
Sustainability Report 2021-2022



Sanctuary

WELCOME



Sanctuary is an organisation that seeks to make a positive difference in society. Sustainability is fundamental to everything we do and is intrinsically linked to our mission and values. When we say our mission is “building affordable homes and sustainable communities where people choose to live”, we mean it. And a sustainable community is about more than just the physical environment.

Our homes and services support over 250,000 people, some of which are the most vulnerable within our society, not just to live but to thrive. As an organisation with 105,000 homes, we recognise our important role in achieving decarbonisation, with a target of reaching net zero by 2050 at the latest. We also have an opportunity to support the health, welfare, and development of our 12,500 employees and encourage fair and inclusive practices more generally.

The past few years have made clear the links between the global world we live in, the national and local communities we are a part of, and the role organisations can play in supporting both. This report therefore looks at all three aspects of sustainability: environmental, social and governance. It aims to highlight the work we are doing and the impact that we have.

To support this, we have considered the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs aim to stimulate action between now and 2030 that supports peace and prosperity for people and the planet.

On the next page you will find a summary of the key areas of focus for our sustainability strategy and how these align to our priority SDGs. Although Sanctuary recognises that we impact on each of the 17 goals, it is important that we prioritise areas where we have the greatest potential to contribute.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and that it helps to show how we hold ourselves to account, as we strive to be the best organisation we can.








A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Moule', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.









Craig Moule
Group Chief Executive

OUR PRIORITIES



This report shares a mixture of case studies and statistics demonstrating Sanctuary's positive impact as we strive to be a sustainable organisation. The diagram below provides a highlight of key activities with more detail found in the following pages.

	 Environment	 Society	 Governance
Strategic aim	<i>To understand and limit our environmental impact, making tangible steps on the journey to net zero by 2050.</i>	<i>To provide high-quality, homes and services that support our customers to have healthy and fulfilling lives.</i>	<i>To act at all times as a responsible organisation that is here for the long-term, recognising the positive role we can make in the lives of our employees as well as our customers.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigate the impacts of fuel poverty by investing in the energy efficiency of our homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain our long-term commitment to delivering and sustaining affordable homes. Use our specialist expertise to support customers that are in financial difficulty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that we pay our employees and supply chain fairly and on time.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce our impact on air quality by improving our fleet and operational processes. Create green spaces that support mental and physical health and wellbeing as well as biodiversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the role that having a high-quality home has on living a mentally and physically healthy life. Provide a range of vital care services with a focus on enriching lives and fostering independence. Support our customers in leading healthier lifestyles through our Sustainable Communities programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the physical and mental health of our 12,500 employees.
 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed social justice within our Environment Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure inclusive access to our services for all customers. Recognise the role we can play in supporting inclusion within our communities as part of our Sustainable Communities programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report both our gender and ethnicity pay gap. Create a vibrant workplace where everyone is able to be themselves.

	 Environment	 Society	 Governance
 <p>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Decarbonise all 105,000 of our homes by 2050. ➤ Reach EPC band C on all social homes by 2030. ➤ Transition to low-carbon heating while prioritising well-established technologies and customer's fuel bills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use energy efficiency measures to make our homes warmer and more affordable for customers. ➤ Encourage the growth of 'green' skills and supply chain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Transition energy contracts within our commercial buildings to low-carbon alternatives, which started with a switch to green electricity in October 2021.
 <p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support the development of green skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with SMEs wherever possible to support growth and local employment. ➤ Support enterprise, employment and learning opportunities through our Sustainable Communities programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remain committed to offering employees opportunities for growth and training, including apprenticeships. ➤ Become an employer of choice.
 <p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure our new developments are designed with the long-term needs of our customers in mind. ➤ Support biodiversity in greenspaces we manage throughout the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support initiatives that build resilience and connection within our communities through our Sustainable Communities programme. ➤ Make decisions based on our desire to be part of the fabric of communities in the long-term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understand our role as a local employer and contractor of services to support vibrant communities.
 <p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieve net zero by 2050 at the latest. ➤ Halve operational carbon emissions by 2030. ➤ Develop a Procurement plan to leverage positive environmental action throughout our supply chain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Raise awareness of sustainability and climate related action by engagement with our customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Build sustainability into our strategic decision making. ➤ Assess and mitigate climate change related risk effectively.
 <p>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work in partnership with other leading voices to support the decarbonisation of our sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognise our role working with a range of external organisations as part of the fabric of local communities. ➤ Learn from our mistakes and strive to always do better for our customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Benchmark ourselves against the highest standards of governance.

ENVIRONMENT



ENVIRONMENT



Customer Rana Judge at our Anderston, Glasgow allotment

Sanctuary's first Environment Strategy launched in June 2021. This sets out our key priorities across five cross-organisational themes: **people, data, assets, procurement, and evaluation.**

During 2021, Sanctuary also signed up to the United Nations Race to Zero pledge. This formalised our commitment to reach net zero by at least 2050 and to make significant steps on this journey by 2030. We will be making sure all our social housing properties reach an energy efficiency rating of at least EPC band C by the end of the decade while also aiming to halve our operational carbon emissions.



[Click above to find out more](#)



Energy efficiency

We continue to make improvements to the energy efficiency of our properties. It is important that we combat fuel poverty as well as decarbonise our homes, and we know that there will be many technological innovations between now and 2050. Therefore, we are prioritising our homes with the lowest energy performance ratings, focusing on maximising the thermal efficiency of our buildings and only installing low-carbon forms of heating if we can demonstrate this will lead to a saving on energy bills for our customers.

EPC ratings within our social housing

66% of our social housing properties have an EPC of band C or higher, slightly above the average sector performance. We are also pleased that only 223 properties have the lowest rated EPC bands of F or G, all of which have been offered energy efficiency works.

- » Band A: 0.20% (136)
- »» Band B: 17.90% (10,693)
- »»» Band C: 49.20% (29,372)
- »»»» Band D: 28.20% (16,818)
- »»»»» Band E: 4.10% (2,442)
- »»»»»» Band F: 0.36% (213)
- »»»»»»» Band G: 0.03% (20)

Our new build specification requires a high level of thermal efficiency. The vast majority of our new homes completed last year are EPC band B rated.

- »»» Band B: 91.6%
- »»»» Band C: 8%
- »»»»» Band D: 0.4%



CASE STUDY >>

Whole Home Retrofit programme, Leeds

Since the release of the UK Government’s Fuel Poverty Strategy in 2015, we have embarked on an ambitious national Whole House Retrofit programme, delivering sustainable and quality energy performance improvements to over 1,000 homes.

We know that 18 per cent of housing association customers still live in fuel poverty. Our programme aims to eliminate energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty for our customers by delivering lower bills alongside warmer, healthier homes.

We install a careful and considered mix of insulation upgrades, window and door replacements, draught-proofing, ventilation, renewable heat pumps and solar panels - all while keeping customer disruption to a minimum.

2021 was a significant milestone in our retrofitting journey. In May, we expanded our Whole House Retrofit Programme to run until 2028, aiming to improve the energy performance of all properties below EPC C over the next seven years. We’ve partnered with Correct Contracting Services to achieve this challenging but crucial ambition.

Grant funding enables us to accelerate our retrofit programme, speeding up and enhancing our delivery plans. Through the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD) funding in Leeds and East Cambridgeshire, customers are enjoying warmer, more comfortable homes.

We have also successfully applied for £2.5 million of funding from the Government’s flagship Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. This will be used to retrofit over 350 of Sanctuary’s properties across England and it will be delivered alongside a range of local authorities and other housing associations.



Whole Home Retrofit programme community event at Holt Farm, Leeds



Our carbon footprint

Sanctuary is embracing the UK Government’s ambition of becoming a net zero-carbon economy by 2050. As a housing association with over 105,000 homes, a large employer, a new-build developer, and care and support provider, it is critical that we decarbonise our operations and buildings across England and Scotland at pace.

Over the 2021/2022 financial year, our operational carbon footprint was 42,135 tonnes. This includes carbon from emissions that Sanctuary can directly control (Scope 1 and 2) as well as emissions from business mileage.

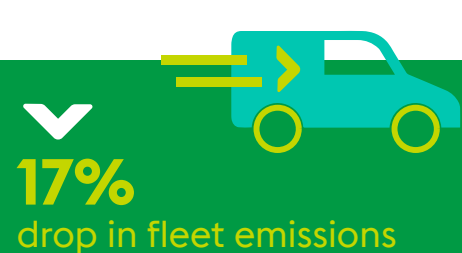
We are also embarking on a wider exercise to measure all of Scope 3 emissions, consisting of indirect emissions over which we have limited control. We already know that the homes we provide generate around 226,474 tonnes of CO2e per year, which is one of the reasons why retrofit works are a key priority within our Environment Strategy. Understanding our full Scope 3 will enable us to take targeted action in areas such as the goods we procure, or the carbon embodied within our construction processes.

Our progress

We are taking strides to reduce our carbon footprint. We've reacted to Covid-19 and harnessed new ways of working to reduce travel and paper. We are also using Carbon Literacy training to upskill our staff and generate ideas about how we can improve the environmental performance of our operations. So far, 40 colleagues have completed the training and of these, 18 have taken the extra step of writing an action plan for which they have received certification from the Carbon Literacy Project.



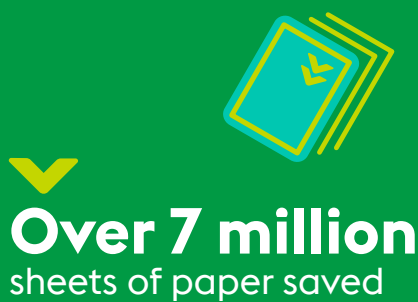
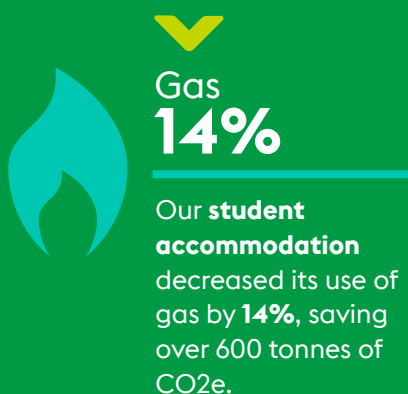
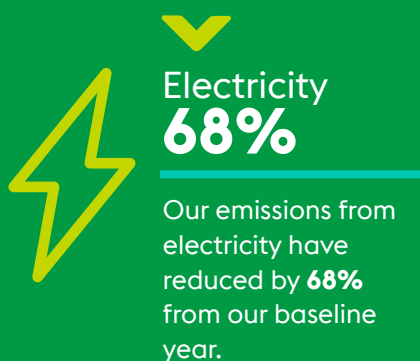
While our 2020/2021 carbon footprint included savings in emissions produced by lockdowns and restrictions, we embedded these savings wherever possible into new business as usual practices. Overall we have reduced emissions by 27 per cent in 2021/2022 in comparison to our 2019/2020 baseline.



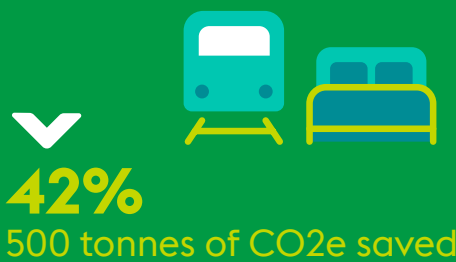
Emissions from transport fell dramatically in 2020-2021, due to Covid-19 restrictions on travel. In 2021-2022, as restrictions were lifted, emissions from transport still remain **17% lower** than they were in our baseline year, 2019-2020.



Despite the continued growth of the organisation, our disclosed emissions show a **16% reduction** on the previous financial year, saving **8,222 tonnes of CO2e**.



In comparison to printing in 2019/2020, 2020/2021 print usage decreased by **35%**, saving **over 7 million sheets of paper**.



Although business mileage decreased significantly over the course of 2020-2021, in 2021-2022, levels have remained low. Compared to our baseline year of 2019-2020, emissions from business mileage were **42% lower**, saving almost **500 tonnes of CO2e**.



CASE STUDY >>

EcoHousing

In 2021, Sanctuary partnered with the University of Worcester, Platform Housing Group, and environmental consultancy, Loreus Ltd. to launch the EcoHousing project. The project applies learning from Higher Education to the social housing sector about how to assess environmental performance and then put in place a processes to support continuous improvement. It is led by the University, a well-established leader in sustainability, and will result in the creation of an Environmental Management System (EMS) to monitor progress.

At Sanctuary, we are currently developing an EMS to help manage our operational impact on the environment across our corporate facilities. Our ongoing work to understand our impact in key areas like carbon emissions, waste, and biodiversity is helping us to make positive changes that reduce our carbon footprint and improve the quality of our local environment.

The EcoHousing partnership recognises that sharing best practice and learning from each other is critical to our search for climate change solutions. Through promoting effective collaboration, project partners are well-positioned to work together to better understand our impact on the environment, and how we can reduce it.



Solar panels at Westcliffs, Southend





SOCIETY

SOCIETY



As a socially motivated organisation, Sanctuary’s impact on society is deep and far reaching. We provide homes that meet a diverse range of needs as well as providing a range of care and support services. Our customers include over 250,000 tenants, residents at 98 care homes, students at 31 halls of residence and 237 people buying a new home.

Fundamentally, the work we do is about building sustainable places and communities and this is core to our mission. But our impact extends to a range of other areas including the role that high-quality housing plays in supporting good health and how we contribute to a broader local network of organisations and institutions, from partnership working with local authorities and the police through to supporting community-led enterprise and social initiatives. Alongside this, by providing affordable homes we can make a tangible impact on alleviating poverty, which is connected to broader goals such as achieving quality education, decent jobs and a fairer society.



Delivering affordable homes

Social and not-for-profit activities account for 76 per cent of our operations, with the remaining 24 per cent of our activities used to generate income that is reinvested directly into our organisation’s charitable aims.

	Proportion of units
General Needs (Social Rent)	50.9%
Intermediate Rent	0.8%
Affordable Rent (General Needs)	5.9%
Supported Housing	4.5%
Housing for Older People	10.7%
Low Cost Homeownership (purchaser less than 100%)	3.3%
Social and Not for Profit Activities	76.1%
Care	5.3%
Private Sector (non Social and Commercial)	0.7%
Homeownership (initial sale or staircased to 100%)	7.6%
Commercial and Students	10.4%
Predominantly Commercial Activities	23.9%

We work hard to make our homes truly affordable, and our average social housing rent is 70 per cent of private sector levels, which reflects the large number of sheltered and supported services we manage. Looking at our non-specialist accommodation alone, our average rent represents only 59 per cent of the private sector average.

Rental value % of Private Sector:

General Needs:	59.4 %
Sheltered and Supported:	110.6%
All Social Housing:	70.0%



This is true of the homes we built too. Last year, of the 767 homes we completed, 83 per cent of these were social housing tenures such as social or affordable rent, supported housing or low-cost home ownership.



It's also important that the customers who rent from us feel secure in the long-term future of their home and have a stable base from which to thrive. Therefore, in 2020, we were the first in the sector to stop offering fixed tenancy agreements for general needs social housing. Sometimes specialist support services need to be for a fixed period for a variety of reasons but, aside from these instances, over 99 per cent of our social housing tenancy agreements in both England and Scotland are lifetime tenancies.

CASE STUDY >>

Cranham Drive, Worcester

Sanctuary's Cranham Drive development in the heart of Worcester reflects the core mission of building affordable homes and supporting sustainable communities.

The £4.3 million scheme, part-funded by Homes England has created 34 new homes for affordable rent, exclusively available for local people. Consisting of a mix of two, three and four-bedroom houses as well as one and two-bedroom apartments, these properties have been built with PV panels to supply a renewable form of electricity and reduce energy bills.

In line with Sanctuary's commitment to support local communities, a number of projects were undertaken alongside the build programme at Cranham Drive. They include

working closely with local Cranham Primary School, to provide a new pathway with post and rail fencing to create a boundary around the school's dedicated 'forest area.'

To mark the completion of the site, two cherry trees were planted as part of a ceremony with MP Robin Walker and Sanctuary Chief Executive Craig Moule, contributing to the environmental benefits of the scheme. Mr Walker said: "It's great to see the realisation of all the hard work that's taken place here and the delivery of new, affordable homes. With all the challenges we've faced over the past two years, it's wonderful to see a new part of Worcester's community delivering homes that people really need."



Cranham Drive, Worcester



Victoria Road, Hartlepool

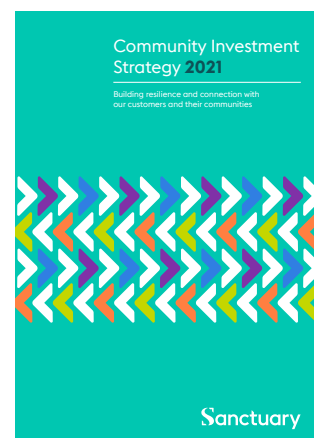


Sustainable Communities

One of the ways that we support vibrant communities is through our Sustainable Communities programme, which has two key aims:

- **Building resilience** – working with our customers to improve their skills and ability to adapt to adversity in a positive way, while supporting community initiatives and groups that will have long-term impact.
- **Building connection** – supporting people to maintain and grow relationships, increasing their connection to others, knowing their community, and feeling part of it.

Our approach is community-led and focuses on building capacity at a local level, by building on the existing skills, assets and passions of people living in our communities. Last year we directly invested £1.4 million in community initiatives which attracted £2.7 million of additional resources including external grant funding and contributions by our supply chain partners. This supported 218 projects with over 54,000 interactions with our customers and their communities.



[Click above to find out more](#)

Our frontline teams also have a broader impact that plays a role in building communities:

- **Crime and antisocial behaviour:** working closely with the police, community groups and our customers to take meaningful action to reduce crime in our communities, for example improving the use of CCTV or signposting activities during school holidays.
- **Good housing design:** wherever possible we futureproof the design of our neighbourhoods to make sure they continue to be vibrant, thriving communities.
- **Inclusion for all:** we aim to make our communities more inclusive places to live, whether that is by supporting specific initiatives such as refugee resettlement programmes or by how we work, for example making our services more accessible.
- **Emergency and welfare:** our frontline teams are often well placed to identify when customers need some extra support and signpost to a range of services both within and outside Sanctuary that could help.
- **Listeners and connectors:** our teams know our neighbourhoods and act as enablers connecting individuals, community groups, resources, and public services to support strong communities.
- **Employment:** as well as supporting employment initiatives via our Sustainable Communities programme, many of the team we employ are our customers or live in the communities in which we work.
- **Doing our job well:** we do not operate like a private sector landlord - our repairs line is open 24 hours a day, we truly want to engage with our customers, and we take a local approach. If we do our job well, this enhanced level of service provides a reassuring platform for our customers and communities alike.





Making a difference through our Sustainable Communities programme

>>> Difference made



196

community groups supported



7,745

people supported to reduce isolation



485

people supported to live more independently



684

people gained work experience



21,894

people supported to improve mental wellbeing



707

people engaged in shaping local investment



447

people with increased confidence to manage their money



£902,228

personal debt reduced & £200,474 in increased personal savings



[Click above to find out more](#)



Safety and quality

This year Sanctuary agreed the principles of our new seven-year asset management strategy. The strategy represents a shift in the way we invest in our homes, with an emphasis on prioritising works that make sure all homes are watertight, safe and warm. We believe these are the fundamentals of providing a high-quality home. By utilising repairs intelligence, we also know that these areas of focus cause the most dissatisfaction from customers if we do not get them right.

The asset management strategy is supported by a stock condition programme that will monitor the quality of our homes via a seven-year cycle of surveyor visits. This will enable a proactive approach to maintaining our current metric of 99.7 per cent of homes surveyed meeting the Decent Homes Standard, with properties only falling outside of this due to tenant refusals or when empty awaiting regeneration or remodelling.

When a customer moves out of one of our homes it provides us with a great opportunity to do major works. A key aspect of the new strategy is to optimise this time and prevent disruption to future tenants.



Multi-Trade Operative, Ian Lowndes

Key facts



99.7% of our homes have an in-date accredited gas safety check, with our teams working closely with customers in the remaining 0.3%



100% of our homes have a Fire Risk Assessment in place



100% of our homes have been checked for asbestos, with a suitable inspection regime in place if necessary



86.4% of our water hygiene inspections are in date, with a new contract live on 1 April 2022 that mitigates long-term sickness and vacancy issues experienced by the previous contractor



We also set and achieve internal benchmarks for electrical (EICR) and lift (LOLER) safety



CASE STUDY >>

Building safety

Our building safety programme, led by Sanctuary’s Head of Building Safety, is a key area of focus. We have a relatively small number of high-rise buildings, for an organisation of our size, but we are looking at a range of measures to make sure that we are prepared for the Government’s new building safety regime.

There are several additional activities we have identified as best practice. One of these was the decision that all our high-rise buildings would have sprinklers, emergency lighting and fire alarm systems. As a result, work was commissioned And is now complete at 13 high rise buildings.

Before works commenced, feasibility studies took place to capture any risks associated with the project and to remove barriers, such as site constraints and utility connections, commonly associated with retrofitting the safety systems. Our operational teams were heavily involved in presenting the proposals to our customers supported by literature, open days and ‘show flats’ in some locations. This led to high rates of uptake of the systems and was vital to the project’s success.

Feedback from customers, fire services and internal teams has been positive, and we already know of one potentially major incident that was averted due to the sprinkler system installed.



Fire alarm and sprinkler



CASE STUDY >>

Maintaining high-quality care homes

One of the foundations to providing excellent care is having a safe, high-quality facility in which to provide it.

Our specialist Care Home Asset Management team oversees a range of quality inspections at each of our 98 care homes. This includes regular visits by our Regional Maintenance Managers, monthly premises reviews by our Home Manager (with actions reviewed by our Regional Managers) and feedback from our Quality Assurance and Group Health and Safety teams. This is in addition to a range of compliance visits undertaken by both internal teams and specialist external contractors.

We collect feedback on the performance of our contractors to identify any specific concerns as well as best practice. Sharing this information across all teams involved in the maintenance of our properties enables effective management of contractor relationships. All works carried out to our homes are supported by a Business Information dashboard, reviewed by our senior leadership team, to enable effective monitoring of all activities against Service Level Agreements.

Customer feedback is also important to us. Our Annual Resident Survey includes questions about the care home environment. Despite our best efforts complaints sometimes do happen. We closely review any feedback related to the condition or facilities in our homes as part of our broader approach to continuous improvement. Likewise, we closely monitor feedback on online review sites to help understand both any areas of improvement and positive comments about the condition of our homes to inform best practice across our wider portfolio.



Upton Dene
Residential and
Nursing Home,
Cheshire



CASE STUDY >>

Place shaping at Anderston, Glasgow

Sustainable community design is increasingly central to Sanctuary's approach to place shaping. A balanced focus on buildings, people and environment in master planning, sows the seeds for successful regeneration.

The transformation of the 1960s Anderston development in Glasgow is an example of a recently completed regeneration project by Sanctuary Scotland that involved intensive community engagement during the process of developing the master plan and throughout the five phases of development.

Throughout the intensive community engagement process, a vision and masterplan captured the needs and aspirations of the people who would ultimately live in the regenerated area. This process captured Anderston's history and its connectivity with the wider urban area of Glasgow, the River Clyde and the Victorian architecture of Argyll Street which was in need of renewal.

Offsite construction and Modern Methods of Construction were at the heart of the rebuild with brickwork to complement the adjacent Victorian buildings, resulting in both a pleasing aesthetic and more thermally efficient homes, reducing fuel poverty and enhancing sustainability for the people who lived there.

Shared play and green spaces with a spectacular public art element are incorporated into the design, contributing to sense of pride in place. Wide walkways through the seven storey blocks and town houses give a greater feeling of space and light. Community hubs that support families and offer space for enterprise were also a central element of achieving sustainable community.

This multi award winning regeneration project has laid foundations for achieving a balance between social, economic and environmental aspirations in our further regeneration schemes.



Customer voice

We are committed to working together with our customers to design the services they receive, understanding what is most important for them.

We have an approach to customer engagement, led by our National Resident Scrutiny Panel, that provides a wide range of opportunities for customers to both shape our service design and scrutinise our service performance. In addition to the customer feedback received by our frontline team and contact centre staff every day, we have specific customer survey responses from about 7,800 customers each year, and more than 1,000 customers have engaged with us in the more detailed design of services over the last year.



CASE STUDY >>

Tone of voice

An example of customer engagement is the group of customers ('a community of interest') who are helping us make the language we use in our communications warmer, simpler, and clearer. This is part of what we call our 'Tone of voice' project. We are developing a 'Tone of voice' guide to make sure our communications use a consistent tone, appropriate to the purpose.

Applying this guide, we are now reviewing the letter we send to customers notifying them of changes to their rent and other charges. We are currently getting feedback from customers on the language we use in this letter which will help shape the new version. At the same time, we are also asking customers to join a new editorial panel, who will be part of the approval process for large scale customer communications we produce in the future.

Bob Werrett from our National Resident Scrutiny Panel



Learning from complaints

We recognise that fixing things when they go wrong for our customers is key to delivering a great customer experience. Last year we supported 3,434 customers who told us something had gone wrong. We were able to resolve 66 per cent of issues at the first stage of our complaint process. For the most recent year statistics are available (2020/2021), where a customer is unhappy with how we resolved their complaint, 51 complaints (2 per cent) made by customers were escalated to the Housing Ombudsman to provide an independent review. Of these, 28 were upheld by the Ombudsman in part or full.

We take all complaints we receive seriously and see them as an opportunity to identify improvements to the service we provide customers. As a result of our 'Lessons Learned' reviews and analysis of the key drivers of complaints, we regularly update and develop our ways of working, for example:



Customers told us that waiting times for responses to emails and enquiries submitted through our website are too long. As a result, our new customer website is being designed to better route customer enquiries to the right person first time, reducing customer waiting times.



As a result of reviewing customer complaints and situations where things went wrong, we created a wellbeing team within our Customer Service Centre. This team plays a proactive role in monitoring repairs and supporting customers where we know there are vulnerabilities and ongoing issues. Our wellbeing team plays a vital role in helping us to provide an excellent service to customers.



The recent introduction of emergency, routine and follow up repair lines within our Customer Service Centre was due to customer concerns raised over wait times to report emergency repairs. The introduction of the new line has meant that customers with emergencies are getting through to someone in less than 10 minutes even at peak times.



Customer Service Officer,
Bethany McLoughlin



Support for customers

As a provider of housing and care services, Sanctuary has the potential to support customers in ways that go beyond our day-to-day operations. Our broader role is to act as listeners and connectors across communities.



Housing Officer, Pam Bruce with Karen and Brooklyn Lloyd



CASE STUDY >>

Tenancy support

There are difficulties our customers may face that can make it harder to pay rent and manage their finances. Our tenancy support model is based on providing support to help customers stay financially secure in their home.

Where a customer has identified it as beneficial, sometimes this can be as simple as working with the Department for Work and Pensions to facilitate the direct payment the housing cost elements of Universal Credit. In March 2021, 4250 customers paid in this way and we have increased that to 6108 over the last twelve months.

We are also able to make applications on behalf of our customers for Discretionary Housing Payment (a Government fund allocated to each Local Authority). We have successfully obtained hundreds of pounds for our customers in this way.

The cumulative impact of inflated energy prices and recent cuts to Universal Credit means that unprecedented levels of fuel poverty within social housing can be expected. Alongside directly donating to the Energy Hardship Fund and supporting our customers

to apply, we are working with our National Resident Scrutiny Panel to identify other ways we can support customers experiencing fuel poverty.

A person centred approach is vital to the tenancy support we provide. It is important to our Income Officers that they understand the particular context surrounding any significant rent arrears. This enables us to work with external agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Age UK or the National Debtline as well as accessing specialist advice from regional support networks.

Our Scottish Housing Team has also recently piloted an innovative new community role to support tenancy sustainment. Our Community Connectors sit outside of the broader Income team. The aim of the Connector, who may have lived experience of homelessness themselves, is to move past the social stigma of debt. The Connector listens and provides support as individuals work towards not only greater levels of financial security, but as customers make positive changes as they face other challenges in their lives. Having supported 80 tenancies already, the initiative is being expanded.



Students at Kelvinhaugh Gate, Glasgow



CASE STUDY >>

More than just a room

Sanctuary Students provides a home to nearly 10,000 students in large university cities across the UK.

Our properties and facilities provide everything students need to study for their university or college course, but we understand that there is more to the student experience than studying. We have a key role to play in making sure our students get the most of their time at university; and that's where our More Than Just a Room programme comes in.

The programme is carefully created to provide exclusive services to support the students' experience.

We recognise that student mental health and wellbeing is more important than ever and through our partnership with Health Assured, we're privileged to offer our customers free access to a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week telephone and counselling service. We understand that sometimes our students need a place to turn to that is independent from their university to talk about any personal issues related to workload, financial matters, legal advice, mental health and physical wellbeing. Students can also access further help and advice which is fully paid for and supported by Sanctuary.

We're proud to offer our students a dedicated programme of events throughout the year. Each property takes part in a range of events from move-in parties, which help students settle into their new homes at the start of the year, through to celebrating cultural events and raising awareness of key issues which are important to our students, like PRIDE in the summer.

She Kei Wan and Ahmed Osonan
at Kelvinhaugh Gate, Glasgow





CASE STUDY >>

Sanctuary Supported Living

Working closely with clients, their families, carers and health professionals, we deliver specialist support and housing that gets people on their pathway for independence.

With over 700 services, we provide retirement communities, supported housing, move-on accommodation, Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered services, floating support and technology-enabled care for people who may or may not have a tenancy with us.



Our range of housing is as varied as the needs of the people we support and central to our success is collaborative working between our teams and clients. Our dedicated teams are driven by 'can-do, not can't do' This applies to our teams' approach to work and the services and support we provide.

Quality is our focus - if we are the best we can be, clients can be their best too. No matter the challenges, everything is designed to support maximum independence and long-term tenancies, where people learn life skills, achieve personal goals and make decisions about their lives, knowing that by maintaining their responsibilities, they can live independently.

Our supported housing services with care, residential homes and nursing homes are regulated by the CQC and all are rated Good or Outstanding. All commercial kitchens across our services have a food hygiene rating of 5 – the highest rating awarded by the Food Standards Agency.

We aim to create sustainable and successful practises that promote wellbeing and improve quality of life for the long-term. We are committed to making sure that supported housing is available for those who need it, now and in the future.

Project Worker, Oluwatoyin Akanji and customer Geral Nkwo from Victoria Way, Greenwich

GOVERNANCE



GOVERNANCE



Structure

Sanctuary Housing Association is a registered provider of social housing and follows the National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2020. We are a not-for-profit organisation with any surplus generated reinvested back into our services, employees, and charitable activities.

The Regulator for Social Housing conducts regular reviews of Sanctuary’s viability and governance. In 2021 we retained the grading of G1 and V2, reflecting both the strength of our governance arrangements and our robust plans to manage exposure to the UK housing market within our new build for sale programme. The Regulator provides an important role to promote a viable, efficient, and well-governed social housing sector. Sanctuary has never been subject to adverse regulatory findings causing the regulator to take action.

CASE STUDY

Managing risk

To assess and manage its risks, Sanctuary identifies operations and business functions that require specific risk appetite statements. Each of these areas then implements a system to map these risks, as well as associated controls, and provide assurance that effective risk management is in place.

Each area has a statement that indicates how the appetite is applied, together with metrics that monitor and measure our approach to risk. This includes hurdles that should not be breached without Group Board approval, as well as trigger points that act as early warnings that a hurdle is being approached. Included within the risk appetite metrics are financial measures and we call a subset of these our Golden Rules. These define the financial parameters that Sanctuary will stay within.

All of the risk appetite metrics are monitored on a monthly basis by Executive Committee, while our Group Audit and Risk Committee meets quarterly to review Sanctuary’s risk maps and monitor progress against risk mitigation measures.

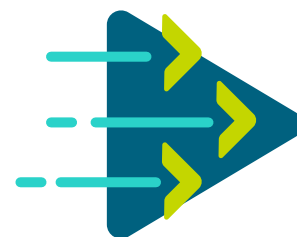
We report on our risks yearly as part of our Annual Report and Financial Statements.



Assistant Housing Officer Sarah Hay



Group Chair,
Andrew Manning-Cox
with customer Alma Brockhill



Our Group Board

Sanctuary has a group structure, in which Sanctuary Housing Association is the parent of several subsidiary operations within its control. Sanctuary Housing Association, as a registered provider, is responsible for regulatory compliance.

Sanctuary's Group Board comprises eight non-executive members, the Group Chief Executive, and two co-opted members. This means that 73 per cent of our Group Board are Non-Executive Directors, helping to make sure that a range of expertise and external perspectives are brought into Sanctuary's decision-making process. The Chair of Sanctuary's Group Board is a Non-Executive Director.

The Group Board oversees all the activities undertaken by the organisation. Its primary role is to define and ensure compliance with Sanctuary's values and objectives. It agrees the strategic direction of the organisation and makes sure that policies and plans are in place to achieve those objectives. It also establishes and oversees a framework of delegation and systems of control.

As well as an annual internal review, every three years we hold independently run Board-effectiveness reviews to monitor how well the Board is meeting these aims. The last external review took place in 2021 conducted by Altair.

Over the last two years there has been a 24 per cent turnover of the Group Board and Management Team. This is due to our policy for the maximum tenure of a Group Board member of six years, with a reappointment process at three years, in line with the 2020 Code of Governance.

Group Board demographics

Board average age:
➤ 56.9 years

Board average tenure:
➤ 3.1 years

Percentage of the Board who are women:
➤ 36.4%

Percentage of the Board who are BAME:
➤ 18.2%

No current member of the Group Board has a disability. Through our Inclusion for All strategy, we strive for representation at all levels of the organisation, including senior management.

Key facts

- **Succession plans are shared with the Group Board** to make sure that a strong talent pipeline is being maintained and the continuance of strong management across the organisation. Our last plan was shared in 2021 as part of our annual Board cycle.
- **We have rules in place to manage conflicts of interest**, including a conflicts policy to make sure these are clearly understood.
- **Sanctuary has a Remuneration Committee** that agrees the reward structure for Sanctuary's Executive Directors. This committee is made up of Non-Executive Directors with the Group Chief Executive acting as lead officer for coordination of the committee.
- **Our external audit partner KPMG** is responsible for auditing Sanctuary's accounts. KPMG has worked in this role for seven years.



Effective procurement

Approximately half of Sanctuary's spend is on external goods or services, that is procurement, and this represents a huge opportunity to support delivery of our environmental and social ambition. Environmental and social benefits can be delivered both by changing the way we do things ourselves and through our suppliers. The procurement approach therefore has three pillars, category management, supplier selection, and supply chain management.



Category management entails robust strategic planning and stakeholder engagement at the earliest stage of every procurement. The procurement impact assessment tool provides a platform for innovation, obliging stakeholders to consider alternative ways of meeting the organisational need, industry best practice and ways in which demands on resources can be reduced.



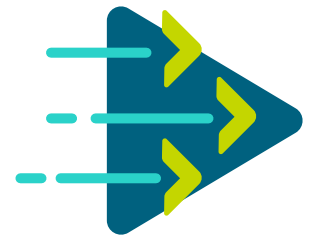
Supplier selection allows us to define the qualities of the suppliers we work with and explore what additional environmental and social benefits they can provide to Sanctuary and the wider community. The actual process of supplier selection plays a key role in our policy delivery. For example, in consideration of our Inclusion for All strategy, we are planning a series of customer led interactive virtual tours of potential products to make sure our tender evaluation process is fully accessible.



Supply chain management segments our supply base to make sure our approach maximises the environmental and social benefits of approximately 3,000 suppliers. At the most basic level all suppliers are required to sign up to the Sanctuary Code of Conduct. Each category will also contain unique sustainability opportunities and risks, for example some goods and services may relate to energy intensive industries or others to industries at highest risk of slavery in supply chains. Our approach to sustainability within each category is being formalised, with opportunities to learn from and work with key supply partners being explored.

The introduction of a formal environmental and social impact procurement plan sits within a wider three-year procurement transformation programme. In addition, this programme will deliver benefits in data quality, resource planning, user engagement, contract management (including benefits recording) and skills.

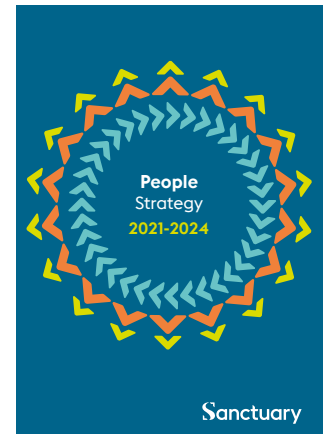




Employee wellbeing

This year Sanctuary launched our People Strategy, an ambitious statement about the kind of organisation we want to be and how we will achieve that. At the heart of our People Strategy is creating an environment where our people and our organisation can flourish.

It outlines the things we are doing to create a positive and inclusive culture and in particular the role that managers play and how we can empower them to make the right decisions for their teams. As well as refining the ways we work, via streamlining our procedures and smart use of technology, it outlines how critical engagement is to our success and embedding our Inclusion for All strategy so that everyone in our teams can feel recognised and included.



[Click above to find out more](#)

Key facts



Sanctuary is a diverse and inclusive organisation which employs around **12,500** people across England and Scotland.



We regularly ask our people to tell us about their experience of working at Sanctuary. **Our employee engagement score was 76% in 2022.**



We currently have **258 Staff Council members** who champion the voice of our people and engage with management on key issues.



We are committed to making Sanctuary a place where people want to work by offering a fair and inclusive reward and wellbeing package that provides something for everyone and values their contribution.



We empower our people to take care of their own mental, physical and financial wellbeing by providing good quality employee benefits, resources and tools alongside a range of events and campaigns throughout the year; promoting a culture where wellbeing can be discussed openly and support obtained. Sanctuary also has 863 Mental Health First Aiders and 69 Time to Change Champions, who focus on mental health support and encourage open conversations.

This is part of Sanctuary's broader offer to employees that includes activities to support learning and development as well as enabling staff to give back to local communities via our employee volunteering programme.



Senior Online Marketing Officer, Aaron O’Keefe, Head of Brand and Digital, Laura Masters and Online Marketing Manager, Joe Stowell volunteering for St. Richard’s Hospice, Malvern



CASE STUDY >

Employee volunteering

We are proud to offer our employees two days a year to volunteer to support communities where we live and work. Our employee volunteering scheme encourages our staff to give time to local causes, learn and share skills, meet new people, and gain a wider understanding of the diverse communities that we work in.

For example, in the last year employees have given their time to lend technology support to a learning disability charity, help sort donations at a foodbank and hospice, carry out habitat improvements with an environmental group and take part in a befriending initiative to support older people.

Our employee volunteering scheme benefits the community, our employees, and our business:

- > For the community – an opportunity for local charities and voluntary groups to access skills and expertise for free and directly promote their work.
- > For our employees – a chance to develop skills in team working, leadership, communication, and creative thinking.
- > For our business – this scheme is one of many reasons that people choose to work for us. Volunteering helps employees to feel connected: to colleagues; to their community; and to our wider purpose. We benefit from our staff developing new skills, enhanced working relationships, increased motivation, and a deeper understanding of our customers.

Learning and development opportunities



Last year Sanctuary supported **142 apprentices**



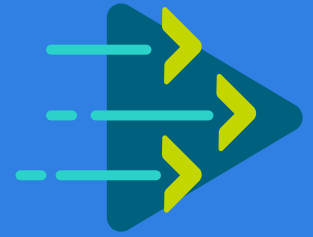
162 employees completed **qualifications**



Our people attended **43,566 learning events** during 2020/2021



175,000 e-learning modules were completed by employees



CASE STUDY >

Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Programme

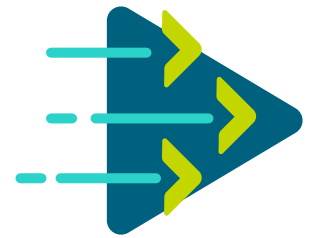
In 2021 Sanctuary was delighted to celebrate the success of our first apprentices that have graduated through Sanctuary Care's Nursing Associate Apprentices Programme. Tabby Bray, Charlie Moore and Jane Cabaya all successfully completed their Nursing Associate Foundation Degree programme at Plymouth University. Meanwhile, Edna Ankrah and Zainab Mwebe Pennin completed the programme with the University of Greenwich in London.

All five have been studying for their qualifications for two years while gaining valuable work experience at care homes run by Sanctuary Care. This has been complemented by clinical work for the students with partnership organisations across various NHS sites, GP practices, learning disability schemes and children's services where they have further developed their skills to deliver safe and effective care to customers.

They will now be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council and will move into permanent roles as nursing associates at their care homes.



Pictured left, Edna Ankrah and Zainab Mwebe Pennin and above Tabby Bray, Charlie Moore and Jane Cabaya



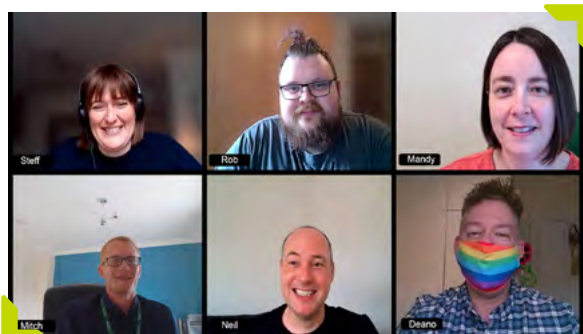
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Over the past two years, Sanctuary has been listening to the different experiences and diverse voices of our people, customers and stakeholders, analysing our data, drawing on the expertise of our specialist EDI partners and looking outwardly at good practice. This work has deepened our understanding and strengthened our commitment to being an inclusive organisation. It has led us to create our new Inclusion for All strategy that aims to create a diverse, inclusive organisation where our people thrive and respond to the needs of our customers with fairness and empathy.

Work on the delivery of the strategy is already underway. We understand the importance of feeling safe to speak up and have supported three new employee networks:

- **Parent Network**
- **PRISM (Pride, Respect, Inclusion, Support and Motivation)**
- **Race & Equality Network**

These networks provide peer to peer support and offer education and insight on the lived experience of these often-marginalised groups. We also have a group of Lived Experience Advisors who volunteer to help us to better understand the barriers faced by disabled people.



Members of the PRISM Network

To help everyone play their part in creating inclusion for all, we have produced a first set of resources to educate and enable leaders, managers and staff. This has included having honest and challenging conversations with leaders about unconscious bias and the part they need to play to tackle this.

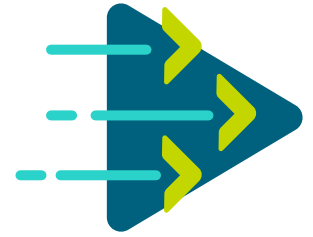
We know action matters more than words so have started to dig deeper into our data to better understand the actual outcomes of our policy and practices from a diversity perspective. Using this insight, our new EDI leaders group and specialists in HR, Communications, and Customer Engagement are leading projects in each of their areas that will make sure we include by design.

Although we know we still have a long way to go, Sanctuary is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion at every level of our organisation. To this end we will continue working with employees and customers to create a thriving community.



[Click above to find out more](#)





CASE STUDY >

Our leadership alliance in practice

We have three groups leading the charge on EDI: our Executive Committee who steer and sponsor the strategy, our EDI leadership group who drive delivery of the four strategic objectives, and our three employee networks who provide peer to peer support and provide insight to the organisation.

One example of the three leadership groups working as an alliance is how we harnessed International Day of Persons with Disabilities as a catalyst for further progress. In the preceding months we carried out a self-assessment against the 'Disability Confident' standard, made clearer our desire to work with suppliers who are Disability Confident, developed an inclusive approach to recruiting new resident scrutiny panel members, and determined a plan to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of our communications. In the run up to the day, our disabled Lived Experience Advisors shared stories in blogs and on film about their day-to-day experiences. On the day, Nathan Warren, a Group Director, and Liz Johnson, a Paralympian swimmer, shared their experiences of living and thriving with disabilities despite the barriers that society puts in their way. Our Group Chief Executive hosted, emphasising the 'All' in 'Inclusion for All'. Next steps are to follow up on expressions of interest in being part of a new disability employee network and to implement an action plan to improve our disability confident performance.



Group Chief Executive, Craig Moule, Paralympian swimmer, Liz Johnson and Group Director, Nathan Warren on International Day of Persons with Disabilities

This report outlines the key areas in which Sanctuary is contributing to a more sustainable society. Thank you for taking the time to find out more about this area of our work. If you would like to find out more, please use the hyper links embedded within the report or alternatively visit www.sanctuary.co.uk.

Accessibility

We want this report to be accessible to all. If you would like it in a different format, call **01905 334000** or email externalaffairs@sanctuary.co.uk.

Sanctuary

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