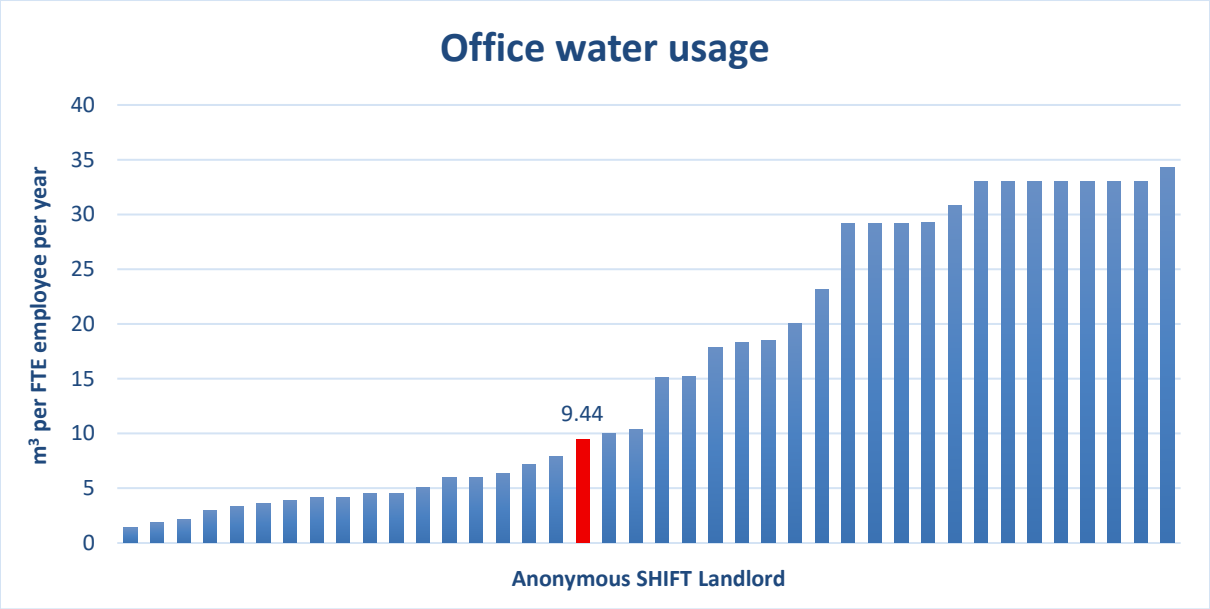
Carry out an analysis of business miles per employee to identify those with the highest mileage and identify ways to reduce this (e.g. switching to videoconferencing).	Low	Low	Low
Devise a sustainable transport policy that encourages public transport, car-sharing, reduces unnecessary travel, walking and cycling for business purposes.	Low	Low	Low
Ensure mileage claims include type of car e.g. petrol, diesel, hybrid or electric. This enables accurate calculation of CO_2 emissions.	Low	Low	Low
Consider if electric pool cars are viable. They could be stored and charged at the head office if charging infrastructure is installed. This may reduce fuel costs and discourage the use of personal vehicles for business travel[6].	Low	Low	Low

[6] Download EV roundtable summary for practical experience from other landlords on EV chargers: SHIFT: Publications

Water

As highlighted in the existing homes section, water is a crucial resource. Plus, water bills are rising so it is worth reviewing water use in offices to see if efficiency can be achieved.

Hightown did not supply suitable evidence regarding their office water usage, therefore SHIFT default data was used. Using SHIFT default data, Hightown used 1,510m^3 at their Hightown House office space during the reporting period. This equates to 9.44m^3 per employee.



Peer Comparison: Ahead

Recommended improvements:

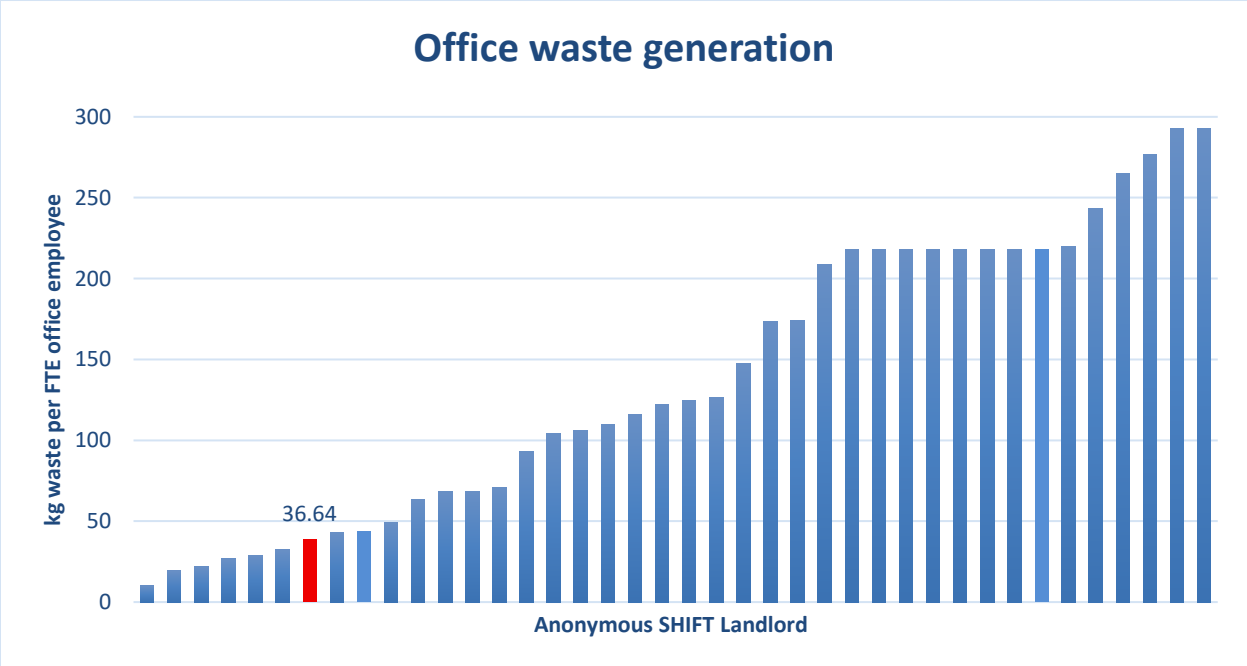
Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Set up a quarterly utility reporting system for your offices to keep a consistent track of data. This will also help identify leaks at an early stage.	Low	Low	Low

Carry out a water audit as this could identify further environmental and cost savings	Low	Low	Low
Engage staff on water efficiency initiatives and water saving measures. Incorporate these into water savings policies and procedures e.g., ensuring the dishwasher is full before turning it on.	Low	Low	Low

Waste

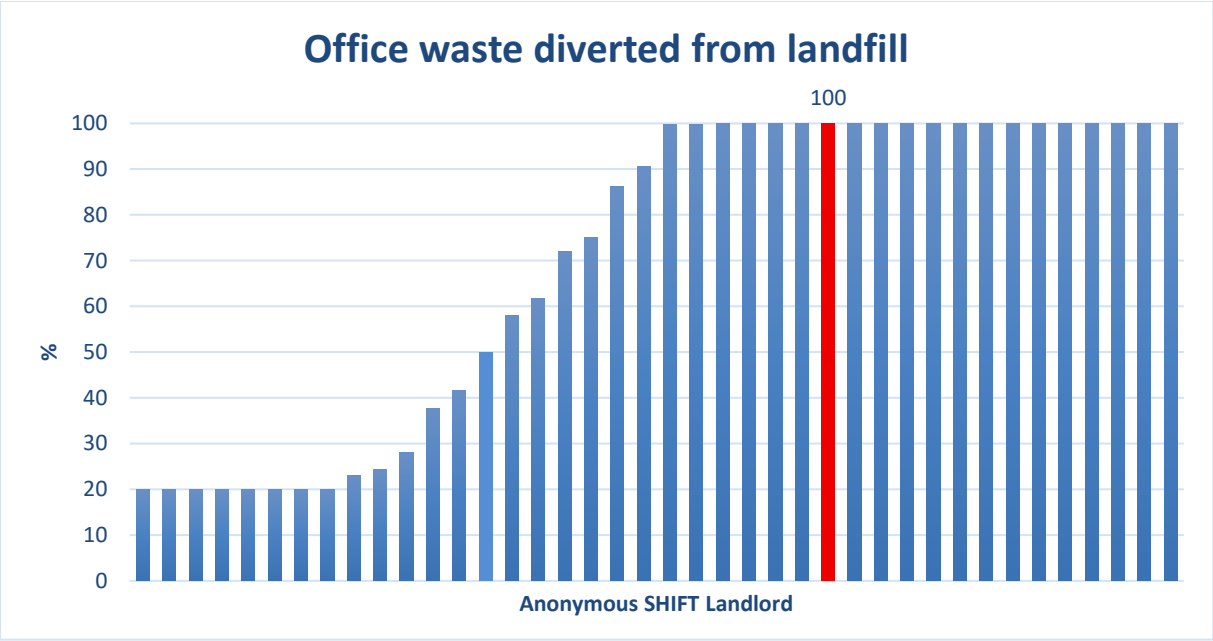
As interest rises in the circular economy, alongside an awareness of the damaging impacts of plastic pollution, companies from all sectors are ramping up efforts to tackle waste. Quantifying total waste outputs and treatment is an important first step.

Hightown supplied a waste report for their Hightown House office space for the reporting period. The waste report showed 5,863kg of waste was collected over the 12-month period, equating to 36.64kg per FTE.



Peer Comparison: Good

100% of Hightown's generated waste from their office activities is diverted from landfill.



Peer Comparison: Good

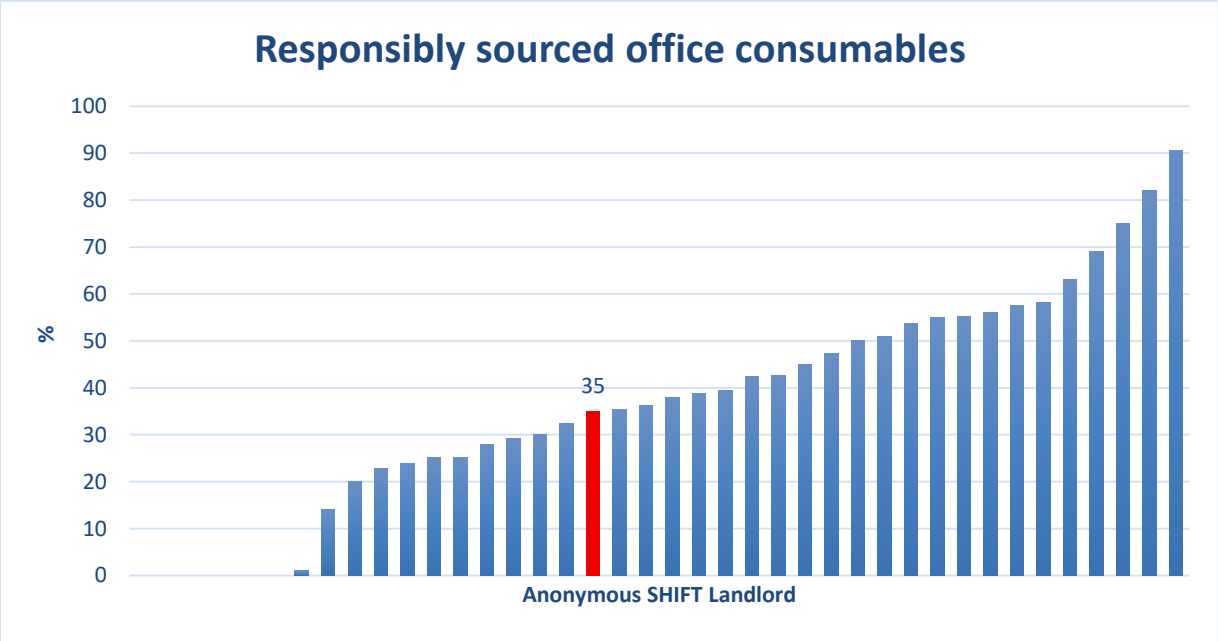
Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Engage with your waste contractor to provide a breakdown of waste disposition (landfill, recycling) as a minimum requirement.	Low	Low	Low
Develop your own waste monitoring system to begin developing waste reduction targets across various teams.	Low	Low	Low
Review in-house processes with the aim of reducing or even eradicating the necessity for printing – many processes are or can be electronic now.	Low	Low	Low

Provide clearly labelled/information on bins to encourage the correct recycling, making it easy for staff members and visitors.	Low	Low	High

Office consumables

Hightown was unable to provide an office consumables eco/green report. Hightown should request documentation from its suppliers or develop a system to record all responsible/sustainable spending on office consumables. Requesting that all products from suppliers are clearly labelled as responsibly sourced will allow for easy selection and targeting of sustainable products. For the purpose of this year's report, last year's data, including in-person observations made for last year's SHIFT report, alongside up to date photo evidence of office consumables has been used to estimate a 35% of office consumables that are responsibly sourced for Hightown's office.



Peer Comparison: Comparable

Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low

Survey your suppliers (you can use the supply chain survey as a template) to receive a list of responsibly sourced consumables and a breakdown of spend for green/eco-label purchased products compared to those that are not.	Low	Low	Low
Increase the proportional spend on green/responsibly sourced products by ~5%. Consider an automatic switch through your current or new supplier.	Low	Low	Low

Offices adapted to flooding and overheating risk

Climate change will affect offices as well as homes. The same flood and overheating risk precautions should be taken for offices as for homes. This will ensure business continuity.

Hightown analysed the Environment Agency's Flood Risk maps and identified that their office space at Hightown House is at very low risk to flooding from rivers and seas and surface water.

No official overheating survey of Hightown's offices has been conducted, but it is documented that their Hightown House office space has an air conditioning and heating system that is in disrepair, causing the need to hire air con units that leave pockets of areas at risk of overheating.

Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
For offices identified as at risk of overheating install risk reduction measures. Preferably passive measures such as the addition of brise soleil, blinds, and additional film glazing on windows. As a last resort, energy efficient air-conditioning.	Medium	Medium	Medium
For offices identified as at risk of flooding install risk reduction measures.	Medium	Medium	Low
Sign up to Environment Agency flood alerts and enact flood risk reduction measures accordingly.	Low	Low	Low

Strategy & Management

A strong sustainability strategy underpins robust environmental monitoring and performance at any organisation, by setting out a clear direction of travel in both the short and long term, as well as SMART KPIs to measure progress against. When assessing strategies for efficacy we look for specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound targets only, for a range of areas including energy efficiency, waste, water and climate adaptation. These targets provide clear direction to the staff who must implement them and give some assurance that your organisation will align with science-based environmental targets. In addition, senior level commitment and defined responsibilities help ensure the efficacy of the strategy.

Hightown have scored 7.76 out of 15 for an effective strategy. The Strategy is in draft form, not currently available on Hightown's website and is yet to have a foreword written by the CEO. Therefore, points are unable to be awarded for clear organisational commitment and public accountability. Points were awarded for clear responsibilities, as within the strategy each objective has a responsible department named.

Regarding SMART targets, Hightown have been awarded points for clear metrics on energy efficiency, climate resilience and sustainable materials. Points have also been awarded for resident engagement. This area is more difficult to develop quantitative metrics for. But there are defined objectives including improving customer awareness and access to sustainability tips. Points were given for water efficiency, as the strategy explains overall litre per day per person goals especially for new build properties.

Hightown have made a commitment to survey 3 of their suppliers each year in order to improve accountability when it comes to sustainable materials, despite none being completed for this year's report and they will be using GIS to map out their owned land and biodiversity of said land from 2027.

Hightown did not receive points for SMART targets based on their waste management goals, as only fly tipping / skip days are referenced in the plan, where built-in recycle storage during retrofits is mentioned in the strategy, a clear SMART goal is not available.

While there is room for improvement in the strategy, Hightown have obviously utilised last year's SHIFT report and have put actions in place which should be commended.



Peer Comparison: Comparable

Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Integrate KPIs into your strategy so that all areas of sustainability that are covered by SHIFT are included. Ensure targets align with corporate objectives.	Low	Low	Low
Ensure actions are assigned to directorates and monitor progress quarterly.	Low	Low	Low
Communicate targets across the organisation to staff and residents.	Low	Low	Low

Implement quarterly scorecard style reporting of environmental metrics to Senior Management Teams. (By adapting the advice given in earlier sections to include data in asset management systems, this may become an easier task).	Low	Low	Low
Lobby Government to develop a sensible funding mechanism for funding upgrades to net zero. This may be best achieved by working with an existing representative body e.g. the National Housing Federation in England.	Low	Low	High

DLO & Supply Chain

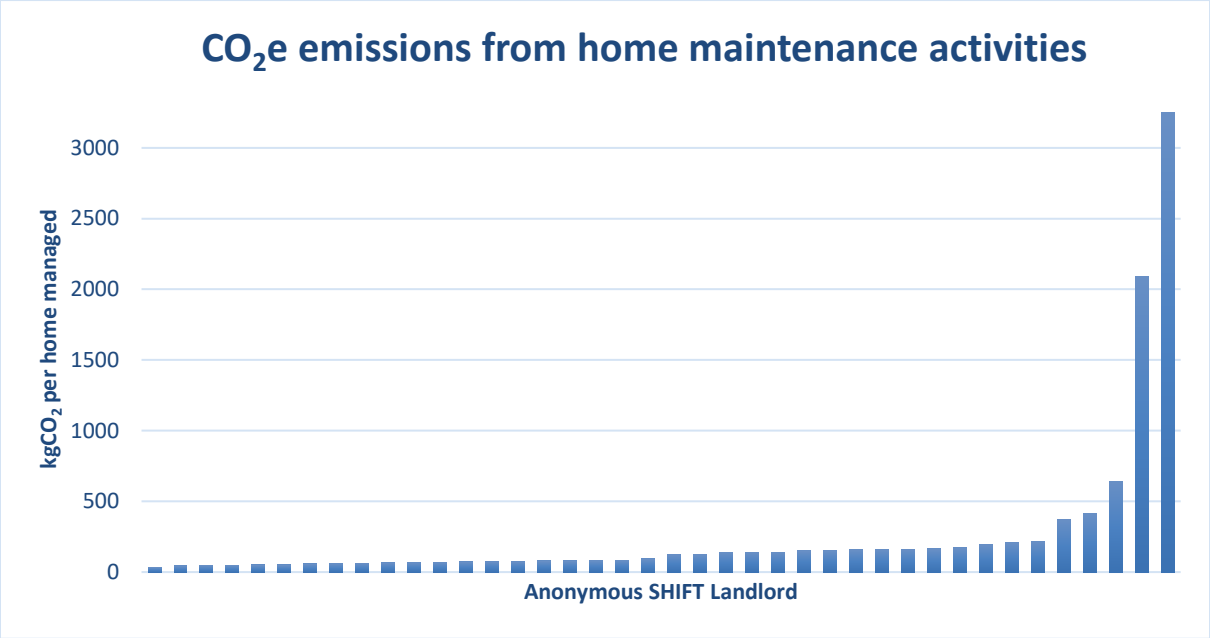
Engaging with your supply chain is a way to encourage improved environmental performance. As well as bringing an enhanced local environment to staff and residents, there are also financial benefits for your organisation. For example, if a maintenance contractor uses more efficient transport, they save costs which could be passed on to you. More landlords are reporting ESG investors asking about supply chain emissions. Our calculations so far indicate that supply chain emissions are a significant proportion of a landlord's overall carbon footprint.

For SHIFT purposes, we include in-house maintenance team data in with the supply chain questions. This allows better comparability between organisations that have a DLO versus those that subcontract out all work.

Maintenance CO_2e emissions

In-house (DLO) and subcontracted maintenance teams emit CO_2e from their fleets, offices, and other operations. Importantly, maintenance fleets also emit air pollutants which contribute to localised poor air quality and consequential health issues.

Hightown provided the litres of fuel bought for its DLO fleet. In total, Hightown's fleet produced 85.27 tonnes CO_2e. Other suppliers also provided emissions. Hightown provided a % of contractor spend of 48.3% with their in house DLO being responsible for 6.2% of that. 189.16 kg CO_2e per home managed. Going forward, SHIFT strongly recommend ensuring primary data is made available to complete the audit trail from the figures given.



Peer Comparison: The above graph shows the current data we have on maintenance emissions. This has been included to demonstrate the disparity of emissions reporting within the repairs and maintenance sector. As this is for indicative purposes only, Hightown's performance is not plotted

Embodied carbon figures for repairs and maintenance materials are included. The aim is to encourage landlords to request this information from external suppliers and gain detailed waste reports for their in-house maintenance to facilitate these calculations. The free SHIFT carbon calculator[7] for property maintenance companies gives an approximation for the embodied CO_2 of the materials used.

Hightown was unable to provide its DLO's waste report to allow embodied carbon to be calculated. The SHIFT assumption is that any material disposed of by the repairs and maintenance teams is replaced by like materials, therefore the embodied carbon can be calculated based on this. The total embodied carbon for Hightown's DLO and supply chain has been estimated to be 283.57 tonnes CO_2e, using SHIFT default data, which is equivalent to 39 kg per home managed.

[7] We have developed a FREE carbon calculator to help smaller property maintenance companies do this: https://shiftenvironment.co.uk/carbon-calculator/

Recommended improvements:

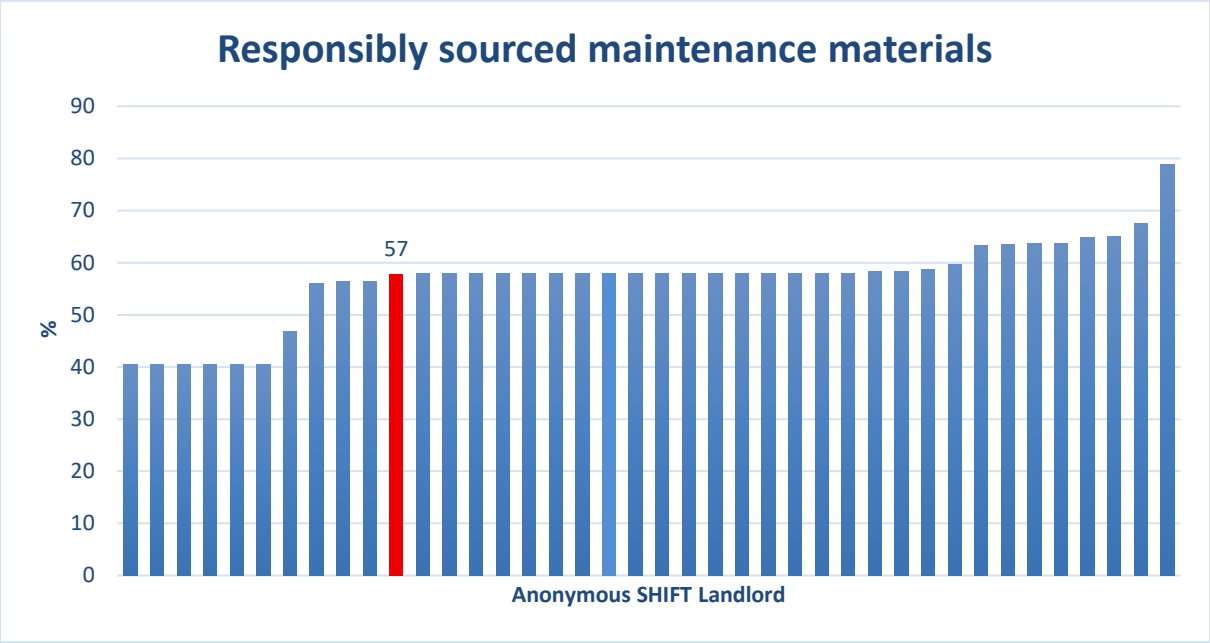
Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Devise a database that collects DLO fuel usage data. Many landlords now use fuel cards which record the litres of petrol or diesel bought. Accurate mileage for EV vans should also be recorded. Installing EV charge points which are sub metered would allow accurate reporting of kWh.	Low	Low	Medium
Implement a telematics system for fleet vehicles, ensuring that quarterly reports can be extracted.	Low	Low	Medium
Combine DLO fuel usage and telematics data to set up monthly monitoring of mpg data and enable anomaly identification and investigation with alerts for the fleet manager.	Low	Medium	Medium
Upgrade at least ~5% of vehicles in the fleet to a more efficient vehicle, possibly an EV if charge points and range allow.	Medium	Low	Medium
Include a clause in procurement contracts stipulating that suppliers must answer the annual environmental survey. This is to encourage engagement.	Low	Low	Medium
Conduct an annual supply chain environmental survey for the largest suppliers. Ask your SHIFT assessor for a standard survey question template.	Low	Low	Medium
Benchmark contractors' carbon emissions per £1,000 of contract value annually. This can be a good way of identifying anomalies – where a contractor's CO_2 e per	Low	Low	Medium

£1,000 spend is much lower or higher than the average, you can see how their calculations are verified.			
Communicate to existing and potential suppliers your commitment to sustainability and explain you want to work with organisations who will help you on your journey.	Low	Low	Low

Responsibly sourced maintenance materials

Responsibly sourced materials have been manufactured in an environmentally sound way and where the producers treat their workers well. Although there are many eco-labelling schemes for maintenance materials, this remains a difficult area to assess. Nevertheless, SHIFT encourages maintenance teams and contractors to devise ways to assess this themselves using a methodical approach.

Hightown do not currently survey their suppliers so the SHIFT default of 57% has been applied. This default uses social and ecological impact data from the top 20 importers to the UK, including the UK.



Peer Comparison: SHIFT default was used

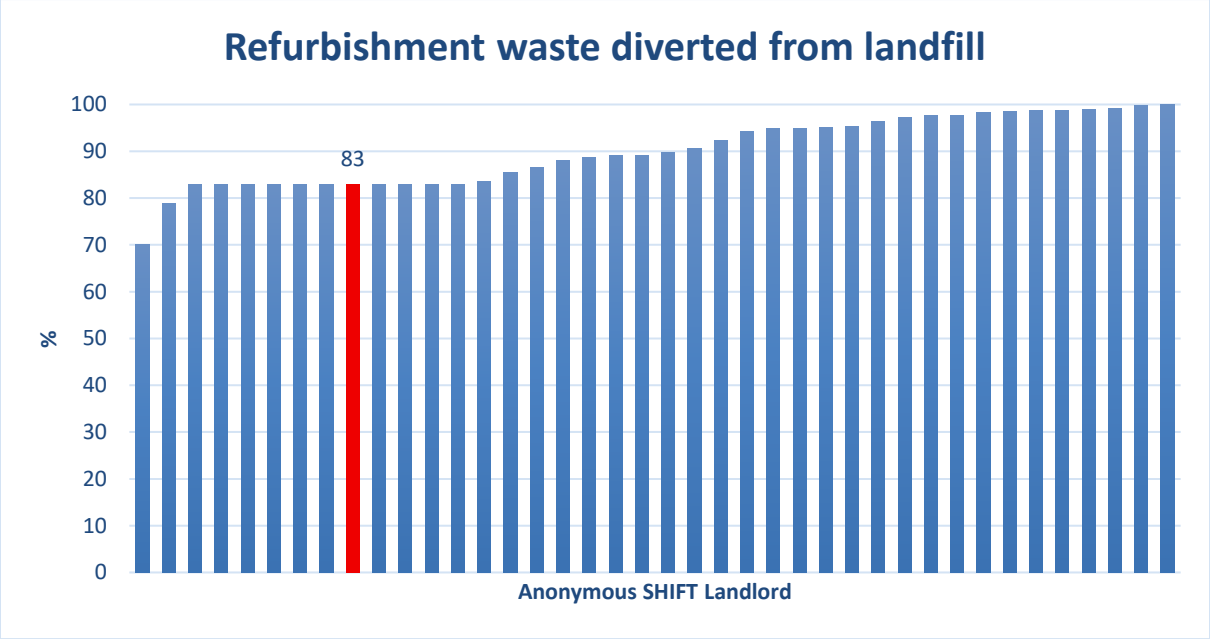
Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low

Communicate to existing and potential suppliers your commitment to sustainability and explain you want to work with organisations who will help you on your journey.	Low	Low	Low
Include a clause in procurement contracts stipulating that suppliers must answer the annual environmental survey. This is to encourage engagement.	Low	Low	Medium
Lobby the Supply Chain School to devise a practical and meaningful metric for responsibly sourced materials. Here is an interim metric we have devised at SHIFT: A new metric for sourcing materials responsibly	Low	Low	Low

Refurbishment recycling

Detailed breakdowns of waste treatment are normally available from contractors and DLOs. Good reporting and recycling practices should be factored into the decision-making when contractors are selected. Hightown was unable to provide waste data for its DLO or external suppliers. For this SHIFT assessment, the SHIFT default value of 83% refurbishment waste diverted from landfill has been applied.



Peer Comparison: SHIFT default was used

Recommended improvements:

Action	Cost High/ Medium /Low	Staff resources High/ Medium /Low	Likelihood of regulation High/ Medium /Low
Require subcontracted maintenance firms to report their recycling rates to you and provide supporting evidence in the form of waste reports.	Low	Low	Medium
Implementing subcontractor KPIs, aiming for 100% diverted from landfill by 2050.	Low	Low	Medium

SHIFT

SHIFT carries out a full range of environmental reporting specialising in the social housing sector. We do:

- SHIFT standard – environmental reporting and benchmarking for existing homes, new build, supply chain and offices
- Related consultancy and compliance e.g., ESG, ESOS and SECR reporting
- Environmental road mapping and strategy development – creating a path from a baseline to a truly sustainable housing stock whilst maximising financial benefits to the landlord
- Post-Occupancy Evaluation – comparing actual performance in retrofit and new build with design performance

Please be in touch for a free consultation on any of the above. Contact Richard on 07718 647117 or richard@SHIFTenvironment.co.uk

SHIFT is run and managed by Suss Housing Ltd

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