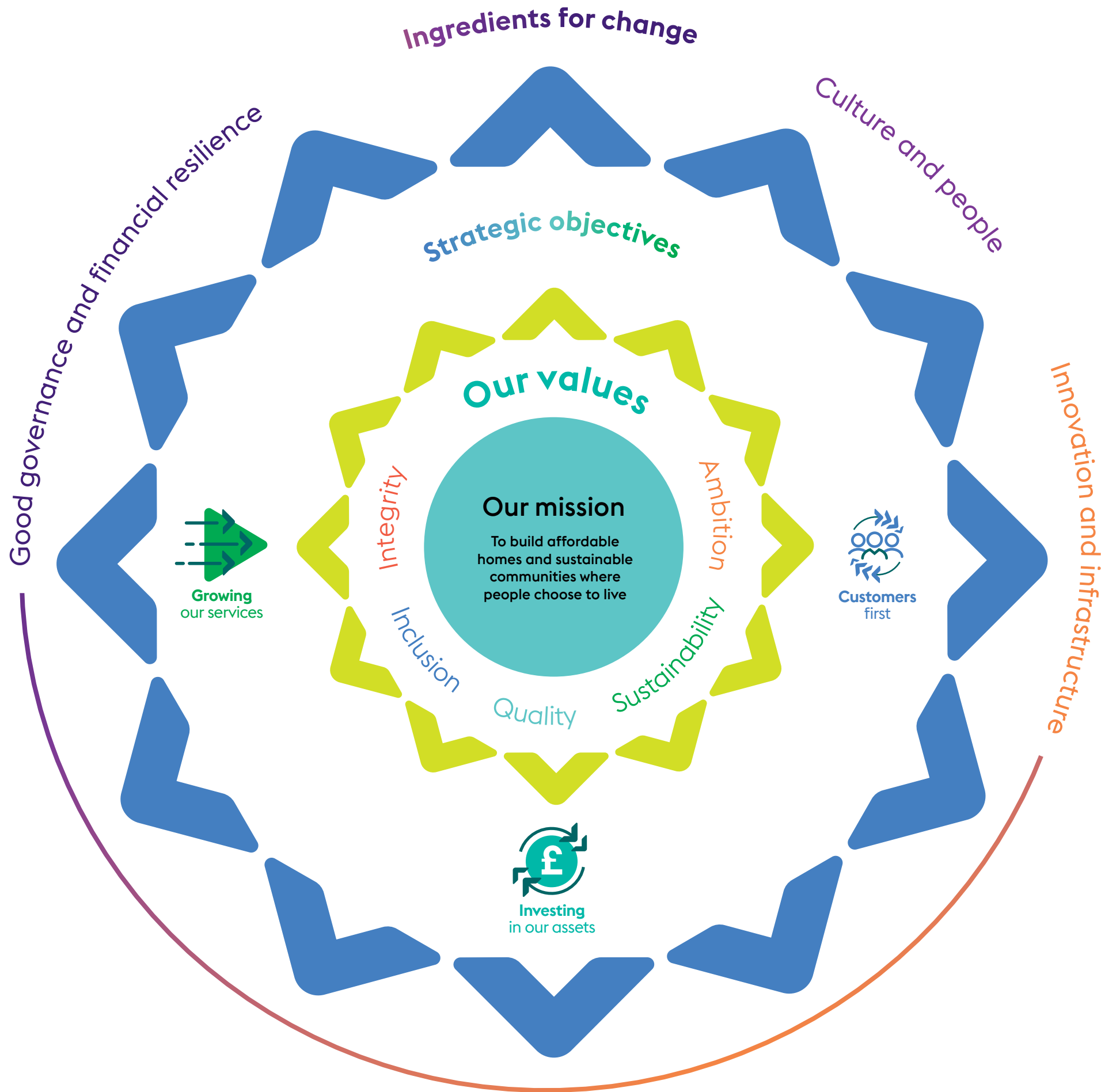


# Corporate Strategy

2023 - 2026



Sanctuary



## Contents

Introduction	5
Our strategic context	6
Our strategic objectives	8
Putting our customers first	8
Investing in our assets	14
Growing our services	18
Our ingredients for change	20
Culture and people	21
Innovation and infrastructure	21
Good governance and financial resilience	22
What we will do	23

To be a **trusted partner** where **customers** are at the **heart** of all we do.





Sanctuary Group Chief Executive Craig Moule with Sanctuary Supported Living resident, Megan Chorley, Worcester

# Introduction



## Our Corporate Strategy 2023 to 2026

We have developed our corporate strategy following extensive collaboration and discussion with key stakeholders across Sanctuary. Most importantly, we have taken significant steps to work more closely with our customers, including through our new Resident Scrutiny and Advisory Panels. This engagement has shaped our strategic priorities and plans for the next three years.

Our customers are at the heart of why we are all here. Every single one of us who works for Sanctuary has a responsibility for ensuring that **putting our customers first** is at the heart of all we do. Over the lifetime of this strategy, we will focus on designing new operating models, technological innovation and engagement structures that deliver a reliable, easy-to-access and personalised service.

One of the most important things our customers have told us is that they want to live in homes they can be proud of. **Investing in our assets** gives our customers confidence that the homes they live in are safe, secure and fit for the future - whether they are a tenant, care home resident, homeowner, student or keyworker. This also means taking the necessary steps on the journey to becoming carbon neutral by 2050, including investing in the retrofit of thousands of our customers' homes.

To support these objectives, **growing our services** remains a core part of our strategy. As a truly national provider of housing and care services, we recognise that Sanctuary has a unique role to play in ensuring the continued success of the sectors in which we operate and the critical services these provide to society. To deliver this we will seek to work as a trusted partner with Government, the private and public sectors, and our customers.

Whilst we are acutely aware of the many external factors impacting the sectors in which we operate, it is important that our strategic plans are designed with the long-term in mind. Our focus on governance and financial stability ensures we can continue to build on Sanctuary's long and proud history of delivering our charitable social purpose.

“Every single one of us who works for Sanctuary has a responsibility for ensuring that **putting our customers first** is at the heart of all we do.”

Craig Moule  
Group Chief Executive



# Our strategic context



Althorne, new build development



## Who we are and what we do

**Sanctuary's mission is to build affordable homes and sustainable communities where people choose to live.**

We are a not-for-profit housing association, providing homes and care for more than 250,000 people in England and Scotland. Every penny we make is reinvested in improving our homes and services, building new affordable homes and investing in communities. We are driven by our charitable and social purpose and our values.

**Across England and Scotland we manage:**

- ▶ Around 120,000 homes
- ▶ More than 110 care homes
- ▶ More than 650 supported housing schemes
- ▶ Around 12,000 student and keyworker rooms.

**We work as one team, made up of over 14,000 people.**

### Why we do it

We believe that no one should be excluded or left behind. We believe that everyone should have a home to live in and community they can belong to. We want to help build a society with opportunities for everyone, regardless of their background or circumstance. As one of the largest housing and care providers in the UK, with a history going back more than 50 years, we have a duty to do everything we can to help alleviate the housing crisis.

The housing crisis is multi-faceted and complex, and there are no easy solutions. The issue of expensive and insecure private tenancies in large cities contrasts with empty, hard-to-let homes in some places. The number of homeless people – both on the streets suffering the indignity of sleeping in doorways and those 'hidden' in unsuitable conditions – is rising.

In parallel, there are many trapped renting in the private sector with no realistic hope of saving for a deposit to achieve their ambitions of owning their own home. Having a home that is safe, comfortable and a place of sanctuary has never been more important.

We recognise that investing in affordable housing will help to provide this security for many people, as well as boosting the economy, creating jobs and improving people's lives when our nation needs it most. Through quality support and housing services, we help clients gain the life skills they need to build the foundations for independent living. Whereas our accommodation options for students and keyworkers play a vital role in social mobility, the economy and the delivery of local health services.

Today, we live an average of 10 years longer than we did when Sanctuary was first established in 1969. By 2050, it is projected that one in four people in the UK will be aged 65 years and over – an increase from approximately one in five in 2018. Too many people experience poverty, isolation and poor health in older age.

We believe older people should have choice about where they live, whether that be through assistance to stay in their own home or moving to a retirement complex or a care home. We want to see a social care system where everyone, regardless of where they live in the country, can access the care they need and can have confidence that it will be of a good quality.

By building and improving more homes, and by investing in our services and communities, we know Sanctuary can enable people to achieve their potential and provide people with a place to live of which they can be proud.

### How we will do it

Our strategy spans January 2023 to January 2026 and sets out three key objectives to deliver our mission:

- ▶ **Customers first**
- ▶ **Investing in our assets**
- ▶ **Growing our services**



## Strategic objective 1: Putting our customers first



“Customer insight and feedback is a vital part of learning what we are doing well and where our services could be improved.”

### Customers first by design

Our customer-first approach drives the design of our systems and processes to ensure the experience of our customers is at the heart of how we operate and our decision-making. Customer insight and feedback is a vital part of shaping the design of our services and learning where we can improve. Within our housing and supported living operations, we will strengthen our resident engagement routes through our [Shaping Our Future](#) strategy, and further develop engagement with our new Resident Advisory and Scrutiny Panels.

As part of our North Star transformation programme, we will build trust by actively listening and connecting to all our customers. We will seek to partner with our customers to co-produce changes to our operating model. To develop these relationships, we have modernised the way we engage and are committed to embedding accessibility across all our communication channels.

In our care business, our team are proudly committed to enriching the lives of our residents. This means they go above and beyond the standard expectations of providing good quality care and support to enable every resident to live a fulfilled life. This approach is underpinned by our independent and innovative Enriching Lives research which shows residents and families need to have six senses met to be fulfilled and content. These six senses are security, belonging, continuity, purpose, achievement, and significance.

Our Students business provides more than just a room, it aims to provide students and keyworkers with a home away from home. While our home sales team understands that customers are not just buying a house, they are buying a foundation for future adventures.

### Reliable and accessible customer service

Our ambition is that our services should be accessible, seamless and easy to deal with. We will enhance our current systems and processes with the aim of resolving queries at the first point of contact. This will reduce the need for further contact or follow-up and enable our customer-facing colleagues to focus their time on complex cases where it is most needed.

To deliver this, we will explore different channels to interact with our customers, including self-service tools for simple transactions. We recognise that this requires continuous innovation, and our priorities will evolve as the requirements and preferences of our customers change.

Delphine Okoye, Assistant Carer with  
Sanctuary Care resident, Ruth Scott, Dundee





## Strategic objective 1: Putting our customers first



“We will aim to offer choice to our customers in the way they interact with us.”

Alan Rennie, Property Services team member, Glasgow

### Personalised service delivery

We are committed to delivering personalised services and tailoring our approach to meet our customers' specific needs and concerns. We will aim to offer choice to our customers in the way they interact with us – recognising that a one-size-fits-all approach will not work for every person.

Delivering personalised services requires us to know our customers. We will focus on improving the collection and accessibility of customer data to design our services so they are responsive to customer needs.

We remain committed to the core principles of person-led care and support. Within our supported living service, we will develop and embed specialised models to enable customers to remain independent for longer. And, alongside the teams in our 110 care homes, we look at what makes every person unique, the people close to their hearts, their passions and dreams yet to be fulfilled, and the continuity of living they need to feel content, happy and fulfilled. Knowing all of this enables our teams to deliver truly person-led care to each and every individual who lives with us.

### National but truly local

Sanctuary is unique as a truly national provider of housing and care services, with a commitment to localism at its heart. Our national footprint provides us with the strength and stability to achieve our strategic ambitions, while embedding truly localised services for our customers. Every community is unique and so we will flex our operating model to reflect each local area and support agile working solutions to take our services to the customer. We will empower our local housing teams and provide them with the tools to focus on what they do best – supporting our customers.

We are committed to supporting sustainable communities, helping them to thrive socially, environmentally, and economically. This means we work in collaboration and partnership with local community organisations using an asset-based approach. We focus on building capacity at a local level, investing in projects that enhance existing skills, assets and passions of people living in our communities.



### What we will do

- ▶ Through our North Star programme, transform our housing operating model so the customer is at the heart of our service delivery and design
- ▶ Embed our Resident Advisory and Scrutiny Panels, strengthening the connection with our Group Board
- ▶ Develop new customer channels that enable choice about how they interact with us
- ▶ Involve customers in the design and scrutiny of our services, using feedback to inform our improvement plans
- ▶ Enhance the quality of our data to enable us to know our customers better
- ▶ Adapt our care services to enrich lives against the six key senses





To be a trusted partner where customers are at the heart of all we do.

Sarah Watt, Sanctuary resident, London

Demetrios Fisentzou, Sanctuary resident, London



## Strategic objective 2: Investing in our assets



### Investing in our homes

Our aim is for our customers to live in homes and communities they can be proud of. As a not-for-profit organisation focused on long-term sustainability and value for money, we must prioritise our resources carefully and direct our funding where it will have the greatest impact.

While ensuring all our homes meet Decent Homes requirements remains a key priority, we believe this is a minimum – not maximum – standard. We are committed to tackling damp and mould in our customers' homes and have established a dedicated task force to ensure reports are dealt with swiftly. We will also use data to identify those homes most at risk of developing issues in future. Our reinvestment plans incorporate a more holistic and proactive view of our assets with the aim of futureproofing them beyond the challenges of the here and now. This means focusing on upgrading components such as lifts, roofs, windows, and doors to ensure our customers' homes, our care homes, schemes, and student accommodation are safe, secure, fit-for-purpose and well-maintained.

Across all our services, our future asset plans are based on a range of data sources, as well as customer insight, to ensure we target our investment where there is the greatest need. Over the lifetime of the strategy, we will continue to focus on enhancing the data on our properties to enable us to plan effectively by enhancing our rolling stock condition survey programme.

### Making our homes sustainable

With around 120,000 homes, one of the biggest impacts Sanctuary has on the environment is through the energy efficiency of our buildings. To mitigate this, we are putting in place measures to safely decarbonise the homes and buildings we own. Our aim is to ensure all our homes achieve EPC Band C by 2030 in England, bringing this forward to 2028 if possible, and to EPC Band B by 2032 in Scotland. We have joined forces with other registered providers as part of the Greener Futures Partnership to collaborate on improving the sustainability of our homes and exploring new, innovative technology. We were also successful in leading a consortium of other housing associations to bid for the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, which will enable us to retrofit thousands of our customers' homes.

This investment will bring additional benefits beyond the vital goal of cutting emissions by creating smarter, healthier, more comfortable and affordable homes. We have adopted a 'fabric first' approach, to be followed by transition to low carbon heating systems. This will improve the decency and comfort of our customers' homes as well as supporting the reduction of our customers' energy bills.



### Optimising our assets

We will use our asset data to identify properties that require major investment, or where there is no longer demand. This will enable us to proactively focus on optimising these properties to meet local needs – which may be through remodelling, regeneration or redevelopment to change their use.

We are proud of our track record of transforming neighbourhoods, such as our award-winning redevelopment of Anderston in Glasgow, and we will build upon this experience to regenerate areas across the country. In Plymouth we are undertaking significant regeneration in Barne Barton, replacing homes which have reached end of life with modern, fit-for-purpose, energy-efficient homes. We recognise the importance of inclusive design, and where we undertake large scale regeneration projects we will work closely with local communities on placemaking.

Across our care and supported living portfolio, we recognise that in some areas the demand for existing services will change as local priorities and demographics evolve. Where this is the case, we will consider converting these assets to meet the housing or care needs of the local community. Where it is not financially viable to invest in a property, we may dispose of it in order to prioritise our resources where it is most needed.

Rana Judge, Sanctuary resident, Anderston, Glasgow allotment

“Over the lifetime of the strategy, we will continue to focus on enhancing the data on our properties to enable us to plan effectively.”



## Strategic objective 2:

### Investing in our assets



#### Investing in safety

Ensuring our customers' homes are safe and secure is at the heart of all that we do. Despite our size and geographical spread, Sanctuary owns very few high-rise residential buildings with only a small number that required remediation. We have reviewed all our properties over 11 metres and for a small number we commissioned detailed surveys to evidence the safety of buildings with external wall systems.

We have inherited further high rise buildings with the rescue of Swan Housing Association and work is underway to integrate these with Sanctuary's Building Safety Programme. We will be working with third parties, including the original developers, to progress works to buildings that require remediation.

We have established a dedicated Building Safety Programme to ensure we are compliant with the Building Safety Act. To embed these principles, we have put in place dedicated Building Safety Managers that work collaboratively with teams across Sanctuary. We have enhanced our processes to implement proactive Health and Safety audits that identify key risk areas across all our properties.

#### What we will do

- Increase our investment in our customers' homes over the next three years
- Undertake retrofit programmes across thousands of homes
- Launch new and improved ways of engaging with our customers regarding the energy efficiency of their homes
- Increase our rate of stock condition surveys to improve data completeness and quality
- Identify challenging assets and undertake optimisation programmes to meet local needs
- Complete the remediation programmes for high-rise residential buildings
- Ensure we are compliant with the Building Safety Act

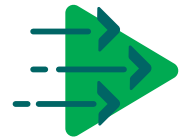
**“Ensuring our customers’ homes are safe and secure is at the heart of all that we do.”**



Libbie Stock, Christina Poynton and Michelle Markert,  
Sanctuary residents, Chester

## Strategic objective 3:

### Growing our services



#### Expanding our social purpose

We've been operating for more than 50 years and today we are one of the leading not-for-profit housing and care providers in the country. The growth in our services over this time is due to our ability to bring together the best of organisations and move forward in the best interests of our customers. As a leader in our field we understand we also play a wider role in ensuring the resilience of the sectors in which we operate and the continued provision of essential services to people from all backgrounds.

We will continue to seek opportunities for expansion only where they are in line with our core social purpose and where it is in the best interests of our customers. Operating at scale enables us to be more efficient and to prioritise our resources on customer-facing services. It also provides us with financial strength to achieve our strategic goals.

We recognise that the operating environment for many in our sectors has been challenging, with some providers moving away from the provision of services such as supported housing. We consider the provision of housing, care and support to be our core purpose and remain committed to supporting our customers across these areas. While we remain ambitious, we will not grow at any cost. We are focused on making decisions with the long-term in mind and we will continue to be selective about future growth to make sure they deliver benefits to Sanctuary and to our residents.

#### Integrating our businesses

With the addition of Cornwall Care, Swan Housing Association and Johnnie Johnson Housing Association to Sanctuary, our future plans will require integration programmes to bring our organisations together. Growth enables us to bring fresh ideas into Sanctuary and this process of integration will seek to take the best from all organisations.

We have extensive experience in the integration of new businesses and recognise that such changes will not take place overnight. Integration work is planned over achievable timeframes and will be undertaken alongside change programmes already underway within Sanctuary.

**“Growth enables us to bring fresh ideas into Sanctuary.”**



#### Building new homes

We will continue our proud history as a developer of much needed housing across a range of tenures. We recognise that in order to develop new homes we need to subsidise our affordable homes programme and seek to do so with the surplus generated from building homes for open market sale. While we remain committed to building new homes for those who need them, we will not prioritise new housing above reinvestment in our existing customers' homes.

To deliver our development ambitions, we will work in collaboration with key organisations. We have a Strategic Partnership with Homes England to support the delivery of new affordable homes across the country between now and 2026. We will also continue to seek opportunities for Joint Ventures with trusted partners. We are mindful of political and economic changes and will stress test all new opportunities against a range of scenarios to ensure we have the measures in place to withstand future risks before entering future arrangements.

We are committed to continual innovation in the way we build new homes. To deliver homes to a high standard, we will expand the proportion of homes delivered via our in-house construction team.

In recognition of increasing need for good quality care, we will review opportunities for new care homes in locations where local people are unable to access services that meet their needs. We are committed to Inclusion by Design and we are developing a range of property types based on what customers tell us they need and want.

Our new developments are built with the long-term in mind, both in terms of minimising our environmental impact during construction and the requirements and environmental impact of future residents.

#### What we will do

- > Review future growth opportunities against our strategic commitments
- > Embed Cornwall Care into our standard operating model and review reinvestment plans for these homes
- > Plan and undertake integration of Swan Housing Association and Johnnie Johnson Housing Association
- > Deliver on programme commitments in our Strategic Partnership with Homes England, as well as the Scottish Government and the Greater London Authority
- > Complete the construction of thousands of new build homes
- > Deliver hundreds of new homes through Joint Ventures and consortiums



## Our ingredients for change



David Boyd,  
Customer Contact Manager, Hull Pride

“We seek to develop **high performing** teams who are **committed** to our mission, **values** and take **ownership** of the services we deliver.”



## Culture and people

Being an employer of choice, developing and retaining the best people, by providing a culture where everyone can thrive and be their best self is central to achieving our strategic goals. We seek to develop high performing teams who are committed to our mission, values and take ownership of the services we deliver.

To support our people to thrive we need to make sure we have high-quality leadership throughout the organisation. Our behaviour framework sets clear and accountable expectations of how we will work. This supports a positive and customer-centric culture.

We will use effective talent management and succession planning to identify and nurture talented individuals and provide a strong and diverse talent pipeline. Growing our own people through the Sanctuary Learning Academy is a key focus, as well as using our apprenticeships and graduate scheme to bring fresh talent into the organisation.

We welcome everyone at Sanctuary, no matter their background, and we are passionate about equity and ensuring people feel included, valued and engaged. Our Inclusion for All strategy sets out the steps we are taking to embed a working environment where people can thrive, and everyone can be themselves. We will hold ourselves accountable for making clear progress against our objectives, and we are building a suite of data analytics that will enable us to measure the impact of our actions.

We recognise that increased flexibility enables us to tap into a more diverse talent pool, as well as developing a more accessible service for our customers. We will also explore further options for flexibility in reward and recognition, such as salary sacrifice schemes, to support the retention and attraction of talented people.

Supporting colleagues' wellbeing helps them to thrive at work. We will continue to support and champion the physical and mental wellbeing of our people, including through our network of over 900 Mental Health First Aiders.

## Innovation and infrastructure

To deliver our strategic commitments it is essential that we drive a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. We will listen to feedback from our people, including via our Your Say survey, to ensure that colleagues across Sanctuary have the tools and technology they need to best deliver for our customers.

We are embarking upon a multi-million-pound investment in our repair and maintenance systems to transform how we serve customers. Our One Property programme will enable more accurate diagnosis of maintenance issues, enable our customers to track the progress of their repairs and support better decision-making by enhancing the visibility of data on our homes.

Aligned to this, we are reviewing our communication channels to enable us to better connect with our customers. We will be integrating our existing platforms, enabling our customers to contact us however they choose to do so, including via new self-service tools. Over the course of this strategy, we will also invest in a new Customer Relationship Management system to improve the way customer interactions are managed.

We will continue to embed flexibility across our workforce by reviewing our office infrastructure to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets the needs of our customer base. We believe more agile ways of working will enable our local teams to spend more time with our customers. Where we retain office space or hubs, we will focus on making these inclusive and collaborative spaces that enable colleagues to come together.



## Our ingredients for change



Good organisations need good management information to make intelligent decisions about service improvement. Our new data strategy focuses on the completeness, quality and security of our data by ensuring clear ownership across all areas. We will develop new analytics tools, building on the innovative dashboards implemented in our care business.

To deliver these changes we need to enhance our supporting infrastructure, which will require overhauling our existing data centre and a multiple year network reinvestment programme. We will also be delivering a programme of connectivity by installing fibre to the premises across many of our customers' homes to aid digital inclusion.

### Good governance and financial resilience

Over the 50 years since we were established, Sanctuary's success has been based upon our financial strength and resilience. We are focused on making decisions with the long-term in mind and ensuring we have a sustainable business model to underpin our strategic commitments.

We recognise that change and transformation will require resource. We will not shy away from making difficult decisions about where to invest our resources and will assess new investments and programmes against the objectives outlined in this strategy.

We will continue to build financial resilience through an optimised funding structure and manage risk through continuous stress testing of our business plans against potential adverse events. Our focus on risk appetite underpins our governance framework, ensuring we operate within our financial envelope and make decisions that are in Sanctuary's long-term interests.

We continue to take our regulatory, statutory and legislative responsibilities extremely seriously and are focused on upholding the highest standards of corporate governance. Our governance structure is designed to support robust risk management and assurance, and we will continually review our effectiveness against best practice.

As part of our commitment to listening to our customers' voices, we are exploring mechanisms to involve our customers in decision-making and increasing the accessibility of our governance structures. We will embed our new Resident Advisory and Scrutiny Panels and use their insight to shape our future plans.

“Our new data strategy will focus on the completeness, quality and security of our data.”

## What we will do:

### Culture and people:

- › Embed our behaviours and values framework to drive a customer-centric culture
- › Launch new executive and senior talent management programmes to support organisational development and succession planning
- › Nurture potential talent by increasing the proportion of apprentices employed across Sanctuary
- › Implement flexible benefits and recognition approaches to celebrate success
- › Enhance our recruitment and progression processes to ensure a diverse and inclusive team

### Innovation and infrastructure:

- › Design and launch a range of customer experience solutions, including our One Property repairs system and a new Customer Relationship Management system
- › Provide greater choice for our customers through the implementation of self-service tools
- › Review our office infrastructure to aid agile ways of working
- › Develop data analytic tools and dashboard to support effective decision-making
- › Install fibre to the premises across a number of our properties to increase connectivity for our customers

### Good governance and financial strength:

- › Continually monitor current and projected performance against our risk appetite metrics and golden rules, taking corrective action where necessary
- › Stress test our financial projections to identify key risks and inform strategic decision-making
- › Deliver value for money through rationalisation of our corporate structure wherever possible
- › Review our governance arrangements to strengthen the influence of our customers

“Sanctuary.  
Where people  
choose to live.”



Gabrielle Kusi-Appiah,  
Sanctuary Students resident, Cambridge



# Sanctuary

Sanctuary House, Chamber Court, Castle Street, Worcester, WR1 3ZQ  
01905 334000 [www.sanctuary.co.uk](http://www.sanctuary.co.uk)

 [wearesanctuary](https://www.linkedin.com/company/wearesanctuary)  [@WeAreSanctuary](https://twitter.com/WeAreSanctuary)  [Sanctuary](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...) [#LifeatSanctuary](https://www.instagram.com/hashtag/LifeatSanctuary)

Sanctuary is a trading name of Sanctuary Housing Association, an exempt charity  
Registered office: Sanctuary House, Chamber Court, Castle Street, Worcester, WR1 3ZQ  
Registered as a provider of social housing with the Regulator of Social Housing No. L0247  
Registered Society No. 19059R

Published: February 2024

## Accessibility

We want this strategy to be accessible to all.  
If you would like it in a different format,  
call **0800 131 3348**  
or email [contactus@sanctuary.co.uk](mailto:contactus@sanctuary.co.uk).