



A review of Sandbourne's business for the year to September 2022 – an annual update

Introduction

Welcome to Sandbourne's Review of the year 2022. We sent out our first review in October 2021, covering the period October 2020 to September 2021. This is our second annual review, and it summarises our business from October 2021 to September 2022. However, it also includes the Financial Statements for the year to 31 March 2022, which were accepted by the AGM on 21 September 2022 and are now available to see on Sandbourne's website (www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk) or by contacting the office.

We hope that you find this report interesting and that it helps you to understand a little bit about how Sandbourne functions and how we spend the money that we collect in rent and service charges from you each week or month. If you have any specific questions about how we work or you would like more information about anything included in this report, then please contact us in the office and we will answer them if we can. We like to hear from you and your opinions help us to ensure that we are providing the most important and cost-effective services to you now and into the future.

Fiona Ferenczy
Chief Executive

The Coronavirus Pandemic

Inevitably last year's Annual Report highlighted the Coronavirus Pandemic and our response to it extensively. We are now very pleased to be able to report that despite the challenges of the 'Omicron variant' at the start of the year we were finally able to return to providing a 'normal' service in the Spring and have continued to operate in this way since then.

We would again like to thank our team, residents, contractors and Board Members for their patience, resilience and understanding over a period of over 2 years that no one is likely to look back on with many good memories.

Like everyone, we approach the Winter with a degree of uncertainty, but with the reassurance that what we have learned over the course of the pandemic puts us in a good place to be able to respond to whatever challenges we face in the coming months.

Changing Times Changing Faces

This year there has been a number of changes within the team at Sandbourne:

In July Gail Phillips, our Administrator, retired, and Sarah Maxwell joined us as the Office Manager.

At around the same time Sharon Doran decided to take on a new part time role as our Administrative Assistant, supporting Sarah, and the Finance and Housing Teams.

Colette Robson then joined us as our new Housing Officer at the beginning of August. Colette is focused on providing the housing management service to our 60+ homes in Bournemouth, our extra care development, Craigleith, and our leaseholders in Poole.

In November Simon Raine, Housing Services Manager, left us after almost ten years with Sandbourne (and previously Broadway Park). We have taken this opportunity to promote Molly Witherington to a Housing Officer role and she is now looking after our general need's properties in Poole and our 60+ properties in Ringwood.

Review of Resident Engagement

We have previously mentioned our 'Resident Engagement Action Plan' which is based on the National Housing Federation's 'Together with Tenants Charter'. This is a nationally recognised framework designed to help strengthen the relationship between housing associations and their residents.

Delivering this Plan is one of our priorities, and we are pleased to report, despite the limitations on personal contact with residents for much of the year, we have made good progress in a number of important areas:

- Completed a consultation with residents to refresh our Service Standards for Repairs, Customer Service, Complaints, Responding to anti- social behaviour, our Lettable standard and Estate Services.

We would again thank everyone who took the time to let us know what they thought and as promised can now tell you (in the following section) how we are doing against the new Standards.

- Launched our Community Fund with an annual budget of £3,500 where residents can apply to us for funding events and small improvements to communal areas.
- We piloted 8 x weekly 'drop in' sessions at our largest development, Stourwood Avenue, meeting residents on a 'face to face' basis to take questions and queries as well as receiving their comments. Over the sessions we met over 40 of the 136 residents, and generally received a positive response to the events.

On the basis of this, in September Colette announced further fortnightly events at most of our 60+ developments and Craigleith and is keen to see as many residents as possible attend over the coming months.

At the same time, reflecting what residents told us in the Estate Services consultation, we began a programme of monthly site inspections at the General Needs' blocks with communal areas. Residents will be invited to attend these four times each year.

Service Standards – How are we doing?

As our new service standards have been agreed through consultation with residents and implemented incrementally, we do not yet have a full year of information. However, what has been collected so far and the monitoring periods for each is shown below:

Customer Service

Sample testing for one week in four from October 2021

Answer 95% of telephone calls to the office within 6 rings	99%
Acknowledge email and website contacts within 24 hours or next working day and normally reply within 10 working days	97%
Acknowledge at least 95% of letters within two working days of being received and give you a full response within 10 working days	98%
Contact you within 24 hours or the next working day if you leave us a message	86%

Repairs

441 surveys issued for repairs ordered by tenants from January 2021 with 219 completed and returned

Ensure that our contractors keep appointments and notify you of any delays, or changes to repairs that are needed.	91%
Ensure that for non - emergency repairs our contractors contact you within 3 working days of an order being raised and make a mutually convenient appointment usually within the following five working days.	91%
Make sure that our contractors complete works within agreed timescales.	90%
Ensure that our contractors carry identification	63%
Ensure that our contractors tidy up after completing repairs.	93%

Complaints

For all formal complaints received from September 2021

Contact you within three working days to confirm that we have received your complaint.	99%
Following investigation, we will write to you with the outcome within 10 working days and explain what we intend to do to resolve the problem	95%
If you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage 1 of our internal process, you can escalate this to stage 2. We will contact you within three working days to acknowledge that we have received your request and a senior manager will provide you with a full response within 10 working days	100%

Anti- social behaviour

We began monitoring our performance in July 2022

Level 1 (most serious) complaints will receive an initial response within 24 hours	99%
Level 2 complaints will receive an initial response within 5 working days	96%
Level 3 complaints will be responded to within 10 working days	95%

Estate services

Our programme of estate visits began in September 2022

We aim to inspect areas where estate services are provided at least once a month	Not yet available
We aim to arrange a full estate inspection every three months, which residents will be invited to attend.	Not yet available

Key Performance Indicators

We currently have a range of indicators that we measure quarterly, and report to the Board how we are performing. The table below provides a summary of these with a commentary where necessary:

Key Performance Indicator	Target	Sept-22	Jun-22	Mar-22	Dec-21	Commentary
Re-let period in calendar days	21 days	32	49	75	65	Performance improving following pandemic.
Rent lost from void properties	<1.0%	0.63%	0.58%	0.95%	1.02%	
Rent arrears (target < 1.5% of annual income)	£41,156	£47,449	£42,317	£42,400	£38,066	£7.965 outstanding for leasehold major repairs
Emergency repairs completed in 24 hours	100%	94%	96%	92%	94%	All made safe within 24 hrs
Average completion time for repairs	14 days	10.43	8.56	9.29	6.33	
Gas boilers serviced within 12 months	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Communal fire alarms and emergency lights serviced	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Communal lifts serviced	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Finally, we are pleased to be able report that we have now completed all the building related works identified in the Fire Risk Assessments commissioned in 2020 at a cost of in the region of £300,000.

It is recommended that Fire Risk Assessments are reviewed every two years, and these began in September. We are hopeful that our previous investment will see a reduction in both the extent and cost of the work identified for the future.

Progress against the Aims and Objectives of Sandbourne's Business Plan

Sandbourne's Board have identified five main objectives for the next five years in its current Business Plan. This is a brief summary of those objectives and any progress made to achieve them.

- **Internal growth in the number of properties for rent** – the aim is to complete the development of six units in Poole and then, if resources allow, look to acquire a further four or five units of housing stock in the next five years.

The development in Poole is due to be completed in November 2022, providing four bungalows and two houses which will be let at social rent to applicants currently on the BCP Council waiting list.

Sandbourne also continued the refurbishment of Ace Court in the year. There is now only one flat left to be refurbished and this should be completed by the end of March 2023.

- **External growth in Sandbourne's links with other small local housing associations** – there are no plans in this area at the moment.
- **Asset management** – looking to make the best use of all the assets owned and managed by Sandbourne.

Sandbourne carried out a stock condition survey on several of its older blocks in the last year to establish the works required over the next five years. It was encouraging that the surveys did not flag up anything that had not already been identified by Sandbourne employees. Stock condition surveys will be carried out on a sample of other properties in the next year to help inform future planned maintenance works.

Sandbourne bought back a 50% share in a shared ownership property and has converted the property to a social rented unit for which there is currently high demand.

Sandbourne continues to let two properties at market rent. These were bought without social housing grant, so the higher market rent is aimed to help recoup the cost of the accommodation more quickly. The use of the properties is reviewed regularly, and they will be converted to social rented properties at some time in the future.

- **Services to residents** – the main aim here is to improve and increase the options for engaging with you, our customers. The work carried out in this area is covered elsewhere in this review of the year.

- **Promotion of social benefit** – looking at ways to promote the overall wellbeing of residents through their occupation of Sandbourne’s homes. This is a difficult concept to grasp but it has been shown that the provision of stable, good quality housing is a major promoter of wellbeing and security. Almost all of Sandbourne’s homes offer affordable rents and security of tenure and we also look to support residents to transfer to other Sandbourne homes as their housing need changes over time.

Sandbourne is also looking to promote resident engagement with all its residents. This helps us to better understand how we can provide the best service possible to you, but it has also been shown that there are social benefits for residents as well as they learn new skills, meet new people and help to improve wellbeing for all residents. If you are interested in helping to enhance our resident engagement programme, then please let us know.

Review of Sandbourne’s Board activity over the last year

Sandbourne’s Board has met six times since its 2021 AGM. Five of those meetings were in person, held at the Cumberland Hotel in Bournemouth. The remaining meeting was held virtually due to the lockdown restrictions. The average attendance of Board members at those meetings was 73.3% (2021: 81.5%). The Board discussed a wide range of topics in their meetings, but the main areas covered included:

- The Strategic aims for 2022/23.
- New appraisal procedure for Sandbourne staff.
- Agreeing six new service standards following resident consultation.
- An application to the Charity Commission to change the allocation area for the properties in Ringwood. We have now heard that the Charity Commission have agreed our proposed changes and our guidelines on allocations at Ringwood have been updated accordingly.
- Discussion about the error in applying the wrong CPI rate to the rent increases in 2021 meaning that rents were increased by 1.7% rather than 1.5%. The Board agreed the submission that was made to the Regulator of Social Housing and the proposed remedy to correct the error.
- Review of stock condition in a number of Sandbourne’s older properties.
- Setting up a Community Fund to allow residents to apply for small project grants for their development.
- Restructuring of several staff roles.
- Ongoing fire safety works at all developments.

The Board currently has nine members, meaning that we have three potential vacancies. Two Board members stepped down at the 2021 AGM and although one new Board member was co-opted in the year, she has since had to step down. Dave Joicey stepped down at the 2022 AGM, having served a full nine-year term on the Board, reducing the total back to nine.

The Board is happy to take applications from any resident who would like to join the Board. An application form can be obtained from Sandbourne’s office.

Summary of Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

Income for the year was £2,704,017, made up as follows:

	2022	2021
Turnover (income)	£	£
Rent	2,193,334	2,149,757
Service charges	451,998	447,100
Support income	34,036	32,303
Grant income allocated to this year	58,823	58,823
Less: Rent lost on empty properties	<u>(34,174)</u>	<u>(22,725)</u>
	<u>2,704,017</u>	<u>2,665,258</u>

Rents are increased in line with government guidance. Service charges are calculated based on actual expenditure in the previous year.

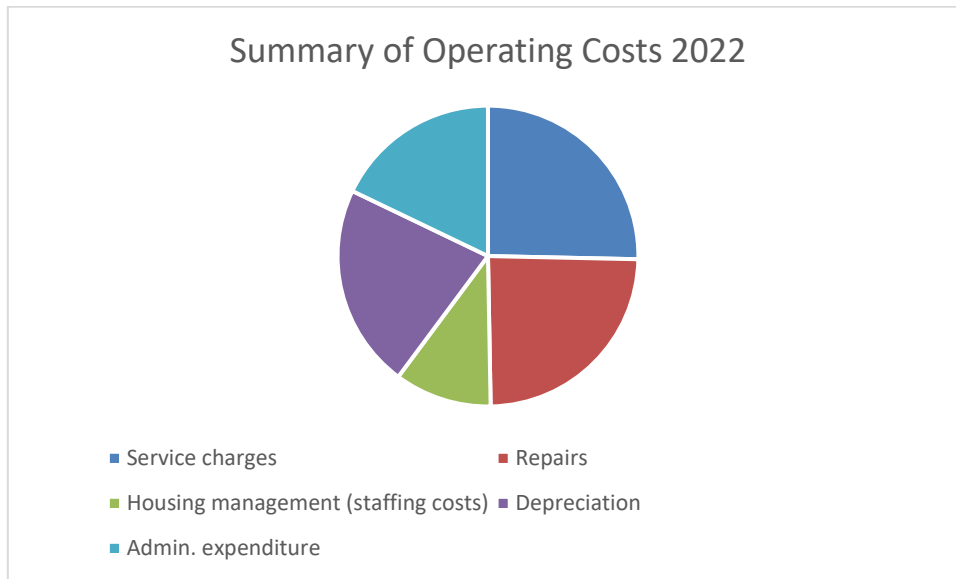
Costs directly related to the day-to-day provision of social housing (Operating Costs) were £2,087,554. The detail of these costs is:

	2022	2021
Operating Costs	£	£
Service charge costs	528,561	483,267
Repairs and maintenance	508,604	514,446
Housing management (staffing costs)	218,139	216,709
Depreciation of housing properties	457,925	442,584
Admin. overheads	372,971	379,510
Rent and recharge arrears written off	<u>1,354</u>	<u>10,108</u>
	<u>2,087,554</u>	<u>2,046,624</u>

Service charge costs have been significantly impacted by rising energy costs and these are likely to be even higher in the year 2022/23.

Repairs expenditure is high due to catch up responsive repairs which could not be carried out during Covid-19 lockdown periods, fire safety expenditure (£182k in 2021/22) and several high costing refurbishments of empty properties before they could be re-let.

The breakdown of expenditure can be more visually represented by a pie chart.



The detailed Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 are shown on the website or can be obtained from the office and were approved at our Annual General Meeting in September 2022.

There is also a summary of the year which was presented at the AGM. If you would like a copy of that summary, please contact the office.