

# Annual Report 2021/2022



Sanctuary  
Scotland

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## Objectives

The objectives of Sanctuary Scotland are to:

- Provide good quality, affordable housing for both rent and for sale to those least able to compete in other sectors of the housing market.
- Provide housing and associated services for those with more specific housing requirements, such as the elderly and those with long-term disabilities.
- Provide value-for-money services and advice to individuals and organisations working to provide social housing.
- Ensure that any investment made by Sanctuary Scotland provides sustainable benefits for local communities.

## Values

In pursuing these objectives, Sanctuary Scotland works to Sanctuary Group's values:



**Ambition**



**Diversity**



**Integrity**



**Quality**



**Sustainability**



## Chairperson's Statement

At Sanctuary Scotland we want to help make life better for those who live in our homes and access our services. This has never been more important than here and now.

Global events have had many consequences, not least for the social housing sector as everyone continues to be affected by the cost-of-living crisis following two years of Covid-19.

Like other housing providers, our services have evolved to meet the challenges of a post-pandemic world. I believe we are in a much better position than back in March 2020 when Scotland first locked down.

Thanks to a full roll-out of mobile devices our Housing Officers can now work more effectively within their communities and spend less time at a desk. This investment in our frontline teams coincided with lockdown rules which prevented members of the public from accessing our offices.

Our Housing and Welfare Rights Officers are now more likely to visit residents at home, saving them a journey. We believe our Housing team's move to an 'Us to You' model was exactly the right thing to do.

During lockdown, Government guidance designed to protect public health rightly stopped our Repairs and Maintenance teams from carrying out non-essential work in people's homes. This meant that for a period of time our list of outstanding 'non-essential' repair jobs grew, with many minor issues only getting worse.

Both our own and our contractors' staff were similarly affected by Covid, reducing the resource available to tackle this list.

The UK-wide shortage of materials still being experienced created further delay. The outcome of these delays was significant and saw the number of non-emergency repairs carried out by us during the year almost double. Thanks to this amazing effort by our staff and our planned reinvestment budget increasing by well over one third this year, we are now getting closer to where our residents want us to be.

Despite Covid-related site closures and other construction industry issues, our Development team continues to build hundreds of affordable homes across Scotland. These energy-efficient properties are handed over to residents as soon as they are completed, improving lives and reducing fuel poverty.

The Scottish Housing Regulator asks landlords to formally measure tenant satisfaction at least every three years. Last year's survey told us what our residents' priorities are and what they would like us to do better, information which can be found on page 4. We have created an action plan and will keep our residents updated through our website and this year's Annual Report to Tenants.

It goes without saying that the resilience and commitment of our staff in doing their best to improve the lives of our residents in tough times has been exemplary.

**Alan West**  
Chairperson





How we manage our homes continued to be affected by the pandemic during 2021/2022. We worked through Covid-19 to serve our residents as best we could, mindful the guidance could change at any time. While our offices were sometimes shut for health and safety reasons, it did not stop us from getting out and about. Thanks to our 'Us to You' way of working, staff have mobile devices to access the information they need, even when away from the office. Our Welfare Rights Officers helped 379 residents secure more than £875,000 in welfare benefits.

We carried out our most recent tenant satisfaction survey in late 2021. The survey is carried out every three years, in line with Scottish Housing Regulator guidance, so it was unsurprising to find satisfaction slightly lower than our pre-pandemic figure.

Residents told us they want us to continue to focus on:

- An effective repair service
- Modernising our homes to keep them to a reasonable standard
- Keeping our rents and service charges affordable.

We used tenant feedback to shape an action plan to target these priorities and hope customer satisfaction will increase as a result.

Our Community Development team supported thousands of residents by providing 21 projects with almost £90,000 of funding. Our team, however, does so much more than give out grants. In Cumbernauld and across Glasgow's Toryglen and Priesthill neighbourhoods, our dedicated staff have helped more than 500 people build relationships and develop their skills, strengthening these communities as a whole.

A targeted approach to eviction prevention has seen us work with dozens of residents to help them overcome problems and keep their safe, secure and stable Sanctuary home.

The team also brought in more than £180,000 of external funding for our communities. This money makes a real difference, paying for meals, tenancy support and antisocial behaviour work within schools, among other things.

We also work with our development partners to benefit local communities. This can include in-kind support, plus job and training opportunities.

In Paisley, where we built 131 homes in Glenburn, we donated £10,000 to Bushes Primary School for play equipment the pupils could enjoy. St Brigid's Primary School in Glasgow received the same sum for the same purpose from our Community Investment Fund, making breaktimes much more fun.

In Cumbernauld, our construction partner at our Burns Road development not only created five new jobs and two apprenticeships but also put £26,500 into a new trauma-informed community builder role, hosted by our partner organisation Resilience Learning Partnership. This investment has enabled us to deliver trauma-informed training and workshops to help community members understand the impact trauma may have had on them and their neighbourhood.

Another construction partner installed two cabins in wooded grounds at the town's St Mary's Primary School.



These learning spaces give pupils the chance to enjoy outdoor learning, connect with nature and provide context for the school's lessons on the environment and sustainability.



## Development and Reinvestment

Our development programme continues to create hundreds of homes to help tackle Scotland's acute shortage of affordable housing. This work is most obvious in Aberdeen where we are currently building 329 new homes across three projects. During 2021/2022 we began building 118 homes for social rent in North Anderson Drive on the site of a former fire station. This £23 million investment in apartments and houses includes one, two and three-bedroom homes, due for completion in 2024.

Elsewhere in the city another 150 homes for social rent are progressing in Persley Den Drive. We will own and manage these properties which cover the affordable housing element of the village-style development being created by CALA Homes (North). Our third work-in-progress in Aberdeen is the £8.8 million final phase of Donside Village. We will deliver another 61 homes for social rent, eight years after phase 1 was completed. Like all of Sanctuary Scotland's affordable new-build projects, this development was made possible thanks to a substantial Scottish Government grant and support from the local authority.

In North Lanarkshire our £75 million regeneration of Cumbernauld's high-rise blocks nears completion, with 131 homes and our new office in the town's Burns Road. The council's wider plans to improve the town centre will be complemented by our visually striking concave-shaped flatted block. By the end of this year the area where Stuart House, Elliot House and Morison House once stood will once again be a thriving community. Burns Road, itself a £23 million project, includes communal gardens and traditional Scottish gables.

In Renfrewshire we completed 131 homes at our Gleniffer Reach development in Paisley's Glenburn. Most of the homes were handed over to residents before the end of March 2022, including 22 for affordable ownership sold through the Scottish Government's shared equity scheme. We manage 79 of the 109 social rent properties, with Paisley Housing Association managing the other 30.

We also completed our first programme of homes in Inverclyde during 2021/2022. Residents were thrilled to receive keys to 44 high-quality flats in Mount Pleasant Street, Greenock. Our £13.8 million investment in Inverclyde included 52 homes across three sites in Port Glasgow. Within this mix of houses, flats and cottage flats are 16 amenity flats with walk-in showers to help people live independently. We work with local authorities to make sure our developments meet the local community's needs.

Our planned improvements also see us reinvest millions of pounds each year to keep our existing homes warm, secure and watertight. During 2021/2022 a country-wide programme delivered new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors, central heating systems, replacement boilers and door entry systems. The environment is a key driver of our home improvement plans as we look to reduce energy consumption, fuel poverty and the emission of greenhouse gases. As one of Scotland's largest social landlords we are aware we have a part to play in helping to tackle the climate emergency. We are confident our reinvestment proposals will make sure all of our properties meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) as required by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Our reinvestment budget of £10.8 million for 2022/2023 is a year-on-year increase of 37%. This significant sum of money is evidence of our determination to give every Sanctuary Scotland resident the best possible home. Our list of planned improvements includes new kitchens in Aberdeen and Kemnay, new bathrooms in Inverurie, new doors in Peterhead, new windows in Glasgow, new boilers in Dundee and new roofing on some of our flatted blocks in Cumbernauld. The 3-year kitchen, bathroom and heating replacement programme in Glasgow's Torglen will also continue, a transfer promise to Thistle Housing Association's former tenants.





## Social Housing Performance Indicators

| Housing Stock  | 2022          | 2021          |   |
|--|---------------|---------------|---|
| Total available for letting                            | 8,231         | 8,116         | Our new-build programme added more than 120 affordable homes and included developments in Paisley, Greenock and Port Glasgow.<br><br>We had a higher number of vacancies on 31 March 2022 compared with 2021, as tenants were more likely to move home as pandemic restrictions had eased.  |
| Vacant and available for letting                       | 51            | 43            |   |
| Vacant and unavailable for letting                     | 29            | 22            |   |
| <b>Total stock</b>                                     | <b>8,260</b>  | <b>8,138</b>  |   |
| Allocations and Voids                                  |               |               |   |
| Number of relets                                       | 437           | 358           | The transfer of Thistle Housing Association on 1 March 2021 increased the number of homes we rent out by 947 (or around 14%). As a result, the rise in the relets figure during the full 1 April to 31 March reporting period is in line with what we expected.   |
| Average number of days to relet                        | 30            | 41            |   |
| Residential rent lost through voids %                  | 0.45          | 0.62          | The easing of lockdown restrictions both encouraged more people to move home and enabled our Housing teams to support viewings and sign ups. This was instrumental in us reducing our relet timeframe by 11 days, and reducing the rent lost through voids.   |
| Rent Arrears   |               |               |   |
| Current tenant rent arrears %                          | 4.7           | 5.4           | The pandemic and cost-of-living crisis have had a significant impact on the household budgets of many residents. In response we are making a special effort to support residents who have fallen behind with their rent. Our Housing teams help to identify problems, find solutions and involve our in-house welfare specialists at an early stage. We are delighted this evidence-based action led to a drop in our current and former tenant arrears percentage. |
| Current tenant rent arrears £                          | 1,983,045     | 1,925,806     |   |
| Former tenant rent arrears %                           | 0.25          | 0.28          |   |
| Former tenant rent arrears £                           | 104,317       | 100,780       |   |
| Maintenance Services                                   |               |               |   |
| Classification of Repair                               |               |               |   |
| Emergency repairs                                      | 8,227         | 6,799         | The increase in the number of emergency repairs mainly resulted from the Thistle Housing Association transfer, and the increase in our managed property numbers for the full 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 reporting year.  |
| Non-emergency repairs                                  | 24,343        | 12,877        |   |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>32,570</b> | <b>19,676</b> | The unprecedented rise in non-emergency repairs stemmed from the Government ending the ban on carrying out non-urgent repairs within people's homes, plus a related surge in people reporting non-urgent repairs after these working restrictions ended. In the year from 1 April 2021 our Maintenance teams carried out 12,894 more repairs than in the previous 12 months (an increase of 66%).   |
| Repairs Performance                                    |               |               |   |
| Average time to complete emergency repair (hours)      | 5.8           | 4.5           | The slight increases in the times taken to carry out repairs is explained by the unusual challenges our Maintenance teams faced. This included issues with the supply of materials outside of our control. We did, however, carry out many more repairs at a time when Covid-19 cases often caused staff to be absent from work. Despite the challenges we did not exceed the 20-working day timeframe within which we aim to complete non-emergency repairs.       |
| Average working days to complete non-emergency repairs | 17.7          | 13.2          |   |





## Procurement Activity

This section reports on procurement activity that has taken place since the publication of the Procurement Strategy issued in December 2016, arising from the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. Sanctuary's strategy can be viewed at:

[www.sanctuary.co.uk/suppliers](http://www.sanctuary.co.uk/suppliers) 

In terms of regulated procurement, goods and services for Sanctuary Group as a whole are procured by the central Procurement team, in accordance with established Group procedures

and Public Contract Regulations that prevail in both England and Scotland. All such Group-wide activity is reported in overall Group reports and the impact of community benefits is summarised in Sanctuary's Sustainability Report. An area where procurement occurs in Scotland separately is where Sanctuary carries out development and house building. A summary of this activity is below.

### Summary of Activity 2021/2022

The following schemes have been awarded in the period April 2021 to March 2022:

| Scheme                  | Contractor                         | Contract Amount £m | Date of Contract | Number of Units |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Donside, Aberdeen       | Robertson Construction Eastern Ltd | 8.2                | 28/4/2021        | 61              |
| The Victoria, Glasgow   | Cruden Building & Renewals         | 44.3               | 10/8/2021        | 277             |
| North Anderson Drive    | Ogilvie Construction Ltd           | 18.2               | 16/9/2021        | 118             |
| Whitegates              | Persimmon Homes Ltd                | 2.7                | 2/11/2021        | 21              |
| <b>Total</b>            |                                    | <b>73.4</b>        |                  | <b>477</b>      |
| Scheme                  | Consultant                         | Fee Amount £m      | Appointment Date |                 |
| Donside, North Anderson | Brownriggs                         | 0.05               | 24 February 2017 |                 |
| <b>Total</b>            |                                    | <b>0.05</b>        |                  |                 |
| <b>Grand total</b>      |                                    | <b>73.9</b>        |                  |                 |

Covid-19 continued to impact the construction industry during 2021/2022 as companies began to increase activity following long periods of lockdown.

The volatility of costs for labour and materials as a result of Covid-19 and also wider global events (such as Brexit, fuel cost increases, and the Ukraine war) continues to affect construction costs, something the Group will actively monitor during 2022/2023.

All services listed on the previous page have been procured in accordance with Group procedures and Public Contract Regulations (Scotland) 2015, and consequently the principles contained in the strategy.

Due to the nature of development works, it is not always possible to publish an anticipated programme as the progression of schemes to site is never certain, neither is the advanced knowledge of site opportunities particularly given the circumstances outlined previously. Sanctuary will similarly publish a retrospective summary in 2023.

Sanctuary has in place major works and consultancy frameworks to support the Group's development programme. All frameworks require providers to consider how community benefits can be delivered. A thorough Community Benefits, Skills and Apprenticeships Framework for main contractors makes sure we maximise opportunities for community investment and the improvement of people's life chances.

Contract and award notices will be published on Public Contracts Scotland and Find a Tender Service. Again, the outcome of these requirements will be reported in 2023.



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We want this annual report to be accessible to all. If you would like it in a different format, please phone **0800 131 3348**.

**Sanctuary  
Scotland**

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