



GUIDED BY PURPOSE

Strategic Review 2022/23





Our Mission

Growing Stronger Communities

Guided by six core principles: safe, healthy, inclusive, connected, sustainable and aspirational, we partner with communities to build better futures together

This report focuses on the delivery of commitments made in the Group Corporate Plan, ["A New Day" 2021-26](#)

About us

We are the North West's largest affordable housing provider and one of its biggest and fastest-growing developers and commercial contractors. But building, maintaining and managing a large, mixed portfolio of quality homes is just part of what we do. We are working hard to make a difference.

Profits made through commercial activities are reinvested to create genuine social impact. That investment funds much-needed projects that improve lives, makes places better and communities stronger.

By supporting local people and investing in their future, we are helping to create sustainable, stable and thriving local communities in the North West.



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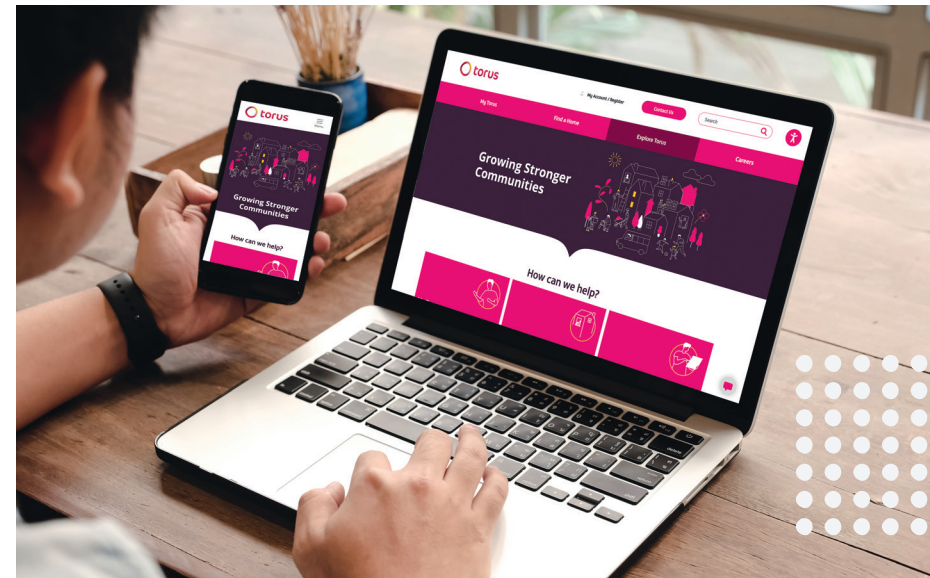
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2022/23 - Key Outcomes and Achievements

Customer Experience

- New set of comprehensive service standards implemented
- New and consolidated Group website launched
- Centralised complaints function established
- Introduced the 'Delighted' survey to better collect feedback regarding responsive repairs



Building Safety & Maintenance

- £1.2bn Repairs and Maintenance Framework launched
- Group received the RoSPA Gold Health and Safety Award
- 99.9% homes have a valid Landlord Gas Safety Record
- 99.9% of homes meet the Decent Homes Standard

2022/23 - Key Outcomes and Achievements



Developments

- 695 new homes delivered
- Over 100 homes handed over from HMS to Torus
- Ground broken on the Group's landmark Lightbody Street redevelopment in Liverpool

Sustainability

- £21.2m investment in retrofitting homes over the next two years
- 91.6% of homes built last year have an EPC B
- Completed first net zero development at Oakdale Road

Tenant Support

- Helped 1,331 tenants into employment
- Helped 694 tenants save £79,000 on energy bills
- Directly awarded £59,550 to community projects
- Group given the top award for Skills and Employability by Liverpool Chamber of Commerce
- Healthy Neighbours Project successfully launched and awarded further lottery funding

Notes From the Chair



In a year dominated by spiralling inflation, economic uncertainties and an awakening for our sector, Torus has had to adapt and reconnect with core purpose.

The challenges of 2022/23 were many and complex. Whilst this has caused short term pains, it has also provided us with valuable learning for the future – evolving our approach to customer service and home maintenance. Against a backdrop of rightfully increasing scrutiny from Government, now is the time to truly embrace and embed the positive changes covered in this report.

Although the progress covered in this document gives me great optimism for the future, I must also take this opportunity to acknowledge the severe maladministration judgements made against Torus at the start of 2023/24. Whilst the ruling falls outside of this reporting period, they stem from complaints dealt with during 2022/23. These rulings have been deeply concerning and disappointing to all, not least to Board.

It clear that mistakes have been made. However, I can give you every assurance that Board is taking an active role in supporting Steve and our executive leadership team. New measures are now being put in place that will stop tenants being let down in the future; this includes our new and refined complaints function, which is covered in this review.

The year also shed light on the competing challenges currently facing housing developers and providers. There is a clear and pressing need to build more quality, affordable homes at a rapid pace. However, there also an urgent requirement to invest record amounts in existing stock, both to improve quality and to move towards the net zero horizon. To deliver against all of these drivers, Torus needs to remain efficient, unlock long-term funding and work in partnership with national and regional bodies to deliver consistent excellence. Throughout these pages, you will be able to see how we are doing just this. Our G1/V1 rating from the Regulator is testament to our financial resilience and means we are well-placed to meet these challenges head on.

One thing that has not changed in the last year is the need to keep our tenants at the heart of everything we do. Our tenants are the reason for the Group's existence, and I am pleased that we are strengthening the links that flow through Torus - from tenants all the way to Board. Our first tenant census survey will launch in the same month as this report, giving me a sense of great enthusiasm. This initiative will allow us to build a deeper understanding of our tenants, their families and the challenges they face – and therefore enable us to adapt our services based on this knowledge.

Amplifying the voice of our tenants will always be a priority for Torus and more work is being done on this in the year ahead. Our Tenant Involvement Framework is going to undergo a significant refresh and that process will also be underpinned by results from the tenant census survey. I hope this will address any barriers that different tenant groups may have had when approaching and working with Torus in years gone by. Our aim is to ensure that the voices we hear are fully representative of our diverse tenant base.

On the topic of diversity, the nature of our Board itself is changing. We are pushing hard to attract candidates with a greater variety of backgrounds and lived experiences. Progress has already been made in the last year and we remain engaged with an external agency who are helping us to improve further. I am confident that in the years ahead our Board is going to become even more robust and truly representative of the communities we serve.

Finally, I conclude this opening with mixed feelings. Whilst I am sad that my term as Chair is coming to an end, I am delighted to be handing over the reins to Mike Emmerich. He is an excellent fit for Torus and will bring extensive leadership experience. He has a deep and varied understanding of strategy and economics having worked across the private and public sectors. Amongst Mike's previous roles, he has been Senior Policy Adviser on social and economic development to the Prime Minister's Policy Unit and Policy Adviser to HM Treasury. Torus is in good hands.

Under Mike's guidance and looking at the work covered in this report, I am positive that Torus will overcome current challenges and continue to deliver for tenants and communities across the North West.



Graham Burgess
Chair of the Board

Group Chief Executive – The Year in Context



As you will see throughout this report, it has been a year of both significant achievements and incredibly challenging moments. Yes, the economic turbulence of our times has played a significant role in this up-and-down period, but I will also be the first to admit there have been occasions where we have clearly got it wrong.

I must therefore address the Housing Ombudsman's recent severe maladministration judgements against Torus. Both rulings relate to a single case in which teams at Torus had repeatedly let a tenant down over a period of months. It is clear our response to damp and mould repairs completely failed to meet proper standards in this instance.

As already referenced by Graham in his notes, reviewing the details of this case has left myself and colleagues across Torus feeling shocked and disappointed. Our Chief Operating Officer, Cath Murray-Howard, and I have visited the tenant to repeat our apology in person. Every tenant has the right to a safe, dry, well-maintained home and it is our most fundamental purpose to provide this. It is a source of personal outrage that we failed to get this basic provision right.

Circumstances such as this are not a regular occurrence and I want to assure you we are doing everything we can to mitigate similar instances in the future - a lot has changed already. We have rewritten our Damp & Mould Policy, created a central and dedicated complaints team, and stepped up the number of stock condition surveys we carry out. I am pushing our teams to get to a 100% understanding of property condition across Torus' 40,000 home portfolio by summer 2024, as this will give us the ability to laser-focus our asset investment programme moving forward.

The change will not stop there; as you will see throughout this review, we are continuously looking for ways to engage tenants and work with them to improve our responsive services – the 'Delighted' survey is one example of this.

Ombudsman reforms, increasing Government scrutiny and rightful pressure from the media and campaigners has meant the spotlight is now firmly on our sector and mistakes will not go unnoticed. Whilst this may cause some further short-term difficulties, it is driving positive change. I am confident in the steps we are taking to be the most effective version of Torus.

On the topic of our ideal future-state, the Group cannot evolve unless we have a deep and meaningful understanding of our diverse tenant base. Consequently, I am pleased that our tenant census survey will launch in the year ahead. Its findings will help us to balance the equality of our services by taking the needs of different groups into account and properly responding to them. It will also enable us to make sure our engagement activity is fully representative of the communities we serve.

Long-term, I also want the demographics of our colleagues to be more aligned to our communities, bringing a broader range of lived experience and insight.

Connection with the full breadth of our communities has taken on a renewed importance in the post-Covid world, a sentiment amplified in the Better Social Housing Review (BSHR) that was published last year. It is no secret that I place great value in our frontline neighbourhood presence and I am pleased to report that we are in the process of reprofiling activity to make neighbourhood teams more visible and efficient.

Beyond the recommendation to build a stronger community presence, myself and Torus welcome all of the BSHR's findings and proposed action plan. We are actively working with both the National Housing Federation and Chartered Institute of Housing to make the actions a reality. Above all, I think that the most pertinent aspect of the BSHR is the call to reconnect with 'core purpose', a sentiment I wholeheartedly agree with. Keeping a firm hand on our core purpose – to provide decent, safe homes for those who cannot afford the market – will guide our pathway ahead.

This purpose defines us and must continue to shape how we, and the sector at large, deliver services - no matter how challenging the external landscape is.

With delivery in mind, it is important not to lose sight of all the great things we have achieved in partnership with tenants, communities and partners in 2022/23. This report is not a celebration. It simply reflects the work we have done to deliver for all of our tenants, old and new.

We have completed and handed over 695 new homes across the region, offering a broad range of tenure types to suit different needs. Whilst the schemes have varied in their construction and build type, they all have one thing in common – they address a very well documented and pressing need for more affordable housing in the North West.

I am particularly proud of Oakdale Road, our first net zero scheme built using offsite construction. It shows our commitment to both the green agenda and providing greater energy security for tenants. This can also be seen in the fact that 91.6% of our homes built in the last year have an EPC B.

In terms of our existing stock, £21.2m has been committed to investment in retrofit over the next two years and we continue to leverage funds from the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

These achievements are a small example of what lies ahead in the body of this review. I hope that following our activity through the quarters of 2022/23 gives you a real insight into our operations and a clear perspective on our priorities. I feel our connection to core purpose shines throughout.



Steve Coffey
Chief Executive Officer



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Strategic Review 2022/23

1. Quarter One (March - June 2022)

1.1 Operating Context

In Q1, the challenges of the year ahead became fully apparent. April started with warnings that the UK was facing its harshest period for energy prices since the 1970s and the energy price cap rose by 54% - £1,971 for a typical household in the UK. Interest rates also continued their upwards march, hitting 1.25% in June – the fifth successive time rates had risen since December 2021.

Locally, the cost-of-living crisis began to significantly impact many of the communities we serve and our support services faced steep increases in demand.

Creeping inflation began to pose significant operational risks across the sector, with many housing providers reprofiling activity for the year and a number of contractors going into administration. Against this headwind, Torus' strong financial position, robust operating model and strategic focus on resilience meant we were able to continue to deliver whilst assessing short, medium- and longer-term risks.

Q1 also saw the Building Safety Act enter into law, instigating changes to how homes are built and maintained. Ultimately giving residents and homeowners more rights, powers, and protections.

Despite the challenging operating context, and as can be seen throughout the information in this chapter, Q1 was still broadly positive for Torus – we stepped up our approach to customer service and a number of transformational schemes progressed.



1.2 Heartland Developments

1.2.1 Newton Community Hospital

In April, we appointed HMS to build 39 apartments on the site of the former Newton Community Hospital in Newton-le-Willows.

The £5 million scheme will see the existing building – which is registered as a war memorial by the Imperial War Museum – be sensitively and respectfully redeveloped into eight apartments. Many original features, such as the foundation stones, will be retained and become unique features of the final development.

A brand-new apartment block will also be built on the site and consist of 31 one- and two-bedroom units.

HMS was appointed following their impressive work on two other complex schemes with heritage considerations - the successful completion of Ogden's Tobacco Factory, Everton and the redevelopment of the former Fire and Police Station, South Liverpool.

Once complete, the scheme will be a clear example of how existing but forgotten infrastructure can be repurposed to meet community needs and provide much-needed modern, affordable homes.



Newton Hospital site before works



Artists impression of completed works

1.2.2 Garston Old Road

In May, HMS completed an apartment development at Garston Old Road and handed the 27-home scheme over to Torus. The £3 million investment saw a disused plot of land repurposed to meet local needs in Cressington, South Liverpool – an area identified as lacking in the provision of affordable housing.



Garston Old Road is a fantastic scheme and one that has seen the team completely overhaul a disused brownfield site in South Liverpool. Schemes such as this add so much value to communities and through taking an active lead in regenerating forgotten land, we really see the benefits modern, high-quality homes have for not only residents, but the wider local area.

John Barrow (pictured)
Construction Director
HMS



1.2.3 Lightbody Street

June saw Torus break ground on the Group's landmark Lightbody Street redevelopment at the historic Stanley Dock, Liverpool.

Investing over £40 million into the regeneration and redevelopment of the former industrial site, Torus and contractor Eric Wright will build a mix of 185 affordable 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartments and 10 townhouses - all of which will be available via Rent to Buy.

The development will also feature commercial space, adding further community value to the scheme by creating opportunities for local businesses to open premises in a location that is one of the city's key focuses for regeneration.



The Lightbody Street site has received nearly £3 million from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's £60 million Brownfield Land Fund, which is used for site remediation and other measures required to make previously utilised sites ready for development.



By targeting brownfield sites, we are transforming once-forgotten areas into thriving communities – and protecting our precious green spaces. This is an area that has been crying out for investment for decades and it is encouraging to see investors staking a claim in its revival, helping local residents to lay down roots in an area that promises to have an exciting future.

Steve Rotheram (pictured)
Mayor
Liverpool City Region



Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram visiting Lightbody Street (site pictured top left)

1.2.4 Alexander Court

This quarter also saw significant renovation works start on Alexander Court, a vacant care home in St Helens. Expected to complete in September 2023, £1.6m of works will see the building transformed into 8 1- and 2-bedroom apartments for people with complex learning and emotional needs.

The scheme has been developed collaboratively with key local stakeholders, including the NHS and St Helens Council, to address the need for specialist housing in the region. Specifically, the requirement for a facility that can accommodate people with emotional and learning needs being discharged from hospital.

HMS are contractors for the scheme and have successfully installed bespoke, specialist and enhanced safety measures. A secure, modern communal space has also been created. Although Alexander Court is yet to welcome its first residents, the scheme has a high profile and specialist care providers have visited the site to observe its design.



1.3 Emerging Localities

1.3.1 Standish and Hallbrook Gardens

Early in 2022/23, Torus Developments geared up to start work on a scheme in Standish, Wigan, which will see 155 new homes built at Hallbrook Gardens – Torus’ biggest investment in Wigan to date. With works starting on site in the Spring, Hallbrook Gardens signifies a £30 million commitment to keep building genuinely affordable, modern homes across the North West - building on investments in our traditional heartlands of Liverpool, St Helens and Warrington.

With 100% of homes at Hallbrook Gardens being available by affordable means, including Affordable Rent, Rent to Buy and Shared Ownership, Torus is committed to ensuring people across the region can access high quality, modern homes that they can afford for years to come.

Wigan is an emerging area of opportunity for Torus, with Hallbrook Gardens following closely behind the Group’s Frog Lane and Plank Lane developments in nearby Leigh. These schemes have provided a total of 147 new homes



1.3.2 Lyndale Avenue

In June and towards the end of the quarter, HMS handed over a 28-unit new build scheme on the former site of Lyndale School in Eastham, Wirral.

The £5 million build was not plain sailing. HMS had to step in and take over development of the site from Cruden Construction after the company went into administration. Despite the challenges that come with mid-project changes, this action provided a clear example of how the Group operating model provides resilience and the ability to mobilise quickly when needed. It is also testament to the skills and flexibility of HMS' workforce.

As with many of the other schemes completed in the year, Lyndale addressed a clear local need in area where affordable homes are in short supply.



Lyndale School was a very happy place and I hope that this legacy will be passed on to the residents of this lovely new development.

Pat Stewart (pictured)
Former Headteacher
Lyndale School



Paul Worthington (managing director of HMS)
Pat Stewart (former headteacher of Lyndale School)
Chris Bowen (Torus Developments managing director)
Lisa Newman (head of housing services at Wirral Council)

1.4 Customer Experience

1.4.1 The Introduction of 'Delighted'

In March, the Group introduced 'Delighted' text message surveys to assess satisfaction with our responsive repairs services.

Customers receive a text message an hour after their repair has been completed, asking them about the service they received. They are invited to provide a rating from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). They are also given the opportunity to provide additional comments and general feedback.

The text replies are free of charge, and all the information supplied is covered by data protection. Customers can also remain anonymous unless they request a follow up.

Immediately after launch, the Delighted surveys proved to be a much more effective tool for gathering feedback when compared to the previous e-mail questionnaire - the response rate increased by 185%.

Another benefit of the Delighted surveys is that they provide results in real-time, allowing cases of dissatisfaction to be addressed as quickly as possible.

At year-end, data collected through Delighted showed that 89.34% of customers were satisfied with the repairs service they had received – a figure just below our 93% target.



1.4.2 Reconnecting with Customers

Whilst we were able to continue to deliver key services throughout the pandemic, inevitably some service areas could not run as normal and suffered because of restrictions. Repairs was the most impacted service, resulting in some works taking longer to complete.

In June we set out to try and get back on track and reconnect with our customers, putting forward an aim to visit every general needs home. Visits provided the opportunity to:

- Discuss any issues tenants may have been having and offer help where possible
- Increase tenant awareness of any changes to our services that may have happened during the pandemic
- Check the safety and maintenance standard of homes

By end of the year, 2,644 Tenancy Visits were completed. They will continue in an evolved format, with a greater focus on stock condition, in 2023/24.

1.5 Social Purpose



1.5.1 Foundation Spotlight: Launch of Healthy Neighbours

In April, Torus Foundation launched the Healthy Neighbours project across neighbourhoods in Liverpool, St Helens and Warrington, commissioning the local organisations shown below to help to deliver targeted activities:



Each locality is served by a dedicated coordinator who work with volunteers to empower community members and facilitate a range of health-related activities. The objective is for these activities to improve health and wellbeing against an agreed set of health indicators, which include food poverty, loneliness, obesity, physical inactivity and mental health.

The project is rooted in a commitment to truly understand needs at a local level. In order to recruit volunteers, open consultations were held with the aid of community champions – people who live and breathe their neighbourhoods. These sessions were used to clearly identify the types of activities people wanted to see happening in their locality in order to improve health and wellbeing. Volunteers continue to be recruited, trained and act as the soul of this programme.

Following initial community consultations, a range of activities underpinned by clear themes have taken place regularly. The most common activity types so far have been: encouraging people to be more mobile, 'opening up' and discussing feelings and wider community engagement. Specific sessions so far have included: writing clubs, 'coffee and chat' sessions, breath work and meditation lessons, litter picking/ community clean up days, clothing swap shops, 'getting active' sessions, walk and talk groups, and baby and parent play.



1.5.2 Joining the Women's Trade Network

Kickstarting the year's focus on improving equality, diversity and inclusion across the Group's workforce, HMS joined The Women's Trade Network (WTN) in June. The WTN is an initiative founded by some of the most well-known organisations in housing and property and their mission is to increase the representation of women in trade roles.

HMS is committed to supporting the network by signing its pledge - a commitment to driving long-term change in the industry by helping to remove barriers and providing empowerment and support.

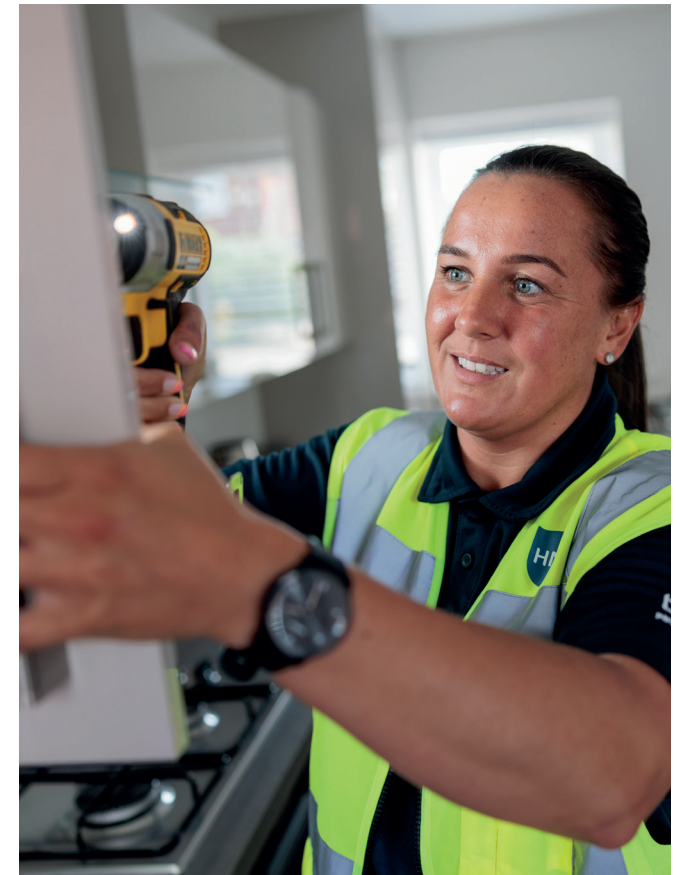
The action was taken as just 2% of tradespeople in the UK are female, a statistic that has barely changed in 40 years. The ambition of the network is also clearly aligned with the Group's Women in Construction programme, delivered by Torus Foundation and HMS, more details on which can be found [here](#).



As an organisation, we have a history of reaching out to women in our communities and over the years, have welcomed hundreds of women to the team. I am delighted to have joined The Women's Trade Network, and with their support, look forward to even more women joining HMS.



Gail Farley
Head of Customer Excellence
HMS



1.6 Quarter Highlight



1.6.1 RoSPA Gold Award

In May, Torus received a Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Gold Health and Safety Award.

The RoSPA Gold Health and Safety Award recognises our drive to ensure safety and wellbeing is given the upmost importance amongst colleagues, customers, contractors, and stakeholders. It is the result of a targeted investment in robust safety infrastructure and the development of a positive culture towards health and safety over the last three years. These initiatives have resulted in a continuous year-on-year drop in the number of accident and incident cases we have reported to the Health and Safety Executive.

Organisations receiving a RoSPA Award are recognised as being world-leaders in health and safety practice. Every year, nearly 2,000 entrants compete to achieve the highest possible accolade in what is the UK's longest-running health and safety industry awards.



This is a fantastic and well-deserved accomplishment. All our award entrants demonstrate their unwavering commitment and passion for keeping people safe at work. By receiving this recognition Torus join like-minded businesses and organisations worldwide, who represent the very best in their approach to health and safety.



Julia Small
RoSPA
Achievements Director



ROSPA
Gold Award

2. Quarter Two (July - September 2022)

2.1 Operating Context

Q2 provided further turbulence, challenges and successes both for Torus and the sector at large. In July, the UK was presented with record temperatures and extreme heat. This meant many providers wrestled with overheating in their properties as a considerable risk for the first time. Torus' approach to tackling this problem is covered in this chapter.

Furthermore, the cost-of-living crisis worsened considerably throughout this quarter. CPI rose at its fastest rate in 40 years and reached 10.1% in September. With people and families on low incomes being disproportionately impacted, Torus stepped up our approach to financial inclusion.

This quarter also saw Torus' approach to customer service take further steps forward. New standards were put in place and Torus began early adoption of new tenant satisfaction measures published by the Regulator of Social Housing.

2.2 Customer Service

2.2.1 New Service Standards

The quarter opened with Torus launching a new set of comprehensive service standards. At Torus, we aim to deliver high-quality services every time and for there to be no surprises when customers contact us. Every service needs to be open and transparent, both in the level of support tenants can expect and the timescales in which they will receive a response.

That is why we developed a new set of standards for Torus services that clearly explain what our customers can expect from us.

Approved by our Landlord Operations Committee (LOC) in March and launched in July, these standards were developed in partnership with involved tenants and the review/consultation period took over a year.

The drafting process started in the previous financial year, with the Tenant Scrutiny Panel working with Torus Service Leads to compare the offer from other landlords to create a new set of proposed standards.

Following feedback from this group and LOC, wider tenant feedback was received from 50 involved tenants and views were invited from 556 Torus Talk (Facebook) members. 27,000 tenants were also invited to give views in the monthly tenant update.

The final and published service standards are built around our customer experience principles, which promise to:

- Make sure customers can access services effortlessly (at a time that is convenient for them, via appropriate channels)
- Listen and show empathy and understanding
- Recognise that every customer is an individual and respect individual needs
- Always keep our promises
- Get it right first time
- Meet our customer service standards (providing a timely response)
- Keep customers informed every step of the way

Our standards are set out into themes, based on what matters most to our customers, covering customer service, responsiveness and accessible information, neighbourhoods, letting homes, safety, rent, tackling anti-social behaviour, complaints and getting involved.



We want to ensure that our customers get the best service possible. The decision to review 'Service Standards' was taken as previous 'Service Standards' were ill-defined and now going forward as a single organisation, Torus, we wanted to make sure that it was clear to customers what they should expect from us and reminds all Torus colleagues what is expected of them and the standards they will be held to.

The process to develop the new standards with our involved customers through Tenant Voice has been really interesting, it was good to hear what good customer service meant to each of them and use what is important to them to develop the new standards

Paul Warburton (pictured)
Group Housing Director
Torus





2.2.2 Highlight: Our Tenant Representatives at Housing 2022

The theme of service standards and tenant involvement further continued throughout July when 13 Torus tenants attended the CIH Housing 2022 Exhibition, Europe's largest housing festival and annual conference.

Our tenant James, who is a member of LOC and our Tenant Diversity & Inclusion Panel, attended following an invite to take part in an 'Effective Complaint Handling Panel' with the Housing Ombudsman.

The panel looked at how housing organisations can improve their response and handling of complaints in partnership with tenants.

James discussed his experience shaping the complaints process at Torus.



It was a great experience and opportunity. I found it a really useful and insightful day of learning and understanding regarding the housing sector and its future. Thanks to Torus for taking us all along.



James (pictured)
LOC Member
Haydock



James presenting at Housing 2022

2.2.3 New and Improved Group Website

Further reflecting the Group's ongoing efforts to improve, align and streamline services, September saw us launch our brand-new single website: my.torus.co.uk

The new platform allows Torus to better engage with customers and stakeholders online and replaces all previous Torus websites, providing a unified gateway to accessing Group-wide services and information.

The new website offers an enhanced user interface with streamlined menus, simplified navigation, a simple intelligent search facility and a new FAQ Chat Box, allowing visitors to the new website to better interact with Torus using a range of devices.

Improved accessibility was fundamental to project success. An initial £12,000 was invested into Reachdeck, a digital inclusion toolbar, which adds speech, reading, and translation tools to the page, making content more accessible for people with dyslexia, literacy challenges, English as a second language, and mild visual impairments.

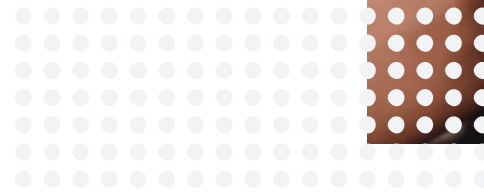
Developed and tested with involved customers through Tenant Voice, feedback played a vital role in production of the website.



I like the way you can change the colour to help people read better, Reachdeck itself is going to open up endless opportunities for people with additional needs and there is an audible format so excellent job guys I can't thank you enough.



Katrina, 41,
Inclusion panel member,
St Helens





2.3 Spotlight: The July Heatwave

Overheating is an issue that has only just begun to impact a very small proportion of our stock.



One extra care scheme in particular – Foundry Wharf, St Helens – struggled to deal with the July heatwave. To mitigate the impact on residents, all of whom are over 55, Torus responded with a number of actions:

- Teams from Torus Foundation and Torus Support Network were onsite every day, including weekends, to provide advice and encourage people into the communal room on the ground floor – the coolest room in the building
- Colleagues committed to rounds every 30 minutes to ensure residents staying in their rooms were hydrated and cool
- A steady supply of iced water was made available for all residents
- Solar reflective film was placed on all windows to keep heat out
- Air conditioning units were placed in every flat and fans in every hallway

Torus continues to assess and manage the situation at Foundry Wharf and across all of our extra care schemes, with works ongoing to reduce the risk of overheating in the future. Air conditioning has now been installed in the corridors at Foundry Wharf and going forward all extra care schemes will have a TM59 report carried out at design stage. This helps to identify if a building is liable to overheating and understand the measures required to prevent it.

2.4 Social Purpose

2.4.1 Apprenticeships at HMS

Apprentices are fundamental to the success of HMS – they allow the workforce to evolve, bring new ideas and breed a positive culture within the team.

HMS has a strong tradition of employing apprentices from the communities we serve and in July 14 new recruits joined the team – representing a quarter of a million-pound investment in the creation of apprenticeship roles.

This was a significant moment – it meant HMS had hired over 100 apprentices since Group amalgamation in 2019. It would not have been possible without Torus Foundation, whose Employment and Skills team help to identify and refer potential apprentices.



For those enrolled as an apprentice with HMS, the partnership with the Torus Foundation is key. By working together, the team's co-ordinate the programme to a high standard and provide vital mentoring support, maximising impact and outcomes for each apprentice.



Dan Bamford,
Head of Employment and Skills,
Torus Foundation



Four of the new recruits were women, with two coming directly from Torus Foundation and HMS' Women in Construction programme.

Over the years, many HMS apprentices have progressed to leadership roles within the organisation. This approach to local recruitment and upskilling is an example of our commitment to community wealth building in action and is a vital pillar of our mission - 'growing stronger communities.'



2.4.2 Mandela8

Also in July, Torus was proud to support Liverpool's annual Mandela8 celebration, which promotes diversity in the city and marks Nelson Mandela International Day. Nelson Mandela's eldest daughter, Dr Makaziwe 'Maki' Mandela, and granddaughter, Tukwini Mandela visited the city to unveil plans for a memorial to the South African revolutionary in Princes Park, Toxteth.

The partnership will continue as the Group continues our commitment to collaborate with and build upon diverse neighbourhoods.



Torus is proud to be associated with such a seminal event, Mandela8 has for many years been a close partner as so many of our tenants live in the area.



Cath Murray-Howard
Chief Operating Officer
Torus



2.4.3 Extending our Partnership with Steve Biko Housing Association

HMS' successful seven-year partnership with the Black and Racial Minority (BRM) provider Steve Biko Housing Association in South Liverpool was renewed in August. HMS will continue to provide planned and reactive maintenance repairs, facilities management and cleaning services to Steve Biko customers.

HMS, and Torus, are proud to play a role in supporting the Steve Biko Housing Association vision – homes and communities without racism.





2.4.4 Foundation Spotlight: Financial Inclusion

With the full scale of the cost-of-living crisis becoming apparent in quarter two, a spotlight was placed on the work and capabilities of Torus Foundation's Financial Inclusion team.

The Torus Foundation team includes two energy advisors, who provide in-depth advice on energy debt, bills and tariffs to vulnerable people in St Helens, Warrington and Liverpool. The service includes support with switching energy providers and applying for grants and seasonal payments where available.

Many of these outcomes were delivered through the 'Supportive Energy' initiative, delivered with funding from the Energy Saving Trust.

Throughout 2022/23, the energy support service supported 684 people resulting in the delivery of:



1,379
telephone advice sessions



218
home visits



£79,000
in estimated savings



£66,385
estimated savings for tenants

This project has been set up to be delivered in two phases in line with peak demand. Phase One was set up in Q2 and then delivered from October 2022 - April 2022 and Phase Two is taking place from January 2023 to December 2024.

Phase One provided advice on energy debt, bills, and tariffs to vulnerable people across Liverpool, St Helens and Warrington. It also offered an advocacy service, allowing the team to contact, negotiate with and challenge energy providers on behalf of vulnerable tenants – this also included claims to the Ombudsman.

It delivered the following outcomes:



471
individuals engaging with the service



140
home visits



264
e-mail consultations



984
telephone consultations



234
referrals for further support

The scope of Phase Two is broader: to provide general energy advice, advocacy and practical solutions for vulnerable tenants in social housing impacted by the energy price cap. Whilst it is ongoing, between January 2023 and March 2023, it has delivered the following:



78

home visits



395

telephone consultations



54

referrals to other services



£13,067

estimated savings for tenants



12

participants reporting improved mental health and wellbeing

To complement Supportive Energy and equip the Financial Inclusion team with a tool to provide direct help, Torus Foundation ran an energy voucher programme in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust from February to August 2022. This initiative was aimed at homes with a pre-payment meter and at risk of self-disconnection.

Between April and August, 4,279 vouchers were redeemed by Torus tenants providing savings totalling £209,671.

Unsurprisingly, these initiatives were met with extraordinary levels of demand and Torus Foundation is constantly exploring ways to expand their provision of energy advice and support.

As already referenced, Torus Foundation has secured funding for 'Supportive Energy – Phase Two' which began in January 2023.

Despite prices being forecast to begin deflating, the market remains extremely volatile and energy security is going to remain an issue for the foreseeable future.

Torus Foundation also provides a more universal financial inclusion service covering benefit advice, debt management, increasing income and financial management skills. **In 2022/23, £4,451,755 in grants and benefits for 3,219 tenants was unlocked via this service.**

The financial inclusion team also administers food vouchers to tenants in need, this is in addition to the support provided to local food banks through the Foundation's Health and Wellbeing team. Last year, 427 food vouchers were issued, providing meals for 615 adults and 289 children.





2.4.5 Highlight: Oakdale Road

In August 2022, Torus completed the Group's first ever net zero new build development, Oakdale Road in Wallasey. The £1.5 million 8-unit scheme utilised modern methods of construction (MMC) and a suite of greener, more sustainable technologies, signifying Torus' commitment to becoming a more environmentally friendly developer.

The bungalows at Oakdale Road were built off site and designed to meet net zero carbon standards. All units have an EPC 'A' and feature technology such as PV Solar Roof Panels and Air Source Heat Pumps – they are the first their kind built by Torus with contractor Starship Group.

Completed in less than a year, Oakdale Road highlights how less traditional methods of construction can quickly regenerate disused sites and create high quality, modern homes. Embedding this technology will also benefit future residents by lowering their energy consumption and ultimately bills – something that has never been so important for tenants.



As we progress on our journey to net zero emissions, this development will form the blueprint for how we continue to use MMC intelligently to not only fix the national housing crisis but reduce our impact on the environment to create more sustainable developments. We are thrilled to have worked with Starship to create such an innovative scheme.



Steve Alcock
Director of Development & Sales
Torus Developments



3. Quarter 3 (October - December 2022)

3.1 Operating Context

Q3 was largely defined by two major developments across the sector.

The tragic death of Awaab Ishak was found to be directly connected to prolonged exposure to mould in his family's housing association flat in Rochdale. This has proven to be a pivotal moment for the industry, with issues raised in the case - beyond just damp and mould coming under more scrutiny than ever before. Racism, customer services and the general perception housing providers have of their tenants have also come into the spotlight.

In response, Torus and our peers have had to step up our approach to tackling these systemic concerns.

The other major development was the confirmation of a 7% rent cap for 2023/24 - a move away from the usual CPI+1% model (which would have seen a rent rise of around 11%). Whilst this has been a positive move to protect tenants, it has also squeezed budgets and meant a more stringent approach to future spending.

Whilst Torus had to navigate and adapt to these headwinds throughout Q3, significant and transformational activity continued to be delivered.





3.2 Spotlight: Addressing Damp and Mould

The tragic case of Awaab Ishak rightly focused attention on the responsibility of all registered providers – private and local authority – to ensure that the homes they provide are decent, safe and well maintained.

After the case came to light, Torus immediately set about conducting an internal review of our processes regarding the identification and management of damp and mould cases. This was primarily conducted via a newly established disrepair task and finish group.

The group was set up with representation from a range of teams within Torus to effectively consider current disrepair cases, current complaints, legacy complaints, and Ombudsman investigations. It continues to meet and has an emphasis on cross-team collaboration to provide tenants with a holistic and tailored approach to their complaint or claim.

Immediate and short-term outcomes following the establishment of the disrepair task and finish group were:

- A commitment to updating our Group Damp and Mould Policy, with a focus on case identification and effective resolution. This document was republished in January and can be found [here](#).
- The implementation of a zero-tolerance approach to language such as ‘lifestyle choices’ and ‘behaviours’ that infer blame on tenants for damp and mould issues.
- Recruitment commenced for a dedicated damp and mould tenant scrutiny panel.
- Additional training was introduced for colleagues who visit homes or interact with tenants, covering the identification of damp and mould and related issues – as a result our ABCRESPOND+ safeguarding procedure covers the identification of damp and mould and associated issues.
- Updated guidance was issued to our tenants regarding what to expect when reporting a case of damp and mould. This included the commitment to a property visit within 10 days once an issue has been reported. Titled ‘You Report, We Resolve’ the full guidance issued can be found on our website [here](#).

We continue to evolve and enhance our approach to tackling damp and mould. [Our stock condition survey](#) taking place throughout 2023/24 will further progress our identification and resolution of damp and mould cases.

3.3 Heartland Developments

3.3.1 Mill Lane

The completion of Mill Lane at the turn of the quarter marked the handover of more than 100 homes from HMS to Torus in the calendar year – a significant milestone and evidence of effective partnership working across the Group. It is also testament to the evolution of HMS, having only been delivering new build schemes for three years.

The £4 million development is situated in West Derby, North Liverpool and consists of 34 new and affordable homes built specifically for over 55's

The project saw the team regenerate a challenging brownfield site, the location of a demolished care home that had suffered a serious fire.

The scheme represents another example of how Torus has taken a forgotten site and regenerated it to meet clear needs of the local community.



3.3.2 Academy Way

In October, Torus officially handed over Roebuck Plaza at Academy Way, our largest housing development in Warrington to date.

A £16.3 million scheme, Roebuck Plaza contains 144 units (all available via Rent to Buy), in a highly sought after, central location.

Completely transforming a disused brownfield site, the scheme is a central development in supporting the Warrington Town Centre Masterplan and the town's ambitions to receive city status.

Roebuck Plaza is also helping the Local Authority reach its aspirations of building more than 8,000 new homes in the town centre over the next 20 years.



3.3.3 Broomfields

Also in October, Torus handed over Broomfields, an over 55s development in South Warrington.

A £4.5 million scheme, Broomfields is situated in the desirable and quiet Cobbs Estate in Appleton, and offers 45 high specification, modern, spacious one- and two-bedroom apartments for affordable rent.

The 'new' Broomfields building is on the site of the old Broomfields extra care facility which closed in 2019. Despite years of regular investment, it was no longer fit for purpose and failed to meet the standards expected of a modern asset.

Some of the original residents moved to Harpers Green, Torus's £11 million purpose-built extra care facility in Padgate. However, the scheme did immediately welcome back one resident who had chosen to return, an option open to all original Broomfields residents.

Broomfields is an example of how Torus works with the fabric of places to transform assets and create schemes that meet and exceed the expectations of residents and local people.



3.3.4 Stadium View

In addition to the completion of new schemes, this quarter also saw a significant and transformational renovation project reach its conclusion.

£1m worth of works on Stadium View, formerly Cross Meadow Court, were completed – converting a pre-existing site into a facility for people who are living with low-level mental health issues. The development was put forward following clear demand for mental health support in the area and its first residents were welcomed in December.

The scheme provides 14 supported tenancies and two units for people in need of short-term, urgent attention. 24/7 support is available to all residents through a dedicated onsite team that have links with the council and local NHS. The site also now benefits from 24-hour security so that residents can feel more secure.

HMS were contractors for the scheme and successfully delivered significant works, including:

- The remodelling of each apartment block, complete with new heating systems, kitchens and bathrooms
- The creation of new community rooms, parking facilities, offices and a communal garden
- The completion of refreshed exterior rendering



Stadium View will provide much-needed care for the rising number of people in need of mental health support, and we remain committed to working in partnership with the NHS and other agencies to help with the provision of person-centred care.



Paul Warburton
Group Housing Director
Torus



3.4 Tenant Engagement

3.4.1 Coffee with Coffey

November saw our Tenant Voice team bring together a groups of involved tenants to take part in two, one-on-one sessions with Torus Chief Executive, Steve Coffey.

Members of our various tenant panels across all three heartlands took part, including representatives from: LOC, Scrutiny, Repairs, Community Investment Fund, Complaints, Diversity & Inclusion and Tenant Inspectors.

The open question and answer session gave tenants the opportunity to quiz Steve, who was joined by Torus Chief Operating Officer, Cath Murray-Howard and Group Housing Director, Paul Warburton, on a range of topics. Questions ranged from rents and cost-of-living support to lettings policy, developments and the green agenda.



What a great morning it was meeting everyone and giving our opinions to Steve Coffey. It was very interesting and went very well. Thank you to the team for a successful event and I look forward to more in the near future.



Ray Jones
Tenant Inspector and
Complaints panel member





3.4.2 Highlight: Tenant Voice Wicked Day Out

Furthering the spotlight on Tenant Voice in November, involved Torus tenants were invited to the Totally Wicked Stadium, St Helens to meet Torus colleagues and celebrate tenant engagement.

The event, which included a festive lunch and mince pies, was used to debate the Government's 'The Charter for Social Housing Residents' White Paper and how it will further empower tenants. Torus Chief Operating Officer, Cath Murray-Howard, opened the event by discussing the tragic case of Awaab Ishak, highlighting what can happen if tenants are ignored.

Following this, attendees were invited to review the Torus Tenant Involvement Strategy and help develop the supporting action plan.

The session was also used as a more general opportunity to gather wide-ranging feedback and provide an update on strategic plans for the Group.



We want to ensure more people can be involved and influence the services they receive by making it easy to participate at whatever level they feels comfortable.



Jan Calland
Housing Director
Torus





3.5 Spotlight: Refreshing our Complaints Function

In response to the growing number of complaints faced over the last two years, Torus established a new, centralised complaints function in December 2022. The aim of which is to improve the quality and efficiency of our response to complaints by giving a designated team end-to-end responsibility for the complaints handling process. Whilst this team is still in its infancy, early signs are promising. There is also now a clear 'learning and improvement cycle' in place, enabling mistakes to become an opportunity for learning and reflection.

In the year ahead, the ambition is to expand this team and focus on reducing the number of failed repairs visits and cancelled jobs – working in partnership with the Tenant Complaints Panel to address the root cause of these issues. Activity will also be centred on introducing a triage process that enables direct and agile action when responding to complaints.



3.6 Highlight: Chamber Awards

The Liverpool Chamber of Commerce Innovation in Business Awards took place in November, a prestigious evening amongst the local business community. It was a celebratory occasion for Torus, as the Group was presented with the top award for Skills and Employability.

The honour was clear recognition of work done to provide skills and employment opportunities by HMS and Torus Foundation in particular. Whilst the work of HMS is highlighted earlier in this review, a spotlight should also be put on Foundation's activities.

In 2022/23 alone, Torus Foundation supported 1,331 individuals into employment, with a further 40 supported into apprenticeships. In addition to this, 574 people were supported to gain new skills through training.



3.7 Spotlight: Christmas Campaign

Torus run a Christmas campaign every year, raising funds to make the festive season more special for some of our most vulnerable customers.

The December campaign was a success, with over £6,280 raised across the Group. In addition to the money raised via Just Giving, teams and supermarkets also kindly contributed various food and gift items.

These donations were used to create gift bags that were distributed to various tenant groups. In many cases the recipients were elderly and living alone.

One of our older tenants benefitting from the campaign was referred after reporting to our support network that she was extremely lonely. Having not received a gift at Christmas since her son passed away, she was delighted to be thought of.

Gift bags were also delivered to residents living across Torus' single person hostels.

4. Quarter 4 (January – March 2023)

4.1 Operating Context

Not quite as operationally and economically volatile as the rest of the year, Q4 allowed Torus a period of reflection. The National Housing Federation and Chartered Institute of Housing's Better Social Housing Review (BSHR) was published at the end of Q3 and its recommendations became key considerations across the Group throughout Q4.

Much time and energy was spent finalising the Group's Operational Plan for 2023/24, and elements of the BSHR were incorporated into a variety of the group's actions. Clear commitments to improving levels of professionalisation, co-authoring stock and repairs standards, enhancing tenant involvement and developing an enhanced community presence were all approved by the Board.

As can be seen throughout this chapter, bidding, contracts and funding awards were also a key theme for Torus in Q4. Our Landlord function awarded HMS the Group's most significant repairs and maintenance contract to date and the Torus was successful securing further funds from the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. In addition to this, Torus Foundation secured extremely competitive National Lottery funding to bolster activity of the already successful Healthy Neighbours Project.

In addition to this, Torus Foundation, secured extremely competitive lottery funding to bolster the activity an already fruitful project.



4.2 Buildings and Maintenance

4.2.1 Repairs and Maintenance Framework

The year started off with a significant moment for Torus as the Group launched our £1.2 billion Repairs and Maintenance Framework.

Over its lifecycle, it will see the Group further invest in our existing housing stock and leverage the services of experienced, award-winning local contractors to complete a myriad of reactive and emergency repairs.

The new framework encompasses several workstreams, including: responsive and void repairs, cyclical maintenance, estate services and facilities management. It will allow the Group to respond quickly and appropriately to the needs of tenants whilst providing reassurance that all services delivered are of a high standard. Running for four years, works will officially start to be delivered as of April 2023.

Following the successful completion of a robust and transparent procurement exercise, HMS were appointed as the Tier 1 contractor and Sovini Property Services as the Tier 2 contractor on the framework.

Utilising a framework approach, Torus can be more agile in how we deliver repairs and maintenance services. Available to other Registered Providers, the framework will help guarantee quality, value for money and ultimately more investment by Torus in our portfolio of properties and communities. It also provides a vehicle for Torus to build effective relationships with external suppliers.



We are delighted to be appointed onto the framework, working in collaboration with Torus who share similar values. Like ourselves, Torus is a customer orientated organisation, committed to investing in the communities they work in.



Mike Dale
Head of Services and Growth
Sovini Property Services



Paul Worthington (managing director of HMS)
Cath Murray-Howard (Chief Operating Officer, Torus)

4.2.2 Retrofit Bootcamp

In February 2022, 40 Assets and HMS colleagues took part in a 'Retrofit Bootcamp' hosted by the Retrofit Academy CIC. This was a two-day intensive course that provided an overview of essential retrofit processes and the PAS2035 standard.

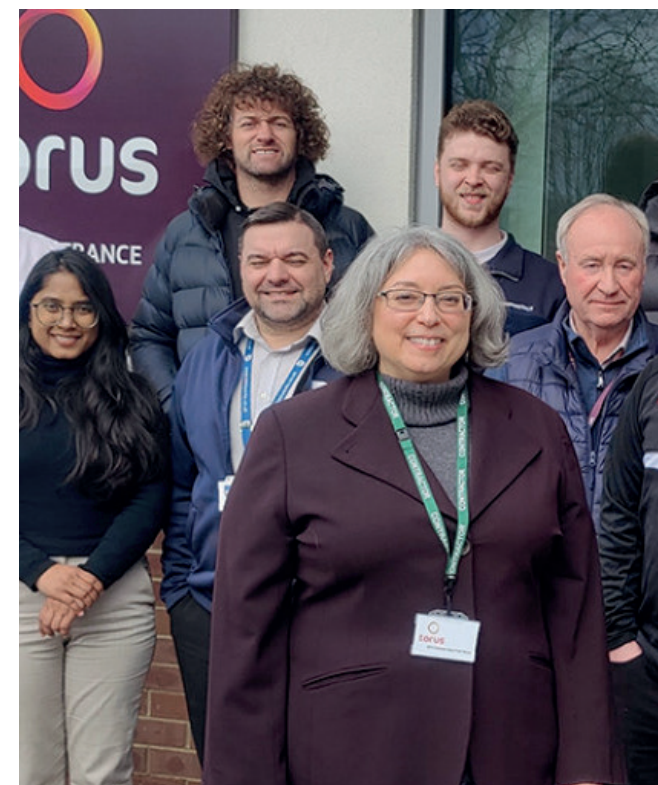
PAS2035 is the best practice guidance on how to enact energy efficiency retrofit which has been adopted for Government-funded measures. It acts as a framework, setting out a management specification for the energy retrofit of domestic buildings. Everyone involved with funded schemes must meet the requirements of the standard.

At close of 2022/23, Torus had seven colleagues working toward formal retrofit qualifications, including: the Level 3 Award in Domestic Retrofit Advice, the Level 4 Award in Domestic Retrofit Assessment and the Level 5 Diploma in Retrofit Coordination and Risk Management.



The bootcamp gave a full oversight, understanding and awareness into the PAS2035 and demonstrated the visions and the group's ambitions moving forward with retrofit. I found it interesting to find out how, we as a group, can make changes to our homes, so our customers gain much more economic and energy efficient homes.

Mick Ledger,
Torus Assets Surveyor

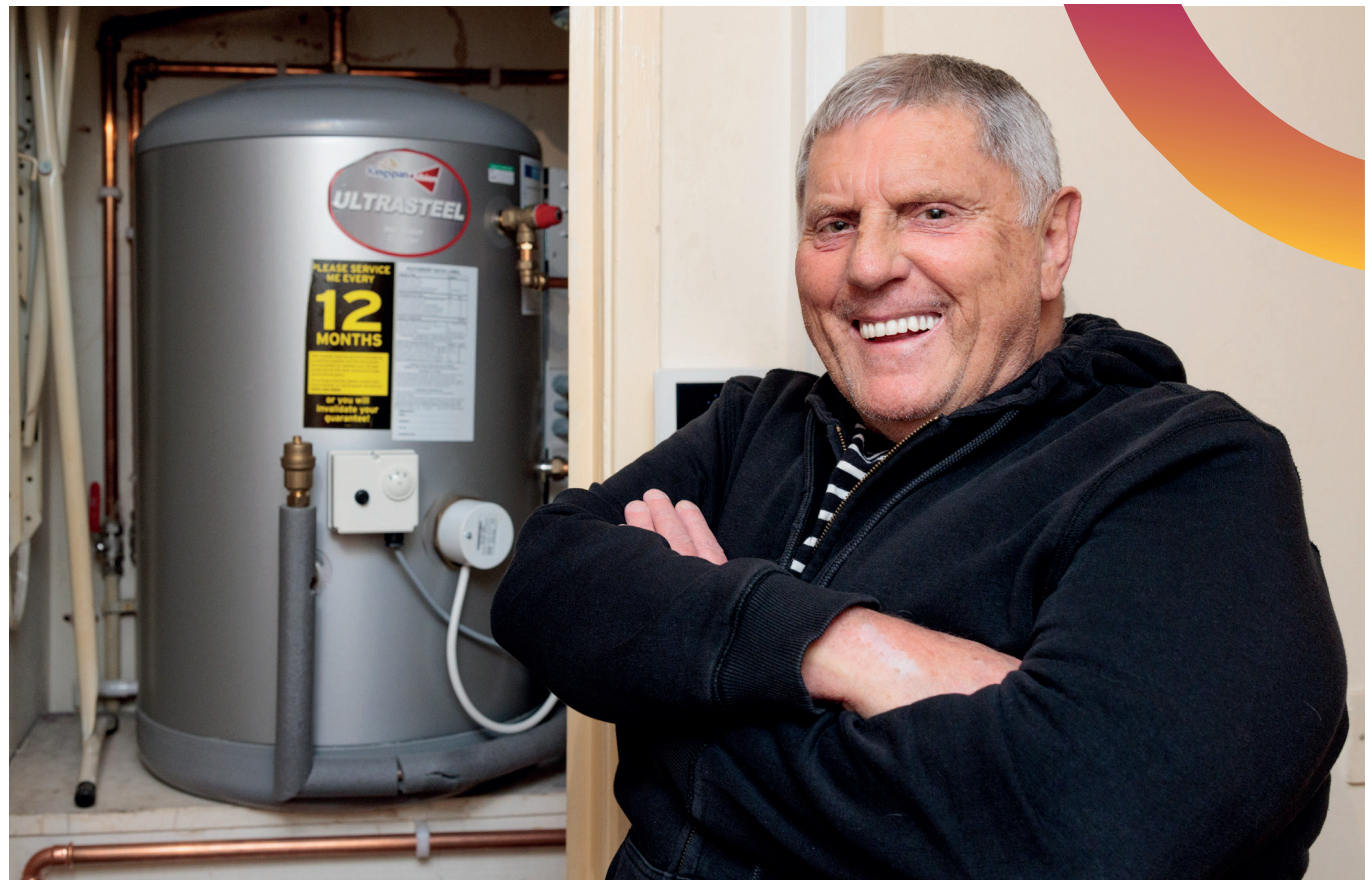


Torus colleagues and their course tutor,
Dee Miller (centre)

4.2.3 Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave Two

Continuing the environmental theme as the quarter and year drew to a close, it was announced that Torus - with the support of Mayor Steve Rotheram and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) - will deliver low carbon upgrades to 695 homes in the Liverpool, St Helens, and Warrington areas. This is following a successful bid from the LCRCA for money from the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) and the second round of the Home Upgrade Grant scheme.

Torus will be awarded £5.8m, which will be further bolstered by the organisation with £15.4m of funding. This will see a total of £21.2m spent on retrofitting homes across Torus communities over the next two years.



This investment will see existing Torus properties benefit from a range of retrofit energy-efficiency improvements. These will include fundamental upgrades, such as the renewal of windows, doors, roofs, loft insulation, and ventilation improvements; in addition to more technological and advanced retrofit solutions, such as solar PV panels, battery storage, and cavity and solid wall insulation.

These improvement works will help to reduce energy usage and therefore bills, improving the overall Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of all properties undergoing to works to a minimum of C.

The works will also benefit the environment by helping to reduce carbon emissions, supporting Torus' wider Environmental Sustainability Strategy. In turn, this will enable the Group to play a key role helping the Liverpool City Region and Warrington achieve net zero by 2040 and 2030, respectively.

SHDF retrofit works have already started at the 1960s built, nine-story, 51-apartment building Kingsway House in Warrington, which is undergoing an ambitious £5+ million refurbishment. Upon project completion, the building will have new windows, doors, improved insulation, ventilation and external walls finished with non-combustible render - this will improve the energy efficiency of the building and thermal comfort. The building will also be installed with a communal air source heat pump, allowing gas supply to be removed. This has the double benefit of reducing carbon emissions and improving the building's safety credentials.

Other SHDF projects include 42 flats on Kirk Street (Everton, L5) which will receive a range of works to improve both energy efficiency and the aesthetics of the scheme, and improvement works to older, pre-war properties in Haydock will benefit from a whole house retrofit. Works are expected to be completed in the Summer of 2025.



4.3 Strengthening Services and Support

4.3.1 Consumer Regulation Pathfinder

Shortly after the turn of the year, Torus volunteered to take part in a pilot programme designed by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). The purpose of which is to evaluate how affordable housing providers are inspected against upcoming changes to consumer regulation. Seven other landlords are also taking part ahead of an intended national inspection roll-out.

In September 2022, the RSH published the outcome of its consultation on tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs). As a result, from 1st April 2023 all registered providers of social housing are required to collect and publish a range of comparable metrics covering areas such as repairs, safety checks and complaints. Torus has been an early adopter of the TSMs, collecting and reporting on them since Q3 of 2022/23.

The TSMs are an integral part of the RSH's new proactive Consumer Regulation, which is designed to ensure the social housing sector is well-governed, transparent and accountable to tenants, and able to deliver quality homes that meet a range of needs.

Ahead of a national inspection roll-out, the RSH has selected eight social landlords – of which Torus is one – to help test how it inspects performance against the new regulation.

We hope to share findings from the pathfinder in the next edition of this review at the end of 2023/24.

More information about the pathfinder can be found [here](#).



4.3.2 Domestic Abuse Network

The Group is working towards achieving Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation before the end of 2023/24. As part of the Group's journey towards this goal - and to strengthen the Torus response to domestic abuse across the organisation - our workplace Domestic Abuse (DA) Champions Network was introduced in January.

Members of this network will play an essential role in supporting colleagues who are concerned about a tenant or customer who may be experiencing domestic abuse.

There are 16 new DA Champions from across the group, all of whom are passionate about protecting people from domestic abuse and have received training. They will be supported and mentored by our in-house Domestic Abuse Team and specialist domestic abuse leads in Support Network to conduct their very important role.

This journey towards DAHA accreditation requires that we consider how we currently respond to domestic abuse as both a housing provider and employer, and that we amend policy, procedures and practice to meet the high standards and expectations set out in the accreditation framework.

The development of a DA Champion network will play a key role in improving our response to domestic abuse, with DA Champions playing an active role in promoting and supporting the work we are doing on the DAHA project and on a Group-wide basis.





4.4 Highlight: Lottery Funding for Healthy Neighbours

The year came full circle in March and ended on a wholly positive note. Torus Foundation's Healthy Neighbours Project, launched at the start of the year, was awarded an incredible £494,000 through the National Lottery's Partnerships Fund.

The funds have been allocated over two years and will be used to enhance and continue activity carried out by the project.

The award is testament to the hard work already delivered in partnership with local organisations – all of whom have been integral to the initiative. It is also a recognition of the amazing work undertaken by dedicated volunteers and engaged community members who are continuing to make such important impacts across Torus communities.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, 41 Healthy Neighbour volunteers delivered over 2,130 hours of their time, supporting 2,067 individual people to engage with 918 activities and support sessions organised through the project.

The Healthy Neighbours Project has given communities a voice and the National Lottery funding will allow this work to continue to create strong, long-term partnerships built on trust and community cohesion. It will also allow the project to create plans for expansion across more of the communities Torus serves.

Healthy Neighbours is an example of how Torus Foundation has stepped up support in the face of increasing demand for services. The team is working within neighbourhoods that have exacerbated health issues post-pandemic and more entrenched, long-term financial hardship due to the cost-of-living crisis.

Healthy Neighbours is part of a wider commitment from Torus Foundation to increase investment in community action, projects and initiatives that improve lives, increase opportunity and bring people together to help create stronger communities.



A Look Ahead To 2023/24

A year of further developmental change lies ahead in and real, tangible differences can be expected:

- New patches for Neighbourhood Officers will be implemented as we work to strengthen our presence in communities
- Our new-look complaints service will begin to handle cases end-to-end, enabling direct and agile action when responding to issues
- Our tenant census survey will launch, giving us greater insight into tenant priorities and enabling us to tailor services
- Enhancements will be made to our Tenant Engagement Framework following results from the Shaping Services Together tenant survey and tenant census survey - ensuring our engaged tenant groups become more representative of communities and that all tenant voices are heard

→ There will be a considerable increase in the number of home condition surveys and our robust repairs service improvement plan will commence

→ A long-term Property Investment Plan that covers net zero retrofit activities will be finalised.

Underpinning all of these activities will be a connection to our core purpose and an emphasis on learning, reflection and continuous improvement, ensuring we are always moving forward and offering the best possible services we can.

In addition to adaptation and strategic changes, we will continue our significant investments in broader support services and charitable activities throughout 2023/24. This is of high importance given that the communities we serve will continue to face significant challenges and economic uncertainty over the next 12 months.

The Group looks forward to sharing updates on these commitments in the next edition of this review.

If you wish to work with us, comment on this document or discuss any of the topics raised, we hope you get in touch. Please email info@torus.co.uk and your message will be forwarded to the correct team.





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