

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a two-story brick residential building. The building has a red-tiled roof, multiple windows with white frames, and a green front door. A purple diagonal overlay covers the left and center portions of the image, creating a modern, graphic look. The text 'Sustainability Report' is written in white, sans-serif font over the purple area.

Sustainability Report

2024

Ascend

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Organisation profile

We're the largest manager of single-family rental (SFR) homes in the UK. Partnering with leading property funds, we provide award-winning end to-end management for 10,500+ homes, of which over 9,000 are SFR, valued at over £2bn in today's market. It means we have the experience to manage every aspect of a portfolio from pre-build consultancy to move-in and beyond.

What's more, we've developed cutting-edge bespoke technology platforms and automated efficiencies, enabling our specialist teams to provide high-quality, low-hassle service and complete peace of mind for investors.

The Ascend commitment means we harness a portfolio's potential to deliver maximum ROI for investors and an unmatched rental experience for residents.

It's an altogether rewarding experience for all.



A proven track record 90+ industry awards won:



Foreword

I am delighted to present our 2024 Sustainability Highlight Report, which underscores our commitment to fostering a sustainable future. This year has been a journey of growth and dedication to our environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals.

Our achievements in 2024 reflect the collective efforts of our entire team, who have embraced sustainability as a core value. We have made significant strides in understanding our carbon footprint, enhancing energy efficiency, and delivering energy efficient homes. These accomplishments are not just milestones but stepping stones towards our long-term vision of a sustainable and responsible business.

We have also made it a priority to educate our residents on the importance of energy and water efficiency, as well as encouraging eco-friendly choices. Recognising our significant influence across our portfolio of homes, we have implemented various programmes and resources to support our residents in adopting sustainable practices.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to driving positive change and continuously improving our sustainability practices. We recognise that there is still much work to be done, and we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement in our sustainability journey.

Paul Stockwell, Group Managing Director



“ The successful delivery of our first year of the sustainability strategy marks a significant milestone for our organisation. We have made substantial progress in reducing our environmental impact, fostering inclusivity, and engaging with our communities. Building on this foundation, we are excited to enhance our commitments through the development of a comprehensive 3-year strategy. This new strategy will further integrate sustainability into our core operations, set ambitious targets, and drive continuous improvement across all aspects of our business. Our goal is to create lasting positive impacts for our stakeholders and the environment.

Jack Wright, Head of Marketing & Sustainability





Sustainability Vision and Values

In 2024, we developed a comprehensive three-year sustainability strategy that builds on our previous achievements and intensifies our focus on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) deliverables. This strategy includes over 20 targeted sustainability commitments across these areas.

Our sustainability strategy underscores our dedication to continuous improvement, setting ambitious goals to enhance our impact. It is built on our values, which distinguish us and guide our actions. We are committed to conduct our business in a socially responsible and ethical manner. Taking bold steps to protect the environment and benefit our residents, clients, investors and the communities in which we work.

Our Vision:

To enhance our high standards by integrating sustainable practices into all aspects of our operations. Safeguarding the environment and ensuring a positive impact for our residents, and the homes and communities in which they live.

Our Mission:

Our mission is to be recognised as a conscientious and sustainable business, acting responsibly and inspiring our employees to do the same, both at work and at home.

We strive for maximum efficiency and deliver our services in the most sustainable manner. Through our Green Living campaigns, we actively support our residents to reduce energy, water and waste consumption and to make eco-friendly choices.

We are committed to partnering and collaborating with local businesses, charities, and schools to drive positive impact in our communities. We aim to stand proud and lead the behavioural change necessary to create a more sustainable, inclusive, and equitable future for everyone.

Our Values

Reduce Our Environmental Impact

To enhance our high standards by integrating sustainable practices into all aspects of our operations. Safeguarding the environment and ensuring a positive impact for our residents, and the homes and communities in which they live.

Green-Living Education

We provide guidance and support to promote sustainable living practices among our residents and employees.

Health and Wellbeing

We prioritise the health and wellbeing of our employees and communities, fostering a supportive and healthy environment.

Sustainable Communities

We collaborate with local businesses, charities, and schools to build and support sustainable communities.

Responsible business

We are dedicated to conducting our business in a responsible and ethical manner, prioritising sustainability, social responsibility and economic integrity.



Our Environmental, Social and Governance pathways

Across our business, we have three pathways we follow to deliver our commitments:

Our Residents & Homes

Our dedication to our residents and our homes is at the core of our mission. We believe that by focusing on sustainable practices and high-quality living environments, we can make a lasting impact on society. Through our extensive portfolio, we can positively impact our residents' lives through the homes and communities in which they live. We encourage sustainable living at any opportunity and equip our employees with the skills and knowledge they need to support our residents in this mission. We are also committed to reducing our own carbon footprint through efficient processes and optimising the use of technology.

Our Operations

As individuals, we can make a small contribution to society; as a whole business, this impact can be far greater. We are committed to integrating sustainability into every aspect of our operations. Our sustainability strategy is designed to ensure that our business practices not only meet the highest standards of efficiency and productivity but also contribute positively to the environment and society. As we continue to grow, we will build on our commitments and embed these principles into our operations, creating lasting value and sustainable growth.

Our Communities

As an industry-leader within the property sector, our residents, clients and employees are at the core of everything we do. Our social reach is broad through the management of our nationwide portfolio of 11,000+ homes. Along with our clients and investors who specialise in single-family rental, multi-family BTR and Buy to Let homes, we are all committed to our social and environmental responsibility. We actively engage with the communities where we operate, supporting local initiatives and fostering strong relationships.





Ascend

Our 2024 Highlights

01.

Launched a Green Living programme for our residents, in partnership with United Utilities

02.

Transitioned **30%** of our fleet to hybrid or electric vehicles

03.

Transitioned to renewable energy across 2 of our branches

04.

Optimised technology by introducing virtual inspections, achieving an average of **47%** of inspections completed virtually

05.

Established a dedicated group to oversee and lead delivery of our sustainability commitments

06.

Continued work in our communities through volunteering & charity contributions

07.

Baselined our emissions, set targets to reduce our impact and achieved a reduction of **15%** (Scope 1 & 2) in 2024

Our 2024 Sustainability Achievements

Our Residents & Homes

Sustainability Commitment	2024 Target	2024 Outcome	Comments
Provide information, signposting and targeted campaigns to help our residents maintain a healthy lifestyle	Launch information in resident literature and website	Complete	Information launched through resident handbook. Supported and promoted several national campaigns through social media
Train our Property Managers on Green Living	Develop and pilot Green living programme	Complete	Trained 12 Property Managers and incorporated training into induction process
Provide Green Living home audits during resident interactions	Develop and pilot Green Living programme	Complete	Successfully piloted Green Living programme across 200 residents
Reduce 'no access' visits through improved processes and resident communications	>90% of scheduled visits completed	Exceeded	93.4% of scheduled visits completed
Promote and encourage virtual viewings, and virtual property inspections where appropriate	Launch virtual inspections	Complete	Launched virtual inspections and completed an average of 47% virtually
Actively promote and encourage Smart Meter adoption	Baseline smart meter data	Ongoing	Collaborated with energy suppliers to increase the uptake of smart meters, promoting them through Green Living audits and resident communications



Our 2024 Sustainability Achievements

Our Operations

Sustainability Commitment	2024 Target	2024 Outcome	Comments
Ensure employees have access to wellbeing services & in-house mental health first aider	1 x Mental Health First Aider	Complete	Mental Health First Aider established
Actively support diversity, equality and inclusivity	DEI internal audit & management training	Complete	Audit complete. 100% management trained. In 2025 we plan to extend this training to all Ascend employees
All electronic waste (e-waste) generated is responsibly managed through reuse / recycling	E-Waste policy & partnership	Complete	Policy and partnership established, 100% of E-Waste reused / recycled
Report on Scope 1 & 2 emissions and carbon reduction plan	Baseline Scope 1 & 2	Complete	Baselined Scope 1 & 2 emissions and agreed carbon reduction targets
Move to renewable energy sources	Identify opportunities	Exceeded	Opportunities identified, 2 branches moved to renewable tariffs
Support local communities and charities through an annual contribution	£5,000 p/a	Exceeded	Financial contributions made and supported charity based initiatives
Support local communities and charities through employee volunteering	Up to 1 day per employee p/a	Complete	Community volunteering completed, including supporting local charities
Mandate ESG training for all employees	Green Living Training	Ongoing	Property Managers Green Living training completed



Our 2024 Sustainability Achievements

Our Communities

Sustainability Commitment	2024 Target	2024 Outcome	Comments
Sponsor a local school(s) to educate around sustainable practices, such as waste and encouraging biodiversity	Identify opportunities	Complete	Identified opportunities to progress in 2025
Leverage partnership to provide residents and/or employees with sustainable products (e.g welcome gifts)	Go-Green gifts pilot	Complete	Successfully piloted Go-Green gifts across 200 residents
Raise awareness of Green Living through education & awareness campaigns	Green Living pilot	Complete	Successfully piloted Green Living programme across 200 residents
Replacing our fleet to hybrid or electric vehicles	30% of vehicles	Complete	Transitioned 30% of vehicles to hybrid or electric vehicles
Continue our hybrid working policy	>20% Hybrid based roles	Complete	50% of our roles are hybrid or remote based
Plant a tree for every property we rent or sell	c.3,000 trees	Complete	3,000 trees planted





Our 2024 Sustainability Achievements

Building on our strong sustainability commitments, we are actively advancing initiatives to promote sustainability across our organisation, create positive change within our communities, and generate lasting benefits for our residents.

Employee Benefits Programme

We launched our employee benefits programme, which includes employee values and behaviours, an internal intranet, and an employee engagement committee. We enhanced employee benefits to support health and wellbeing, including increased holiday entitlement, enhanced maternity, adoption & paternity pay, and support for medical appointments.

Optimising technology and reducing emissions

In 2024, we optimised technology and improved operational processes, successfully reducing 'no access' visits by 20%. This achievement significantly saved travel time and reduced our carbon footprint. Moving forward, we aim to ensure over 90% of our visits are successful, further enhancing our service delivery and environmental impact. Additionally, we have automated various business processes, including renewals, arrears, and repair tracking. These advancements drive both operational efficiencies and sustainable practices, reinforcing our commitment to excellence and sustainability.

Green Living

We launched a bespoke programme consisting of in-person & digital guidance for our residents on water conservation, energy efficiency and waste reduction. We rolled out our Green Living training across our teams so we can support residents in making more sustainable choices and to help reduce their utility bills. Alongside this, in partnership with United Utilities, we trialled a new Go-Green welcome pack across 200 households, encouraging smart water use and eco-friendly habits.

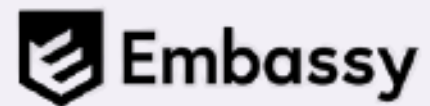
Recognition of Excellence and Innovation

In 2024, Ascend was awarded 'Best Use of Operational Technology' at the Love to Rent BTR Awards. This reflects our dedication to providing top-tier services and leveraging advanced technology to enhance our operations and sustainability goals.

Supporting our Communities, Residents & Employees

We are deeply committed to making a positive impact in our community through active participation in volunteering and charity initiatives. Our efforts include generous charity donations and sponsorships, creatively re-purposing our show home furniture to support those in need, and enthusiastically participating in local events. We also proudly support charities chosen by our dedicated employees, ensuring our collective efforts make a meaningful difference.

Charity Donations



We are proud to have donated **£5,000** to Embassy, a local charity dedicated to supporting individuals facing homelessness and developing the Embassy Village. This contribution will aid their vital work and help make a significant impact in our community.

Kenya Volunteering Trip

In partnership with the Kanzi Kibera charity, we also sponsored Embassy's volunteering trip to Kenya. Their team visited the Kibera district, home to approximately 1.2 million people living in extremely poor conditions. During this impactful trip, they:

- Fed over 400 children daily
- Ran daily kids clubs to engage & support local children
- Clothed over 65 mothers, providing much-needed relief
- Assisted with DIY projects at a local school



Furniture Donations

We also reused our show home furniture by donating it to Embassy, which furnished five homes in the Greater Manchester area. This initiative supports individuals in need of housing, helping them create a comfortable and stable living environment.



“ Thank you all so much for your support so far this year. It is truly an honour to have you on this journey with us. The Embassy model and the village are revolutionary alternatives to the current status quo which has people waiting in shelters for an average of 10-15 years. We plan on shaking things up in a UK-first with the Embassy Village and I'm so glad we have your backing!

Sid Williams, Co-founder & Director at Embassy



Volunteering and Charity Events

JLL & Place North West Charity 5-a-side Football Tournament

A team of seven Ascend employees took part in this tournament to support two remarkable charities:

HideOut Youth Zone:

This charity is dedicated to supporting young people by providing a safe space, engaging activities, and someone to talk to. The funds raised will support the Honey Bees sports programme, encouraging girls to participate in sports, and provide free places at HideOut's holiday club. This club tackles holiday hunger and offers a safe environment during school holidays, running from 8am to 5pm, with meals provided. HideOut's members come from some of Manchester's most deprived areas, with 43% eligible for free school meals, making this initiative vital for their well-being.

WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature):

Working globally to restore habitats, educate communities, and build resilience against climate change, WWF places a special focus on supporting women and vulnerable groups during crises.

LandAid SleepOut Event

Several members of our team participated in LandAid's SleepOut event in Manchester, spending a night outdoors to raise crucial funds and awareness to combat youth homelessness across the UK. LandAid provides transformative support, from safe accommodation to essential grants, helping young people rebuild their lives.



Monthly Charity Support

We have launched a new initiative encouraging employees to nominate a charity each month to receive a donation from Ascend. So far, we have supported:

- The Royal British Legion
- NorthCare Charity
- Mind



Additionally we ran several impactful social media campaigns to celebrate and promote national awareness days, including International Women's Day, Earth Day & Mental Health Day, and launched our own Green Living campaign to encourage sustainable practices and environmental stewardship.



2025 Key Priorities

In 2025, we are dedicated to advancing our sustainability journey in line with our 3-year sustainability strategy.

Health and Wellbeing Initiatives

Through targeted health and wellbeing and Green Living campaigns, we will provide valuable information, signposting, and advice for both residents and employees.

Carbon Reduction Efforts

Our carbon reduction activities will continue, focusing on reducing energy consumption, transitioning to renewable energy sources, and expanding our fleet of electric and hybrid vehicles.

Technology Optimisation

We will continue to optimise technology to minimise unnecessary travel, maintain virtual viewings and inspections, and our focus on 'no access' visits.

Community Engagement

Our volunteering programme and support for local charities will remain a priority. We will also further roll out our Green Living home audits and collaborate with energy providers to promote and increase the adoption of smart meters.

Employee Support

Through our employee benefits programme and employee engagement committee, we will ensure that our employees are supported and have access to wellbeing information and services.

E-Waste Reduction

We will persist in our efforts to reduce electronic waste through our ongoing E-Waste policy.

We are excited to be on this journey, delivering against our sustainability vision and mission: to integrate sustainable practices into all aspects of our operations, safeguard the environment, and ensure a positive impact for our residents and communities. We aim to be recognised as a conscientious and sustainable business, inspiring our employees and leading the behavioural change necessary for a more sustainable, inclusive and equitable future for everyone.

Ascend

For Better BTR

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