

Sunderland City Council Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee 27 February 2023

gentoo

**Great homes
Strong communities
Inspired people
for Sunderland**

Challenges facing Gentoo tenants

These are the issues our tenants are talking about:

- complaints themes
- cost of living
- anti-social behaviour
- damp and mould
- stock condition

Interim Leadership Team structure

gentoo



Louise Bassett
Interim Chief Executive Officer



Susie Thompson
Executive Director Housing



Pete Lenehan
Executive Director Finance



Catherine Loftus
Associate Director
of Housing



James Haste
Director of
Property
Maintenance



Vicky Lambert
Head of Planning
and Business
Services



Simon Walker
General Counsel



Sam England
Head of HR



Kerry Leng
Director of
Marketing and
Engagement



Stephen Flounders
Director of Risk
and Assurance



James Mullenger
Director of
Transformation
& Technology



Joanne Gordon
Development
Director



Marc Edwards
Director of
Asset and
Sustainability



Laura Watson
Head of
Procurement



Paul Wright
Finance Director

Board and Committee Members

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Emily Cox MBE
Chair of Group Board
Development Committee



Alison Fellows
Group Board
Chair of Development Committee



Chris Watson
Group Board
Chair of People Committee



Hannah Pollard
Group Board
Development Committee



David Murtagh
Group Board
Risk and Audit Committee



Brenda Naisby
Tenant Board
Member People Committee



Claire Long
Group Board
Chair of Risk and Audit Committee



James Prestwich
Group Board
People Committee



Patricia Smith
Group Board
Risk and Audit Committee



Carol Long
Group Board
Risk and Audit Committee



Ellen Thinnesen
Group Board
People Committee

Independent Committee Members



Ged Walsh
Development Committee



Alan Gallagher
Risk and Audit Committee

Board Trainee Programme Members



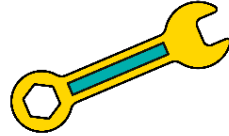
Hayder Qureshi

About Gentoo



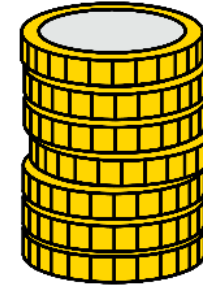
2001

Stock transfer from
Sunderland City Council



£68m

Annual investment
in existing properties

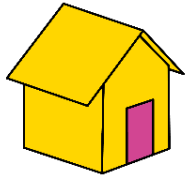


£166m

Turnover

£599m

Net assets worth



28,500

Homes owned and
managed across
the North East



900

Affordable homes being
delivered by 2026



1000+

Employees



60,000+

Tenants living in
our properties



200

New private homes
for sale every year



80%

Of our employees live
in Sunderland

Our core purpose

Safe, decent homes for our tenants

- we know our tenants and our properties
- tenants receive a high quality, consistent service and respond positively to the Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- tenants are proud to live in our homes and they feel they are at the heart of the services
- colleagues are empathetic, consistently purposeful and take ownership, to do the right thing for our tenants
- Gentoo is a sector leader in tenant experience
- Gentoo is an employer of choice and a place where people want to work



Challenges facing Gentoo tenants

These are the issues our tenants are talking about:

- complaints themes – Louise Bassett
- cost of living - Susie Thompson
- anti-social behaviour – Susie Thompson
- damp and mould – James Haste
- stock condition – Susie Thompson
- new homes – Joanne Gordon

Tenant satisfaction levels

Overview – from April 2022 to 31 January 2023

Total number of
complaints

427

(Stage one)



Total number of
compliments

221



Total number of
Own it, fix it

753



Total number of
MP enquiries

270



All Councillor enquiries to be emailed through to feedback@gentoogroup.com

Q4 Complaint theme comparison

Q3 Oct - Dec 2022	Total
Theme*	No
Repair timescales and property condition	37
Damp and condensation	23
Issues with contractors (Asset)	12

Q4 Jan 2023	Total
Theme*	No
Damp and Mould	8
Repair timescale	5
Leaks	3

**Numerous other unique themes are recorded that do not feature in the top theme tables*

Cost of living

- tenant cost of living survey 1550 responses
- 76% had used a food bank in the previous six months
- 78% in the age bracket of 21 to 39
- 81% of respondents were in employment but over 80% of these were in receipt of benefits
- 51% were very or extremely worried about the cost of living
- the biggest concerns for tenants were paying rent paying energy bills and buying food

Cost of living support

We are listening to our tenants and supporting as much as possible, for example:

- the Tenant Crisis and Tenancy Sustainment Fund
 - £50,000 currently, in discussions with the board to significantly increase this to support tenants to sustain their tenancy
- core member of SCC Cost of Living Task Force
 - working with SCC to ensure a joined up approach to tenant support
- strategic partnerships with utility providers
 - OVO energy providing £10 gas and £10 electricity top up to every new tenant
 - EDF providing access to their Crisis fund
 - Utilita offering advice to maximise energy costs and access to one off funds
 - 9000+ tenants receiving water rates discount
- the Money Matters Team continues to maximise benefits and access external funding for those most in need

Cost of living support

- launched the first Bread and Butter Thing for the City
- school uniform project
- warm coat project
- Christmas campaign with toys and hampers
- Easter campaign underway
- referring tenants to advice on cooking on a budget
- provided warm packs to tenants in need
- support Greggs' breakfast club
- Gentoo's corporate charity for 2023 is Sunderland Foodbank
- supporting The Soup Kitchen

Anti-social behaviour

We recognise the challenges of living with ASB and our teams do everything they possibly can within the realms of the law:

- 19 Evictions for ASB in 2022/23 to date
- hot spots across the city
- represented strategically and operationally on HALO, SARA and SAIL
- investing social value funding in areas with youth disorder
- using all tools and powers – closure orders, injunctions, evictions
- additional security arrangements in some areas
- DLUHC – good practice award for our Positive Engagement Officers
- team set up, we offer support along with enforcement
- partnerships are key to success

Damp and mould

Where did we start.....

- reached out to all customers
- visited vulnerable and high priority cases
- supported tenants via:
 - *relocation*
 - *heating assistance*
 - *money matters*
 - *fast tracked investment in homes*
- introduced a dedicated phone line
- raised a bespoke contract to track demand
- recruited additional resource
- we made empathy our priority on all cases



Damp and mould progress

- 1846 inspections complete and 962 physical repairs complete since 24 November 2022

Current status

- 35 urgent inspections outstanding (all carried out within 7 days of being reported)
- 830 routine inspection's outstanding (next available routine appointment 25 days)
- access to properties remains an issue:
 - 11 % of tenants have not been in for a prearranged damp inspection*
 - 9% of tenants have not been in for remedial works following their report*

Damp and mould progress

- data analysis now in place to shape next steps (heat map of most affected areas)
- rapid response squad in place
- reviewing future investment works for most proactive interventions
- additional training for call handling, inspections and repairs awareness
- access process will follow the legal access moving forward
- additional resource across most impacted areas
- remote video assist and drone / thermal imaging trials
- compliments on inspection / works (empathy and clear communication with tenants)
- demand trending in positive direction

Stock condition update

- Gentoo operate a five year rolling stock condition survey programme to all our homes
- 96.8% of homes have received a physical stock condition survey
- we are slightly behind our 5-year programme due to suspending surveys during the Covid 19 lockdown period
- 83.3% of homes have received a stock condition survey visit since 2018
- we employ a team of five dedicated stock condition surveyors with a dedicated Asset Data Manager
- the stock condition survey covers the condition of components that require periodic replacement, any repair issues identified and a review of HHSRS criteria including visible signs of damp and mould
- all issues raised through stock condition surveys are reported back through the business

Gentoo property investment 2023/24

- £39.4 million investment in existing properties during 2022/23 financial year
- £39.8m investment planned for 2023/24 financial year
- £6.9m on roof replacements
- £2m on re-pointing homes and asbestos removal
- £3m on modernising Hedworth Court
- £4.3m on heating upgrades, this includes the completion of properties connected to district heating in Washington
- £3.9m on window replacements
- £7m on kitchens, bathrooms and electrical rewires
- £2.1m on improvements to the outside area of properties, e.g. fences
- £1m on energy efficiency measures
- £1.68m on decoration to outside of properties

Window replacements

- history of underinvestment in Gentoo properties which we are now putting right
- commitment to have replaced all single glazed windows by December 2023
- currently three months ahead of the anticipated completion date
- 300 homes will be completed post December 2023 to coincide with major investment works at Pennywell
- Sunderland-based Sekura Group remain our biggest partner for window installations
- **2900** properties have had double glazing installed this financial year
- **1650** properties remaining

Pennywell regeneration

- £19m investment to regenerate 1000+ gentoo properties on the Pennywell Estate
- an ambitious 'whole-house' approach to property modernisation
- 700 homes planned to be completed in 2023/24
- two year plan to modernise roofs, canopies, windows, front garden fences and decoration to outside of properties
- commenced in October 2022 and will be completed in late 2024
- more than £1 million in social value activity to be delivered as a result of the scheme
- some properties will also benefit from energy efficiency upgrades to EPC C

Energy efficiency improvements

- successful bid in partnership with Sunderland City Council for Wave 1, currently on target for March 2023 completion
- 422 properties have been upgraded to EPC C as part of Wave 1
- bid submitted for Wave 2 to improve 321 homes
- EPC C improvements planned to commence at scale in late 2023
- £15.5m investment planned in EPC improvement works from 2023 - 2027
- significant window replacement programme remains on going and will be completed in 2023
- 1400 heating upgrades planned
- external wall insulation retrofit scheme in Whinfell, Washington completed
- all Gentoo homes will have an EPC Certificate by December 2023

Washington district heating

- 261 properties completed as at period 9
- overall property type completed:
 - 217 Gentoo
 - 29 freehold
 - 15 leasehold
- scheme is now 27% complete
- planned completion November 2023
- meters now being installed via Scottish Power



Gentoo's affordable housing offer

- 900 homes over next five years
- £165 million investment in the city over 5 years
- 14 new house types that meet national space standards
- homes are 70% carbon neutral
- EPC A – via PV Panels



Gentoo's affordable housing offer

New house type range

- 14 new house types
- repeating roof lines
- large vertical windows
- two types of each dwelling size:
 - narrow fronted house (efficient for plotting, allows for gable front)
 - wide front house (dual aspect, reduced plot depth)
- hip or gable roof
- semi-detached or terrace
- all house types meet Nationally Described Space Standards



Gentoo's affordable housing offer

Low carbon initiatives

- all new affordable homes are 70% carbon neutral
- EPC Rating A, SAP Rating 81
- all new homes include:
 - air source heat pumps
 - photovoltaic panels
 - thermal battery storage
 - triple glazing
 - full fill insulation
 - electric vehicle charging points
 - smart meters



Schemes in construction

Scheme name	Number of homes	Estimated practical completion date
Crosstree Park, Keighley Avenue, Downhill	41	June 2023
Penshaw Gardens, Penshaw, Houghton-le-Spring	72	July 2024
Eskdene Rise, Cragdale Gardens, Hetton-le-Hole	86	Early 2024 (Subject to new contractor takeover former Tolent site)
Wellspring Park, Blaydon Avenue, Town End Farm	71	December 2023
Total number of affordable homes currently being delivered:	270	

A wide-angle photograph of a beach at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow. The beach is wet, reflecting the colors of the sky. In the distance, a lighthouse is visible on a cliff. The foreground shows the wet sand and some rocks.

Thank you

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