

**gentoo**

Great homes  
Strong communities  
Inspired people  
for Sunderland

# Tenant Annual Report

19.  
20

# Thank you

to our COVID-19 heroes



## A tribute to the late James Falade

This year we were sad to lose one of our longest serving involved tenants and former Board member **James Falade**.

We're incredibly grateful to James for the knowledge he shared and invaluable input he made, which has helped to shape Gentoo to what it is today.



# Welcome

## from our CEO, Nigel Wilson

I'm pleased to welcome you to our Tenant Annual Report for 2019/20, which aims to provide you with an annual snapshot of our performance and achievements as your landlord. This is the first report I am able to bring you following one full year as Gentoo's Chief Executive Officer and hope you find it useful.

The year ended in extraordinary circumstances as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and presented significant challenges, not just for Sunderland and the UK, but for the entire world. Between Gentoo, Sunderland City Council and other key city partners, we worked hard during the pandemic to ensure our most vulnerable residents received the support they needed. We made more than 30,000 telephone calls to check on the welfare of our tenants and provided more than 1,000 volunteering hours at Sunderland Foodbank, to help produce and deliver food parcels to residents who were unable to leave their home – something my colleagues and I were extremely proud to be a part of.

Being proud is one of the key cornerstones to Gentoo being able to deliver its key services and during 2019/20, I'm pleased to say the organisation continued to perform strongly for its tenants. We collected more than 100% of the rent due to us, completed almost 170,000 repairs visits, with 95% of tenants being satisfied with the overall service they received.

I am pleased to say that we have continued to invest significantly in our existing homes this past year, spending £41 million on property investment programmes across the city, such as new double glazing and new boilers, with a further £34 million planned to invest in the maintenance of our properties during 2020/21. Hopefully this reassures you that I am fully committed to this pledge.

I was delighted to launch our new Affordable Homes Plan this past year, which will be vital in improving the availability of good quality affordable rented housing in Sunderland over years to come. By doing so, we will invest £117 million in bringing a minimum of 900 additional homes to rent to Sunderland by 2024.

I fully believe that whilst the journey ahead will have some challenges, the fantastic spirit and passion of the people of Sunderland will build a strong and vibrant future for all. I look forward to driving further positive change in the city.

### **Nigel Wilson**

Group Chief Executive Officer










**“Whilst the crucial mistakes made by Gentoo in the past around lack of investment in its properties, particularly around double glazing, are well known, I am determined to put these right. I will ensure that you and all our other tenants, receive the service that you deserve, as quickly as we can possibly deliver these important improvements.”**

# Our performance 2019/20

How we performed  
during 2019/20

How we are performing  
so far during 2020/21

Current rent arrears		<b>£1.65m</b>	<b>£2.09m</b>
Average time to re-let a property		<b>49 days</b>	<b>97 days*</b>
Formal complaints performance		<b>78%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Telephone calls to Housing Services		<b>236,369</b> calls received average wait of 10 seconds	<b>9,701</b> calls received average wait of 16 seconds
Telephone calls to Property Services		<b>181,895</b> calls received average wait of 78 seconds	<b>22,715</b> calls received average wait of 93 seconds
Tenants satisfaction with our routine repairs service		<b>94%</b>	<b>97%</b>
Repairs completed on time		<b>84%</b>	<b>88%</b>
Repairs completed right first time		<b>83%</b>	<b>90%</b>

\* Inflated due to the Covid-19 lockdown measures

# Our achievements

## 2020/21

**We have launched our new corporate strategy which aims to provide the organisation with key areas of focus for delivering its services to tenants. We call these five key themes our 'five Ps'.**

Here is a brief summary of our achievements over the past year using these themes.

### Place

- £41million being spent on planned modernisations
- 100% of homes meeting the Government's Decent Homes Standard
- 1,000 homes fitted with double glazing
- 1,858 heating systems upgraded
- 100 new homes for rent started on site at Keelman Rise (Downhill) and Brockwell Green (Fence Houses)

### People

- Provided money and debt management advice to 1,225 tenants with £1,114,456 claimed in additional benefits
- Supported more than 200 people aged between 18 and 24 to live independently
- Supported 174 tenants who may have been struggling with drug or alcohol issues, through our Positive Engagement Service
- Worked with more than 100 people on our Wise Steps employability programme and supported 14 people into a job
- Supported 211 victims of domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour and signposted to 252 to other organisations



# Our achievements

## 2020/21

### Perform

- Worked closely with the Regulator of Social Housing on our recovery plan and were reclassified as G2 compliant for our corporate governance
- Ensured that the voice of our tenants is heard at all levels of in our organisation and took a lead role in delivering the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants
- Continued the rollout of our 'My Gentoo' online self-service portal, with more than 3,000 tenants now regularly accessing our services online
- Our Community Engagement Forums granted £25,000 to 56 local community groups through our Aspire Grant Scheme

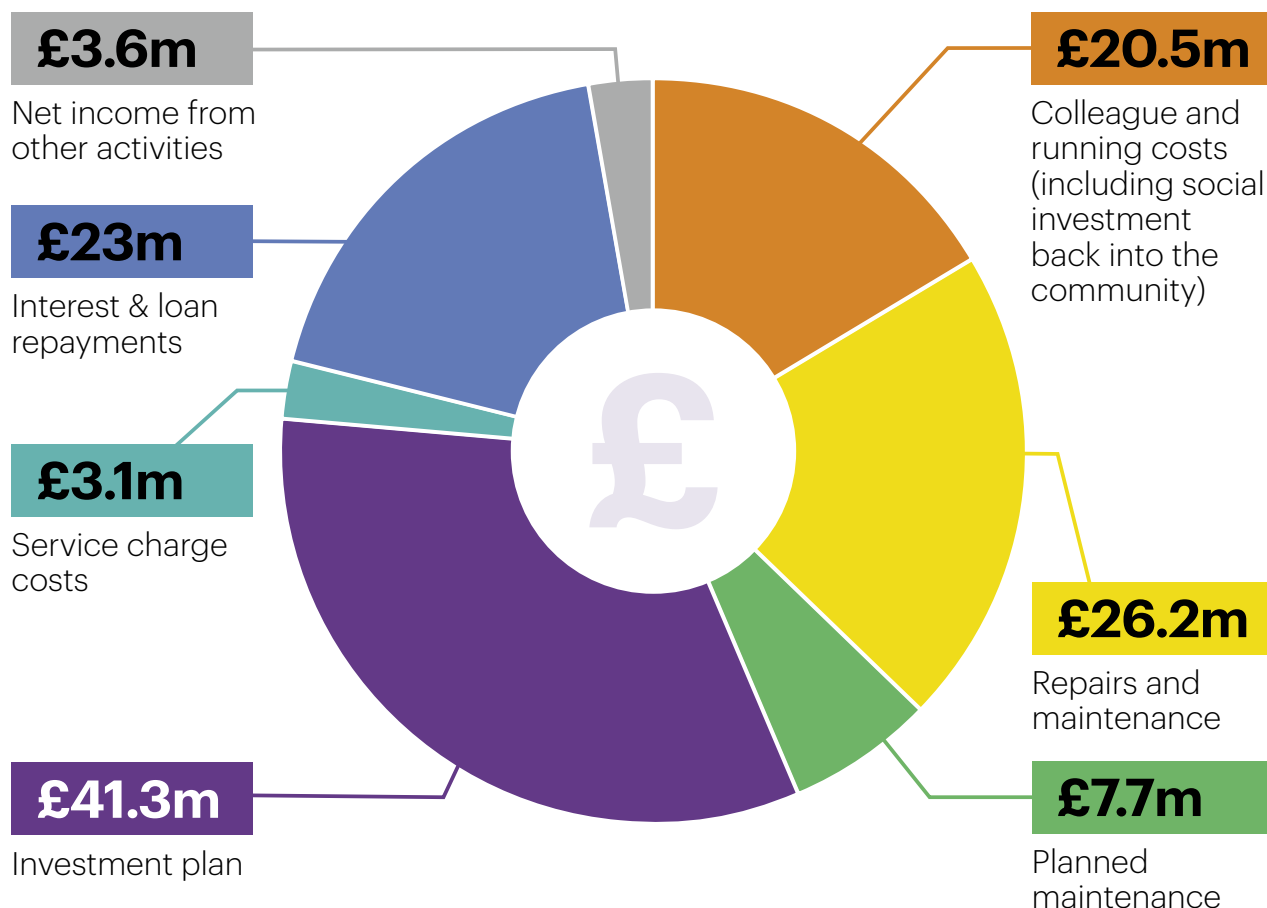
### Partnership

- Worked closely with our main principal contractors to create unique opportunities for tenants across the city
- Launched a partnership with SAFC and the Foundation of Light to engage tenants across a range of programmes
- Worked with key partners to deliver some Christmas cheer to more than 200 families
- Worked with Sunderland City Council to provide homes to eight homeless people

### Pride

- Celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Genfactor, with 1000 contestants taking part since we launched the talent competition
- Commissioned the delivery of the Positive Footsteps programmes in schools across Sunderland to help inspire the career aspirations of young people in the city
- Kept our estates and neighbourhoods in top condition and cut 3m square metres of grass
- Further demonstrated our commitment to employing local people, with 75% of our workforce living in the city
- Awarded the Living Wage Accreditation, for our commitment to ensure our colleagues are paid a fair wage

# How we spend your rent



We believe that in order to achieve our goals, we must operate as a compliant, efficient and effective 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.

Value for money is a key driver of the services we provide on behalf of our tenants and residents and it is embedded in everything we do. We recognise that it is not just simply about the cost, it's about identifying the right balance in how our resources are best utilised.

# Complaints performance

	2018/19	2019/20
Number of formal complaints received	96	212
% of complaints fixed right first time	88%	91%
Number of stage 2 appeals (where tenants were dissatisfied with original response)	12	19
Number of new Ombudsman cases	2	3

The three service areas to receive the most formal complaints were:

Service area	Number of complaints	Theme	Complaint fully/partially accepted	Complaint declined	Complaint ongoing
Repairs and Maintenance	91	Policy and procedures	82	6	3
Asset	46	Single glazed windows	38	7	1
Tenancy Management	31	Policy and procedures	19	12	0

## You said, we did

Here are some examples of how we have used your feedback to improve our services

Complaint theme	Improvements made
Fixing a repair right first time	We've recently reviewed what materials our tradespeople carry on their van in order to help them complete more repairs right first time.
Time taken to re-let a property	Tenants can now view a property in person, or by video/photos. We've also introduced the option for tenants to sign up to a tenancy online reducing re-let times.
Communicating repair schedules with tenants	Tenants were disappointed that in some instances, first visits were not to repair a property but to measure for materials needed for the work. We now advise tenants when 'pre appointment' first visits are necessary.

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