



Clive Betts MP

(Chair, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Select Committee 2010-2024 and Member of
Parliament for Sheffield South East)

Housing and Communities Annual Lecture 2024

09:30 – 12:30, Wednesday 10th July 2024
Banqueting Suite, Birmingham Council House



Housing and Communities Annual Lecture 2024

10:30 – 10:35

Welcome

(Dr Halima Sacranie, Director of Housing Research, CNM)

10:35 – 10:50

Delivering Social Impact and Supporting Communities through Commercial Banking

(Colin Fyfe, CEO, Unity Trust Bank)

10:50 – 11:00

What would a Decent Neighbourhood Standard look like?

(Dr Halima Sacranie, Director of Housing Research, CNM)

11:00 – 11:45 Housing and Communities Annual Lecture, followed by Q&A

(Clive Betts MP, Member of Parliament for Sheffield South East))

11:45 – 12:30 Refreshments



Dr Halima Sacranie
Director of Housing Research
Centre for the New Midlands

Welcome



Colin Fyfe
CEO
Unity Trust Bank Plc

Delivering Social Impact and Supporting Communities through Commercial Banking



For Businesses. For Communities. For Good.



'Not for further distribution'

Our history

We were launched out of a vision by trade unions to create a bank that would embrace the philosophy of serving the common good. Now independent, we continue to embody these founding principles.

1984

Unity Trust Bank launched on May 1

1987

Acquired full status as a bank

2012

Committed to delivering positive social impact alongside stable finance returns

2013

First Living Wage accredited bank in the UK

2014

First UK bank to achieve the Fair Tax Mark

2015

We became fully independent

2016

Joined the Banking Standards Board

2020 / 2021

Socially Responsible Lender of the year (NACFB)

2023

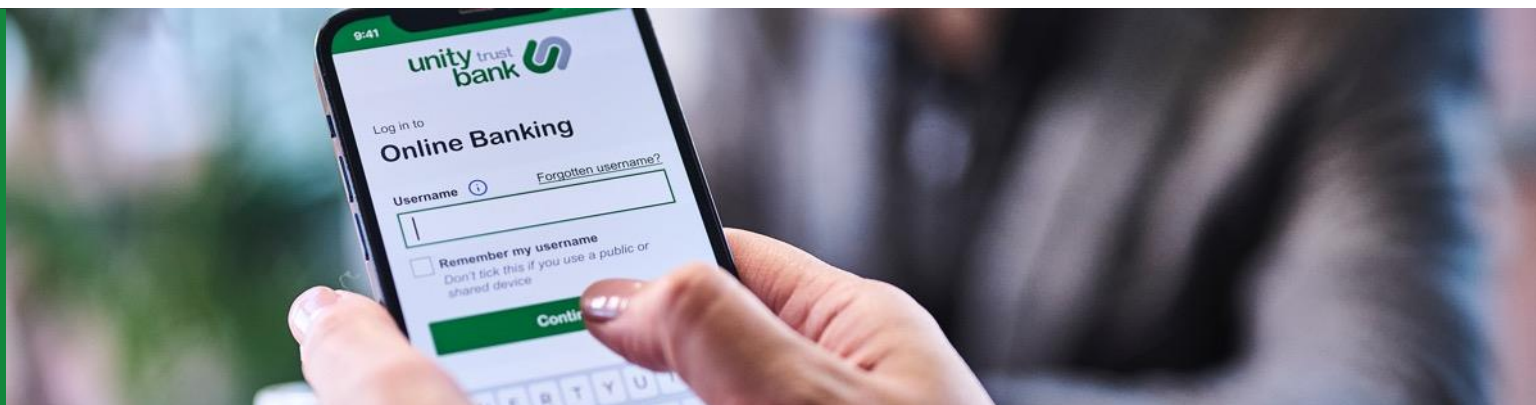
Reached £1 billion in lending for the first time

2023

Business of the Year (Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce), Regional winner (British Chambers of Commerce); Industry Trailblazer (Living Wage Foundation)

“Unity Trust will be an organisation identified with, and embracing, the philosophy of the common good”

Founding Statement, 1984



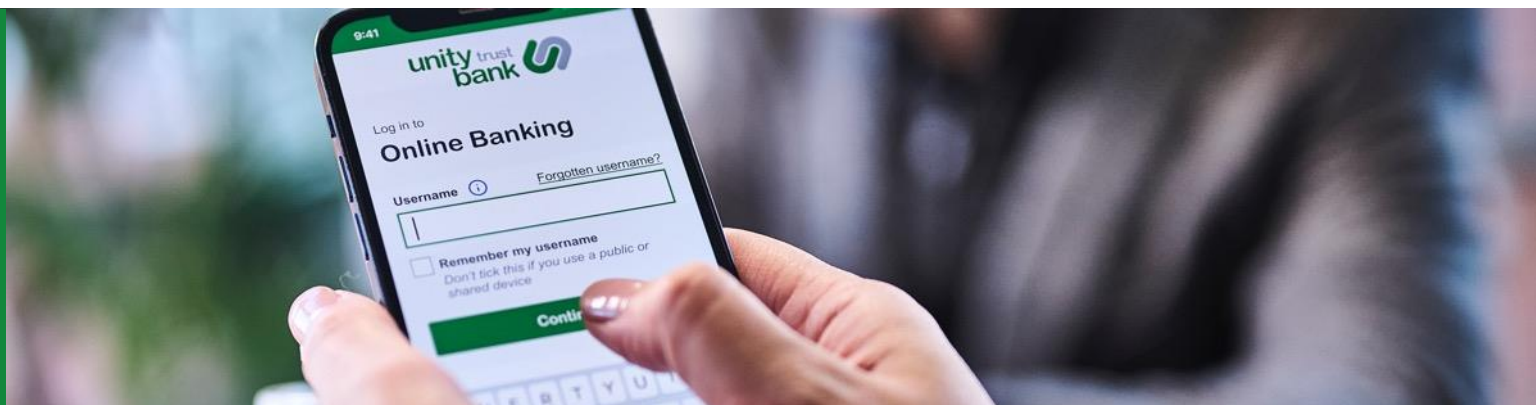
Our history

We were launched out of a vision by trade unions to create a bank that would embrace the philosophy of serving the common good. Now independent, we continue to embody these founding principles.

1984	1987	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2020 / 2021	2023	2023
Unity Trust Bank launched on May 1					We became fully independent			Reached £1 billion in lending for the first time	

“Unity Trust will be an organisation identified with, and embracing, the philosophy of the common good”

Founding Statement, 1984



Ethical banking for business

Our mission is to create a better society for everyone by delivering social benefit alongside sustainable returns.

As an ethical bank, our customers' deposits enable us to lend only to organisations that address social, economic or environment needs.

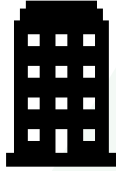
We align every lending proposal against one or more of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and use best practice to measure and ensure that all funding has demonstrable and quantifiable impact.

Our lending helps businesses across a range of sectors - from healthcare to education - to grow, achieve their ambitions and make a positive difference to local communities across the UK.

Unity's experience in the housing sector

>125

Loans provided focused on the provision housing



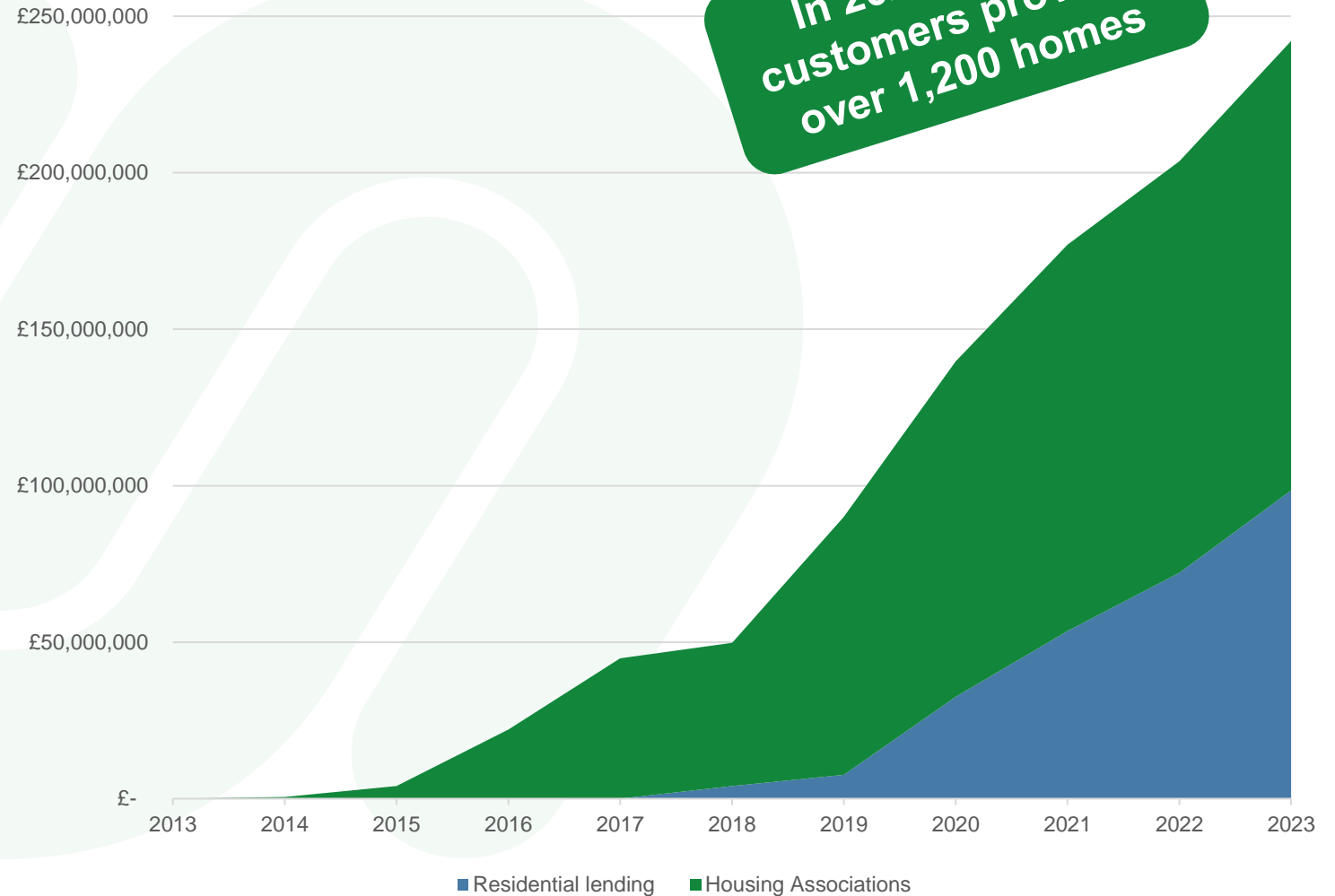
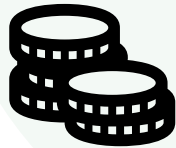
£1.9m

Average loan size



>£200m

Total combined drawn balances over decade



We're here to respond to the increasing demand for housing

Unity provides

Unity integrates impact, risk, return with a customer-centric focus, to work with organisations delivering good homes.

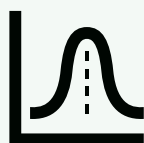
Specialist

Housing Association
Relationship Managers



>14%

of our overall loan
book by value



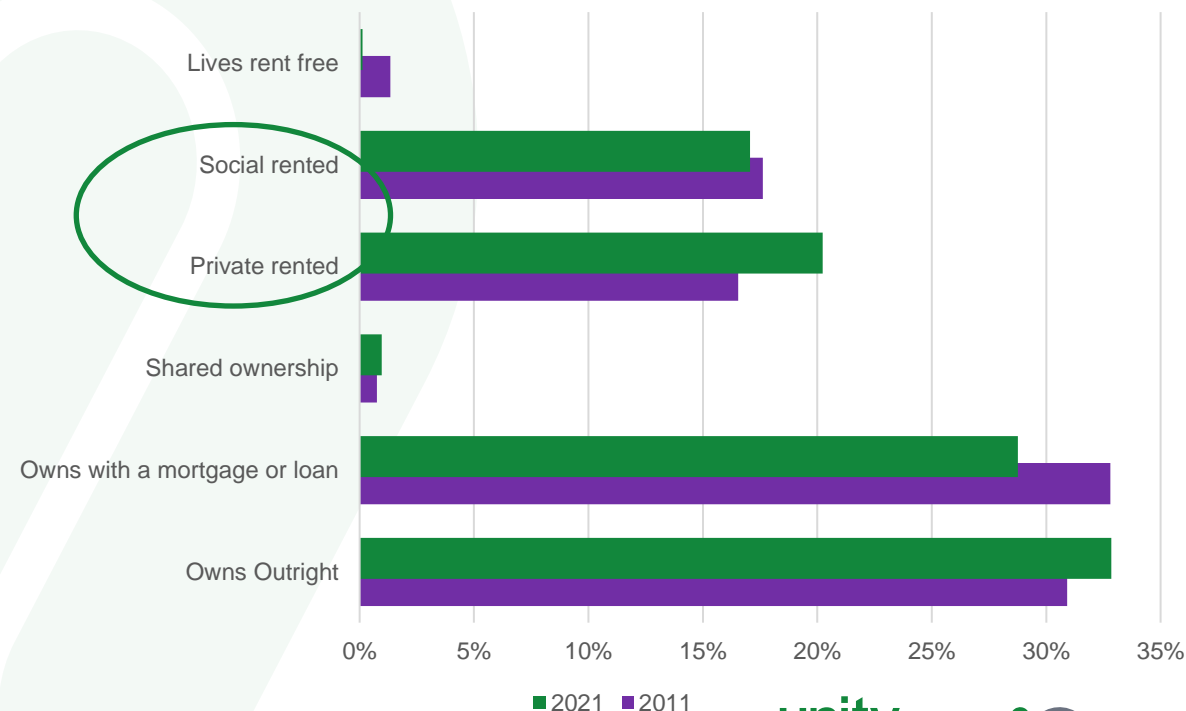
£25m

Allocated for **HADI****
scheme to meet
decarbonisation needs.



To support those in need of housing

With 9.8 million households in social and private rent, ethical banks can play a role ensuring housing is sustainable, affordable and quality.



Social need in the housing sector

8.5 million people in the UK have an unmet housing need. The drivers and impacts are multi-faceted and require cross-sector and all of society to solve for the most vulnerable people in our communities.



4.2 million

people estimated in waiting lists of social housing in England



3.7 million

people live in overcrowded homes in England



2 million

children live in households that face some form of housing need.



1.9 million

'hidden households' of adults living with parents

Upgrading and utilising existing housing stock

Building new social and affordable homes

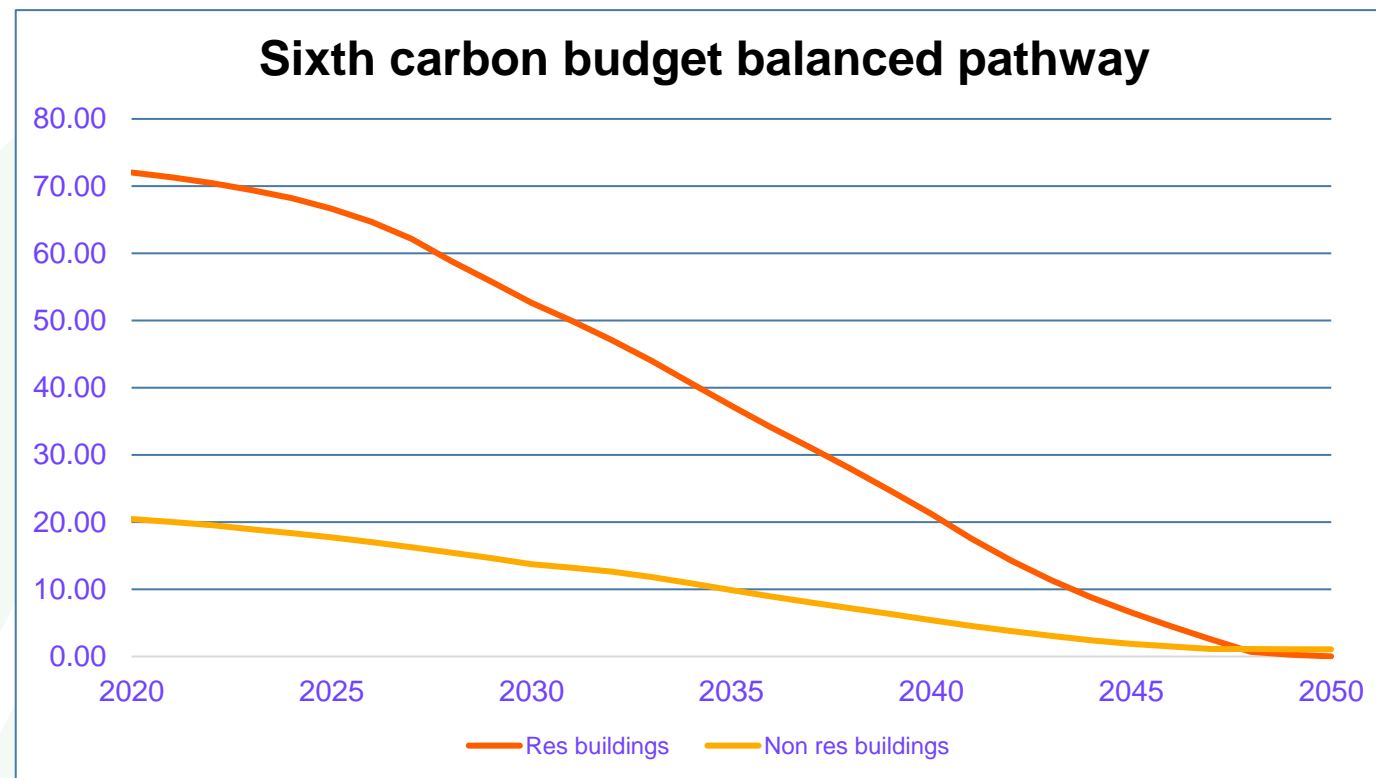
Improve quality & energy efficiency of existing homes

The Net Zero and environmental drive in Housing

Residential buildings have the second largest CO2e emissions rates to reduce.

People in low income housing or social rent are at higher risks of the impacts of climate change:

- Higher risk of pollution and poor air quality
- Climate-related risks such as heatwaves carry greater risk due to poor housing quality
- Cost of 'maladaptation' likely higher due to poor housing standards



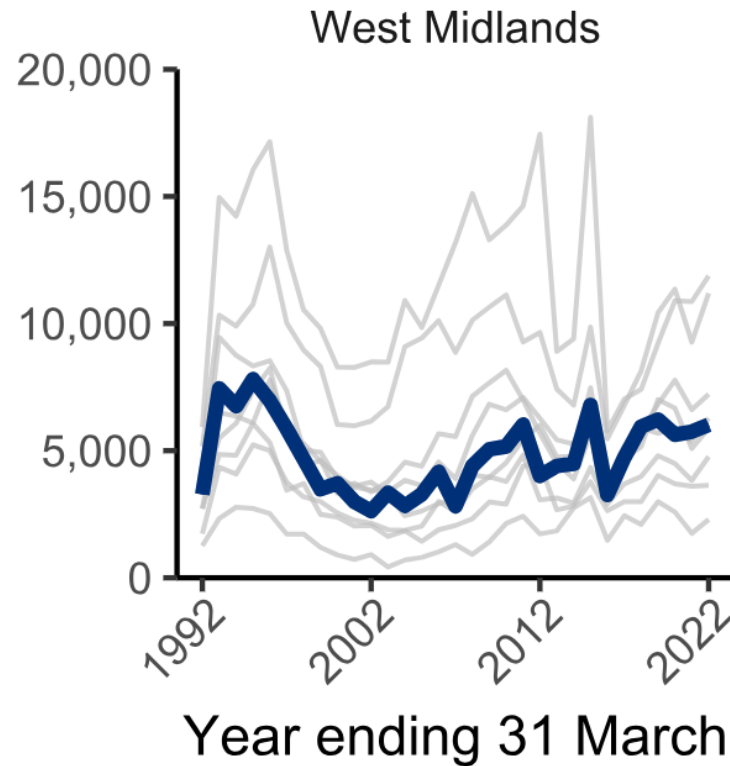
Support affordable housing providers to manage climate-risk

Champion retrofitting to decarbonise

Tailored finance to meet housing provider needs

What is the situation in the West Midlands?

Data from the West Midlands Combined Authority highlights the increasing housing affordability problem.



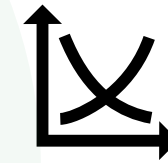
£265k

The median house price regionwide



125k

Families remained on social housing waiting lists as at early 2024 across West Midlands region.



+83%

Increase over the past decade, while earnings growth is just **27%**



+20k

Permitted new homes per year since 2021. 18k units below estimated yearly need.

What challenges do our customers face?

Safety and Quality Standards

Prioritise tenant wellbeing - Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.



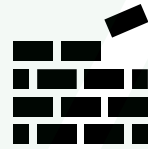
EPC ratings

Upgrade programme to have more homes in Band C 'practical, cost-effective and affordable'



Development Programme

Focus on more refurbishment of existing housing stock instead of development of new homes.



Balancing affordability and cost

Maximum permissible rent increase 7.7% for 2024/25.



Increased borrowing costs

According to the Gov Survey there is a record amount of debt drawn while interest rate spike.



Financial Viability Standard

Increasing demand on resources has reduced cash balances to the lowest level in ten years.



Sustainability and net zero achievement

Decarbonisation of social housing stock has become a key strategic challenge for all social housing providers.

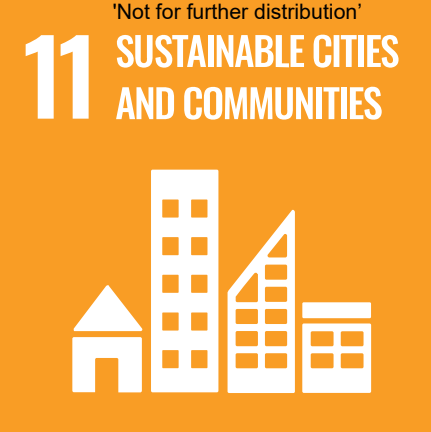


How do we respond to the need?

1. Working with housing providers who align to our values to deliver affordable, sustainable and quality homes.
2. Supporting our customers by understanding their commercial needs and mission.
3. Delivering against our mission at Unity Trust Bank by ensuring we deliver against our double bottom line with our customers.

If Unity can help you contribute to delivering great homes, contact us

SDG 11 focuses on investment in quality, sustainable and affordable housing.



Supporting this outcome area, our customers delivered the following achievements in 2023:*

452

Housing supported to decarbonise

New measure

1,225

People supported housing

2022: 493

Colin Fyfe

Chief Executive Officer

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✉ Email: us@unity.co.uk

☎ Phone: **0345 140 1000***



Follow us: [!\[\]\(de95854c7ee024cfadc48187bbb781b2_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(cef08d8c15d8a8acd5e25ab0d65432c3_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(c244836fd67166dc60ebf5279a0f8377_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(c9651b690bdf1dda88278b8b3445c7b1_img.jpg\)](#)

*Our call centre opening hours are 9am - 4pm, Monday to Friday, excluding bank and public holidays in England or Scotland. Calls may be monitored and recorded for training, quality and security purposes. Calls to this number are charged at your local geographic rate, and calls from mobiles may be higher. Please contact your telephone provider for details.



What would a 'Decent Neighbourhood Standard' look like?

Dr Halima Sacranie
Director of Housing Research
Centre for the New Midlands

CNM's Housing and Communities Research Mission

To **address critical issues** around Housing and Communities in the Midlands, supporting independent debate on strategy, policy and practice.

To **collaborate with key stakeholders** to undertake impactful research, which includes reviewing existing evidence, identifying evidence gaps and addressing these gaps with new rigorous research.

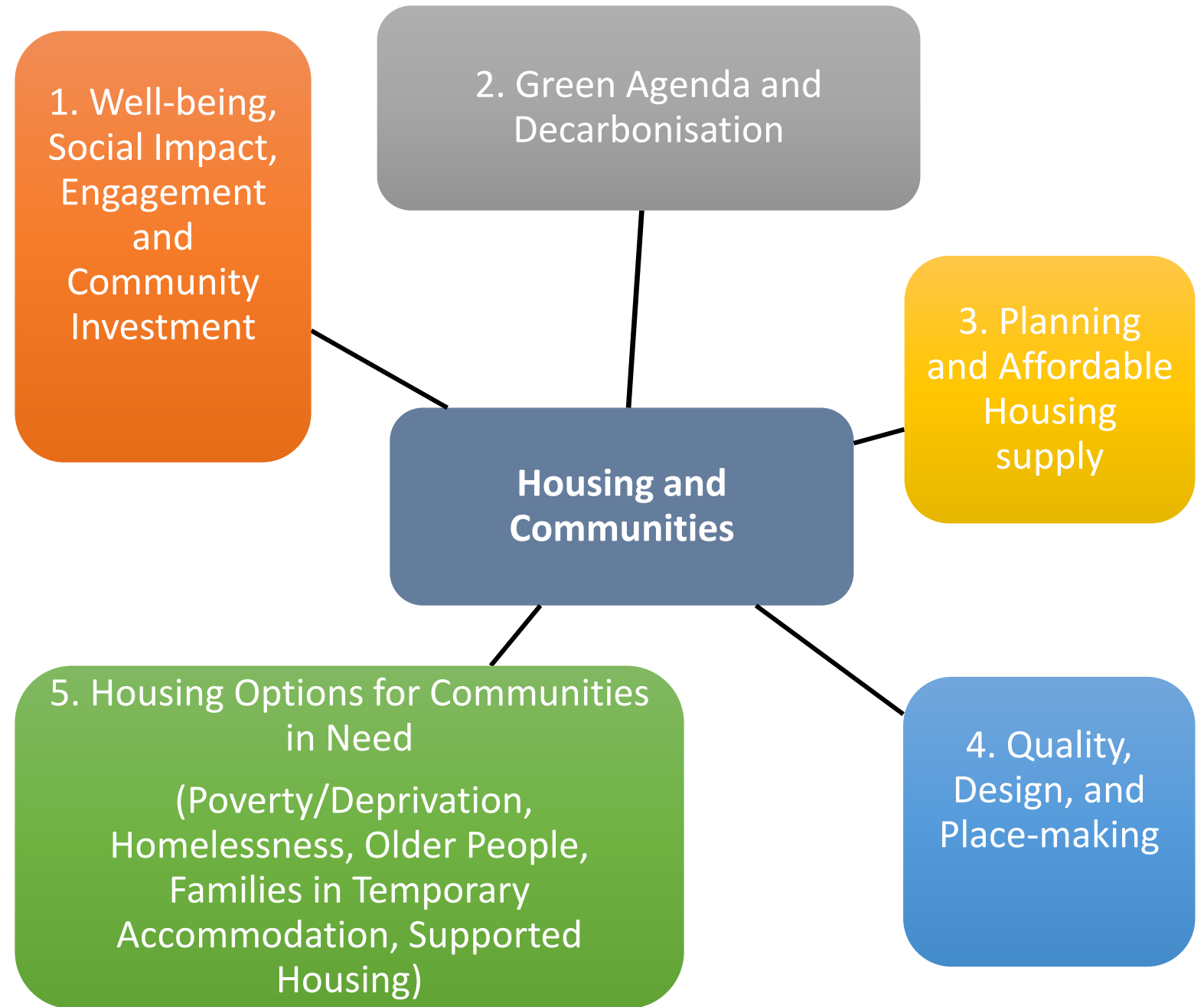
To **create long-term and sustainable impact** as a thinktank by uniquely **contributing towards new research** on core themes including housing and neighbourhood quality, health and wellbeing, net zero transitions and tenant engagement, housing need and affordability.



CNM HC

Core Themes:

- Housing Quality, Affordability and Supply
- Neighbourhoods, Place-making and Communities



The Impact of Housing Quality and Neighbourhood Conditions on Resident Wellbeing: A Longitudinal Study of an English Housing Association

CPFW, Aston University (2022-22)

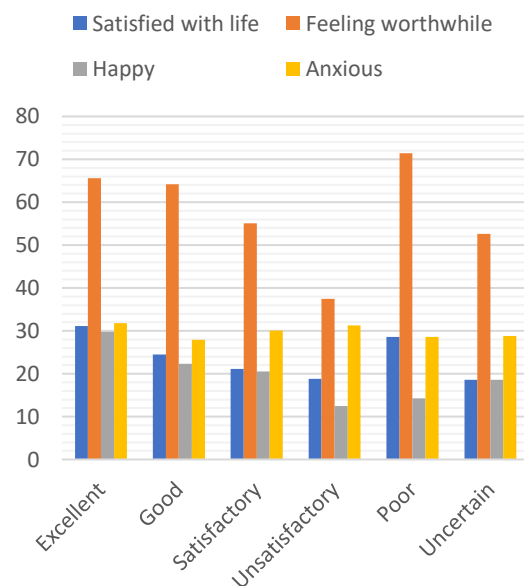


Better access to school, public utilities or facilities (like transport), essential stores or GP surgeries are associated with higher SWB.

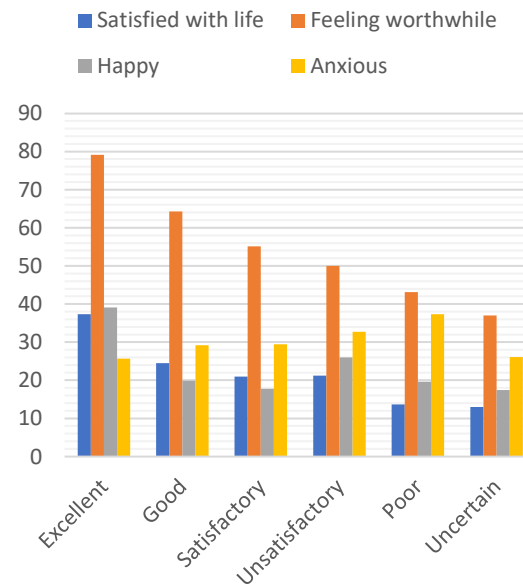


Access to public utilities or facilities and GPs is positively related to happiness and lower levels of anxiety. Access to public utilities is also positively associated with the feeling of worthwhile.

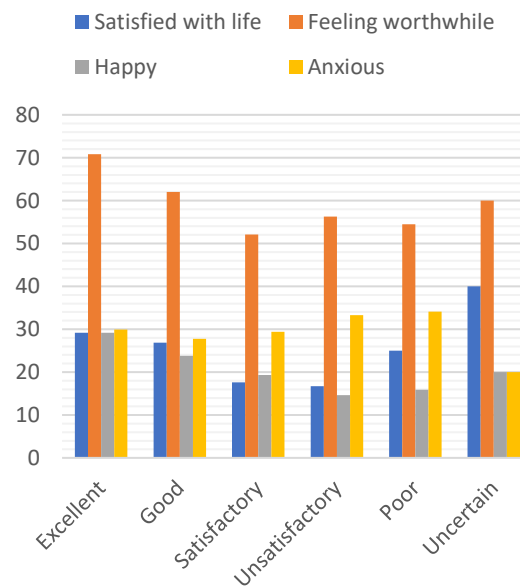
SWB by access to school



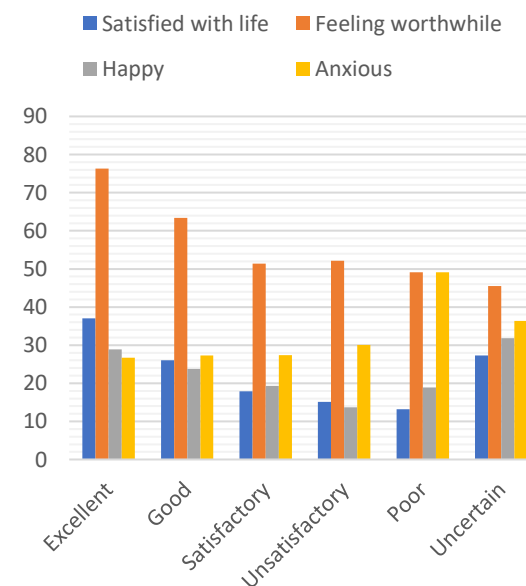
SWB by access to public utilities



SWB by access to essential stores

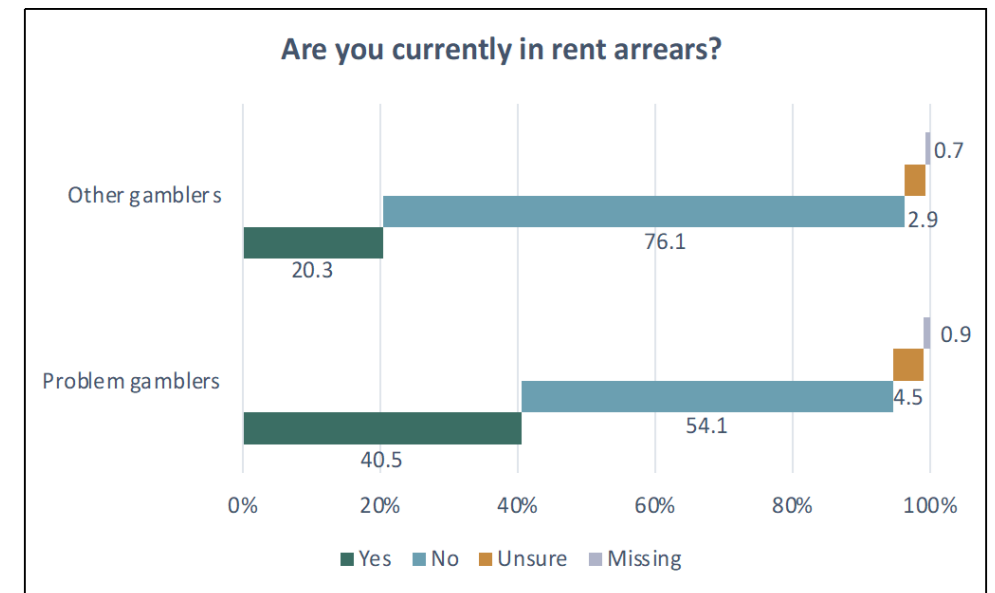


SWB by access to GP



BCC Harmful Gambling and Tenancy Insecurity (2021 – 2023)

- Aston University and Birmingham City Council study to
 - understand the links between gambling harm and tenancy insecurity
 - help develop intervention strategies to prevent tenancy loss as a result
- Funded by the Regulatory Settlement Funds of the UK's Gambling Commission





Qualitative evidence on concentration of bookmakers in deprived neighbourhoods

- *The biggest issue is look in any High Street and it's filled with Betfred and Paddy Power. I live near Acocks Green High Street and **every shop is a gambling facility**. There are **far too many gambling shops open and in such close proximity**, all advertising heavily- this is how people develop gambling issues. **I'm tempted to go in myself** but so far I've never gambled at all ever not even the lottery and I'm still tempted. Hopefully, I never will gamble, that's my intention, but **with heavy advertising and cost of living I can see why people can fall into the trap** of harmful gambling.*
- *I understand gambling is a big thing at the moment but the society we live in there is a **betting shop in every poor run-down area** we live in."*

- *“Delivering decent homes is a commitment in the national strategy for **neighbourhood renewal** and has a key role to play in **narrowing the gap** between deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country. Delivery needs to be part of a holistic approach to regeneration which is about more than just ‘bricks and mortar’ and which makes the right linkages to wider regeneration objectives such as **improving health and education outcomes, renewing failing housing markets, tackling poverty and delivering mixed sustainable communities**”*

(Decent Homes Standard, 2006, pg. 8).



Chancellor's Speech – 8 July:

- “Nowhere is **decisive reform** needed more urgently than in the case **of our planning system.**”
- “Urgent steps necessary **to build the infrastructure** that we need, **including one and a half million homes** over the next five years.”
- “First, we will **reform the National Planning Policy Framework**, consulting on a new growth-focused approach to the planning system before the end of the month, including restoring **mandatory housing targets.**”
- “Including **universal coverage of local plans**, and reviews of greenbelt boundaries. These will prioritise **Brownfield and grey belt land** for development to meet housing targets where needed.”



Labour Party Manifesto 2024

“In partnership with local leaders and communities, a Labour government will build **a new generation of new towns**, inspired by the proud legacy of the 1945 Labour government. **Alongside urban extensions and regeneration projects**, these will form part of a series of **large-scale new communities** across England.”

“Labour wants **exemplary development** to be the norm not the exception. We will take steps to ensure we are building more **high-quality, well-designed, and sustainable homes and creating places** that increase climate resilience and promote nature recovery. ”

DNS Research Proposed Stages and Timeline



Stage 1: Regional multi-stakeholder co-design and consultation through call for evidence, roundtables, conference panels and community workshops



Stage 2: Publishing outcomes of regional consult and co-design in the form of a research brief



Stage 3: Literature Review and Fact Finding to map out and evaluate previous and current Neighbourhood standards (regionally, nationally, international, academic and public policy)



Stage 4: Designing a Pilot Decent Neighbourhood Standard



Stage 5: Testing the Pilot Decent Neighbourhood Standard across regional case studies including urban/rural, mixed tenure, social housing, new build, regeneration brownfield neighbourhoods



Stage 6: Refining Pilot and Reporting

Connections for Prosperity Conference

18 September 2024 | Edgbaston Stadium

Decent Neighbourhood Standard Session (3a)

- The quality and conditions of neighbourhoods greatly impact on the health and wellbeing of households and communities.
- Who is ultimately responsible for the standard of a neighbourhood?
- What frameworks have worked (or not) before, where and why?
- How can we develop a Decent Neighbourhood Standard to help shape investment and policy making to reduce social inequalities and help communities to grow and thrive?
- Tim Fawcett, Simon Foster, Dr Elanor Warwick, Dr Halima Sacranie

<https://www.connectionsforprosperity.co.uk/session/3a>





Housing and Communities Annual Lecture 2024

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Your questions

Please state your name and organisation clearly



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