

Better

Futures.

# ESG+ Strategy 2026-2029



Our environmental, social, governance  
and client impact commitments.



# Acknowledgement of Country

Haven Home Safe acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

We acknowledge the Dja Dja Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which our Bendigo office is located.

We extend that respect to our other office locations, to the Wurundjeri People, the Wadawurrung People, the First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee, being Latji Latji and Ngintait Traditional Owners and all First Nations peoples.

BUK GERRBUMUL WURRDHA - STRONG COMMUNITY IS BY FIRST NATIONS ARTIST, MICK HARDING.



**ABOUT THE ARTIST AND ARTWORK:** This artwork titled Buk Gerrbumul Wurrdha - Strong Community is by First Nations artist, Mick Harding. Mick is from the Yowong-Illam-Balkuk and Nattarak Baluk clans of the Taungurung People. In the artwork, the shields symbolise the strength of our shared bonds, guarding the values and relationships that unite us. Within these protected spaces, we nurture the roots of our heritage while planting new seeds of hope and resilience. Seeds symbolise the beginning growth, nurtured by strength of community, the bonds of connection, and the richness of culture. Together, we create a thriving, harmonious environment where every individual and every story is cherished.

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# Message from the Chair and CEO

Housing does not exist in isolation from challenges of climate change, social inequity and system complexity.

**Rob Camm**  
Board Chair



**Trudi Ray**  
CEO



*Delivering Strategy 2040* and the current Live Well horizon (2026 – 2029) sharpen our focus on what matters most over the next three years — disciplined delivery, focused growth and meaningful outcomes for people and communities, particularly across regional Victoria. *Delivering Strategy 2040* reinforces that growth is defined by impact, not output and that housing, support and advocacy must respond to real and changing needs.

Our ESG+ Strategy is a critical enabler of this refreshed direction.

Three years of annual reporting against the Australian Community Housing (ACH)'s ESG Reporting Standard has shown that ESG is more than compliance – it strengthens performance, builds trust with partners and investors and supports our capacity to deliver sustainable, people-centred housing and support. ESG+ provides the structure and discipline needed to deliver on Strategy 2040, translating purpose and ambition into clear actions, measures and accountability.

This ESG+ Strategy is guided by our Theory of Change and builds on our Strategic Decision-Making Framework, bringing together environmental, social, governance and client impact commitments into an integrated action-focused framework. Its development was informed by a robust materiality assessment, stakeholder engagement and workshops with teams across the organisation to ensure ESG+ is clearly connected to how we deliver housing, services, partnerships and advocacy every day.

Housing does not exist in isolation from the challenges of climate change, social inequity and system complexity. Climate risk is a housing and wellbeing risk. Workforce engagement and capability shape the quality and consistency of our service delivery. Client voice, cultural safety and placemaking are central to delivering a quality experience for renters and clients. ESG+ recognises these realities and responds in a way that is practical, measurable and aligned with our strategic priorities.

Through this ESG+ Strategy, we are committing to:

- **Reducing environmental risk and improving liveability**, by embedding climate resilience, energy efficiency and sustainable procurement into how we design, build and manage homes.
- **Investing in an inclusive, engaged and capable workforce**, recognising that our people are essential to delivering quality housing, support and advocacy in a challenging operating environment.
- **Leading and governing for impact**, strengthening partnerships, accountability and decision-making so we can attract aligned investment and deliver sustainable growth.
- **Improving the experience of renters and clients**, by embedding client voice, cultural safety and placemaking into service delivery and using evidence to drive continuous improvement.

Importantly, ESG+ is not an add-on. It is embedded within *Delivering Strategy 2040* and supports delivery across our strategic

objectives, from financial and organisational performance, to growing our impact, strengthening partnerships and ensuring a quality experience for clients and renters. It reinforces our commitment to use evidence and impact measurement to improve how we work, helping us maintain our social licence, and to influence policy and investments toward people-based housing solutions.

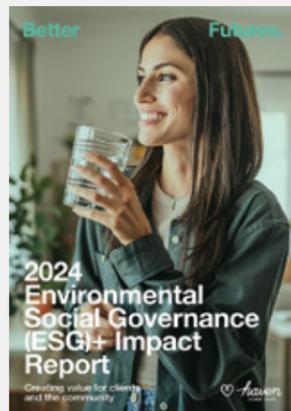
As we progress through *Delivering Strategy 2040*, this ESG+ Strategy provides the guardrails that enable us to adapt to change while staying true to our purpose. It ensures growth is responsible, outcomes are meaningful, and the legacy we build is one of trust, resilience and better futures.

We want to thank our staff, Board Directors, partners, including Think Impact, and the renters and clients whose insights have shaped this strategy. Together, through purposeful action and collective impact, we will continue to demonstrate what sustainable, people-centred community housing can achieve.

# About this ESG+ Strategy

We have developed this ESG+ Strategy to ensure it is aligned to sector standards, global reporting frameworks, Delivering Strategy 2040, Client Voice Framework, ESG+ Strategic Decision-Making Framework and reflects our Theory of Change and material topics identified by stakeholders.

## ACH ESG Reporting Standard



We have been an adopter of the ACH's ESG Standard since 2023, committing to annual reporting.

## Global Reporting Frameworks



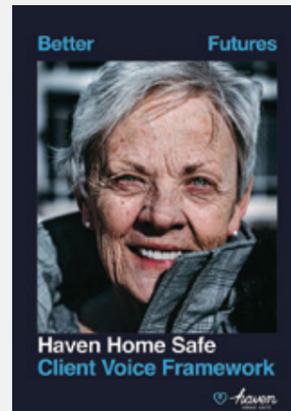
As part of the ESG+ Strategy development we considered if and how HHS should contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by asking which goals were relevant and whether we could make a meaningful contribution to these targets, beyond current activity.

## Delivering Strategy 2040



Our Strategy 2040 is a roadmap for the impact we want to have as an organisation and our ESG+ aligns with this and shows how we will deliver responsibly and credibly.

## Client Voice Framework



Our commitment to embed client voice practices is detailed in this framework and the approaches are reflected in this strategy.

## ESG+ Decision-Making Framework



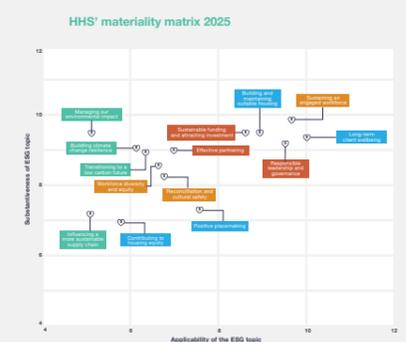
The criteria we benchmark our investment decisions against aligns with and informs our ESG+ domains and topics in this strategy.

## Theory of Change



Our Theory of Change responds to the environment we work in, calling out the interconnected crises of climate change, rising inequity and challenges to human wellbeing, and the barriers increasingly more people face in accessing the basic human right of housing. Our response and the impact we can achieve when we're successful guides and drives the work we do and helps us track and measure the impact we are having.

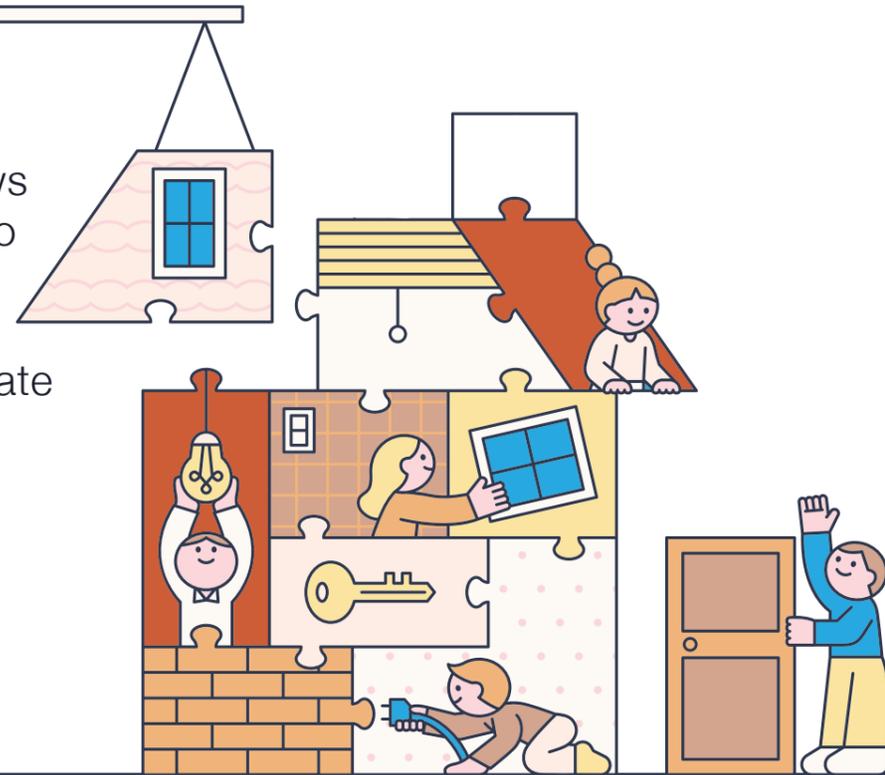
## Materiality assessment



We have now conducted two materiality assessments. These are best practice tools in helping organisations focus on the issues that matter most and when conducted regularly demonstrate how external contexts can shift and affect materiality in a relatively short period of time.

# Our Theory of Change

Developed with staff and renter and client insights, our Theory of Change shows how we're driving change to achieve better futures. It is a visual narrative that helps us measure and communicate our impact.



## 1 Problem

Australia's housing system is fundamentally unfair – it treats homes as commodities, not as a human right. With a critical housing shortage, having a job doesn't mean you can afford a home. Rising costs, climate change, family violence, the ongoing dispossession of First Nations' peoples and growing health and wellbeing challenges are compounding disadvantage. The result is more people are being pushed into housing stress, instability and homelessness.



*"Before this, my story was about homelessness and mental health issues."*  
RENTER IN BENDIGO

## 2 Response

We believe housing is a human right and everyone deserves a home. Through partnerships and advocacy we demonstrate what sustainable and affordable community housing can be. When a home isn't available, we walk alongside people and find creative solutions to remove barriers, help navigate the system, provide support, and drive systemic change.



*"Your understanding, care and continuous support helped me regain trust in people and find some peace of mind again".*  
CLIENT IN PRESTON

## 3 Impact

When we're successful, renters and clients have a positive experience with us and a better future. They have more autonomy, voice and choice for a home and support that meets their needs and provides connection to community.

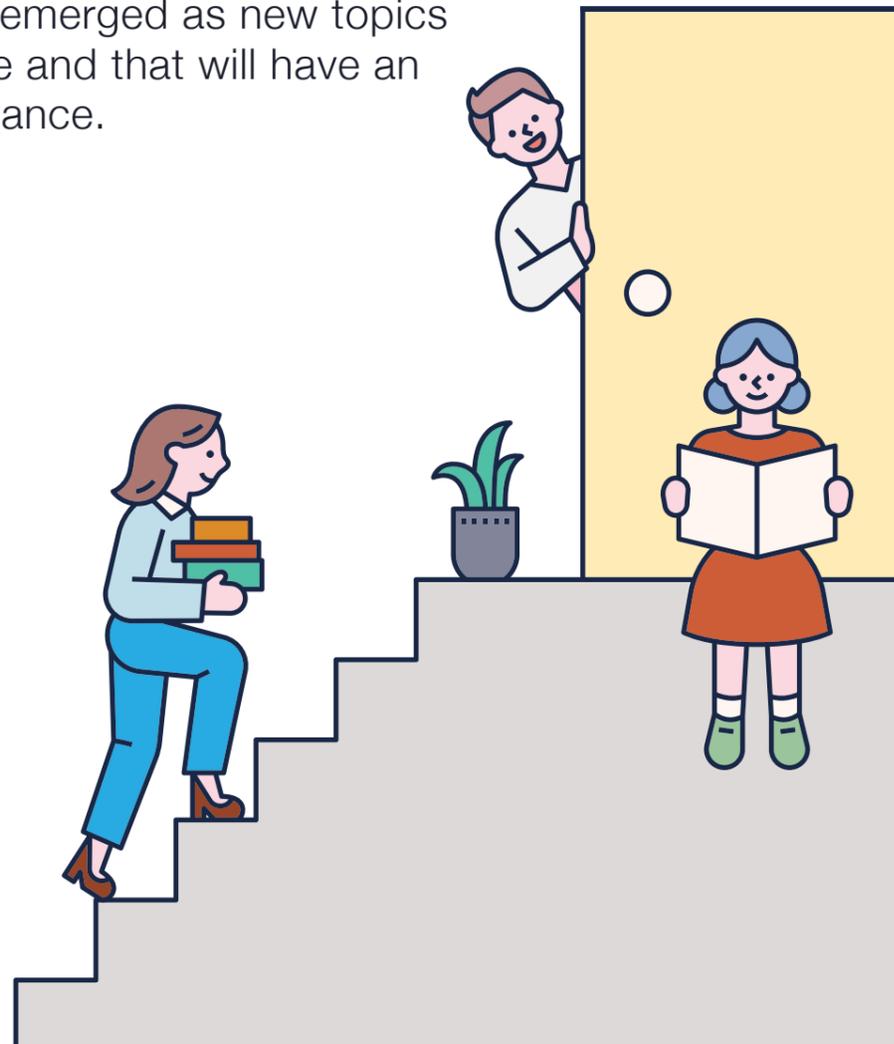


*"This is not just a home to me, it's my sense of safety and belongingness."*

RENTER IN MILDURA

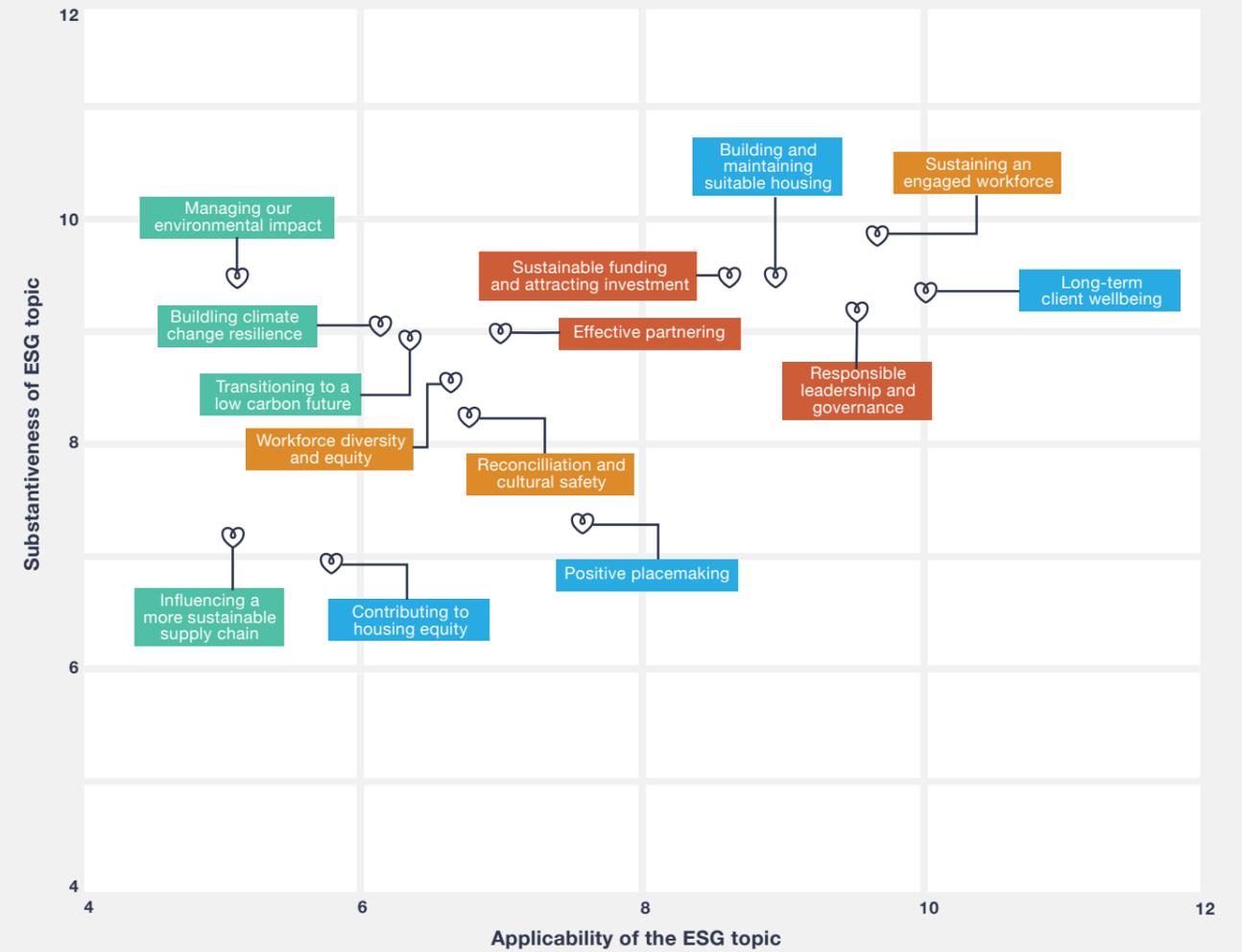
# Our material topics

As part of developing this strategy, we undertook our second materiality assessment to help us identify our most significant impacts and hear from internal and external stakeholders (including renters, clients, staff, Directors, community partners, funders and government bodies) about their expectations and interests. This built on our first materiality assessment completed in 2023 and revealed a shift in priorities and some new emerging topics. Of note, ‘responsible leadership and governance’ and ‘sustainable funding and attracting investment’ emerged as new topics that HHS can influence and that will have an impact on our performance.



The results of the materiality assessments shaped our ESG+ strategy domains and topics on page 12.

HHS' materiality matrix 2025



- E Environmental responsibility and risk management
- S Inclusive and engaged workforce
- G Leadership and governance for impact
- + Positive renter and client experience

# ESG+ Strategy domains and topics

ESG+ Strategy 2026-2029: Better futures through environmental and people-focused outcomes.



## **E** Environment

Environmental responsibility and risk management

*We recognise climate change is a financial and social risk and we must take steps to minimise our footprint and build resilience to climate change.*

- Climate change resilience
- Reduce emissions and waste
- Sustainable supply chain

## **S** Social

Inclusive and engaged workforce

*Cultivating an inclusive, engaged and diverse workforce supports our vision of better futures.*

- Engaged and resilient workforce
- Workforce diversity and equity
- Collaborative workforce

## **G** Governance

Leadership and governance for impact

*Leading and governing responsibly to create opportunities for sustainable and ethical partnerships and funding.*

- Responsible leadership and governance
- Effective and ethical partnering
- Sustainable funding and investment

## **+** Renter and client

Positive renter and client experience

*By advocating for and providing fair and just access to housing and support we can enhance renter and client wellbeing and connection.*

- Service delivery that enhances wellbeing
- Build and maintain suitable housing
- Placemaking for connection
- Reconciliation and cultural safety
- Advocacy to reduce inequity

# Action Plan: Environmental responsibility and risk management

Climate change is a social risk, impacting how and where people live, as well as a financial risk. We must take steps to minimise our footprint and build resilience to climate change – reducing our emissions and waste is fundamental to climate change risk management.

- By building homes that are energy efficient, we can increase liveability for renters through thermal comfort and reduced energy bills as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- By reducing the waste we generate through our operations, we can reduce emissions and demonstrate more sustainable ways to develop housing as a CHP.
- By procuring goods and services that increase social value and reduce environmental harm, we can not only reduce costs but amplify social benefits through our supply chain and use resources more efficiently.

Material topic	SDG contribution	Activities currently underway	Foundation work required (2026-2028)	Targets for Live Well Horizon (2029)	Measurements and baseline data
Climate change resilience and reducing emissions and waste	 <p>11.6 Reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities by paying special attention to the inclusion of green spaces and waste practices.</p> <p>11.8 Support renters to be more resilient to climate disasters through emergency preparedness procedures and resources.</p> <p>11.3 Enhance sustainable urbanisation by incorporating climate change resilience into urban design strategies.</p>	<p>Build in appropriate areas that avoid high-risk flood/fire zones. All new builds are 7+ NaTHERs rated.</p> <p>Incorporate climate-change adapted urban design strategies into new builds.</p> <p>Gather household energy baseline data.</p> <p>Provision of emergency preparedness resources for renters, clients and staff.</p> <p>Actively moving to hybrid fleet.</p> <p>Pilot projects that support a circular economy.</p>	<p>Improve climate resilience and readiness within our housing portfolio using CHIA's Climate Action Roadmap.</p> <p>Develop Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) to set targets and activities to drive improved performance for existing and new assets.</p> <p>Collect baseline data on waste (office, maintenance, construction and client brokerage).</p> <p>Assess Victorian Government's 2040 emissions reduction targets and any related sector targets and determine what alignment with these would require operationally.</p>	<p>Based on SAMP targets, invest in renewable energy that also meets the Victorian Government's new minimum energy efficiency standards for rentals.</p> <p>Partner with industry to increase solar panels and electrify older homes.</p> <p>Reduce Scope 1 and 2 emissions through staff education on energy use in offices and vehicles/use of hybrid fleet.</p> <p>Develop organisational policy on waste aligned with the resource efficiency hierarchy and set targets from here.</p> <p>Understand existing canopy and green space in developments to set targets to improve</p> <p>Understand Scope 3 emissions.</p>	<p>Increase 13.6% of homes that currently have solar.</p> <p>Decrease Scope 1 &amp; 2 Emissions from 336.84 tonnes CO2 equivalent.</p> <p>Energy ratings of current portfolio:</p> <p>54% of homes have a NaTHERs rating. (637 properties).</p> <p>151 at 8+ NaTHERs rating</p> <p>138 at 7-7.9</p> <p>306 at 6 - 6.9</p> <p>38 at 5-5.9</p> <p>2 at 4-4.9</p>
Sustainable supply chain	<p>N/A: We determined that we cannot make a meaningful contribution to SDG Goal 12: sustainable consumption and production patterns at this stage. We will work to improve on sustainable consumption within our remit and scope.</p>	<p>Ensure procurement is sustainable through procure to pay system as part of purchase order process.</p> <p>Ensure Head Contractor specifications align with ESG+ Strategy.</p>	<p>Embed sustainable procurement process throughout all teams.</p> <p>Set environmental and social procurement targets to report against.</p>	<p>Establish checklist for new suppliers to ensure transparent assessment of environmental and social considerations.</p> <p>Measure and monitor procurement activities to identify improvements.</p>	<p>System data to track supplier credentials and proportion of procurement that meets targets.</p>

# Action Plan: Inclusive and engaged workforce

Cultivating an inclusive, engaged, resilient and diverse workforce supports our vision of better futures.

- An engaged and resilient workforce is essential to effectively delivering our services in a challenging environment.
- A diverse workforce that represents the communities it serves will build trust and deliver more effective and culturally sensitive services.
- By collaborating across teams, we can harness different perspectives to drive better outcomes for clients and renters.

Material topic	SDG contribution	Activities currently underway	Foundation work required (2026-2028)	Targets for Live Well Horizon (2029)	Measurements and baseline data
Engaged and resilient workforce	N/A: As a small organisation, we determined we cannot materially contribute to SDG Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth.	Ongoing implementation of The HHS Way culture plan. Regular pulse checks/staff surveys. Boost leadership capacity with resources and training. Staff retention plan. Response to staff complaints. Development of a workforce strategy. Staff onboarding process. Performance development.	Activities currently underway will form the foundation for the 2029 targets.	Maintain an average of 80% or above for staff satisfaction levels. Regrettable departures <25% Staff aligned with strategy greater than 70%. Staff complaints responded to within 14 days. Workforce strategy in place. Onboarding of The HHS Way for all staff. Implement the Employment Hero Performance Appraisal module. Build leaders' development plan as part of Workforce Strategy.	PX survey data. Engagement metrics. Resilience – sick leave/take up of EAP; training hours.
Workforce diversity and equity	 <p>10.2 Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.</p> <p>10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including eliminating discriminatory policies, practices and promoting appropriate policies and action in this regard.</p>	Workforce strategy will include monitoring of gender equity in pay. Outcomes of Fair Work Modern Awards review to considered. Build on inclusive workforce strategy. Values awards recognised quarterly.	Undertake a workforce composition baseline through annual DCA survey (gender by pay, First Nations, CALD, disability, age cohorts, neurodiversity, LGBTIQ+ etc). Establish target range for gender pay gap that we will maintain. Continue with graduate program supporting generational change in workforce. Develop and promote an Employee Value Proposition, building on existing inclusion policies, benefits and values. Review existing DEI plan and update.	Maintain target range for gender pay gap. Hiring strategies and training that support a diverse team – e.g. unconscious bias training. Establish a DEI working group.	PX survey data. Engagement metrics. Recruitment metrics. Ensuring workforce diversity translates into operations practice with clients/renters. Review inclusive workplace policies after 12 months.

Material topic	SDG contribution	Activities currently underway	Foundation work required (2026-2028)	Targets for Live Well Horizon (2029)	Measurements and baseline data
Collaborative workforce	N/A: This topic did not specifically align with any of the SDGs.	Cross-collaborative working groups. Knowledge management system (KIMS) and improve transition planning to retain knowledge.	Identify cross-collaborative work opportunities to improve outcomes for clients e.g. tenancy, maintenance, placemaking and development plan for new developments.  Develop a cross-collaborative approach for the implementation of the internal audit recommendations.	Embed knowledge management system processes as part of KIMS.  Embed ESG+ work across organisation.	Internal surveys.  Project outcomes – measure based on frequency of interactions and outcomes of cross-collaborative projects.  Existing measure in pulse checks on how well teams work together.



# Action Plan: Leadership and governance for impact

Leading and governing responsibly to create opportunities for sustainable and ethical partnerships and funding.

- Responsible leadership and governance is the foundation of meeting our regulatory requirements and delivering on our organisational strategy.
- Cross-sector partnerships are vital in delivering comprehensive services and creating broader social value.
- Promoting our purpose and unique value proposition will attract funding and investment to deliver more outcomes, particularly in regional areas.

Material topic	SDG contribution	Activities currently underway	Foundation work required (2026-2028)	Targets for Live Well Horizon (2029)	Measurements and baseline data
Responsible leadership and governance	N/A: We determined we cannot meaningfully contribute to any SDGs within this topic.	Implement knowledge management strategy. Regulatory reporting. Code of governance. Risk management. Auditing process. Effectiveness review. Embedding the ESG+ Strategy and Theory of Change throughout HHS.	Activities currently underway will form the foundation for the 2029 targets.	Incorporate knowledge management into KPIs. Leadership succession planning.	Regulatory findings. Audit report. Effectiveness review.  Pulse survey questions on leadership.
Effective and ethical partnering	N/A: We determined we cannot meaningfully contribute to any SDGs within this topic.	Create partnerships framework that aligns with ESG+ commitments, identify, new strategic delivery partners and define role of government.	Establish partnership principles, objectives and potential partners. Quantify the value of advisory work, connection of partners. Explore housing partnership models for St Paul's Way.	New partnerships established in the following areas (TBC): New housing development General lease Service delivery Advocacy Reconciliation Impact.	Survey partners. Assessment of partnership outcomes.
Attracting sustainable funding and investment	N/A: We determined we cannot meaningfully contribute to any SDGs within this topic.	Maintain relationship with government. Occupancy rates 96%. Investment decision making and capital frameworks. Pursue government funding opportunities. Diversification opportunities. Debt strategy. Fundraising Strategy.	Activities currently underway will form the foundation for the 2029 targets.	Secure ongoing funding partner for SMH. New suitable government funding opportunity secured. Other targets in line with <i>Delivering Strategy 2040</i> .	Occupancy rates. Targets and metrics from relevant strategies.

# Action Plan: Positive renter and client experience

By advocating for and providing fair and just access to housing and support we can enhance client wellbeing and connection.

- Deliver services to renters and clients that meets agreed service-level standards and expectations.
- Provide and maintain suitable and diverse housing where it is needed in a way that connects people to their community.
- Play our role in reconciliation.
- Advocate for more equitable access to housing and support.

Material topic	SDG contribution	Activities currently underway	Foundation work required (2026-2028)	Targets for Live Well Horizon (2029)	Measurements and baseline data
Support to enhance a positive experience	N/A: We determined we cannot meaningfully contribute to any SDGs within this topic.	<p>Review of our scope of practice within contracted service delivery.</p> <p>Explore opportunities through under-utilisation to support renters through the housing continuum.</p> <p>Improve collaboration and referrals process throughout the social services system with better use of data.</p> <p>Operationalise client voice framework.</p> <p>Educate service providers on what we can and can't do.</p>	<p>Define positive experience and what our service-level agreement should be with renters and clients.</p> <p>Define feedback and complaints and educate on what is in HHS remit.</p>	Targets set in relation to a positive experience for renters and clients.	<p>2025 Tenant Satisfaction Survey improvement plan.</p> <p>Ongoing improvements in renter satisfaction survey.</p> <p>Client voice data.</p> <p>Google reviews.</p>
Build and maintain housing	N/A: We determined we cannot meaningfully contribute to any SDGs within this topic.	<p>Providing diversity of housing in regional, rural and metro areas.</p> <p>Advocacy for diverse housing products.</p> <p>Maintaining housing in a way that provides a positive experience for renters.</p> <p>Head Contractor role to streamline maintenance delivery.</p>	<p>Educate renters on the maintenance service level agreement.</p> <p>Implement maintenance app.</p>	<p>Deliver IMBYs (number TBC).</p> <p>Renter satisfaction with maintenance (target TBC).</p> <p>VCAT/RDRV complaints (target TBC).</p>	<p>Client voice data.</p> <p>Ongoing improvements in renter satisfaction survey data (specifically around maintenance).</p> <p>Complaints data.</p> <p>Housing portfolio assessments.</p>

Material topic	SDG contribution	Activities currently underway	Foundation work required (2026-2028)	Targets for Live Well Horizon (2029)	Measurements and baseline data
Placemaking for connection	N/A: We determined we cannot meaningfully contribute to any SDGs within this topic.	Incorporated into all new builds. Welcome events. Renter survey to understand community connection/impact of placemaking. Placemaking framework.	Embed placemaking into tenancy teams.	Digital placemaking. Placemaking in stand-alone homes. Quantifiable neighbourhood improvements.	Client voice data from placemaking surveys.
Reconciliation and cultural safety	 <p>10.2 Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.</p> <p>10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including eliminating discriminatory policies, practices and promoting appropriate policies and action in this regard.</p>	Deliver Innovate RAP. Work with MDAS.	Understand First Nations allocations in new developments.	Maintain minimum 10 percent allocations to First Nations but explore targets for new developments based on existing First Nations allocations in recent new developments. Commence Elevate RAP.	Innovate RAP deliverables. 10% allocations to First Nations. 1.4% staff identify as First Nations.
Advocacy to reduce inequity	 <p>10.2 Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.</p> <p>10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including eliminating discriminatory policies, practices and promoting appropriate policies and action in this regard.</p>	Develop advocacy strategy. Memberships with sector organisations that advocate for change. Conference presentations. Thought leadership. Policies that support equity of service delivery. Awareness days calendar to advocate internally and externally on important environmental and social issues.	Increase capacity of organisation to do advocacy (reduce reliance on CEO).	Target key issues e.g. gendered disadvantage for women and regional funding. <i>(Targets to be worked through as part of advocacy strategy).</i>	Sentiment indicators. Engagement with digital advocacy. Advocacy submissions. Conference presentations. Policy changes.

# ESG+ Governance

Our Impact Team works with teams throughout the organisation to embed an ESG+ mindset alongside meaningful data management and supporting different ways to monitor, deliver, showcase and reflect on impact initiatives.

We have invested in the skills and knowledge development of our Impact Team, headed by our Head of Impact, including undertaking Net Zero for Executive Leaders and Social Return on Investment training, amongst others. Our work in this area has been guided by our partners at Think Impact who have been generous in sharing their knowledge so that we can mature in this area. The team is now adept at reporting annually against the ACH's ESG Standard and will provide monthly updates on progress against the ESG+ Strategy to Executive and Board. Moving forwards, progress against this strategy will be incorporated in our annual ESG+ Reports and a review of our ESG+ Strategy will take place in line with Delivering Strategy 2040 progress reviews. The Client, Quality and Risk Board Committee maintains oversight of delivery of ESG+ initiatives and reporting. This ensures progress and accountability for HHS' ESG+ Strategy and supports the organisation's maturity in ESG reporting.



# Guiding Principles

Additionally, staff from across HHS involved in the strategy development determined the following set of guiding principles to inform how we embed ESG+ at HHS.

- Everyone can make a difference and contribute
- Our Theory of Change shows how the work we do is connected to impact
- Being realistic and practical means we are also financially sustainable
- Telling the stories of the impact we have and celebrating the wins is important to motivate and inspire others
- We are committed for the long-term and designing a world for future generations
- We can have collective impact when we work in partnership.

**2026-2029 ESG+ Strategy**  
**Our environmental, social, governance**  
**and client impact commitments.**

**[Havenhomesafe.org.au](https://www.havenhomesafe.org.au)**

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