

gentoo

Great homes
Strong communities
Inspired people
for Sunderland

Social Value Report

21 22



Welcome



I am delighted to introduce you to Gentoo's Social Value Report for 2021/22.

Nigel Wilson
Chief Executive Officer

This is my third year as Chief Executive Officer and it's been another challenging year as we dealt with the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and now the equally challenging crisis as we see first-hand the acute impact of the cost-of-living crisis on our tenants and colleagues.

As a registered provider of affordable housing, we provide vital housing to more than 60,000 people. We believe that everyone deserves the right to live in a safe, secure and good quality home that they can afford and we're proud to provide this to our tenants.

This year, it's more important than ever before that we continue to make a positive difference to our neighbourhoods, investing in services that deliver real social value. Services that help people live their best life possible and have a long lasting impact on our people and communities.

We are here to assist any tenant or leaseholder that needs us. We have specially trained, dedicated teams and have invested significantly in funds and grant schemes that are available to anyone who may need them.

The cost of food, gas, electric, furniture and clothing have all increased. I am deeply concerned about the cost of living crisis and the impact this may be having on our tenants and employees. But we are here to assist any tenant or leaseholder that needs us. We have specially trained, dedicated teams and have invested significantly in funds and grant schemes that are available to anyone who may need them.



We have a strong vision to provide great homes, create strong communities and inspire people. This report highlights the important work that we do to contribute to the prosperity of Sunderland and its residents and demonstrates our resilience, strength, and determination as an organisation to achieve our vision and support our people.

We have measured the impact of our social investment and the outcomes of this using the HACT Wellbeing Valuation Approach and the national TOMs social value framework, both of which are robust social value measurement tools.

By using these formulas, we have been able to accurately measure the social impact of interventions and activities that have a positive impact on our people and communities.

I am immensely proud of everything Gentoo has achieved in Sunderland over another tough 12-month period and I hope you enjoy reading more about the work my colleagues have carried out.

Our social impact summary 21/22

£5,914,763

total social value generated

Place

£68 million

invested in works and improvements on our properties

4,012

properties fitted with double glazing



137

affordable homes built



92%

of tenants satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live

People

£1.57 million

additional income for tenants



120

people supported by Wise Steps job coaches



216

domestic abuse and antisocial behaviour cases

Perform

£1.7 million

surplus reinvested
back into Gentoo

97% 

of tenants satisfied with
the work carried out during
upgrades to their home

Partner

200

families received
VIP treatment at
the pantomime

£309,182

in social value generated through
partners and principal contractors



61

adults and families
provided with
emergency temporary
accommodation

Pride

£22,000

fundraised by our colleagues
for our corporate charities

81 veterans
rehoused

313

families
benefited from
Easter hampers



A perfect

place



We believe that everyone deserves to live in a home that meets their needs and keeps them safe, in a community they can be proud of.

Our aim is to provide homes and services that enable our customers and communities to succeed. To deliver on this, we will

- **invest** significantly in repairs and upgrades to our properties
- **invest** in our homes to ensure they are safe and secure
- **improve** our communities through investment in local priorities, and
- **develop** and sell quality new affordable homes, that people aspire to live in, throughout Sunderland and the North East

We provided more than **60,000 people** in Sunderland with a place they can call home.

We believe everyone has the right to live in a good quality home they can afford. We invest millions of pounds every year to keep our existing homes safe, secure and compliant. Our investment in these homes and in Sunderland has a significant social impact.

1,114 heating systems upgrades

£37.4 million invested in our properties and buildings

4,012 properties fitted with double glazing



137 affordable homes built



97% of tenants satisfied with the work carried out during upgrades to their home

Finished investment work to properties in Houghton-le-Spring



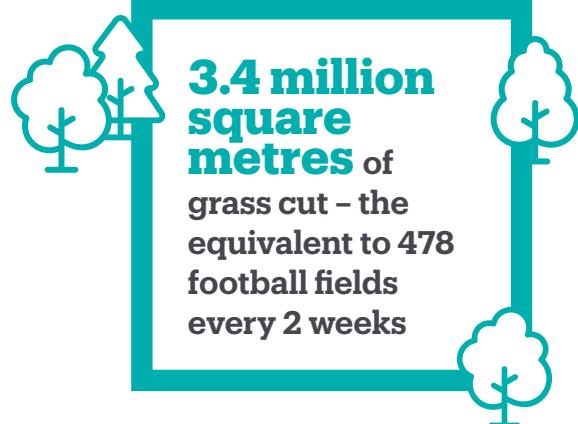


Recently modernised Bexhill Play Area

Taking care of our outdoor space

We continue to provide services that keep our neighbourhoods safe, clean and attractive places to live. We are proud of our estates and want our tenants to be proud of where they live.

We know that greener and cleaner estates can help our tenants to live more sustainable lifestyles and our teams work hard to keep our neighbourhoods well-maintained.



92% of tenants were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live



Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund success

This year we were successful in our bid for funding to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, receiving **£1.23 million** from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Thanks to a successful partnership bid with Sunderland City Council, 604 properties will see their energy performance enhanced, with homes made warmer, more energy efficient and healthier places to live.

The scheme, which has been made possible thanks to funding secured via Sunderland City Council, will help us to protect tenants from the impact of growing fuel bills, with new double glazed windows, insulation and external wall insulation among the measures being put in place.

This is all part of our continued effort to protect them from the rising cost of energy, building on a number of eco projects across the city that have improved the energy credentials of our housing stock, including the use of solar panels on more than 6,000 properties.



Marc Edwards, Director of Asset & Sustainability at Gentoo, Lee Francis, Chief Executive Officer for RE:GEN Group, Cllr Kevin Johnston and Nigel Wilson, Gentoo Chief Executive Officer

We are fully committed to supporting the carbon reduction targets set out by the government and partners across Sunderland. The programme fits with Sunderland's Low Carbon Framework which provides a high-level strategic framework for how Sunderland will play its part in lowering emissions to become carbon neutral by 2040.

Part of this includes an external wall insulation retrofit scheme with 21 properties at Whinfell in Washington set to benefit.

Empower Sunderland Community Fund

Gentoo is contracted by Empower Community Solar to manage more than 2200 solar panel systems in Sunderland. In 2020-21, profit share from the portfolio generated income of **£87,086**, all of which was reinvested back into the Group's housing services.

Other reshared profit is allocated to Empower Sunderland Community Fund – which is run independent of Gentoo. The fund grants money to energy and environmental projects in Sunderland that will help local residents and communities.

In 2021/22, the fund supported 6 local voluntary and community projects with more than £57,000 in grant funding, including the Fans Museum, Fulwell Community Library and Back on the Map, a charity which works with and for local people in the Hendon area.

This year, Empower grants have been awarded to a number of projects including installing double glazing in a community centre and LED lighting in a library.



Catherine Loftus, Associate Director of Housing at Gentoo, Fans Museum founder Michael Ganley and Nigel Wilson, Gentoo Chief Executive Officer



Our Affordable Homes Plan

Our Affordable Homes Programme significantly picked up pace over the last year and we now have 5 completed developments.

The developments all form part of our planned £165 million investment into affordable housing in the city, with ambitious plans set to create a further 1200 new homes for rent in Sunderland by 2026.

We now have developments at:

- **Austin Place**, Pennywell
- **Bellmen Green**, Silksworth
- **Brockwell Green**, Fencehouses
- **Keelman Rise**, Downhill
- **Liberty Grange**, Hylton Castle

A fabric first approach has been combined with renewable and low carbon technology to offset carbon in the homes. This

contributes to Gentoo's ambition to reduce carbon emissions by 75% - 80% by 2025.

The majority of the homes will be available for affordable rent, with some homes available for sale through affordable home ownership options including Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy.

Construction work is currently in progress to deliver 270 new homes at Crosstree Park, Wellspring Park, Penshaw Gardens and Eskdene Rise.

The sites all provide a boost to the local economy through job creation in construction and the wider supply chain of the developments.



The Lime and Elder Show Homes at Bramblewood, Hetton-le-Hole

Gentoo Homes

Our profit for purpose HBF five-star private house building arm, Gentoo Homes, generates a vital surplus which is reinvested back into Gentoo's housing services to support the delivery of affordable rented homes across the city and to fund services that improve the lives of our tenants.

They currently have **7 developments** across the North East and sold **154 new homes in 2021/22**. This generated a surplus of **£1.7m** which was invested back into Gentoo Group.

The Spindle at The Fairways, Marsden

Incredible People





We believe that by putting people at the heart of all that we do we can build great homes and create strong communities.

Our aim is to invest in people and communities to help realise opportunities and release potential. To deliver on this we will:

- **always provide** a great service to our tenants and customers
- **help our tenants and customers** to become more resilient and support independent living through a range of support services
- **be an employer of choice** in Sunderland by investing in and developing our colleagues to achieve their potential, and
- **provide a range of employability opportunities** to potential recruits, including apprentices and work experience

Safety and support services

Our tenants are at the heart of everything we do. As well as providing vital housing, we support our tenants, residents and communities by investing in services that help people live their best possible life.

Our specialist teams help and support tenants through a range of support services.

Our Positive Engagement Team has provided support to 175 tenants at risk of losing their tenancy and those behaving in an antisocial way because of alcohol misuse, drug misuse or mental health conditions.

The social value generated from this was £548,106



Our Safeguarding Team coordinate safeguarding alerts across our properties. They work closely with city partners, such as Together for Children to protect more than 220 adults and children.

175 tenants
supported through positive engagement



78 adult safeguarding alerts

216 domestic abuse and antisocial behaviour cases

144 child safeguarding alerts



Ashlea Morrow,
Neighbourhood Coordinator

Our Victim Support Team has continued to support tenants who have been victims of domestic abuse and antisocial behaviour. This year, 216 people have benefitted from the specialist support service.

The social value generated from this was £785,876



Young Persons Service

Our Young Person's Team offers a range of vocational, educational and housing-related services to support young people aged 16 to 25 with the skills to live independently. We offer supported housing, advice and guidance to meet their specific needs.

This year, the team dealt with 250 young persons' cases and provided 200 young people with support to manage their tenancy.

25 young people were provided with a place they can call home at Holmewood



69 young people were provided with a secure home

250 referrals to our outreach support service

The social value generated from this was £53,833



Wellbeing service

Our Wellbeing service supports tenants to live independently in their own through aids and adaptations.

We manage 6 sheltered schemes and 2 extra schemes across the city for those who choose to move into a residential building or who have a care need.

To combat social isolation, our teams put on social activities and events for residents. This could be anything from singers and bingo to arts and crafts and quizzes.

2,945 support referrals received

Residents of Haddington Vale celebrating the Platinum Jubilee



1,335 social activities were delivered for tenants living in our schemes

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee was a huge celebration this year and residents enjoyed creating bunting at craft workshops, which was used to decorate Mowbray Park for the city-wide jubilee event. They also benefited from afternoon teas and singing performances to help get them in the jubilee spirit.

Money Matters Team

Our specialist Money Matters Team provide advice and support to help tenants maximise their income, reduce debt and remove financial barriers to ensure they can maintain their tenancy.

The pandemic was financially challenging for tenants and with the current cost of living crisis, a new challenge is just beginning. Our team are on hand to provide this vital service that will help our tenants through a difficult time.



£7,741 in grants
was given out to tenants
via our crisis fund



£1,075,953
additional income
for tenants

4,336 referrals to water
rate discount schemes,
resulting in **£491,064**
discounts to tenants



860 tenants
supported to make
financial gains

Chloe Harrison, Gentoo



Tahnee Kelly, Gentoo

We are here for you. If you find yourself struggling financially, please get in touch. We can help

A photograph of a young woman with long, light brown hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is positioned in front of a large, white wall that features the word "gentoo" in a large, orange, lowercase sans-serif font. Below the wall, a portion of a sign is visible with the words "Great hom" in a teal, lowercase font. To the right of the woman, the shoulder and arm of another person are visible, wearing a dark blue denim jacket.

Great hom



Nigel Wilson, Gentoo Chief Executive Officer with our 15 new apprentices

Investing in our people

We are one of the largest employers in Sunderland and are extremely proud of the achievements of our colleagues who make a difference to the lives of our tenants every day.

As part of our ongoing commitment to invest in the workforce of the future, our 2021 apprenticeship recruitment programme saw us welcome 15 apprentices to the Group. We also created 15 placements through the Government funded Kickstart scheme, which focuses on creating jobs for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit.

We've continued to support our previous apprentices with 10 people from the previous cohort gaining permanent employment with the Group.

The social value generated from this was £18,570



You are Gentoo award

This year, almost 500 colleagues were nominated by their peers and 93 colleagues were celebrated in our You Are Gentoo Awards.

We are part of the Living Wage Foundation to ensure all our colleagues are paid fairly and valued for the work they do.

Our uniqueness and strength come from the dedication, skill and energy of our staff. They live our values every day and work to achieve our vision. We are proud of our IIP Gold status in recognition for our commitment to our people.

In 2021/22 we invested £633,403 on upskilling our colleagues (approximately £629 per colleague) and an additional £227,582 on wellbeing initiatives (approximately £226 per colleague).



Employment and skills

Our Wise Steps programme provides one-to-one support to people living in the city who are unemployed and looking for a job.

We work with organisations to create employment opportunities, help with skills development, confidence building and vocational training. We understand the importance of getting a job or learning new skills for the wellbeing of individuals. Programmes like this remove the barriers to work and are currently more important than ever before.



12 people successfully gained employment

120 people supported by Wise Steps job coaches



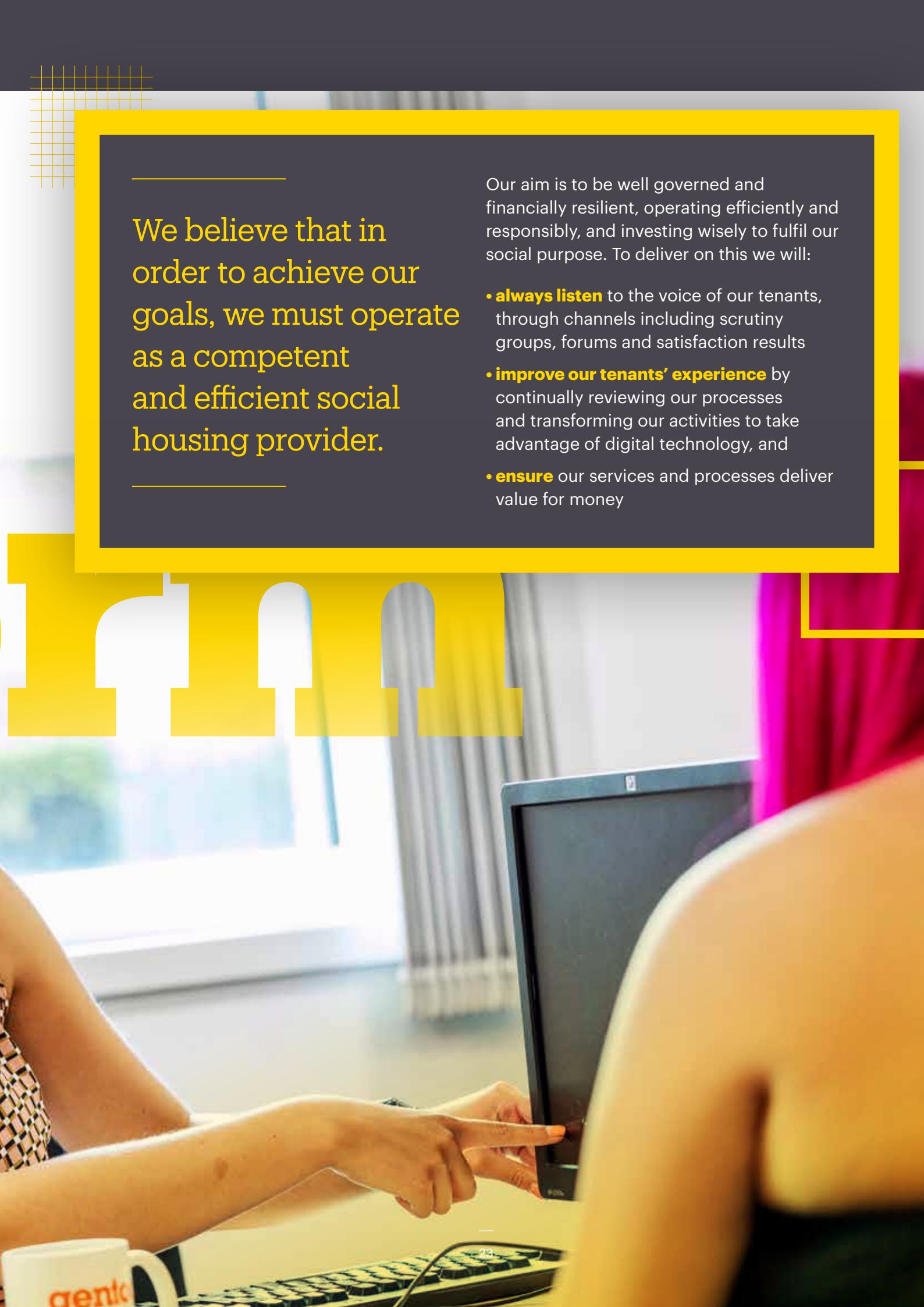
6 people successfully completed vocational training

5 people moved from claiming benefits to job searching activities

The social value generated from this was **£191,313**

Striving to

perfo



We believe that in order to achieve our goals, we must operate as a competent and efficient social housing provider.

Our aim is to be well governed and financially resilient, operating efficiently and responsibly, and investing wisely to fulfil our social purpose. To deliver on this we will:

- **always listen** to the voice of our tenants, through channels including scrutiny groups, forums and satisfaction results
- **improve our tenants' experience** by continually reviewing our processes and transforming our activities to take advantage of digital technology, and
- **ensure** our services and processes deliver value for money

Performing well for tenants

As a social housing provider, we are well governed and financially strong, operating efficiently and responsibly and investing wisely to fulfil our social purpose.

We pride ourselves on performing to the highest possible standard and delivering the quality of service our tenants deserve. This year, we are pleased to have once again performed to a high standard.



93% of tenants were satisfied with the service they received from our Property Maintenance Team

93% of tenants were satisfied with the condition of their home when moving in



97% of tenants were satisfied with the work carried out during upgrades to their home

100% of tenants were satisfied with our Positive Engagement service



92% of tenants were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live



Investing in our homes

We believe everyone has the right to live in a good quality home. Alongside planned investment in modernising our homes, we respond to thousands of repairs calls each month to ensure our communities and homes are safe and well-maintained for our tenants.



179,094 repairs and servicing appointments

2622 door faults rectified



1426 properties rectified with condensation and mould growth



367 properties rectified with penetrating damp

The social value generated from this was **£2,860,894**

Putting tenants at the heart of housing

In line with the recommendations in the Government's Social Housing White Paper, we have put our tenants voice at the centre of our organisation.

We are honest in acknowledging there are times when we don't get things right and have overhauled our formal complaints process, encouraging feedback whether it be positive or negative.

Our Tenant Voice Team was set up to directly deal with complaints, work with our tenant groups and liaise with community and voluntary organisations. Being so proactive in our approach to managing complaints has given us an opportunity to put right where something has gone wrong, identify trends and

strengthen our partnerships with other strategic partners in the city.

The Tenant Voice Team also manage five geographical tenant-led Tenant and Community Voice Groups (TCV). The Groups work with Gentoo to help shape services, invest resources and make improvements. We actively work with 97 involved tenants across various groups and forums such as our TCV and Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

Throughout 2021/22, we held 31 tenant engagement events both in person and online.

The social value generated from this was **£625,146**

Performing well for tenants

Earlier this year, 2 of our tenants were selected to be part of the government's Social Housing Quality Resident Panel. The Panel is made up of 250 social housing tenants from across the country and will meet regularly and act as a collective 'voice' for tenants.

They will share their views with government and ministers on their approach to improving the quality of social housing.

Over the last 2 years, we've changed the way we listen and learn from tenants. It's important to us that we listen to tenants and get things right. We have consulted with tenants and leaseholders on critical

business changes, as well as made improvements to our processes from tenant feedback.

It's great that our tenants are representing Gentoo and Sunderland at a national level and we can't wait to see what the panel will achieve.



Lewis Walmsley, Gentoo Tenant Voice Partner with a tenant



Stephen Flounders, Gentoo Director of Risk and Assurance and Hayder Qureshi, trainee board member

Every Voice Matters

Last year, we launched our 'Every Voice Matters' campaign, an exciting training programme that is specifically aimed at recruiting and developing people from underrepresented groups, who can provide diverse thinking and experience of different lived experiences, to become potential board or committee members at housing associations.

We recognised we need to continue to improve the diversity of our board and want a healthy variety of people from different backgrounds and cultures to help shape the future of Gentoo.

As part of the campaign, we welcomed local resident Hayder Qureshi to represent Gentoo. Hayder is currently a trainee board member and observes all board meetings. The programme is giving Hayder the skills and expertise to become a board member in the future and help freshen up our thinking and ensure we have the right mix of skills governing the group.

The perfect partner



Susie Thompson, Gentoo Executive Director of Housing and Julie Whittaker, Gentoo Neighbourhood Coordinator with representatives from partners, Bell Group and Tolent



We believe that by working with others we can achieve far more than we can on our own, for the good of our tenants and the city.

Our aim is to work with others to influence and generate sustainable change. To deliver on this we will:

- **develop Sunderland** into a vibrant, healthy and dynamic city through effective partnerships with Sunderland City Council and other local anchor institutions
- **working alongside** organisations such as Northumbria Police, local schools, community groups and businesses to improve the safety of our neighbourhoods and wellbeing of our tenants and customers, and
- **collaborate** with key partners and other housing associations to influence things that affect our tenants, colleagues and society locally, regionally and nationally

We have continued to work closely with our key city partners to drive collaboration and positive change in Sunderland. As one of the city's main anchor institutions, we recognise that we are uniquely positioned to make a real positive difference to the lives of tenants and residents on Wearside.



Affordable Development Team

Working with our contractors

We work closely with our principal contractors to help fulfil our social purpose in our communities. Throughout 2021-22 we worked closely with our contractor partners, EQUANS, Tolent, RE:GEN and Bell Group

Nearly £30,000 was spent on education activities and a donation of laptops was made to ensure children could take part in virtual learning during the pandemic.

The partnership with our contractors has impacted hundreds of people and multiple communities by providing them with opportunities and relief aids.

Our colleagues and contractors also donated their time, taking part in litter picks and volunteering to decorate the Springboard Special Educational Needs and Disabilities centre, which will make

a huge difference for the people and communities in Pennywell.

Between the contractors, we have received support with a number of initiatives including our Christmas gift appeal, Easter Egg appeal and our Give it a Grow gardening competition.

This partnership work created a social value of £103,388

Spreading much needed Christmas cheer

Christmas is the season for giving and for many of our tenants some fun and a celebration was just what they needed. With many of our tenants still recovering from financial impacts caused by the pandemic, our Christmas appeal this year was more important than ever.

Thanks to the generosity of partner organisations such as Sunderland City Council, EQUANS, Tolent and Sunderland Empire we were able to make Christmas extra special for hundreds of families.

200 families received VIP treatment at the pantomime, with a visit from Father Christmas and complimentary snacks and ice cream



Susie Thompson, Gentoo Executive Director of Housing, Peter Lenehan, Gentoo Executive Director of Finance and Terry Forth, Gentoo delivering gifts and dinners

600 Christmas presents delivered



160 Christmas dinners delivered

250 selection boxes donated to Back on the Map Christmas Grotto



1 Christmas tree donated to Basis Sunderland through Oasis Community Housing

Positive Footprints

Our Raising Aspirations programme, which we deliver in partnership with Positive Footprints, changes the lives of children and young people in Sunderland.

More than 1,500 children will benefit from the programme which inspires them to identify their natural talents, believe in themselves and raise aspirations for the future.

Sunderland has a proud work heritage and there's nothing more important to our future than investing in our young people and our future.

The programme, which was launched in 2019, is adaptable across all primary school year groups, with children achieving vital employability skills at the end of the 12 hour course which include everything from discovering their unique qualities and skills to CV writing and preparing for an interview.

This created a social value of £205,794



Junior flag bearer on behalf of Gentoo Homes, supporting Sunderland AFC Women

Gentoo Homes sponsors of Sunderland AFC Women

Our commercial house-builder, Gentoo Homes, was proud to partner with Sunderland AFC to support the women's team last season.

Equality, diversity and inclusion continue to be our priority. We were delighted to support the club's re-emphasis on the women's team, sharing the club's ambitions to see the women's game to continue to grow in the city and the region.

We have been working alongside the club as a key partner in the city since 2019, previously as Sunderland AFC's official Community Partner and supporting the Foundation of Light on a range of exclusive community-based events and activities for tenants.



Sunderland AFC Women

A healthy meal to start the day for 300 children

This year we created a new partnership with Farringdon Academy in Sunderland to bring the breakfast club to 300 children at the school.

School children will receive a healthy meal before the school day begins, preparing them for the day ahead.

Since the launch of the breakfast club, there has already been an improvement in the school's punctuality and productivity.

We are proud to have supported the Greggs Foundation Breakfast Club for almost ten years.



Providing homes for those in need

Everyone deserves the right to live in a safe and secure home. We work with Sunderland City Council and charity, Changing Lives, to provide homes for people sleeping rough.

This year, we helped to provide a home for 3 adults who had no permanent home and were sleeping rough. We also provided secure housing for 61 adults and families who were living in temporary accommodation.

CHANGING LIVES

This partnership work helped generate a social value of £594,018

Taking Pride



We believe that Sunderland is an outstanding city. It is our heart, our homeland, and somewhere we will always be proud to shout about and give something back to.

Our aim is to harness the collective passion and energy of our people to support the city's plan. To deliver on this we will:

- **remember** our roots in all that we do
- **be an excellent provider** of social housing in Sunderland, demonstrating the quality of our service
- **actively work to reduce our carbon footprint** in line with Sunderland City Council's ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030
- **show pride** in our city by working collaboratively with local partners to make a difference

Whether this is through history and heritage, our culture, how we talk, what we eat or how well our garden is kept, being proud of where we live and work is key to ensuring both Gentoo and Sunderland continue to improve and transform. We are immensely proud of the work we have achieved over the last year and it is the pride that our tenants and colleagues have every day that really makes Sunderland a special place.

Easter hamper donations

Every year we collect Easter egg donations from our staff and contractors. This year we wanted to give tenants more than just an egg.

With soaring food and fuel prices, we thought a hamper full of essentials would be more beneficial for our most vulnerable tenants.

With the support of our contracting partners, Bell Group, Tolent, EQUANS and Venson we collected thousands of food items, to create Easter Hampers. The hampers were full of cereal, pasta, toiletries and Easter treats.



Nigel Wilson, Gentoo Chief Executive with Bell Group and EQUANS who supported the Easter appeal

Gentoo colleagues delivered the hampers to over 300 families over the Easter weekend.



Catherine Loftus, Gentoo Associate Director of Housing with pupils from Dame Dorothy Primary School

This created a social value of £24,888

Give it a Grow

Our annual gardening competition is now in its 6th year. It recognises and celebrates keen gardeners for their efforts in creating beautiful gardens and outdoor spaces.

The competition, which is in partnership with EQUANS and Tolent, recognised tenant gardens, communal gardens in one of our sheltered schemes and two local schools.

Veterans in Crisis Sunderland

We're extremely proud to support the Armed Forces community in Sunderland. Working with Veterans In Crisis Sunderland we've re-housed more than 81 veterans this year and we're also delighted to have scooped Gold in the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) Employer Recognition Scheme.



Fundraising for those in need

Each year, our colleagues vote for and choose two corporate charities that we will support. For the last 2 years, our corporate charities have been Action on Dementia Sunderland and St Benedict's Hospice.

Our colleagues raised an impressive £22,000 through raffles, bakes sales and our regular payroll deduction scheme.



Colleagues from Gentoo's Central Area Office



Gentoo colleagues

The charities spend 100% of their funds in Sunderland, meaning the money raised will directly benefit our tenants, residents and communities.

Our colleagues also played their part in standing with the Ukraine, holding a one-off fundraising day to raise vital money for everyone impacted. Through various fundraising activities, we raised more than £4,700 which was donated directly to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.



Sarah Duffy, Gentoo

We are
gent

too



ARMED FORCES
COVENANT

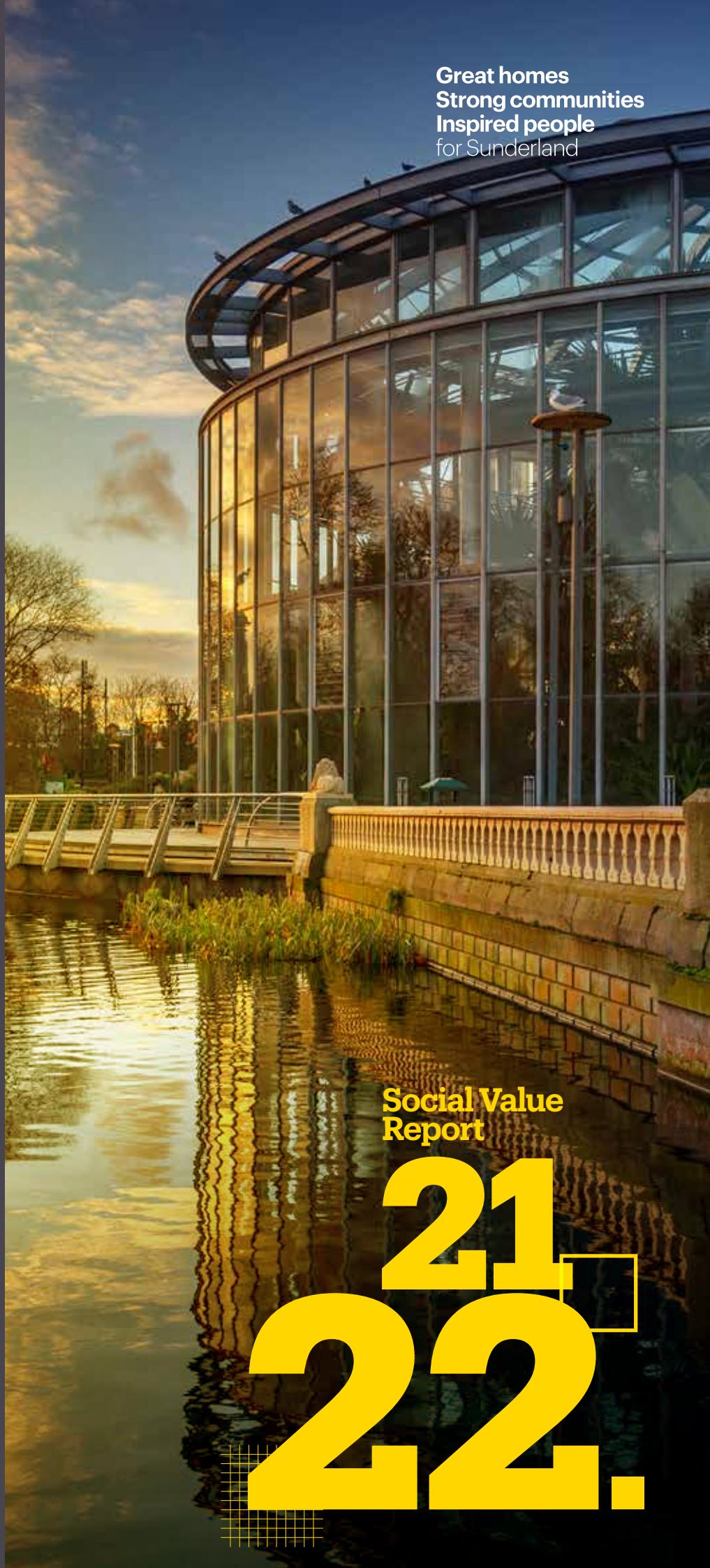
EMPLOYER
RECOGNITION
SCHEME

GOLD AWARD



gentoo

Great homes
Strong communities
Inspired people
for Sunderland



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Gentoo Group Limited is a charitable community
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