

Social Impact Report 2018-19



Introduction

Welcome to Gentoo's Social Impact Report for 2018-19. The report is a summary of the social and economic impact that our services, policies, projects and programmes have on our tenants, communities and colleagues.

Tenants are at the heart of everything we do and it's fantastic to see the impact our services have on their lives. Gentoo provides more than just a place to live; we offer services to support our most vulnerable tenants and people in financial need, and look after the environments of our neighbourhoods.

We are proud to call Sunderland our home and to support Sunderland City Council's plan to make the city a dynamic, healthy and vibrant place to live, work, study and visit.

Gentoo's vision is to support great homes, strong communities and inspired people across Sunderland. We do this by living our core values to do the right thing, make a difference, work together, keep learning and give all we've got. This report shows just how seriously we take this mission and the impact we do have in our communities.

We have measured the impact of some of our outcomes using the HACT Wellbeing Valuation Approach. Wellbeing Valuation is a consistent and robust way to measure the social impact of an intervention by how much it increases people's wellbeing, and is a method for placing values on things that do not have a market value through being bought or sold.

I hope you enjoy reading our Social Impact Report for 2018-19 and learning more about the fantastic communities we work in.

Nigel Wilson
Group Chief Executive Officer



Our 2018-19 social impact highlights



Great homes

2,404

referrals handled by our Wellbeing Service

100%

of properties met Decent Homes Standard



Provided homes for

young people leaving care or in housing need

317

Delivered

activities for tenants in our extra care and sheltered accommodation schemes

£33 million

invested in our properties



Strong communities

3.4 million

square metres of grass

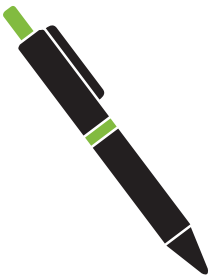
Cut



29

Worked in partnership with

tenant and residents' associations



96

Supported

people through our employment programme

145

tenants took part in community involvement activities

Inspired people

102

Supported

tenants with complex needs



adult safeguarding alerts dealt with

145

Supported

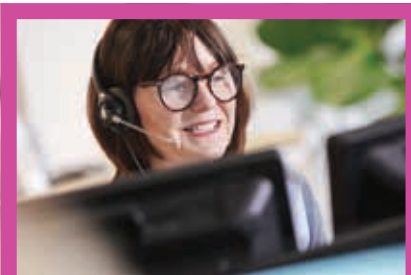
victims of domestic violence and anti-social behaviour



189

Dealt with

child safeguarding alerts



£583

Invested

per colleague in training and development

691

hours providing gardening services for vulnerable tenants



2,200

volunteer hours to support community projects



£34,536

Awarded grants of

to community groups

£1 million

Helped tenants access more than

in benefit claims and gains



1,500

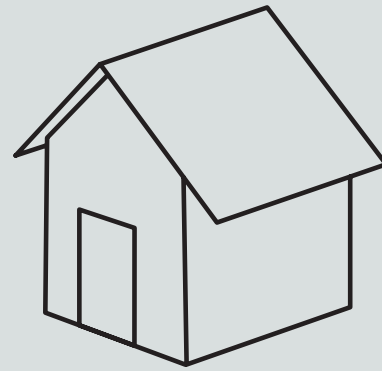
Christmas gifts donated to 325 families

Great homes

Independence for everyone

Gentoo is committed to supporting our tenants to live independently.

In 2018-19, we provided services generating social value worth £157,000** to young people, older people and those with care needs.



Young Persons' Support Service

Our Young Persons' Team offers a wide range of vocational, educational and housing-related services to equip young adults aged 16-25 with the skills, experience and confidence to maintain a home and become independent.

This year, we:

- Dealt with 148 young person cases
- Offered 22 young people leaving care or those under the age of 18 in housing need a place to call home
- Provided secure housing for 13 young people living in temporary accommodation, homeless or leaving care, creating social value worth approximately £131,000**
- Provided ongoing support to 135 young people to secure or maintain their tenancy, creating social value worth approximately £26,000**

Wellbeing Service

Our Wellbeing Service supports tenants to remain in their home independently, particularly older people. It can also assist a move if this is the most appropriate solution.

This year we received 2,404 referrals for support which included 1,604 referrals for aids and adaptations and 583 for rehousing assistance.

Extra care and sheltered accommodation

Our extra care and sheltered accommodation schemes provide homes and support for older tenants.

We provide 155 sheltered accommodation apartments across the city for people aged 60 and over, and 85 extra care apartments and bungalows for tenants aged 55+ with a care need.

Each scheme has a manager who is there to support tenants with every aspect of their tenancy, plus 24/7 access to a care provider for those living in our extra care facilities.



“My mobility chair has been great – it’s really helped me”



We provide a range of activities in all of our extra care and sheltered accommodation schemes to reduce social isolation and improve wellbeing. We delivered 317 activities and events this year, with craft sessions, singers and entertainment, seated exercises, coffee mornings and game afternoons among the most popular.



“The extra help I’ve received has made it possible to exit the house instead of being trapped”



Great homes

Decent Homes

Every one of our homes for rent complies with the Decent Homes Standard, which is the minimum standard housing associations should meet according to the Government.

88% of tenants were satisfied with the condition of their home when they moved in

We continuously invest in our properties to ensure their quality remains high. In 2018-19, that investment exceeded £33 million and included:

- 1,755 boiler replacements
- 529 double-glazed window installations
- 1,442 gable end repairs
- 972 roof replacements
- 65 kitchen and bathroom upgrades
- 1,247 communal fire door renewals and 1,367 refurbishments
- 740 flat door renewals and 1,197 refurbishments*

We also have a dedicated team to provide practical advice and repairs for issues relating to damp and condensation. This year, we repaired 280 properties with damp issues and 612 properties with issues concerning condensation, creating a social value worth approximately £695,000**.

95% of tenants were satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service



Secure homes

Gentoo provided secure housing for six rough sleepers, creating a social value worth approximately £128,000**.

A further 26 people living in temporary accommodation were offered secure housing, creating a social value worth approximately £208,000**.

91% of tenants were satisfied with the work carried out following upgrades to their homes



94% of customers were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live

95% of tenancy breaches were closed as a result of intervention and prevention



Energy efficiency

5,612 of our homes are fitted with solar panel systems, 5,276 of which are owned by Empower Community Solar (ECS). Each system could save the household up to £158 per year on energy bills.

Gentoo is contracted by ECS to manage a solar panel portfolio of over 10,000 installations in Sunderland and across the country. This includes the systems on our homes which we are also contracted to maintain. We receive 40% of the shared profit from the installation portfolio on our homes each year, which is reinvested into the Group to support the delivery of our services. This totalled £153,000 in 2018-19.

Another 40% of these profits each year are allocated to the Empower Sunderland Community Fund, which is independent to Gentoo. This fund supports local groups in Sunderland and since it was established in 2016, 14 community groups have benefited from £88,000 of funding.

We also generated an income of £191,000 in feed-in-tariffs from the 336 Gentoo-owned installations on our homes, which we reinvested back into our services.



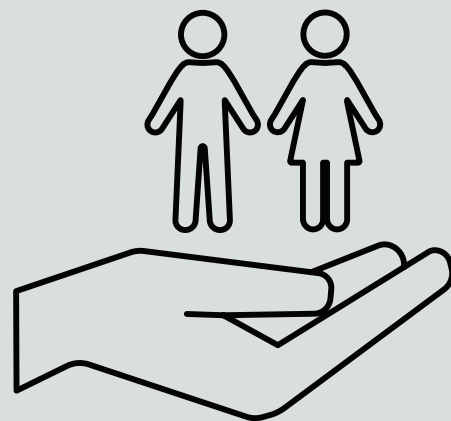
Gentoo Homes

Gentoo Homes is our commercial arm. It is a profit for purpose business that builds around 200 homes per year for sale, which helps to generate a subsidy to support the delivery of more affordable rented homes across the city.

This year, Gentoo Homes reinvested £4.1 million back into the Group and built 67 affordable new homes (34 of which were built for rent). This investment will support the delivery of our 2019-24 Affordable Homes Plan which will bring 900 additional affordable rented homes to the market.

Strong communities

We don't just provide homes,
we help to create strong
communities across Sunderland.



Getting tenants involved

We want to work with tenants to shape the services we offer. This year, we delivered a wide range of opportunities for tenants to have their say and get involved in their communities.

Involved tenants

145 people from our communities participated in customer involvement activities including Customer Engagement Forums, Customer Scrutiny Groups, Local Focus Groups, Management Committees, Rate Your Estate inspections, and Customers Helping Achieve Improvements Now (CHAIN) projects.

68 of those tenants had regular involvement throughout the year, generating social value worth approximately £268,000** through their active contribution to their community.



Tenant and residents' associations

Gentoo works in partnership with 29 tenant and residents' associations (TARAs) across the city to improve our communities. TARAs registered with us can access support with annual public liability insurance, involvement in city-wide and local consultations and community engagement opportunities, and obtain ongoing advice from our customer and community teams.

The TARAs are made up of 151 committee members and 56 of those actively participated in the groups in 2018-19, generating a social value worth approximately £368,000**.



Annual Give it a Grow competition

To recognise tenants who take great care of their gardens, Gentoo runs an annual Give it a Grow gardening competition.

The competition is open to schools and tenants, and provides an opportunity for those involved to showcase their garden and demonstrate pride in their community. In 2018-19, 16 tenants and 12 schools took part in the competition.

Environment

Protecting the environment and ensuring the sustainability of our trees and woodlands is a vital part of what we do. Whether we are taking down a mature tree or trimming a garden hedge, everything is re-used or recycled and chipped. Chippings are donated to local farms for spreading on fields for horses.

This year, we inspected 796 trees and cut 3.4 million square metres of grass – that is the size of 476 football pitches!

Our Grounds Maintenance and Repairs Team also works hard to keep the environment of our communities safe and looking attractive. In 2018-19, the team's work included:

- Clearing 1,489 void gardens and bringing them up to lettable standards
- Garden maintenance for over 40 schools
- Weekly safety inspections on 20 play parks across the city
- 120 litter picking jobs
- Responding to 1,830 fly-tipping issues
- Responding to 122 graffiti reports

Volunteering

Gentoo encourages all colleagues, partners and tenants to give their time to activities that make a difference in our communities.

Volunteering is a great way for people to develop skills, gain experience and give something back. This year, 23 volunteers (including 17 tenants) gave over 2,200 hours of their time at events including befriending sessions, lunch clubs, community events, and reading in schools.

In 2018-19, 20 out of the 23 volunteers took part in regular volunteering activity, generating a social value worth approximately £52,000*.

Strong communities



Gardening service

We offer a gardening service to our most vulnerable tenants that costs them just £10 per visit. This year, we provided 691 hours on gardening jobs for 210 of our vulnerable tenants

The Genfactor

Our talent contest, The Genfactor, gives young people the opportunity to showcase their talents, build confidence and grow. Many of the finalists and previous winners have gone on to do great things, including studying at prestigious performing arts colleges and competing on national TV talent shows.

The competition is now in its tenth year and over 1,000 young people have taken part. In 2019, 95 young people (comprising 57 acts) audition for the contest.



Helping Hands campaigns

We encourage our colleagues, partners and the local community to donate to our Helping Hands campaigns which aim to help people across the city.

In 2018-19, we donated:

1,310 Easter eggs to young people

1,500 Christmas gifts to 325 families

172.68kg of food (providing 411 meals)

50 Christmas lunches to vulnerable tenants in partnership with a local restaurant

Supporting our tenants and communities

Gentoo delivers projects and supports other organisations that give back to our communities. In 2018-19, these projects had a combined social value of £688,000**

Support from our contractors

Gentoo works with a number of contractors to deliver our investment programme. We ask all of our contractors to commit to supporting the delivery of our social value initiatives, including the Helping Hands campaigns, sponsoring competitions like Give it a Grow and The Genfactor, and employing local apprentices.



Strong communities



Universal Credit

Our dedicated Universal Credit Team was established in July 2018 to help tenants prepare for the launch of the new benefits system. The team helps tenants to understand how Universal Credit works, identify any vulnerabilities they may have and discuss the crisis support that is available throughout their assessment period.

This year, the team contacted 3,251 tenants making a claim for Universal Credit to offer support. Our average increase in arrears per case for 2018-19 was just £24.60, which compares positively to other housing associations.

Employment programme

WiseSteps job coaches provide tailored support to help tenants move closer to the employment market.

In 2018-19, the service supported 96 people:

9 people moved into full-time employment and six people into part-time employment

13 undertook vocational training

12 people moved from claiming ESA or Income Support into job searching activities

This work generated social value worth approximately £129,000**.



Financial wellbeing

Gentoo provides dedicated services to help our tenants manage their finances, deal with Universal Credit payments and find employment

Aspire grants

Gentoo offers Aspire grants to local people and groups who are delivering projects to improve or support their communities. We have supported football clubs, parent and toddler groups, and art, music and drama clubs.



In 2018-19, we gave grants totalling

£34,536

to 81 local organisations

Money Matters Team

The Money Matters Team is a free service that provides our tenants with advice on benefits and managing their finances, and support to manage debts. The aim of the service is to improve tenants' financial and overall wellbeing by helping them to maximise their income, manage their outgoings and expenditure, and become more financially responsible.

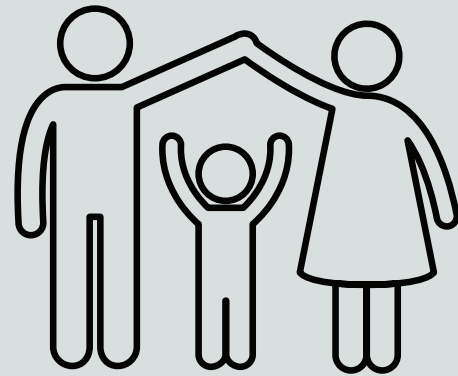
In 2018-19, we supported 1,225 tenants to make financial gains and improve their financial management skills. This included:

- 533 tenants supported to manage their budgets, identify priority bills and equip them with the appropriate skills to manage their finances
- 479 tenants advised on £338,965 worth of rent arrears
- 554 tenants advised on £487,100 worth of debt
- £7,628 awarded to tenants in crisis, the majority of which was used for gas and electricity
- 233 referrals to Northumbrian Water's Water Rate Discount Scheme
- £13,994 worth of discount from tenants' water charges
- £1,003,956 worth of benefit claims and gains for tenants

87% of tenants reported feeling 'very satisfied' with the services they received from the Money Matters Team

Inspired people

Tenants are at the heart of everything we do and our services provide them with a wide range of support at all stages of their lives. Our safety and support services generated social value worth approximately £2 million in 2018-19.



“[The service] was really easy to talk to - I felt that they really cared about me and my wellbeing”

Positive Engagement Service

Gentoo employs a specialist team to support tenants with complex needs to address issues such as mental health, confidence, domestic abuse, and drug and alcohol misuse.

This year, 102 tenants accessed support and 70% of those had a primary support need concerning mental health and 23% concerning alcohol addiction. 100% of tenants felt satisfied with this service.

“It was like talking to a friend but [the support worker] could also give me good advice and get me the help I needed. She motivated me to get better and do something about my situation.”



Victim Support Service

Gentoo employs specialist colleagues who are experts in providing support to victims of anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse. The Victim Support Team provides tenants with emotional support, practical help and advice with tenancy and other issues.

This year, 145 victims received support and 304 victims were signposted to other support organisations. 98% of tenants felt satisfied with the service they received.

“The support worker helped me through everything and made me feel very safe and settled in my new home. I love it!!”

The positive engagement and victim support services measure their impact using the Short Warwick and Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, and values the distance travelled by tenants using Mental Health and Life Satisfaction.



“I don't think I'd have ever got to this point if it hadn't been for the multi-agency approach”

Social value worth approximately £1.2 million* was generated for the tenants supported by the victim support service and approximately £795,000* for tenants supported by the positive engagement service. Funding worth £180,000 was awarded by Big Lottery to deliver the Positive Engagement and Victim Support Services.



Inspired people



Safeguarding

Gentoo has a colleague dedicated to coordinating all safeguarding alerts across the Group and referring concerns to Sunderland City Council's safeguarding team.

This year, we received 189 child safeguarding alerts and 89 of those resulted in formal safeguarding referrals to Together for Children (which delivers children's services on behalf of Sunderland City Council).

We also received 53 adult safeguarding alerts and 32 of those were referred for formal review by the council's adult services department.

Our Something Not Quite Right (SNQR) process encourages all colleagues to report any concerns they may have about the welfare of a tenant(s) following a meeting with them or a visit to their home. In 2018-19, 202 SNQR alerts were raised and included concerns about safeguarding, wellbeing, domestic abuse and housekeeping. In January 2019, the scheme received the 'Best Customer Impact' award from the National Housing Maintenance Forum (NHMF).



Domestic abuse

Gentoo is one of the three Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) partners leading change for cohesive policies and strategies for tackling domestic abuse. DAHA's mission is to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through:

- Lobbying Government and the housing sector
- Offering an accreditation service to housing providers
- Undertaking research and disseminating good practice across the sector

An employer of choice

Gentoo's uniqueness and strength comes from the dedication, skill and energy of our colleagues. We are proud to support our workforce to grow and develop in their roles.

Investors in People Gold

Gentoo is recognised as a gold standard organisation by Investors in People. The accreditation acknowledges our commitment to developing our colleagues and supporting our people managers.

Living Wage

All of our colleagues are paid the Living Wage and we are an accredited Living Wage Employer.

Investment in colleagues

We continuously invest in the training and wellbeing of our colleagues. In 2018-19, we invested £583 per colleague in training, including compliance, professional qualifications, seminars and conferences, management development and soft skills development.

We also invested £89 per colleague in employee wellbeing initiatives, such as occupational health provision and our MyPlace reward and wellbeing system.

Employing local people

73%

of Gentoo colleagues live in Sunderland.

Salaries paid to local people total

£21,633,897

Apprentices

We offer apprenticeships in a range of professional disciplines across the Group. We currently employ 32 apprentices and three completed their apprentice programme this year, securing permanent employment with Gentoo.

Our 2019 apprentice recruitment programme attracted almost 1,200 applications for just 16 positions. Successful candidates will begin their apprenticeships with Gentoo in September 2019.

Social activities

We provide social activities to reward our colleagues for their hard work and dedication.

Our Family Fun Day 2018 was held at Beamish Living Museum of the North and 1,370 people enjoyed a free day of activities.

At Christmas, we organised a suite of activities to celebrate the festive season including Christmas wreath making, ice skating, a choir concert, Christmas jumper day and a Christmas party.



References

*Mental Health and Life Satisfaction: The Relationship between the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale and Life Satisfaction, HACT and Daniel Fujiwara (www.hact.org.uk and www.simetrica.co.uk).
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www.gentoogroup.com

Gentoo Group Limited, Emperor House,
2 Emperor Way, Doxford International Business Park,
Sunderland, SR3 3XR.

