



# Sunderland City Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025



## FOREWORD

Welcome to the latest Annual Report for tenants updating you on our activity between April 2024 and March 2025.

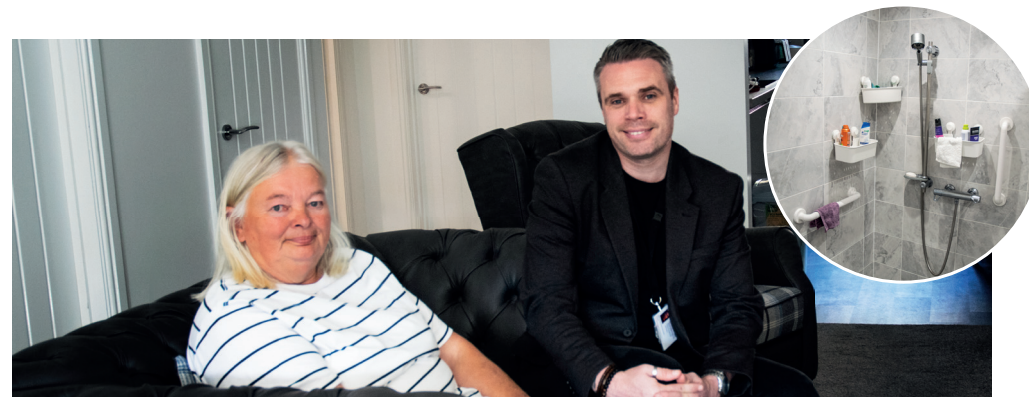
We have been gathering your feedback during the last year, and I am pleased to share the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures. The data is reported to the Regulator of Social Housing demonstrating our compliance whilst ensuring we are listening to the views of our customers and acting on them.

## ARTHUR REACHES MILESTONE

Arthur Stoker was the first tenant to move into Sycamore Park, Sunderland and has been reflecting on his first year in the property. The scheme comprises of 20 bungalows catered for those adults with a support requirement who can live independently knowing support is on hand when needed.

Arthur said, *"I have loved my first year in the property, I love the fact that the whole community comes together, and we have created a welcoming atmosphere for all of the residents"*.

Arthur noted that the support from the staff along with the relationships he has built with the other residents has helped him settle into his home with ease.



## RESIDENTS BENEFIT FROM DISABLED GRANT FUNDING

Mrs Potts is one of several residents who have benefited from disabled Facilities Grant funding. The scheme is aimed at residents who have a disability and would benefit from adaptations to the home.

In this case Mrs Potts was struggling with the bath in her current property and through joint working with Sunderland City Council and Sunderland Care and Support who facilitate the grants she now benefits from having a walk-in shower.

Mrs Potts said *"I think the scheme is great and the help I received was most welcome. Without this the likelihood was that I would have to find another home and now I can continue to enjoy my current home and not have to worry about having an accident when bathing"*.

**For more information and to see if your eligible for the scheme please visit Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) | Sunderland Information Point.**

## RYHOPE SUPPORTED HOUSING SCHEME

**Built as part of Sunderland City Council's ongoing work to provide homes for those who are most at need, each bungalow will come with 5G infrastructure built-in, ready to incorporate assistive technology depending on client needs.**

The development is being supported by £660,000 funding from Homes England and is part of a council-led plan to deliver more supported properties for vulnerable residents. This includes more bungalows for people living with disabilities and providing specialist accommodation available for affordable rent.



Councillor Kevin Johnston, Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and Business at Sunderland City Council, said: *"It's great to see work nearing completion on these six new bungalows, which are all about helping us to deliver more accessible properties for those who need them."*

*"We've worked closely with colleagues in Adult Social Care, Sunderland Care and Support and the residents themselves to create homes that will meet their needs."*

*"The creative and innovative thinking from everyone involved has resulted in homes that are both personalised and technology enabled, enabling their residents to live as independently as possible."*

The three three-bedroom bungalows and three two-bedroom bungalows in Ryhope follow similar projects to provide accessible housing in Washington and at Hylton Road.

Matthew Wright, Manager - Affordable Housing Delivery

at Homes England, said: *"As the Government's housing and regeneration agency, increasing the supply of quality affordable homes remains one of our key objectives and we are committed to supporting ambitious housebuilders of all sizes to build those homes and communities."*

*"This investment through the Affordable Homes Programme does just that, enabling*

*Sunderland City Council to build 12 much needed new homes the people of Sunderland can be proud of."*

The development has been built by North East based T Manners and Sons.

The first residents are expected to start moving into their new homes this Autumn.



## SMART MOULD AND DAMP SENSORS

Sunderland City Council is committed to leveraging technology to create safer, healthier, and more efficient housing solutions, aligning with our bold and ambitious vision of a connected, international city with opportunities for all. One of the key themes highlighted in our City Plan is to establish a Healthy Smart City where residents can live longer, healthier lives by reducing health inequalities. Ensuring high-quality housing that meets residents' needs and aspirations is a crucial step towards this objective.

Damp and mould in homes pose significant health risks, affecting both physical and mental wellbeing. Exposure to mould spores can lead to respiratory conditions such as asthma and allergies, while damp environments can exacerbate pre-existing health conditions. Managing damp and mould effectively is critical in improving residents' quality of life.

Social landlords have a legal duty to provide safe, high-quality housing and services to tenants. Traditional methods of monitoring damp and mould are often reactive, rather than proactive, requiring inspections after issues have already developed. By incorporating smart technology, Sunderland City Council can take a proactive approach, preventing issues related to mould and damp before they escalate.

Given the well-documented link between damp and mould and respiratory illnesses, especially in children, this pilot presents an opportunity to enhance public health in Sunderland while protecting the long-term value of the local authority's housing stock.

### SOLUTION

The integration of environmental sensors into housing stock will provide real-time data that allows Sunderland City Council to better identify risks early, potentially reduce maintenance costs, and improve the overall living conditions of residents.



In collaboration with Sunderland City Council's Property Services and Development team, the Smart City team is undertaking a pilot installing smart environmental sensors in social housing stock. These sensors monitor temperature and humidity in key areas of council properties, providing valuable insights into conditions that may lead to mould growth.

Data is transmitted via our robust network of networks, developed through the council's unique 20-year joint venture partnership with Boldyn Networks, where Boldyn has deployed high-speed 5G infrastructure for a variety of Internet of Things (IoT) applications throughout the city, including sensors for detecting mould and damp.

A total of 21 properties across different areas of Sunderland have been selected for this pilot, with a focus on city-centre locations. The first sensors were installed in late February 2025, with the year-long pilot running from early March 2025 to March 2026. The pilot will assess two different sensor technologies to determine the most effective, cost-efficient, and scalable solution for future expansion:

- **AICO Environmental sensors:** Installed in 12 properties, these sensors are connected via 4G and require a gateway to transmit data. Each property is equipped with three environmental sensors and one gateway. Additionally, six LoRaWAN-connected window open/close sensors are installed per property, feeding data into the council's Smart City data platform. This data provides insights into ventilation habits and their impact on indoor air quality.

- **iOpt sensors:** Installed in another 12 properties, these sensors deliver remote property monitoring for social housing providers. They operate using LoRaWAN connectivity and consist of three sensors per home, designed to detect temperature and humidity variations that contribute to damp and mould formation.

Three of the selected properties are equipped with both ACO environmental sensors (including window sensors) and iOpt sensors to compare their effectiveness under the same environmental conditions.

The real-time data from these sensors will enable proactive interventions. By detecting early warning signs of damp and mould, we can issue tailored recommendations to Sunderland residents who live in social housing, improving indoor air quality and reducing health risks.

## IMPACT

This pilot directly supports Sunderland's Smart City objectives by demonstrating how data-driven solutions, enabled by next-generation connectivity, can enhance housing quality and public health. Residents should benefit from healthier homes, as the sensors provide insights that allow the council's property managers to take early action against damp and mould. By potentially preventing moisture-related damage, the council can also ensure the long-term sustainability and structural integrity of its housing stock.

Cost savings are another potential outcome of this pilot, as traditional inspections require significant resources and are often conducted only after a problem has already developed. By utilising smart sensors, Sunderland City Council can shift to a more proactive approach,

reducing the need for costly reactive maintenance and potentially minimising the financial impact of extensive property repairs.

By leveraging data, the council can make informed decisions on how best to manage and improve social housing, ensuring that interventions are both efficient and effective.

Additionally, the success of this pilot could pave the way for a broader rollout of in-home sensors beyond damp and mould detection. Future implementations may include smart carbon monoxide detectors, fire alarms, and additional security measures such as door and window sensors, creating a comprehensive smart home network that enhances safety and wellbeing for people living in social housing across our smart city.

Sunderland City Council and Boldyn Networks are demonstrating how smart technology can be harnessed to create healthier, more resilient communities. The lessons learned from this pilot will contribute to the city's broader ambition of delivering resident-focused and community-led smart solutions.



## 2024-25 FACTS AND FIGURES / STATS



**46**  
Number of  
new tenancies



**100%**  
Repairs  
complete  
within set  
timescales



**100%**  
Annual Gas  
Safety checks



**100%**  
Electrical  
Safety checks



**£476,921**  
Total money  
spent on  
repairs



**0**  
Court  
Orders  
obtained



**58**  
Affordability  
assessments  
carried out



**95**  
Annual  
Customer care  
visits complete



**5**  
Anti- Social  
Behaviour  
cases  
complete



**4480**  
Housing  
Applications  
processed



**£1,911,846.47**  
Money spent  
on developing  
new homes



**0**  
Complaints  
received

## 2024-25 TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES

The information shows the percentage of tenants who agreed with each statement about their home.

Overall satisfaction



**87%**  
Very Satisfied

Satisfaction with repairs



**73%**  
Very Satisfied

Satisfaction with time taken to complete the most recent repair



**52%**  
Very Satisfied

Satisfaction that the home is well maintained



**77%**  
Very Satisfied

Satisfaction that the home is safe



**87%**  
Very Satisfied

Satisfaction that Sunderland City Council listens to tenant views and acts upon them



**84%**  
Very Satisfied

Satisfaction that Sunderland City Council keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them



**89%**  
Very Satisfied

Agreement that Sunderland City Council treats tenants fairly and with respect



**85%**  
Very Satisfied

Satisfaction with Sunderland City Councils approach to handling complaints



**N/A**

Satisfaction that Sunderland City Council keeps communal areas clean and well maintained



**76%**  
Very Satisfied

Satisfaction that Sunderland City Council makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods



**52%**  
Very Satisfied

Satisfaction with Sunderland City Councils approach to handling anti-social behaviour



**17%**  
Very Satisfied



## GET IN TOUCH

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If you would like to speak to us, please get in touch:

Email: [sunderlandhosingservice@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:sunderlandhosingservice@sunderland.gov.uk)

Call: 0191 520 5551

Visit: [www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk)

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**Sunderland  
City Council**