

## How you can get involved with Sanctuary

We want to encourage as many residents as possible to get involved with the planning, development and delivery of our services. This involvement enables us to ensure our services are fit for purpose and cater for our residents' needs. Through participation and involvement, we can make sure that residents' views influence the way we provide our services. We have communities of interest around a range of topics:

- Complaints reviewers
- Estate inspectors
- Home ownership
- Procurement
- Resident inspectors/service reviewers
- Supported living

If you would like to get involved please

email: [scrutiny@sanctuary-housing.co.uk](mailto:scrutiny@sanctuary-housing.co.uk);  
or call: 0800 131 3348/0300 123 3511

Housing Communications Team, Sanctuary House, Chamber Court, Castle Street, Worcester WR1 3ZQ

Tel: 0800 131 3348/0300 123 3511

Email: [contactus@sanctuary-housing.co.uk](mailto:contactus@sanctuary-housing.co.uk)

If you would prefer this document translated into another language or produced in an alternative format, for example large print, Braille or audio CD, please contact your local office for details.

Sanctuary Housing Services Limited is a subsidiary of Sanctuary Housing Association, an exempt charity.

# 2017 Annual Report to Residents



# 2017 Annual Report to Residents



Scrutiny Panel update from Wendy Burridge, Chair of the National Resident Scrutiny Panel

- Supporting our Group procurement team – initially on the tendering of the maintenance contracts for lifts in large multi-occupancy flats. We have stressed the vital importance of regular communication from contractors on progress with repairs so residents can be kept up to date. The contract has been amended to reflect this. The next focus is on the tender for replacement kitchens.
- Working with our home ownership team to identify how service charges are presented.

“...we have significantly changed how we involve residents. We have set up new ‘communities of interest’ involving around 300 residents so far...”

Residents are supporting us in reviewing how calls are managed by our customer service centre. Waiting times and how enquiries are handled are being investigated. The scrutiny panel will be considering any recommendations from this work shortly.

We have reviewed the Local Offers (our service standards) this year. We have contacted more than 30,000 residents in the last few months, through surveys and workshops held across the country. The overwhelming message is that the Local Offers remain sound. In our role as the scrutiny panel we will be continuing to ensure the Local Offers are successfully delivered. The Annual Report to Residents sets out progress against the Local Offers.

We value your contributions and thank everyone who has been involved in scrutiny so far. New volunteers are always welcome, so if you would like to contribute your skills, experience or interests and be involved with any future projects, please email [scrutiny@sanctuary-housing.co.uk](mailto:scrutiny@sanctuary-housing.co.uk) or call 0800 131 3348/0300 123 3511.

## W elcome

**I feel very privileged to have been able to serve both my colleagues on the panel and to represent the interests of Sanctuary residents for a third year; it is both a busy and fascinating role.**

You let us know that you prefer practical ways of getting involved with scrutiny rather than formal-style meetings. Therefore, we have significantly changed how we involve residents. We have set up new ‘communities of interest’, involving around 300 residents so far, to undertake specific activities for which they have expressed a particular interest. These groups work on behalf of the National Resident Scrutiny Panel (NRSP), which is in place to hold Sanctuary to account.

Work that the communities of interest have been doing includes:

- Reviewing the condition of our housing estates with staff and recommending any improvements needed. We will be completing an inspection the equivalent of every working day of the year.
- ‘Family and Friends tests’ - mystery shopping in our extra care and supported living services, recommending whether the resident visiting would want a family member or friend to live there if they needed a similar service. Where improvements have been identified in these visits, they have been actioned promptly, sometimes within 24 hours.

## Welcome



Introduction from Simon Clark, Group Director - Housing

**This annual report is important because it shows how we’re doing and how we plan to improve in the future.**

You’ll see throughout it that across our Local Offers – the things you told us were important to you – our performance is being maintained or improving. We have also been clear what we are doing to improve further.

Thank you to those of you who took the time to complete our survey or come along to a face-to-face session about our Local Offers. In response to your feedback, we have added to our neighbourhood offer regarding the condition of estates. You can read more about this on page four.

One of the big things for us this year has been improving our computer systems. It is about ensuring that we have the right information at the right time so we can answer your queries quickly and efficiently. But it’s not just about technology. By the end of the year, we will have created 100 new jobs in Hull through the expansion of our customer service centre.

Have you thought about joining scrutiny?  
Email: [scrutiny@sanctuary-housing.co.uk](mailto:scrutiny@sanctuary-housing.co.uk) or call:  
0800 131 3348/0300 123 3511

Again this year we directly invested £1.5 million to support the needs and aspirations of our residents and their communities. This investment resulted in 390 community-led initiatives focused on employment, health and well-being, community safety, environment and financial inclusion. This year’s investment benefited 61,690 people across our neighbourhoods.

As Wendy has said on the previous page, it’s through the valued involvement of tenants and residents that we learn, improve and make things better for everyone. I’d encourage you to get involved with our communities of interest and help make a difference to your area and the services you receive.

I hope you find this report informative.



Sanctuary Housing Association is regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

This means the HCA checks that we are doing what we say we will against two sets of standards: economic and consumer. Sanctuary's commitment to delivering value for money and meeting the consumer standards is demonstrated by our Local Offers.



## Economic standards

- **Governance** – this looks at how well we manage risk, how we plan for the future, whether we comply with laws and whether we deliver the right services.
- **Financial viability** – this checks that we are managing our money well and that our future finances are strong.
- **Value for money** – this examines whether we offer good value for money.

The HCA rates all organisations like us. We are rated 'G1' and 'V1' for governance and financial viability. These are the highest ratings and show the importance we place on these issues.

## Consumer standards

- **Home** – this is about the quality of your home, and whether it is safe and well-maintained.
- **Tenant involvement and empowerment** – this looks at how well customers are involved in our services and whether we respond to the diverse needs of tenants.
- **Tenancy** – this checks how homes are allocated and for what type of tenancy.
- **Neighbourhood and community** – this explores how well we manage neighbourhoods and prevent or respond to anti-social behaviour.



## Our Local Offers 2017-2020

After hearing from more than 1,800 housing and supported living residents nationally, we have reviewed our existing Local Offers for our housing and supported living services. The overwhelming feedback was that our Local Offers were focused on the right things. We have added a new Local Offer covering the condition of our estates.

The regulations also cover services to shared owners. Within Sanctuary, we have a 'Homeowners Forum', which also includes leaseholders, to make sure that all homeowners have the opportunity to influence our services.

### Neighbourhood

- We will make it clear to you what to do if you experience anti-social behaviour (ASB).
- We will also respond within one working day if you report a serious incident of ASB.
- We will make sure your neighbourhood is well maintained.

### Customer service

- We will make it easy for you to contact us if you have a problem, or want information or advice.
- If a staff member cannot resolve your query immediately, they will explain the process and the timescale for resolution to you.
- If you have a problem, we will keep you informed regularly of how we are dealing with your query or complaint, and the reasons for any changes.
- If you cannot get through or you leave a message, someone will call you back within one working day (Monday to Friday).
- We will share information about the level of service you can expect from us on our website.
- We will provide training for staff to ensure they are competent, knowledgeable and treat you as a valued customer.

### Moving home

- If you want to move home, we will help you identify options to meet your needs.

### Value for money and governance

- We will provide an annual assessment of performance against Local Offers.
- We will comply with all relevant legislation and regulation, and remain accountable to our residents and partners.
- We will use external credit rating companies to check our performance and make sure we continue to be financially strong.
- Our Group Board is committed to effective leadership and supporting residents to shape and scrutinise the services we provide.

### Home

- If you have an emergency repair, we will respond to you within 24 hours.
- If your repair is not urgent, you will be offered an appointment at a time that suits you.
- If we don't fix your repair on the first visit to your home, we will give you the date of a further appointment.
- We will make sure your home is safe and compliant with health and safety law.
- We will make sure your home is repaired to the Decent Homes Standard.

Key statistics

Statistics	2015/2016	2016/2017
Percentage of residents who said we make it clear what to do if they experience anti-social behaviour (ASB)	72%	77%
Number of ASB cases reported	9,960	10,460
Average resolution time for ASB cases	44 days	37 days
Percentage of residents who said they received a response within one working day of reporting a serious incident	72%	72%
Percentage of respondents satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live	88%	82%

Summary

We are always looking to improve how we can support you if you experience anti-social behaviour (ASB). We make it clear what to do if residents experience ASB through our website, our newsletters, social media, our Housing Officers and our Customer Service Advisers. You can see in the table above that more people think we have done this better this year than last year but we are working to continue increasing that. The two case studies on page six are practical examples of how we work with partners to prevent crime and ASB.

We encourage residents to report ASB so we can, wherever possible, work with you to address it. We have had about 10,000 cases reported again this year, and we are resolving cases faster. While clearly it is not good that there is ASB, it is good that people report it and that we are resolving it faster. We will run an additional campaign on social media in 2017/2018. We are introducing a new assurance process for ASB cases, in response to recommendations from a recent resident scrutiny review, to make sure we are responding to reports effectively.

Residents' satisfaction with your neighbourhood as a place to live has fallen this year, but is still above 80 per cent. However, to improve this, residents will be carrying out estate inspections, with local staff, on at least one of our estates every working day this year, identifying actions needed which staff will address.

Operation Shield - Chester

We are working with the Cheshire Police Service to support Operation Shield, which has seen a 26 per cent reduction in crime in Chester in the last year. The housing team and police visited 125 residents at home to explain how to keep their property safe. They also gave them a bottle of SelectaDNA, which provides DNA markers to personal property. Each bottle of SelectaDNA contains unique DNA coded microdots which can be applied to personal property (such as TVs, bikes and jewellery) allowing them

to be traced back to their owner if they are stolen. We have widely publicised the use of SelectaDNA, including using very prominent billboards and street signs (shown in the photo below) to deter burglars in the area. Operation Shield also includes marking copper piping and boilers in unoccupied houses, helping to identify any stolen materials in scrap yards.

Preventing anti-social behaviour in Hackney

On the Kingsmead estate, one of our neighbourhoods in east London, we have been working with local partners Immediate Theatre, Tutors United and ISHAKA female empowerment to provide activities designed to divert young people from getting involved in local gangs.

Immediate Theatre engaged young people in a remake of the classic tale Hansel and Gretel to discuss issues of homelessness.

University students through Tutors United helped pupils at the local school to improve their maths and English, improving their engagement in school at the same time.

ISHAKA worked with local parents to improve their parenting skills and manage their children's behaviour.



## Key statistics

Statistics	2015/2016	2016/2017
Percentage of residents who found it easy to contact Sanctuary	80%	82%
Satisfaction with staff professionalism	80%	81%
Percentage of residents who said Sanctuary kept them informed when dealing with their query	48%	54%
Number of complaints received*	2,604	2,373
Percentage of complaints dealt with at frontline	81%	81%

\* Includes housing, supported living and extra care

## Summary

Our customer service focus is to make it easy for you to contact us and that any queries are quickly resolved. We are pleased that the percentage of residents who think it is easy to contact us has increased, and likewise with staff professionalism, but we want to do more. We are piloting web chat so customers can contact us online and will consider rolling it out.

The customer service centre achieved Customer Service Excellence certification again this year, an accreditation they first gained in 2015. Residents are currently reviewing how we handle calls. The scrutiny panel will make recommendations for any improvements in November 2017.

The number of complaints reported has reduced by nine per cent this year. We are aware that we can improve keeping people informed regularly when we are dealing with a query or complaint. This will be a key focus of the work we are doing to strengthen our approach to involving residents in learning from complaints described below.

## Learning from complaints

Over the past year, we have carefully considered our complaints policy and procedure to ensure that we use every available opportunity to learn from the feedback given to us by our customers. Following consultation with members of the scrutiny panel we have decided to change our approach so that they are involved in the independent review of a wide range of complaints during the year.

In our new approach, a number of complaints will be reviewed by residents to consider how the

complaint was handled and what lessons we have learned. They will be in a position to recommend changes to our communications with customers, the procedures we use to deliver our services and areas for improvement for teams and individuals. Their findings will be reported to the scrutiny panel on a regular basis. In next year's annual report, and in communication throughout the year, we will share with you any changes that they have put in place.

## Key statistics

Statistics	2015/2016	2016/2017
Percentage of residents who said Sanctuary helps identify options when they want to move home	51%	62%
Number of swaps on Homeswapper	144	164

## Summary

We are pleased that the percentage of residents who said Sanctuary helps identify options to move home has increased. We proactively communicate through our website, social media, Housing Officers and Income Officers. We work with local authority partners, through their Choice Based Lettings or nominations processes, to make applying for a property as straightforward as it can be.

A total of 6,197 Sanctuary households are registered with the Homeswapper website - for residents who are thinking about swapping their home with other Sanctuary or non-Sanctuary households. The number of swaps is increasing.

A key aim of our supported living services is to assist residents in moving on from the service by gaining greater independence. Below is a case study of this in practice.

## Personalised support helps Rachael to thrive on her own

Rachael, from Ipswich, who has a learning disability and limited mobility in her right hand, arrived at Anglesea Road supported housing service in 2012 with little understanding of how to live alone.

She had previously been carer to her ex-husband and had to move to independent accommodation after struggles with managing their finances on top of the personal support.

In need of assistance, Rachael was referred by Suffolk Council social services to a disability-friendly adapted flat at the service.

Once settled, she was able to draw up a personalised support plan with staff, focusing on areas where she needed help including budgeting, managing benefits

and developing positive relationships with other people.

When the time came to move on to independent accommodation, Rachael was given support on how to successfully manage and maintain her tenancy. She continues to receive regular floating support from Sanctuary Supported Living to ensure she thrives in her new home.

As a result, she has now maintained her own independent accommodation for two years, is studying ICT Functional Skills through a local further education provider, and is volunteering at a local charity shop.



## Key statistics

Statistics	2015/2016	2016/2017
How much it costs to manage each property	£621	£580
Overall satisfaction with their rent providing value for money	83%	84%

## Summary

Ensuring good value for money is important because it means we are making the best use of the resources we have. We are pleased to have brought down the cost of managing each property so it is now less than £50 per month. This figure doesn't include the maintenance or any improvement to your home which you can read about on page 11. We are equally pleased that this is in conjunction with an increase in satisfaction with rent. We will work hard to use resources wisely to deliver a good service.

Complementing our Group Annual Report and Financial Statements and our Value Report, this Annual Report to Residents provides an assessment against our Local Offers.

Our successful compliance with the Homes and Communities Agency requirements is demonstrated by maintaining the highest G1 and V1 ratings for governance and financial viability. Our credit ratings have also been maintained at A1 with Moody's and A+ with Standard and Poor's, reflecting our financial strength.

## Reducing the cost of our vans

Last year we conducted an extensive review of fleet costs comprising around 900 maintenance vehicles. We reviewed the triggers that identified the need to replace a vehicle. Instead of setting the replacement date on vehicle age we now consider mileage and vehicle condition. The impact of the review resulted in a change to our fleet policy, extending the life of the vehicle and resulting in savings of over £1 million per year.

## Delivering more services ourselves

During 2016/2017, we have expanded our gas services and now do 87 per cent of gas repairs ourselves. Where we do it ourselves, we save about £70 per job. Customer satisfaction with repairs has increased from 90 per cent in 2016 to 92 per cent this year.



## Key statistics

Statistics	2015/2016	2016/2017
Percentage of residents who said we responded to their emergency repair within 24 hours	70%	82%
Percentage of repairs completed at first visit	81%	82%
Percentage of residents who said Sanctuary gave them a date of next repair if it couldn't be completed at first visit	61%	73%
Percentage of homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard	100%	100%

## Summary

We are pleased that the percentage of residents that said we responded to their emergency repair within 24 hours has significantly improved. This has been the result of the improved planning of repairs through our maintenance improvement programme, Smarter Maintenance. The percentage of repairs completed first time is also up, while 73 per cent of those where we couldn't complete the repair at first time were given follow up appointments.

Nationally, we spent £68.9 million on capital repairs and maintenance and £23 million on planned maintenance of our properties this year. In addition, the spend on routine maintenance in our stock was £47 million.

One hundred per cent of our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard, complying with the necessary Health and Safety legislation. The scrutiny panel undertook a review of the repairs service and were confident the requirements of the regulations were being met.

The two case studies that follow show a specific example of reinvestment and also how the maintenance service is constantly implementing further efficiencies.

## Maintenance team create a sanctuary for older residents

Residents at a Sanctuary retirement living scheme in Banbury are benefiting from new-look facilities thanks to a major £1 million renovation. Staff carried out a range of transformation works at The Hawthorns scheme for the over 55s.

The renovations took place throughout the building with 37 of the scheme's bedrooms being refurbished and a complete redecoration of the communal lounges. The works also included the installation of new UPVC windows, a new communal kitchen, re-laid patio area and redesign of the reception and communal toilet.

## Battery powered tools support the environment

Sanctuary Maintenance staff are undertaking trials of battery powered tools to evaluate a suitable alternative to petrol-powered equipment.

Battery powered tools, such as lawn mowers, strimmers, leaf blowers and hedge cutters, have already been tested in a 12-week pilot and produced great results. The tools produce less noise and emissions, and are cleaner to use and store. On average, the noise produced was 45 per cent lower than the petrol tools. Cost savings were also made; in the first eight weeks of use, fuel savings of around £900 were achieved.