

gentoo

We know every penny counts especially when it comes to your rent.



That's why we want to be open and clear about how your rent is spent, where our money comes from, and how it helps us look after you, your home and your community.

We're not here to make a profit. Any money we make is reinvested back into homes and services for our customers.

Where does our money come from?

Your rent makes up around **80-90%** of our total income.

But rent alone isn't enough to maintain thousands of homes or build new ones. That's why we also rely on government grants, which help towards the cost of building new affordable homes and borrowing from private lenders, similar to a mortgage, which allows us to invest in major improvements and new homes.

Why does rent sometimes go up?

Just like households, our costs increase each year. This includes things like repairs, building materials, contractors, safety checks and energy. When these costs rise, it becomes more expensive for us to look after homes.

We also follow government rules on how rent is set. The government decides the formula housing associations must use. Rent is usually reviewed each April and is based on the rate of inflation from the previous September.

When rent does increase, it's so we can continue maintaining homes to a good standard, keep services running smoothly, and invest in improvements.

So, what does your rent actually pay for?

For every £100 of rent, we spend it like this:

- £30** modernising our existing homes
- £20** repairing and maintaining homes
- £4** regular safety checks, like gas and electrical inspections
- £24** neighbourhood support, estates teams and the teams that support frontline services
- £19** interest on borrowing that is used to modernise homes and build new ones
- £3** rent we lose when homes are empty or when rent isn't paid

On top of this, we invest around **£1 million** every week to improve existing homes. This includes upgrading boilers, insulation, roofing, accessibility and safety. It's an ongoing commitment to keeping homes safe, warm and comfortable.

You can read more on all of the ways we invest in homes and customers in our customer report:
www.gentoogroup.com/annual-documents

How we've improved support over the last year

Over the past 12 months, we've made real improvements to services that matter to customers:

- We've reduced the average time to complete a repair from 29 days in 2024-25 to **16 days** in 2025-26
- We **invested £7.1 million** to improve **1,927 homes** to EPC C, helping customers reduce energy bills
- We **improved 6,617 homes** through our annual investment programme including installing new kitchens and bathrooms
- We've **invested in our repairs service** by increasing the number of trade colleagues, helping us to get repairs completed quicker for customers

- We doubled the number of colleagues in support roles, so we can help more people can get the help they need
- We reduced patch sizes for coordinators, allowing them to spend more time engaging with customers and communities

What happens if there's money left over?

Any money left at the end of the year is called a surplus. This isn't profit, it's reinvested back into social housing.

This could include:

- Building new affordable homes
- Upgrading existing properties
- Supporting customers through services that reduce poverty or improve wellbeing
- Investing in safer, stronger neighbourhoods

By paying your rent, you're helping to maintain your own home and supporting investment across the community, helping create safer homes, stronger neighbourhoods, and a better Sunderland for everyone.

Our Money Matters service

Our Money Matters service offers free, confidential support to help you manage your money and improve your financial wellbeing.



We can help with:

- Welfare benefit checks and applications
- Better off calculations, so you understand how changes might affect your income
- Budgeting support
- Support with welfare benefits, including forms and mandatory reconsiderations
- Help to access grants for essential items
- Low level debt advice

To contact the Money Matters team:

Call: **0191 525 5000** (select option 3)

Email: moneymatters@gentoogroup.com

Online: gentoogroup.com/moneymatters