

Cardiff Council
Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023 Compliance
Policy

Contents	
Section	Page Numbers
Background, Policy Statement and Key Principles	2 – 3
Section 1 – WHQS Overview and Requirements	3 - 4
Section 2 – Cardiff’s Approach to Meeting and Maintaining WHQS 2023	5
Section 3 - Energy Efficiency and Target Energy Pathways	6 -9
Section 4 – Redevelopment, Demolition and Carbon	10 - 11
Section 5 - Conditional Passes, Temporary Fails and Cost Prohibitive Activity	11 - 14
Section 6 - Asset Management	14 – 16
Section 7 – Independent Verification	16 – 17
Section 8 - Tenant Engagement and Communication	17 – 18
Section 9 - Meeting the Needs of the Household, including Older Persons / Disabled Persons Housing	18 - 21
Section 10 - Attractive Outside Spaces and Biodiversity	21 - 23
Section 11 – Broadband, Digital Connectivity	23 - 24
Section 12 – Community Benefits	24
Section 13 - Monitoring and Reporting	25
Appendices	
Appendix 1 – Element compliance	26 – 31
Appendix 2 - Target Energy Pathways and Initial Cost Estimates	32 – 39
Appendix 3 - Tenant satisfaction survey 2024 WHQS results	40 - 42

Background

The original Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) was established in 2002 and Cardiff Council achieved the standard in September 2012, becoming the first Council in Wales to do so. Continuous investment in our housing stock has taken place to maintain WHQS compliance. Following a full review of the standard, the Welsh Government launched WHQS 2023 on 24th October 2023

Policy purpose and scope

The purpose of this policy is to explain how Cardiff Council intends to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023 (WHQS), taking into account local resources and circumstances. It provides an overview of the procedures for managing, monitoring, and verifying data, as well as the strategy for maximising achievement and ensuring ongoing maintenance of the standard.

This Policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently if required.

Local Strategic Context

Cardiff Council is committed to delivering a Stronger Fairer Greener city. This approach meets the requirements of the Future Generations Act 2015 and clearly aligns with the ambitions of WHQS 2023:

A stronger city recognises the importance of good, affordable housing, in safe confident and empowered communities;

A fairer city includes a commitment to support and protect those suffering the effects of poverty

A Greener city responds to the climate emergency and celebrates biodiversity and high quality open spaces.

Delivering new low carbon council homes and retrofitting our existing homes to improve energy efficiency are a key part of the Council's One Planet Strategy.

Policy Statement

We recognise that good housing is essential for a community's health and well-being.

We are committed to delivering and maintaining high quality, sustainable and affordable homes, particularly for those in most need.

Key Principles for delivering decarbonisation targets

Very ambitious decarbonisation and energy efficiency targets are included in WHQS 2023, while Cardiff supports this ambition, the cost of achieving these targets is

significant. There are many competing pressures on the Housing Revenue Account, including the need to build more homes to address the housing emergency.

We also need to take into account the best interests of our tenants, some new technologies could lead to higher costs for tenants. We have set out 3 key principles to guide the delivery of the decarbonisation targets:

- **Tenants First** - As a first consideration measures will not be installed if they negatively impact on tenants in term of the cost of energy. All decisions will balance tenant affordability, carbon impacts, and also the level of disruption caused to tenants during implementation
- **Prioritising properties in greatest need of improvement** - There will be a focus on properties with the lowest energy efficiency levels and those affected by damp and mould, with priority given to improving these properties.
- **Affordability to the Housing Revenue Account** – affordability will be considered before any work is commissioned, balancing the need to move towards zero carbon with the many other pressures and demands facing housing services. While some programmes of work will be affordable within existing capital resources any significant move towards decarbonisation will require considerable grant funding as shown in the estimated costing above.

Section 1 – WHQS 2023 -Overview of Requirements

Compliance with the new WHQS is mandatory and all homes must meet the WHQS 2023 by 31st March 2034 and maintain compliance thereafter.

The updated WHQS measures 44 elements across 8 categories, setting minimum standards for various components. The 8 categories are as follows:

- Be in a good state of repair;
- Be safe and secure;
- Be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact;
- Have an up-to-date kitchen and utility area;
- Have an up-to-date bathroom;
- Be comfortable and promote wellbeing;
- Have a suitable garden; and
- Have an attractive outside space.

While many of the requirements of the original WHQS remain, a number of new requirements have been included. Some new requirements are effective from 1st April 2024. These include:

- Affordable Warmth and Environmental Impact
- Flooring
- Water efficiency

- Biodiversity
- Active travel (bicycle storage)
- Noise nuisance

The requirements relating to decarbonisation are by far the most challenging additions to the standard. These are phased in over a longer period of time. The requirements for social landlords are as follows:

- by 31st March 2025, assess the condition of their stock and the work necessary to meet the standard, estimate the investment needed, and engage with tenants
- By 31st March 2027, carry out a whole stock assessment and produce target energy pathways for their homes
- By 31st March 2030, all properties must achieve a SAP rating of 75 (midpoint of EPC C).
- By 31st March 2034, all properties should achieve a SAP rating of 92 (EPC A).

The updated WHQS aligns closely with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and the Renting Homes (Wales) Act. Certain elements must adhere to HHSRS principles, ensuring dwellings meet national averages for their type and age and are free from category 1 hazards.

The requirement for a compliance policy

All social landlords must develop a compliance policy by the end of March 2025 and maintain it thereafter. The policy must be formally approved, published to demonstrate open and transparent working and reviewed annually.

The requirement for statistical returns

While the compliance policy provides the context for how progress is to be achieved, WHQS statistical returns are also required to demonstrate the progress made in meeting the Standard.

The statistical return will include:

- Stock information e.g. age of property, property type, number of bedrooms.
- Housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) information.
- Status and condition of components e.g. Kitchens & Bathrooms.
- Energy efficiency score of each property.
- WHQS 2023 specific data e.g. bike storage & water efficiency.

Unmeasured elements

Some elements are not measured through statistical return and a statement on these will be achieved and monitored has been included in this policy. This includes the target energy pathways; biodiversity; safe community spaces; digital connectivity; disabled and older peoples housing requirements.

Section 2 – Cardiff’s Approach to Meeting and Maintaining WHQS 2023

As stated above the WHQS includes 8 categories and 22 elements. Appendix 1 outlines in detail Cardiff Council’s interpretation of each of the WHQS elements and the action that is being taken to achieve and maintain these.

Cardiff Council’s approach to achieving and maintaining WHQS is based on a component-by-component basis. The components of each property, such as the roof, windows, doors etc are recorded on our Asset Management database together with a provisional date for renewal. Replacements typically take place when individual components reach the end of their life cycle.

Where appropriate components will be replaced alongside other programmes of work, to avoid duplicating or repeating work or to deliver the works in the most cost-effective manner. For example electrical works may be scheduled alongside kitchen or bathroom replacements.

A rolling 30-year programme of asset renewal is planned based on asset life expectancy and expected costs. This information is updated regularly to ensure the programme’s accuracy and alignment with requirements, based on data from inspections and tenant feedback. This programme of work informs the HRA Business Plan and capital programme.

To ensure that compliance is maintained with all elements of the WHQS, and that large scale renewal programmes can be taken forward, the existing approach will continue to be used for many of the components of the property however we will work to align these with any retrofit works to prevent counteractive outcomes, rework, or unnecessary component renewal.

When implementing energy efficiency measures, Cardiff Council will aim to adopt a whole-house approach where practicable. Referred to as the “optimised retrofit approach” this seeks to fully enhance the environmental sustainability of each of our homes.

British Standard PAS 2035 outlines a detailed approach for assessing properties individually, taking into account the entire property and its occupants. This standard guides decisions on installing energy efficiency measures that aim to enhance energy efficiency and reduce carbon footprint, benefiting both the tenant and the environment.

Health and safety elements will be maintained through periodic testing and maintenance plans. When required these have been modified to accommodate additional compliance needs, such as smoke and heat detection installations.

Section 3 - Energy Efficiency and Target Energy Pathways

The standard states that:

- Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions.
- Landlords must carry out a whole stock assessment and produce target energy pathways for their homes by 31st March 2027

Homes Must Be Economical to Run

A key priority of Cardiff's HRA business plan has been to increase the energy efficiency of homes and ensure they are economical to run. Most homes have an A rated gas boiler providing economical heating for tenants. A number of external wall insulation projects have been undertaken to improve thermal efficiency of blocks of flats as funding has allowed. New homes are built to a high standard and with a range of energy efficiency measures.

Target Energy Pathways and Improving Energy Efficiency Ratings

Currently Cardiff's homes have an average SAP rating of 72, which is 5 points higher than the Wales average of 67. However, 9,871 properties still fall below the interim target of SAP 75, often by only a small number of points.

WHQS 2023 requires social landlords to carry out a whole stock assessment and produce Targeted Energy Pathways (TEPs) to detail how homes will achieve SAP 75 by 31st March 2030 and SAP 92 by 31st March 2034.

Work is underway to develop comply with these requirements by:

- Implementing a new Asset Management Database. Cardiff currently has a wealth of information about its housing stock. This information is being uploaded to a new database which will allow for greater analysis of this data.
- Commissioning independent stock condition surveys for homes on a rolling basis of a minimum of 10% per annum.
- Working towards obtaining Energy Performance Certificates for all properties (1220 remain outstanding at March 2024) and ensuring that these remain up to date.
- Using Sava Intelligent Energy software together with the data from the Asset Management database to produce individual Target Energy Pathways for each home.

Although the Target Energy Pathways are not due to be delivered until 31st March 2027, the Welsh Government have asked for an estimated cost for delivering WHQS 2023 by 31st March 2025. An initial estimate has therefore been undertaken using the SAVA intelligent energy system, Cardiff has been able to produce initial Target Energy Pathways for all of its homes.

These pathways indicate what measures are needed to enable homes to initially achieve a SAP rating of 75, and eventually reach a SAP rating of 92 where feasible. It has also been possible to provide estimated costs for implementing these measures.

To summarise, the initial TEPs have provided the following information:

Sap 75 (C)

On current projections 99.8% of stock could achieve a SAP rating of 75 at a cost of circa £351m. This is an estimated value and would be subject to change with inflation, variations in supply chain and upon individual detailed PAS 2035 assessment.

SAP 92 (A)

On current projections 19.1% of stock would achieve an A rating at an additional cost of circa £515m, making the overall cost circa £866m. While most stock would not reach an A rating 76% would reach a B rating with this level of investment. This is an estimated value and would be subject to change with inflation, variations in supply chain and upon individual detailed PAS 2035 assessments. Additional details of these findings can be found in Appendix 2

Cardiff's Housing Revenue Account capital programme for the period April 2025 to March 2034 contains investment of £174.3m in improvement schemes which will contribute to delivering WHQS in existing stock. Of this £58.3m will be spent on implementing energy efficiency measures. While this is a significant amount, it accounts for circa 16% of the estimated overall cost for achieving SAP 75 (C) and less than 10% of the cost of achieving SAP 92 (A).

It is important that we maintain investment in other components such as kitchens and bathrooms. Cardiff was one of the first Councils to achieve WHQS and many of these components are now reaching end of life, investment in these is needed if the whole standard is to be maintained.

Risks and Constraints

As stated above, delivering the standard requires substantial resources and is not feasible without additional grant funding. There are also other constraints on delivery of the standards:

- Current grant restrictions pose significant challenges to planning large-scale programmes of work. Typically, grants are issued annually with strict deadlines for expenditure. Current grant restrictions favour smaller projects that can be completed quickly, preventing the delivery of larger more cost-effective programmes of work.
- Many of the technologies to support decarbonisation are still at an early stage in their development, and have not yet been tested over an extended period of

time, giving rise to concerns about the use of these measures in larger programmes of work.

- There is concern that some measures may increase the cost to tenants of heating their home or may result in considerable disruption if completed when the property is tenanted.
- All social landlords will be seeking to meet WHQS, this will put pressure on supply chains and affecting deliverability.
- There are also limitations in the current National Grid infrastructure, much of which needs to be upgraded to allow for more solar capacity.

Cardiff's approach to Implementing the Target Energy Pathways

Principles

Due to the challenges outlined above a number of principles have been set out to guide Cardiff's approach to decarbonisation:

- **Tenants First** - As a first consideration measures will not be installed if they negatively impact on tenants in term of the cost of energy. All decisions will balance tenant affordability, carbon impacts, and also the level of disruption caused to tenants during implementation
- **Prioritising properties in greatest need of improvement** - There will be a focus on properties with the lowest energy efficiency levels and those affected by damp and mould, with priority given to improving these properties.
- **Affordability to the Housing Revenue Account** – affordability will be considered before any work is commissioned, balancing the need to move towards zero carbon with the many other pressures and demands facing housing services. While some programmes of work will be affordable within existing capital resources any significant move towards decarbonisation will require considerable grant funding as shown in the estimated costing above.

Our approach to achieving the compliance with the standard.

A practical approach will be taken to decarbonisation, and the following steps have been identified to take this work forward:

- Initial quick wins will be identified to bring as many properties as possible above SAP 75, through small scale interventions such as loft insulation. It is estimated that 369 properties are in this category.
- A specialist consultant will be commissioned to support the development of large scale programmes of work focussed on delivering the most cost effective solutions, initial indications are that solar panel installation are likely to yield the greatest improvement for the funds invested.
- Detailed PAS 2035 surveys will be carried out on properties to identify the most appropriate solutions and where possible whole house retrofit will take place.
- Programmes of work to install a single component, such as solar panels, will take place where this is the most cost-effective way to deliver the upgrade. However, when any such intervention takes place a PAS survey will be carried

out which will identify other work that is needed and inform a whole house approach.

- When it is not physically possible for homes to meet the established standards, these homes will be evaluated, and efforts will be made to achieve a result as close as possible to the target. Sale or demolition of the property will only be considered as a last resort.

Upskilling of the workforce

Ongoing workforce development is planned is to ensure that Cardiff can support planning and delivery of these major retrofit projects and also undertake the future maintenance and repairs of new types of technology.

Collaborative working with other authorities

Collaborative working with other authorities for energy housing retrofit is essential for achieving large-scale, impactful results. Opportunities to collaborate with other local authorities is being explored to share expertise and experience.

Energy efficiency in new build properties

To help meet ambitious operational and embodied targets all new build homes will be designed to achieve high levels of energy efficiency normally achieving an EPC A or designed to meet a similar approved standard such as Passivhaus or Carbon-lite.

Our approach includes:

- Fabric First approach, meaning a super insulated and airtight building that will require only a minimal amount of heating.
- Maximising Solar panels and to connect these to batteries where possible this will generate and store energy to power the new homes.
- Non-fossil fuel dependant heating systems: Heating systems that harness renewable energy such as air source or ground source heat pumps or infrared heating panels, these are systems which use low-carbon heating technology. Heat pumps extract the warmth from the air outside or from within the ground – even during the winter – and then use it to keep spaces inside the home warm. Infrared heating panels are highly efficient electric fed heating panels that help to kept heating bills lower.
- MVHR, meaning mechanical ventilation heat recovery, to allow for comfortable habitable spaces with good air quality that saves on energy.
- Opportunities for electric vehicle (EV) charging points, meaning each home will be designed to be EV-ready, so that residents can be provided with charging facilities on request to charge their electric vehicle conveniently at home.

Section 4 – Redevelopment, Demolition and Carbon

Cardiff Council will always aim to refurbish homes rather than redevelop or demolish and rebuild when considering major investment in homes or schemes, the exceptions to this are where the existing structure is not financially and/or practically viable to reuse. Examples of this could include:

- The structure is not able to be modified to create the new use for the building without significant demolition.
- The structure is of non-standard construction with defects that make it difficult to refurbish.
- The structure is in poor condition and will not be economically viable to retain.
- The structure will not be of suitable quality to allow future refinancing to fund more homes.
- The structure will leave poor construction details which will be a maintenance issue in the future.
- The structure will provide poor quality accommodation for future tenants in terms of design, layout, running costs, noise nuisance etc.
- Demolition of the structure will allow more homes to be built, addressing housing need within the city.

The benefits of this are not just in relation to carbon reduction but also help to preserve the heritage of the areas in which the council operate in. This is particularly important when considering traditional buildings which although not listed or within a conservation area, may have a strong cultural or heritage significance in the local vernacular and to local people. Examples of this could include:

- Former schools
- Former places of worship
- Former working persons clubs/community halls
- Former commercial buildings with a strong history

When considering any redevelopment or demolition of Cardiff Council's assets or acquisitions, we will utilise the RICS Professional Standard: 'Whole Life Assessment for the Built Environment 2nd edition' assessment tool [Whole life carbon assessment \(WLCA\) for the built environment](#). This assessment will allow us to understand the quantity of carbon emissions expected to be omitted over the entire life of a building including the following stages:

- Module A includes the sourcing of raw materials, transport and fabrication of components (the product stage), and the construction process, including the demolition of any previous structure (the construction stage).
- Module B is the use stage, and includes maintenance, repair and replacement, any planned refurbishment, and the use of energy and

water over the life of the asset. It can also include the emissions resulting from the use of the asset, in addition to energy and water use.

- Module C is the end-of-life stage and covers the anticipated emissions from demolition/disassembly, waste processing, associated transport and eventual disposal.
- Module D includes any potential benefits or costs from the recovery of materials leaving the asset during any stage, such as for reuse, recycling or energy recovery, and the export of any energy generated by the asset. Module D is part of a whole life cost analysis but must always be reported separately.

We will also consider embodied vs operational carbon emissions when retrofitting existing homes. Examples of embodied carbon considerations include:

- Utilising locally manufactured materials.
- When retrofitting homes, minimising the amount of disruption/demolition and disposal into landfill of existing components in good condition.
- Any components removed from homes that are not at the end of their life expectancy and still in good condition will be recycled wherever possible.
- Using materials manufactured from natural materials e.g.
 - Sheep's wool loft insulation instead of mineral wool loft insulation.
 - Insulated lime render instead of phenolic or expanded polystyrene boards for wall insulation for traditional dwellings.

Examples of operational carbon considerations include:

- Using local contractors to maintain buildings.
- Using electric vehicles supplied by renewable energy.
- Grouping works by area to minimise travelling across the city.
- Efficiently ordering materials to minimise multiple deliveries.

Section 5 - Conditional Passes, Temporary Fails and Cost Prohibitive Activity

The Welsh Government acknowledges that not all homes will meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), this can be for a range of reasons. The reasons are categorised into two groups: conditional passes and temporary fails.

Conditional Pass Definitions:

- **Physical constraint** – These may occur where there are considerable physical difficulties that prevent compliance from being achieved. For example, the

home has a bathroom only big enough for a shower unit and the only way to provide a bath would be to reduce the size of a bedroom.

- **Heritage/conservation constraint** – These occur where there are heritage/conservation issues preventing works from being completed both internally and externally. For example: Cardiff Council has properties that are locally listed or within conservation areas preventing the installation of additional wall insulation or renewable technologies.
- **Cost prohibitive** – This may refer to instances where it is not cost effective to carry out an improvement at a particular time e.g. when major works are planned for a later date. For example, the garden is steeply sloping and the cost of excavation and installing a retaining wall was too excessive.
- **Other Metrics / Offsetting (Balancing Carbon emissions)** – These may occur when a property cannot be physically brought to an environmental impact rating of 92 and so the home can be offset by a home that exceeds this target.

Temporary Fail Definitions:

- **Programmed within 5 years** – The property does not comply, but it can be demonstrated through works programmes that the property will comply in the next five year.
- **Tenant refusal** – The tenant has refused works.
- **Tenant delay (timing)** – The tenant has requested the works be deferred due to mitigating circumstances e.g. illness within the home.
- **Currently cost prohibitive (decarbonisation only)** – The home has been upgraded with new windows, doors and loft insulation but is still heated by a gas boiler. Other decarbonisation measures available are not affordable at this stage or would push the tenant into fuel poverty e.g. a heat pump without providing extra insulation.
- **Tenant behaviour** – for example, despite all necessary measures being taken to prevent mould or condensation, the tenant may still dry clothes indoors without proper ventilation.

Conditional passes and temporary fails are usually detected using the following methods:

- Desktop analysis of the asset data within our database
- During the delivery of planned programmes of work
- Following communication with tenants
- During property surveys/inspections
- Following completion of works to vacant properties, prior to re-letting

Addressing Temporary Fails

All conditional passes and temporary fails are reviewed regularly and documented within our asset management database. The numbers and reasons for these

conditional passes and temporary failures are reported to the Welsh Government annually as part of the WHQS return. We will aim to address and resolve any failures to ensure maximum compliance where possible.

When a property becomes vacant, we will address all temporary fails related to tenant delay, refusal, and behaviour. Temporary fails associated with scheduled works within five years will remain in the improvement programme unless immediate replacement is necessary.

The table below details the general approach to addressing each temporary failure reason:

Temporary Fail Reason	How it will be addressed
Programmed within 5 years	We will ensure that the required work is programmed in to be completed within 5 years
Tenant Refusal	<p>We will review this regularly to ensure tenants can change their mind.</p> <p>Refusals related to health and safety compliance, such as gas and electrical testing, will be directed to the Tenancy Management Team. They will further emphasise the importance of this work to the tenant, and if needed, exercise our right of entry to complete it, taking the necessary legal action to achieve this.</p>
Tenant Delay (Timing)	Where feasible, we will be supportive and adjust our timelines accordingly.
Currently Cost Prohibitive (Decarbonisation Only)	Cost-prohibitive fails will be addressed when adequate funding and resources become available, such as through grants.
Tenant Behaviour	We will regularly review information provided to tenants to help them prevent recurring issues caused by household behaviours. Information on temporary failures related to this reason will form the basis of educational videos and written communications aimed at

	addressing any issues where we can assist tenants.
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Cost Prohibitive Activity

Cardiff Council has dedicated resources to meet the required standards. Currently, there are no elements deemed cost-prohibitive under the conditional pass category that are unrelated to decarbonisation. However it should be noted that there is currently insufficient data on some new elements, in particular external storage, and we are actively gathering the necessary information to remedy this. As this data becomes available, we will continually evaluate compliance and seek to remedy any fails to the extent that this is financially and practically feasible in accordance with the principles outlined in this document.

Section 6 - Asset Management

We employ various methods to record and update information about our properties.

The Asset Management database records all data related to properties on the following:

- **Property Address Information:** This includes unique property reference numbers, data from national gazetteers, and map coordinates.
- **Property Type Information:** This includes dwellings (including sold/leasehold dwellings), courtyards, physical blocks, communal blocks and traveller site pitches.
- **Property Attribute Information:** Detailed records of property attributes are maintained e.g. age of property, number of bedrooms, layout and type of construction.
- **Planned Maintenance Components:** This includes the following information about parts and equipment such as kitchens, bathrooms windows and doors. It includes when they were installed, when they will likely need to be replaced and their current condition.
- **Anticipated asset lifecycle data.** We use Welsh Government and Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) to determine estimated lifespans for each major component. This data will be checked against stock condition surveys to ensure components are only replaced when this is required
- **Repair and Replacement Information:** This captures any repairs or replacements that might impact on the lifespan of an asset. It will also enable the identification of trends in repairs to inform planned maintenance timescales and the integrity of the products used.
- **WHQS Compliance Data:** Comprehensive records on compliance with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, including temporary fails and conditional passes.

- **Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) Compliance:** Information where inspections have been completed.
- **Reduced Data SAP (rdSAP) Rating Data:** This includes the capability to lodge data to create an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). The Reduced Data SAP (RdSAP) is a simplified version of the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) used to assess the energy performance of existing residential buildings without a certificate.
- **Energy Performance Certificates Data:** All information assessed as part of Energy Performance Certification are stored in the database.
- **Health and Safety Compliance Information:** This includes data on fire risk assessments, asbestos, gas servicing compliance and electrical testing.

We have purchased and are currently implementing a new asset management database called Civica CX. This database offers enhanced functionality which will better enable the production of detailed Target Energy Pathways by 31st March 2027.

Using data from the sources above, the new asset management database will offer a comprehensive overview of each home and will support decision-making processes to achieve optimal outcomes. Planning tools within the database will help in forecasting budgets and scheduling component replacements appropriately, avoiding premature or delayed replacements.

Both the current and new asset management database are linked to a carbon modelling tool called Sava. Sava is able to process all energy related information and, based on custom built scenarios such as budget constraints, property type and the most cost-efficient improvements, will provide Targeted Energy Pathways for all dwellings. The results of findings from the use of SAVA are captured in the appendices (Appendix 2) and the Energy Efficiency and Target Energy Pathways section of this policy.

Data Management and Updates:

The asset management system does not store individual tenant data, only property data. The database is frequently updated using different data sources to maintain accuracy, this includes:

- Information received when a new development or acquisition is completed
- Survey information when a property becomes vacant and any works that are completed prior to reletting.
- Information from surveys conducted by an independent surveying company
- Information from inspections and surveys conducted by our staff
- Reports made by tenants and any associated responsive repairs carried out
- Recorded completion of a planned programmes of works, such as kitchen upgrades.

Data Improvement Plan

We acknowledge that data is not always perfect, and it is important that data is reviewed and audited to maintain its quality. To ensure compliance is assessed against reliable information, an assessment of our existing data has been developed an

improvement plan has been developed to address areas that need enhancement and to set out ongoing plans to maintain quality.

The assessment found:

- A significant portion of the necessary information to inform WHQS compliance can be derived from existing asset data and repair records, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the overall condition of the stock. When considering each element of the standard, an initial desktop exercise is feasible and would be validated as new data becomes available.
- Surveys offer accurate and current information and are necessary for the different property types and areas of the city, to assess the condition of the stock and its elements. It would be beneficial to complete these on the entire stock.
- The stock condition surveys will enable the assessment of elements, and this data will be extrapolated across the entire stock initially. Future stock condition surveys, in conjunction with repairs data, will then enhance the accuracy of this information.
- The purchase and implementation of the new Asset Management Database, Civica CX, will enhance our data collection and analytical capabilities and it will further ensure the timely replacement of assets and the optimal allocation of resources to areas where they are most needed.

Stock Condition Surveys:

We intend to conduct full property condition surveys on all our housing stock. Until this objective is met, the data from incoming surveys will be extrapolated based on the build type, age, and location of properties.

Property condition surveys comprehensively assess fixtures, fittings, and the overall functionality of components to determine whether they meet required standards and if any changes to the timeline of replacement or urgent repairs are necessary.

This approach seeks to offer a thorough evaluation of the condition of our housing stock and verify the accuracy of lifecycle estimations and existing data, facilitating better planning and decision-making.

Section 7 – Independent Verification

We will ensure independent verification of our Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) assessment through a comprehensive range of methods, including:

Asset Database Reporting: The asset database utilises a range of reporting features to identify duplication, inconsistencies, and data inputting errors. These

discrepancies are manually verified against original records and corrected accordingly. Pre-surveys are conducted as part of programmed schemes to validate existing on-site data.

Officer Verification: Verification is undertaken by officers not directly involved in the delivery of WHQS, either through data collection management or direct engagement with tenants and properties.

Bi-Annual Inspections: Communal blocks are inspected bi-annually to ensure data accuracy and compliance. Vacant dwellings are also inspected prior to letting, verifying the data held within the asset management system.

Survey Data Integration: All survey data is uploaded into the asset management database, and necessary amendments are made to reflect the most current and accurate information.

External Surveying Companies: External surveying companies conduct a minimum of 10% stock condition surveys annually throughout the city. As mentioned above, this process helps collect new data and verify existing records, maintaining the integrity of the asset management database.

Welsh Audit Office : External consultants may be commissioned by the Welsh Audit Office to conduct random samples of surveys and audits on properties to validate the data, as took place under the previous standard.

Section 8 - Tenant engagement and communication

Tenant Engagement

Tenant engagement is essential to the successful delivery of the standard. Tenants should understand how the standard impacts them, and their priorities should be understood and taken into account.

We will continue to make information available to tenants on what the standard intends to deliver and our progress in delivering it via a range of communication methods.

We have gathered feedback from tenant groups to understand their views on the standard and identify their priorities through:

- Tenant survey - the survey consisted of a 40% random sample (5,271) of all current Local Authority Housing Tenants – with a return rate of 22.8%. Details of the response in relation to WHQS can be found in Appendix 3. The survey results indicate that tenants consider kitchens and bathrooms to be in the greatest need of updating and view these elements as the most important. Generally, tenants perceive their homes as energy efficient. However, when asked which energy efficiency improvements would be most beneficial, 46.9% identified solar panels as their top choice.

- HRA Business Plan - this is published annually and is available to tenants via the website or on request. It provides a breakdown of work carried out and financial planning information for the upcoming financial year.
- This policy will be published on the Cardiff Housing Website and updated annually.
- Tenant coffee mornings – these are held monthly in HUBs throughout the city. Tenants can discuss issues, and Tenant Participation Officers can introduce new initiatives or policies in an informal setting. Coffee mornings will be used to consult tenants on the detail of any proposals arising from the implementation of WHQS 2023.

We will continue to develop new ways to gather feedback from tenants.

Compliance Statements for new Tenants

At the start of each new tenancy, we will provide each tenant with a compliance statement. This statement will detail:

- The purpose of the standard and when it is to be achieved by.
- What the standard contains.
- Where the home complies
- Where the home does not comply along with reasons explaining why.

The compliance statement will only be issued once vacant works are completed to ensure the WHQS position for the property is as up to date as possible.

Vacant works ensure that WHQS standards are achieved. Areas that do not comply will usually be a conditional pass or a temporary fail.

Section 9 - Meeting the needs of the Household, including older and disabled peoples housing

The standard requires that homes should suit the specific requirements of the household

We will on a case-by-case basis consider any cultural needs of the tenants within our homes and where possible make reasonable adjustments.

Helping those who are living in overcrowded accommodation

The Common Waiting List indicates that approximately 663 families are living in overcrowded council accommodation. Therefore, we are delivering innovative solutions to help address this issue. Actions being taken include:

Increasing the number of larger properties in our Stock.

To address the needs of overcrowded families, we are purchasing larger properties from the open market. Since April 2022 we have purchased 13 properties that have at least 4 bedrooms, with additional planned as funds allow. Our new build programme also ensures that a number of 4 bed properties are built as part of these new schemes. Where possible, additional rooms in attic spaces are also being created in these new build properties to provide additional living or bedroom spaces for larger families.

Multi-Generational Living

Through our Housing Development programme we are planning to develop a housing model that can help support larger extended families to live together. We call this form of housing multigenerational living. Plans are underway to create a new development that will allow extended families to live in the same housing scheme

Building Extensions onto existing Properties

We are also piloting the use of modular extensions to create additional space in existing properties. This helps to alleviate overcrowding without requiring tenants to relocate. This pilot will help identify the most cost effective way of addressing this issue. Clear criteria for referral will also be developed to ensure properties are selected based on well-defined and consistent guidelines and prioritise those with the greatest needs.

Rightsizing

Community Transfers (Mutual Exchanges)

Community Transfers are an excellent way for tenants who are overcrowded or under occupying to transfer into a property that better suits their needs. We use Homeswapper, a digital solution, to help to match tenants who are seeking to move to a different property. Support is available to help tenants to look for a suitable transfer in our Community Hubs across the city.

In response to the pressing need to address both overcrowding and under occupation of properties, a Rightsizing Coordinator has been employed to facilitate community transfers between council tenants who are downsizing and overcrowded families. This officer identifies suitable matches using data held on the Housing Waiting List and actively engages with all parties to promote the benefits of community transfers including quicker relocation times and the opportunity to move to a more appropriately sized home without waiting for an allocation through the social housing waiting list. Tenants receive support throughout the exchange process, including assistance with paperwork and helping to reduce any barriers to moving. This approach ensures that

all parties are fully informed and comfortable with the arrangement. By promoting this efficient and mutually beneficial solution, the Rightsizing Officer helps optimise housing resources, reduce overcrowding, and improve the overall living conditions for tenants.

Rightsizing into Older Persons Accommodation

Our Rehousing Solutions Team offers support for older tenants to relocate to smaller, more manageable homes that better meet their needs. This in turn frees up more family's homes which can then be reallocated. The team provide services tailored to individual needs and preferences, assisting with overcoming obstacles and offering practical and financial incentives, such as organising removals and clearance of unwanted items. Individuals are supported through every aspect of the moving process.

This approach has been used recently through our new Community Living scheme, Addison House. 26 tenants left family accommodation to move into the Older Persons Accommodation, thereby releasing 26 much needed family homes.

Older Persons Housing

Cardiff has an Older Persons Housing Strategy aimed at improving and increasing the range of older persons housing and the facilities offered.

Existing Homes

We have a range of accommodation that is designated as specifically suitable for older people, these "Independent Living properties" include flats and bungalows across the city. The allocation of these properties is restricted to older people.

We also have 10 community living schemes offering a greater degree of support, including a scheme manager and activities and events on site. These schemes are going through a programme of refurbishment which is nearing completion, to offer modern and attractive living spaces. All but one of these schemes has achieved Royal National Institute for the Blind accreditation.

New Homes

In recognition of our ageing population and in line with our Older Persons Housing Strategy, Cardiff is investing over £200 million in the development of 620 new apartments specifically designed to meet the housing needs of older individuals and to allow them to age well in place. Ensuring that older people can remain independent for longer can both improve quality of life for the individual and reduce the pressure on social care.

All our new homes are constructed to Lifetime Homes Standards and Development Quality Requirements standard.

Homes adapted for the disabled.

Cardiff's Rehousing Solutions team helps residents needing adapted accommodation to find suitable social housing, ensuring that they individuals with disabilities or mobility issues can live in safe and comfortable homes.

The team includes a specialist Occupational Therapist, a qualified nurse practitioner, and officers dedicated to identifying appropriate properties for people with physical disabilities. They conduct comprehensive assessments of housing needs, evaluating current living conditions and necessary adaptations.

Success depends on partnerships with local housing associations, health services, and social care providers. These collaborations provide additional resources and expertise, aiding the team in finding and adapting suitable housing for those in need.

Every property that becomes vacant is assessed and graded according to their level of adaptation by the Rehousing Solutions Team so that the most suitable tenant can be allocated to the property.

Cardiff Council has a dedicated service for providing adaptations to people's homes across the private and public tenures in order to enable them to live as independently as possible when faced with the barriers to housing that come with all forms of disabilities. This Disabled Facilities Service works closely with our Occupational Therapy team to ensure that they agree any proposed adaptations are both necessary and appropriate for the individual. The capital programme for 2024/25 for adapting council properties was £3.9M and from April to December 2024 1,317 adaptations have been completed to assist some of our most vulnerable tenants to remain living independently in their own homes and communities.

Section 10 - Attractive outside spaces and Biodiversity

Attractive outdoor spaces

Our Land and Asset Team plays a key role in maintaining and improving the external environment of Cardiff Council's housing stock, ensuring communal areas remain safe, functional, and welcoming for residents.

Through a rolling programme of regeneration projects, the team upgrades communal spaces, including courtyards, green areas, and shared facilities, to create more

secure, accessible, and sustainable environments. Improvements include upgrading the rear courtyards of flats to make them private and secure for residents, improving courtyard surfaces, installing new drying facilities and bin stores, improving access and functionality for both residents and Waste Management.

Our Local Action Team works within communities to improve neighbourhoods. To achieve this, the team works with residents to clear their gardens of overgrowth and any unwanted waste which may have accumulated over time. Additionally, the team tackles vegetation fly-tipping and litter build-up while also collaborating with organisations like Coed Caerdydd to improve green spaces through tree planting. In partnership with other Council departments such as Waste Strategy, Caretaking Services, Tenancy Management and Tenants Participation, the team work to educate residents on how to responsibly dispose of waste and discuss how we, together, can contribute to a cleaner city and foster a sense of community pride.

The Regeneration Team takes forward larger regeneration projects to improve neighbourhoods, often including both housing and private land to create welcoming and safe spaces for residents.

Biodiversity

Cardiff Council has a biodiversity policy that outlines Cardiff's commitment to the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty (BRED) and it provides guidance on green space management, biodiversity enhancement, and community engagement.

Cardiff Council aims to:

- Enhance and protect biodiversity across Cardiff.
- Promote ecosystem resilience through sustainable management practices.
- Align activities with the Green Infrastructure Plan and the BRED Action Plan.
- Contribute to the One Planet Cardiff climate change strategy.
- Foster community involvement in green space management.

As part of the One Planet Cardiff programme, Cardiff is responding to the climate emergency, which celebrates and nurtures biodiversity, by creating high-quality open spaces within easy reach for rest and play which are convenient, accessible and safe.

Cardiff Housing owns a considerable amount of land in the city and fully engages in the Council scheme. There are a number of biodiversity schemes that are involve housing land or engage with council tenants:

Community Gardens: Four community gardens on housing land across Cardiff allow tenants and residents to engage in sustainable planting, including fruits, vegetables, and flowers. These gardens support biodiversity and encourage social interaction while enhancing green spaces on housing-owned land.

One-Cut Grass Mowing Scheme

Cardiff Council has adopted a "one-cut" grass mowing strategy for 33 selected sites, including five housing-owned areas. This approach promotes habitat diversity, supports a wide range of plants and animals, and enhances the natural environment. It is intended to further establish and adopt a phased timeline to expand the this scheme on housing sites.

Coed Caerdydd Tree Planting Program

As part of the One Planet Cardiff strategy, Coed Caerdydd focuses on increasing tree cover across Cardiff. To date, 303 housing-owned sites have benefitted from tree planting efforts, with a goal to plant more trees that benefit both nature and the community.

Pollinator Patches

Cardiff Council has designated specific areas to support pollinators, which are essential to ecosystem health. One such pollinator patch is located on housing-owned land, providing critical support for species like bees and butterflies.

Grass Verge Protection

In alignment with this policy, requests for driveway installations on housing owned grass verges and adjacent green spaces will no longer being approved. This measure helps preserve these areas for biodiversity and green infrastructure.

We will continue to deliver more bio-diversity in schemes on housing owned land.

Exposure to Noise

To safeguard the physical and mental well-being of tenants, it is essential to minimise exposure to noise pollution within residential properties. New homes are designed and constructed to shield tenants from typical domestic noise originating from adjacent homes, as well as from traffic or other external ambient noise.

Existing homes are equipped with double glazing and Secure by Design doors to mitigate external noise. These features are replaced on a rolling programme of works, and repairs are conducted as necessary to ensure they remain effective.

Energy efficiency measures, including roof insulation, cavity wall insulation, and external insulation, also offer additional soundproofing benefits alongside their primary purposes.

Section 11 – Broadband and Digital Connectivity

Access to broadband and 4G mobile phone signal are not generally a problem in the city, of much greater concern is the affordability of these services for council tenants. Feedback from the 2024 Tenants satisfaction survey stated that over 81% of tenants have access to the internet. They access the internet mainly via Mobile phone, Tablets or smart TV's. 6% of tenants access the internet via libraries or Hubs.

Digital Support

Cardiff Council have a dedicated digital and support team who are focused on targeting digital deprivation and supporting the people of Cardiff to upskill and improve their digital abilities. This is achieved through 1:2:1 support, workshops, activities and access schemes. The team are on hand throughout Cardiff in Hubs and community buildings ensuring as many people as possible can access the support they need.

The team can help through measures such as device gifting or loaning and access to data. Working in partnership with the National Databank, the team are able to gift free sim cards with data to allow those facing digital deprivation to get online, accessing the services they need. Many people are without mobile phones, tablets or laptops, preventing them from staying in touch, accessing council services, managing their money, accessing training or looking for work. The Tablet Gifting Scheme aims to tackle this by providing free tablets to those in need and supporting them to make the most out of their new device.

Introductory workshops are available in Hubs and community buildings throughout Cardiff. These courses are designed to introduce learners to digital devices and software, giving them the skills to be more independent online.

The Digital Team are available in Hubs, Community Buildings and Sheltered Schemes on a regular basis, hosting digital support drop-in sessions. During these sessions, service users can attend with any questions they have relating to digital devices, getting online, downloading apps, accessing information, staying safe and much more. The team are experts in all things digital and go above and beyond to ensure every enquiry is answered, utilising support available from partners organisations where possible. Cardiff Council work with the following partner organisations: Digital Communities Wales, Ability Net, Hubs Wellbeing and Age Friendly Teams and the Into Work Service and Adult Learning Services.

Section 12 - Community Benefits

Cardiff Council's commitment to deliver community benefits is embedded into our procurement activity. Procurement is designed to ensure that wider social and economic issues are considered when spending public money. Monitoring is achieved using the Welsh Government Community Benefits Tool Kit.

Examples of benefits included through the framework include:

- Training and employment opportunities
- Contractors will be expected to consider the opportunities to recruit and train long term economically inactive persons as part of the workforce delivering programmes of work for the council. The Council is keen for contractors to consider offering opportunities including apprenticeships, NVQs, health & safety training, full time employment etc.

- Contractors will be expected to work with the council to open opportunities for small medium enterprises including social enterprises. This enables money to be retained within the local community and provides equal opportunities.

In addition to providing community benefits with external contractors, the Cardiff's Housing Service also has its own in-house workforce. As part of this, the council has set up the Responsive Repairs Unit Academy which currently provides:

- Provision for six apprentice positions for as long as is required for the staff member to become qualified in their chosen trade.
- Provision for up to five responsive Repairs Unit trainees who complete an extended work experience which covers a variety of trade roles over a two year period. This enables the trainee to understand various roles before making a commitment to start an apprenticeship in a particular trade.
- The Council is currently looking to partner with other housing providers in Cardiff to see if the opportunities for apprenticeships can be increased.

Section 13 - Monitoring and Reporting

Cardiff Council is committed to meeting and maintaining the WHQS standard and has a comprehensive set of activities place to achieve this goal.

Action plans will be put in place to take forward any additional work identified through this policy. Progress on achieving the full standard will be reported in the annual HRA Business Plan and published on the Cardiff Housing website.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Element compliance

	Element	Compliance
1	Homes must be in good state of repair	
1A	Homes must be structurally stable and free from disrepair	If a property has components that need attention, whether found through stock condition surveys, regular inspections, capital works projects, or reported directly to the repairs team, they are systematically addressed and addressed as part of the ongoing work.
1B	Homes must be free from damp	If a property has damp or condensation it is referred to the Dry Homes Team. Technical Managers will inspect the property and identify any remedial action. These remedial measures are actioned under the normal maintenance frameworks and tenants are given advice and guidance on mitigating any issues with condensation. Where necessary the team utilise specialists to survey/assess the property, report of the findings and remedial measures required. Damp is also being assessed as part of the independent verification surveys that are being carried out and appropriate action is taken where necessary.
2	Homes must be safe and secure	
2A	External doors and windows must provide a reasonable level of physical security	All properties have had Secure By Design windows and doors installed during previous programmes of work. Future programmes of work will install enhanced Secure by Design and thermally efficient windows and doors.
2B	Staircases and balustrades must be safe	Under the previous WHQS all staircases were assessed for safety, ongoing inspections will continue. Any defects/repairs will be rectified as part of the maintenance programme or at change of tenancy.
2C	Homes must have adequate fire detection and alarm system installed and maintained to the appropriate British Standard	All properties have mains connected smoke alarms fitted to British standard and annually maintained. Replacement and upgrades and new installations are done as part of the electrical programmes of work to current WHQS 2023.

2D	Homes must have appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building, in accordance with building regulation requirements.	All blocks of flats are assessed under Cardiff Council's Fire Risk Assessment process and appropriate action identified to ensure that tenants and residents can escape from the building safely. Fire egress windows for houses form part of the new windows specification to allow for easier escape/rescue in the event of a fire.
2E	Gas, oil-fired or solid fuel burning combustion appliances and installations must be annually certified as safe by an appropriately qualified person.	Inspections are carried out annually as part of the Council's maintenance plan. Inspections are carried out by qualified Gas Safe inspectors. Where the tenant does not provide access, the case is referred to the Tenancy Management team who will take further action as necessary including legal action and forced entry if required.
2F	A carbon monoxide detector must be fitted in each room containing a fixed gas appliance, an oil-fired combustion appliance, a solid fuel burning combustion appliance or an associated flue.	All properties Carbon monoxide detectors fitted to British standard and annually maintained. Replacement and upgrades and new installations are done as part of the electrical programmes of work to current WHQS 2023 requirements.
2G	Homes must have an electrical safety inspection undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less.	Inspections are carried out every 5 years as part of the Council's maintenance plan. Inspections are carried out by qualified electrical engineer. Where the tenant does not provide access, the case is referred to the Tenancy Management team who will take further action as necessary including legal action and forced entry if required.
2H	All electrical equipment supplied by landlords in homes must be safe, comply with the current safety requirements for domestic electrical products and be tested annually.	Electrical goods are generally only issued in temporary accommodation. Any equipment that is provided is Portable Appliance Tested and complies with current safety requirements.
2I	Common parts of flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings must have adequate means of warning and escape from fire in accordance with building regulations requirements.	All blocks of flats are assessed under Cardiff Councils Fire risk assessment process. Fire alarms are fitted to high-risk blocks. There is a stay put policy in place for low rise blocks. All flats are fitted with Secure by Design fire doors appropriate to their location and maintained as part of the Planned maintenance process.
2J	All buildings containing more than one dwelling (regardless of whether	All blocks of flats, temporary accommodation, shared housing and community living schemes are assessed

	they also contain common parts) must have a current and up-to-date fire risk assessment.	under Cardiff Council's Fire risk assessment process and have an up-to-date fire risk assessment.
3	Homes must be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact	
3A	Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92 – EPC A).	Target Energy Pathways will be produced for all housing stock. The approach to this is set out in the WHQS compliance policy.
3B	In the interim, all homes must meet a minimum standard of SAP 75 – EPC C.	Target Energy Pathways will be produced for all housing stock. The approach to this is set out in the WHQS compliance policy.
3C	Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92).	Target Energy Pathways will be produced for all housing stock. The approach to this is set out in the WHQS compliance policy.
3D	Landlords must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes.	Target Energy Pathways will be produced for all housing stock. The approach to this is set out in the WHQS compliance policy.
3E	Homes, and in particular kitchens and bathrooms, must have an adequate amount of ventilation.	Mechanical ventilation is fitted to kitchen and bathrooms. New builds have mechanical ventilation with heat recovery installed. Older fans are being upgraded at tenancy change as part of the void process.
3F	Landlords must make arrangements for a smart meter to be installed in each home.	Arrangements for smart meter installation is undertaken at tenancy change as part of the void process.
3G	Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances.	When replacing fittings of fixed appliances the specification used include water efficiency standards to the requirements of the WHQS 2023.
3H	Water butts to be installed when appropriate.	Water butts are fitted wherever practicable and generally form part of the voids process at tenancy change, following an assessment of suitability.

4	Homes must have an up-to-date kitchen and utility area	
4A	Kitchens must be in good condition.	All kitchens are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 16 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. They are also reviewed on tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
4B	Kitchens must have adequate space for kitchen appliances.	All kitchens are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 16 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. They are also reviewed on tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
4C	Kitchens must be well organised and contain sufficient work surfaces.	All kitchens are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 16 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. They are also reviewed on tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
4D	Homes must have sufficient general storage.	All kitchens are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 16 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. They are also reviewed on tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
4E	Homes must have adequate space for local recycling requirements.	All kitchens are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 16 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. They are also reviewed on tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
4F	Kitchens must have sufficient conveniently located power sockets.	All kitchens are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 16 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. They are also reviewed on tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
4G	Kitchens and utility areas must have suitable flooring.	All kitchens are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 16 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. They are also reviewed on tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
4H	Homes must have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes.	All kitchens are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 16 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. They are also reviewed on tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
5	Homes must have an up-to-date bathroom	
5A	Bathrooms and WC facilities must be in good condition.	All bathrooms are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 26 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. They are also reviewed on

		tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
5B	Bathrooms and WC facilities should have suitable flooring.	All bathrooms are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 26 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. They are also reviewed on tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
5C	Bathrooms must have a shower and a bath (or shower and sufficient space for the provision of a bath).	All bathrooms are fitted to WHQS 2023 specification, they are renewed every 26 years or as determined by the stock condition survey. The specification requires a bath and shower to be fitted to all properties. They are also reviewed on tenancy change as part of the void process or if concerns are raised by tenants.
6	Home must be comfortable and promotes wellbeing	
6A	Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living.	All property types have been assessed with compliance to WHQS 2023 Space Standard requirements. New builds space standards comply with WDQR 2021.
6B	At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the home should have suitable floor coverings.	Suitable floor coverings are now incorporated at tenancy change as part of the voids specification and process for all habitable rooms.
6C	Exposure to noise should be minimised.	As part of the stock condition surveys all properties are assessed using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). For any properties assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling attenuation measures will be carried out.
6D	As far as possible, homes should suit the specific requirements of the household.	This issue is covered in detail in the main body of the Compliance Policy.
6E	Disabled and older people's housing requirements must be planned for and met in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments.	This issue is covered in detail in the main body of the Compliance Policy.
6F	Homes should be clearly identifiable and have definable boundaries.	All properties have clearly identifiable door numbering and blocks of flats have clearly identifiable block numbering. All properties have clearly defined boundaries.

7	Homes must have a suitable garden	
7A	There should be an external level space no smaller than 10m ² directly accessible from the home.	All properties comply with this requirement.
7B	There should be paved access from the home to any garden gate.	All properties comply with this requirement.
7C	There should be paved access from the home to the drying line if one is present.	All properties comply with this requirement.
7D	Outdoor space must be easy to maintain, and safe.	Most properties will comply with this requirement, any further works required will be picked up by the stock condition surveys. any repairs or improvements are actioned at tenancy change as part of the void process or under current maintenance frameworks.
8	Homes must have an attractive outside space	
8A	External lockable storage for cycles and equipment must be made available.	There is currently insufficient data external storage, and we are actively gathering the necessary information to remedy this. As this data becomes available, we will further evaluate compliance. In the meantime, secure communal bike storage for blocks of flats is fitted as part of the courtyard schemes. Alternative forms of bicycle storage are currently being piloted to identify the most secure and cost effective approach.
8B	There should be adequate, practical, maintainable and safe community space(s).	This issue is covered in detail in the main body of the Compliance Policy.
8C	Biodiversity opportunities should be introduced by landlords who own or manage verges, parks, grounds and open green spaces by changing their management of these areas to make them more wildlife friendly.	This issue is covered in detail in the main body of the Compliance Policy.
	Digital Connectivity	This issue is covered in detail in the main body of the Compliance Policy.

Appendix 2 - Target Energy Pathways and Initial Cost Estimates

Initial Target Energy Pathways have been developed using the Sava Intelligent Energy System. This system examines factors such as the current EPC rating or, where an EPC is not available, the predicted rating based on information about the components in the property.

The Sava system then considers elements like loft insulation thickness, boiler efficiency, and other components that affect overall energy performance. The system then determines what improvements are necessary for each property to reach SAP A or SAP 75 (Mid C), along with the associated costs.

The table below shows a summary of the improvements required to achieve SAP 75 for Cardiff's council homes. Initial indications are that SAP 75 is achievable in 99.8% of our stock. It lists the different measures and a count of the number of properties that require each type of improvement. The total cost to install these is also shown.

The data clearly indicates that implementing individual measures can significantly enhance a substantial number of properties to achieve the SAP 75 target. This demonstrates that large-scale programmes focusing on a single measure would be advantageous in improving the energy performance of the housing stock sufficiently to meet the initial objective of SAP 75.

The data also shows that a significant portion of the cost arises from preliminary works rather than the installation of the measures themselves. These activities include surveying, scaffolding, and performing tasks to ensure that the areas of the property where measures are applied are in good condition.

The table below includes the average estimated increase in the property's EPC score for each measure. According to the data, solar panels contribute the most, with an estimated 10.8 points increase.

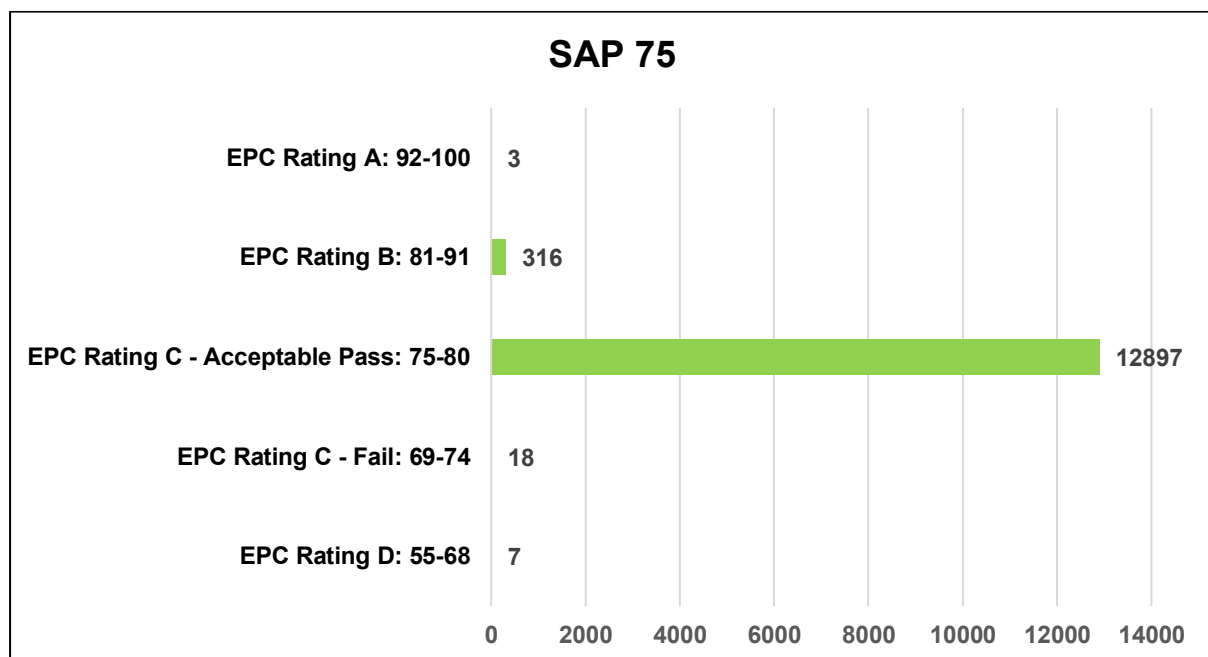
This breakdown aims to show the overall impact if all options were applied. This is for illustrative purposes only. Programmes of work will be refined to take into account the detailed surveys for each home. Also some improvements would not be appropriate, for example, given the disruption to tenants, floor insulation is unlikely to be installed. While air source heat pumps may not be appropriate where these would increase heating costs for tenants.

SAP 75 (Mid C):

Improvement	Count of Improvement	Sum of Capital Costs	Average SAP increase
CCC Prelim works/mandatory No EWI	12286	£205,446,492	N/A
CCC Prelim works/mandatory EWI	1214	£36,571,750	N/A
Photovoltaics	4245	£55,741,950	10.8
External wall insulation	1214	£16,300,875	4.6
Floor insulation (solid ground floor)	2306	£12,373,572	2.5
Upgrade heating controls (wet system)	7298	£5,924,525	1.7
Upgrade existing boiler	2165	£4,247,575	2.5
Secondary glazing	2556	£3,654,571	0.8
Loft insulation	5975	£2,268,392	1
Window replacement	540	£1,739,340	1.5
Glazing only improvement	1366	£1,510,089	1.5
Gas condensing boiler	215	£1,043,446	4.9
Floor insulation (suspended floor)	578	£993,094	2.3
Air source heat pump	156	£961,313	3.2
Cavity fill	798	£470,609	3.9
Storage heaters	132	£467,704	2.3
Flat roof insulation	195	£439,215	2.9
Cylinder thermostat	1218	£158,340	1.8
Remove secondary heating	850	£102,000	1
Low energy lights	8569	£80,518	1
Cylinder insulation	1783	£32,456	0.6
Draught-proofing	13	£1,990	0.5
Grand Total	34029	£350,529,816	

Projected Final Sap score after all works done to SAP 75, (number of properties)

The graph below shows where the whole stock would sit against the different bands after applying the full target energy pathways as set out above. It is estimated that only 25 properties would be left with a rating below the target.



SAP A:

As demonstrated below, achieving an A rating for energy performance can only be achieved on 19% of our properties and delivering this comes with very high expense. Again, it shows that preliminary works account for most of the cost.

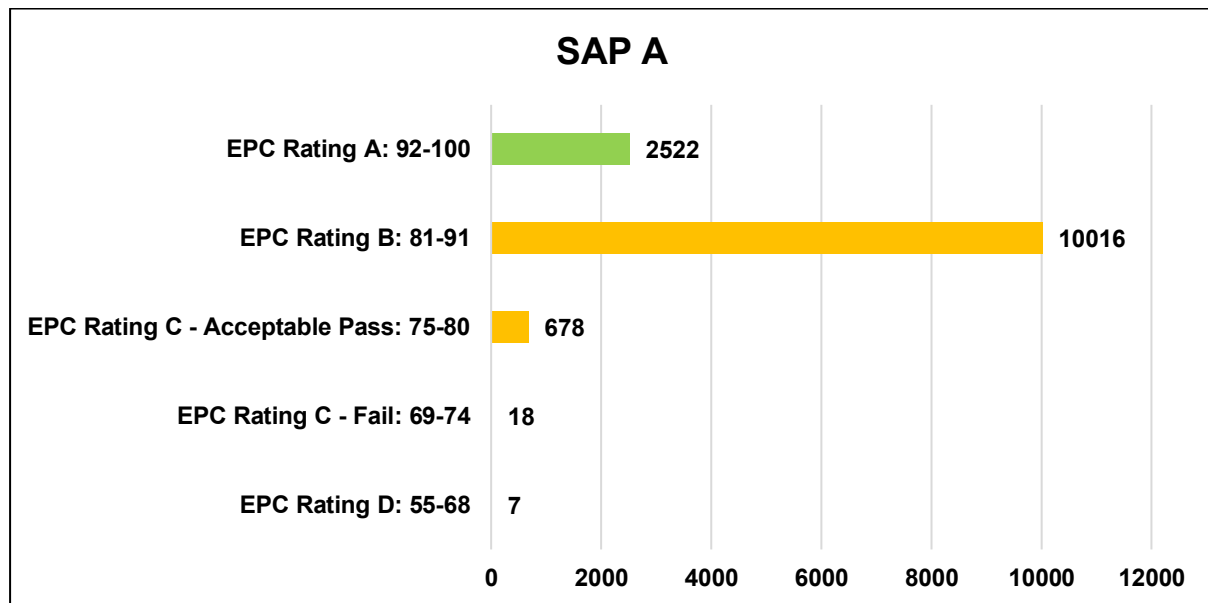
Like the TEPs for achieving SAP 75, it suggests that implementing a single measure can move properties closer to an EPC A rating, however, multiple measures are more frequently necessary to achieve these pathways.

SAP 92 (A)

Improvement	Count of Improvement	Sum of Capital Costs
CCC Prelim works/ mandatory EWI	11733	£353,456,625
CCC Prelim works/mandatory No EWI	1767	£31,806,000
External wall insulation	11733	£172,101,145
Photovoltaics	7901	£137,447,310
Air source heat pump	9017	£55,902,000
Window replacement	12167	£54,721,968
Floor insulation (solid ground floor)	7709	£44,995,777
Loft insulation	9644	£4,750,698
Upgrade heating controls (wet system)	3707	£3,223,165
Upgrade existing boiler	715	£1,567,699
Gas condensing boiler	296	£1,386,484
Floor insulation (suspended floor)	748	£1,316,101
Secondary glazing	520	£1,064,607
Flat roof insulation	248	£661,863
Cavity fill	914	£524,030
Glazing only improvement	196	£258,576
Storage heaters	82	£221,470
Cylinder thermostat	1276	£165,880
Low energy lights	9465	£87,574
Remove secondary heating	696	£83,520
Cylinder insulation	1891	£34,608
Draught-proofing	17	£2,788
Grand Total	55878	£865,779,888

Projected Final Sap score after all works done to SAP 92, (number of properties)

The graph shows the distribution of properties across bands after aiming for band A. The data indicates 10,712 properties would not reach band A, but 10,016 (76%) properties could achieve a B rating, representing a significant proportion.



Preliminary Work

As illustrated above, there is a substantial cost associated with preliminary works. The tables below show a detailed breakdown of the estimates for preliminary works and associated activities. There are two distinct levels of preliminary works required:

- Improvements involving External Wall Insulation
- Improvements that do not involved External Wall Insulation.

The tables below gives examples of the typical activities that make preliminary works. Even though the initial work costs are high in both cases, the costs for improvements including external wall insulation are much higher. There's also an extra cost for unexpected expenses. These estimated prices comes from the costs of past energy efficiency pilot project.

Preliminary works (for improvements that include External Wall Insulation)			
Decarb Costings and improvements	Cost	Summary	Work status
Estimated cost for Retrofit Co-ordinator and team	£769	PAS 2035 Requirements	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for Energy Pathway Survey	£8,685	PAS 2035 Requirements	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for Party Wall Notices	£467	Requirement Party wall act (legal)	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for Pre EPC	£285	Survey requirements PAS 2035 & WG requirement	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for Post EPC	£285	Survey requirements PAS 2035 & WG requirement	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for performance sensor monitoring system, (IES)	£2,642	Survey requirements WG requirement for funding	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for Access solutions per H Semi/End	£1,617	Scaffolding requirements	Onsite works
Estimated cost per Dwelling Cost Boilers / Flue works	£181	EWI works required to extend boiler flues	Onsite works
Estimated cost per Dwelling Asbestos removal (Average Semi detached)	£0	Extent of works to be determined by onsite survey	Onsite works
Estimated cost per Dwelling render repair and stabilisation	£906	PAS 2035 requires the property to be in good state of repair before EWl can be applied	Onsite works
Estimated cost per Dwelling Structural repairs	£242	PAS 2035 requires the property to be in good state of repair before EWl can be applied	Onsite works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for paths gullies and S&V pipe alterations H Semi/End	£3,033	EWI works thickness require alteration to drainage, gullies, pathways etc.	Onsite works

Estimated cost per Dwelling for roof edge extending for EWI H/B Semi/End	£6,819	EWI works thickness require alteration to extend the length of the roof edge to protect the insulation.	Onsite works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for ventilation upgrade B & H	£964	Survey requirements PAS 2035 & WG requirement	Onsite works
Estimated Cost per Dwelling for Radon Mitigation	£604	EWI improves airtightness of the dwelling, Cardiff is in a Radon zone, requiring mitigation.	Onsite works
Estimated cost for Prelims	£1,313	Allowances for contractor site set up, ecology surveys.	Contractor process
Estimated cost for Contingencies	£1,313	Contingency for unforeseen works.	Contractor process
Estimated total cost per property	£30,125		

Preliminary Works (for improvements that do not include External Wall Insulation)			
Decarb Costings and improvements	Cost	Summary	Work status
Estimated cost for Retrofit Co-ordinator and team	£769	PAS 2035 Requirements	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for Energy Pathway Survey	£8,685	PAS 2035 Requirements	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for Party Wall Notices	£467	Requirement Party wall act (legal)	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for Pre EPC	£285	Survey requirements PAS 2035 & WG requirement	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for Post EPC	£285	Survey requirements PAS 2035 & WG requirement	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for performance sensor monitoring system, (IES)	£2,642	Survey requirements WG requirement for funding	Pre works
Estimated cost per Dwelling for ventilation upgrade B & H	£964	Survey requirements PAS 2035 & WG requirement	Onsite works
Estimated cost for Prelims	£1,313	Allowances for contractor site set up, ecology surveys.	Contractor process
Estimated cost for Contingencies	£1,313	Contingency for unforeseen works.	Contractor process
Estimated total cost per property	£16,722		

Appendix 3 - Tenant satisfaction survey 2024 WHQS results

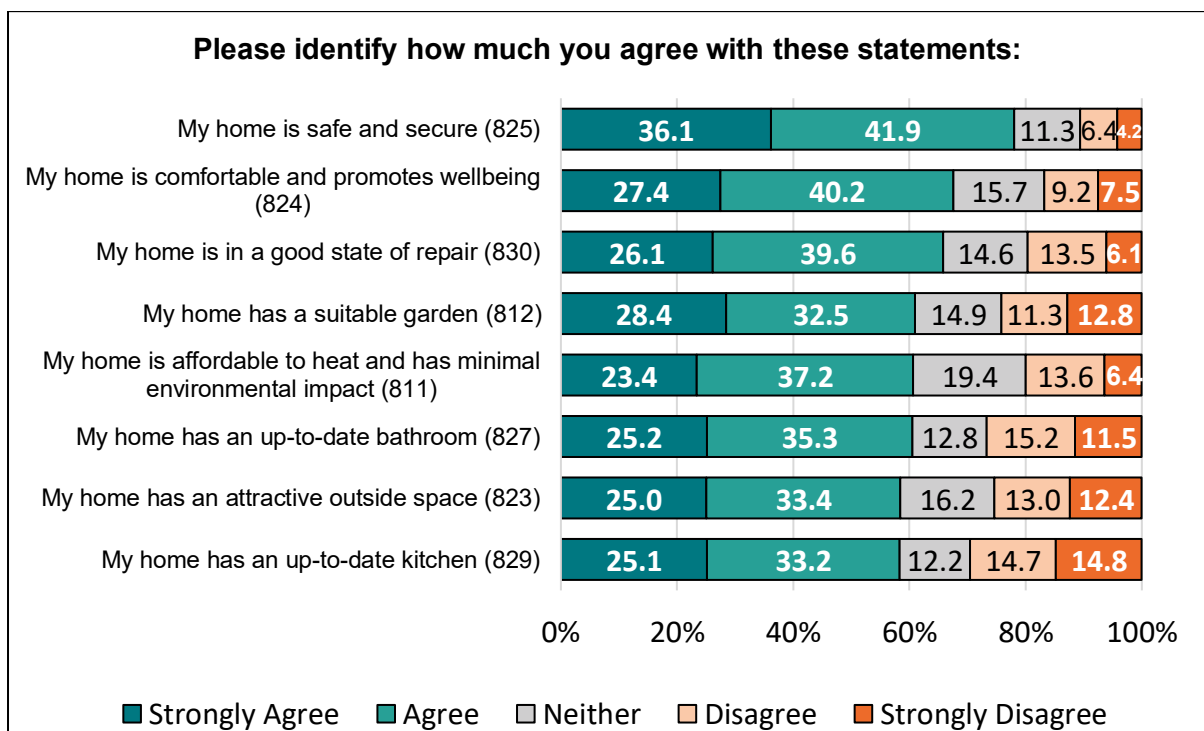
In 2024 40% of tenants were sent a Tenant Satisfaction Survey to complete, a total of 878 responses were received.

When asked how much they agree with the outcomes that WHQS intends to achieve, the majority of respondents agreed with each statement.

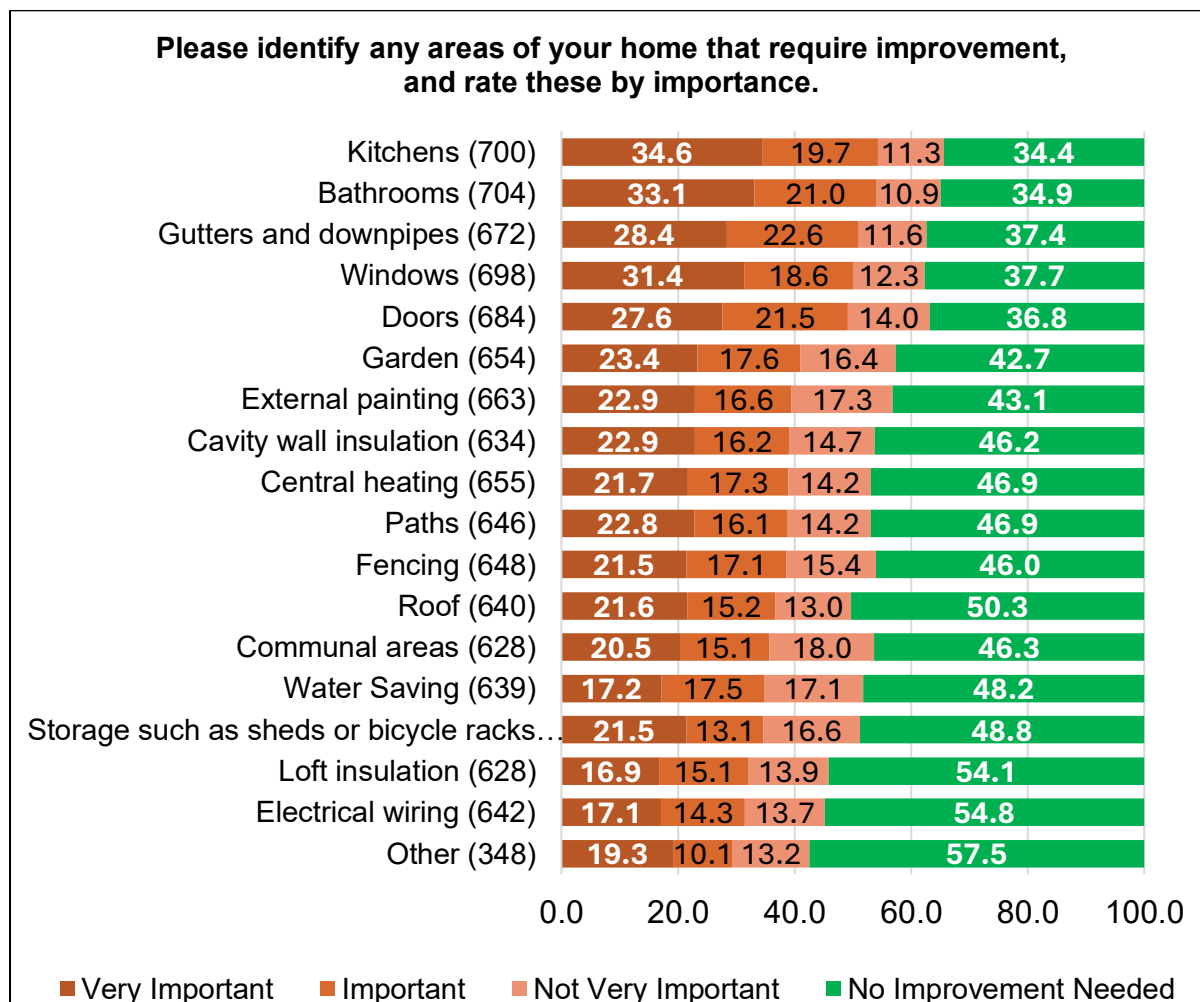
- 78% of respondents feel that their home is safe and secure
- 67.6% of respondents feel that their home is comfortable and promotes wellbeing
- 65.7% of respondents feel that their home in a good state of repair.

Responses where tenants disagree were highest in three areas:

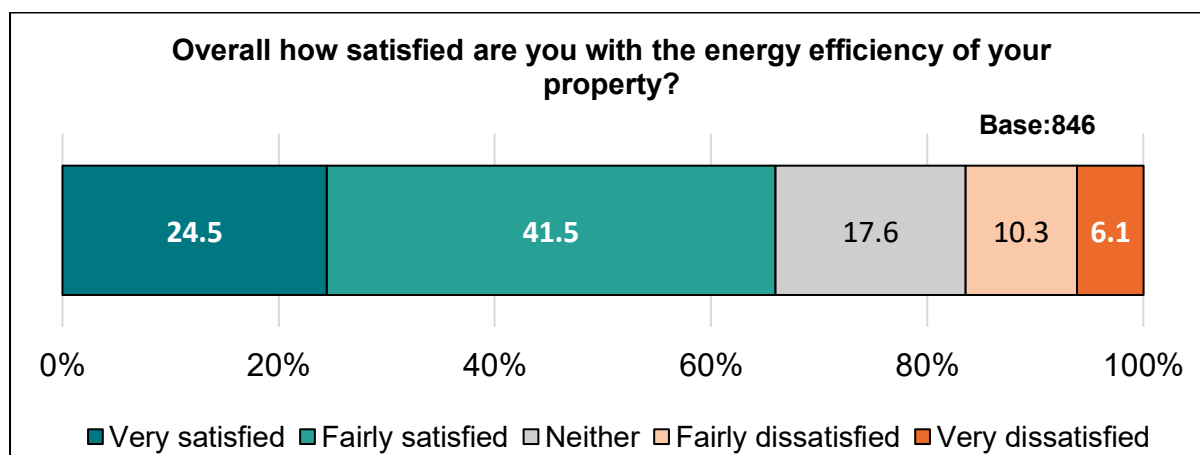
- An up to date kitchen (29.5%)
- An up to date bathroom (26.7%)
- An attractive outdoor space (25.4%)



Similarly when asked which are the most important areas of their homes that require improvement, Kitchens (54.3%) and Bathrooms (54.1%) came out as the highest priority to tenants.



When asked about energy efficiency in their home, 66% overall were satisfied or very satisfied.



Tenants were asked to identify what energy efficiency measures they would benefit from in their home.

Tenants were presented with a pre-coded list of potential energy efficiency measures and asked to select which one(s) they'd benefit from in their homes.

'**Solar Panels**' (46.9%) were viewed as the most popular. This was followed by '**Low energy lighting**' (32.1%) and '**External wall insulation**' (31.0%).

	No.	%
Solar Panels	307	46.9
Low energy lighting	210	32.1
External wall insulation	203	31.0
Smart meter	153	23.4
More insulation in your loft	152	23.2
Air source heat pump	95	14.5
Total Respondents	654	-

NB. Percentages total more than 100% as respondents could identify more than one energy efficiency measure.

Tenants Together – WHQS Focus Group

The Council's Tenants Together team held a coffee morning where 12 tenants attended to discuss what the Welsh Housing Quality Standards were and what they thought about the scheme.

The participants emphasised the importance of prioritising essential repair works over additional ecological initiatives like water butts and bicycle sheds. They expressed concerns about funding, given the recent drop in Cardiff Council's budget.

Communication emerged as a critical factor, with tenants stressing the need for clear and timely updates about work schedules and an anonymous way to report issues. They also highlighted the importance of polite and respectful operatives, as well as the necessity for workmen to carry identification.

The feedback underscores the need for Cardiff Council to maintain open lines of communication and ensure that tenants are well-informed, and their concerns are addressed promptly if any building work would be to occur.