

Seymour Housing Co-Operative 2026 Annual Report

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Report prepared by Fred Mikardo-Greaves. Report presented by the Management Committee of Seymour Housing Co-Operative.

If you require any information included in this report in another language or format then please tell a member of staff who will be happy to look into the matter for you.

Management Committee and Roles

2025-2026

Norelia Alvarez

Sue Anello

Abbie Bambridge

Clara Bezanilla

Rosalind Hobley

Mike Holderness

Titta Laattala

Andrew Morris

Kerry Murphy

Lennart Pasch

Pennie Quinton

Joanna Sands

Jessica Thomas

Paul Whitcombe

Treasurer

Vice-chair/Staff line manager

Secretary

Chair

Staff line manager

Data protection officer

Meet Our Team



FRED MIKARDO-GREAVES

HOUSING & CO-OPERATIVE SERVICES MANAGER

I have several years of experience in co-operatives. This experience includes working between 2018-2020 at the Tangram Housing Co-Operative in Leeds in a similar role to the one I have taken on here at Seymour. Other co-operatives I have been part of include the Chunk arts co-operative where I served on the Management Committee for two years.

Having spent the last few years working for charities, I am delighted to now be involved in co-operative housing once again. I am settling into the role since starting in May 2026 and am looking forward to learning more about Seymour, getting my teeth into my work here and meeting the membership.



MUKHTAR AZIMI

MAINTENANCE & FACILITIES MANAGER

A building surveyor by trade, I graduated in 2015 with a degree in Building Surveying. I have since worked as a surveyor within the social housing sector for co-ops, housing associations, local authorities, private landlords and managing agents. I hold extensive technical and design experience in overseeing refurbishment, maintenance and repair projects along with a wide range of practical experience throughout the construction industry.

In my free time I enjoy playing football and socialising with friends and family.



RUPERT FLOWERDEW

FINANCE MANAGER

I'm a qualified accountant with experience in producing accounts and delivering finance process improvement projects across a wide range of organisations. My work has included implementing new finance systems, creating best-practice finance processes and supporting finance transformation initiatives in both the public and private sectors. This experience spans organisations ranging from the NHS and other government bodies to small businesses and large multinational enterprises.

I began my work with Seymour earlier in 2026. Alongside longer-term projects, key priorities in my work with Seymour include simplification of the existing bookkeeping/controls, improving the cash management tracking and updating core software systems.



MARIA McCARRON

RENTS OFFICER (NOVO PROPERTY MANAGEMENT)

Maria, the founding director of Novo Property Management, is a housing professional and a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing. She has been working in the housing sector since 1989, she has previously worked at CDS Co-operatives as the Housing Services Manager and MBM Co-operative Services LTD as a Co-founding Director.

Maria has experience at senior management level in housing associations & local authorities, managing housing departments which provided services to tenants and client housing co-operatives.

Supported by her colleague Becky Lockwood, Maria began working with Seymour earlier in 2026 as the interim Housing Services Manager. With Fred now in post, Maria is now leading Novo on dealing with all rental matters on behalf of Seymour.

Chair's Report

This is my Chair's report covering the period between June 2025 and January 2026, ending when I handed over the Chair to Titta M Laattala.

The Management Committee (MC), with the support of myself, has been working hard this last year. I cannot praise them enough for the time they have given up, all voluntary and unseen, working to keep this Co-op running smoothly.

The theme of this year has been very much about updating policies and reviewing procedures. Towards the end of last year, we began preparing for the recruitment of two new members of staff to begin in early 2026.

One, was to replace our Housing Manager Alison Oswald who was leaving us to take on an opportunity in another Housing co-op with less hours. Her energy and co-operative spirit were very much appreciated, and she will be missed.

Two, our Finance and Rent officer, Sarah Jowers, who's contract was coming to an end. As part of this recruitment process our two MC line managers and Treasurer began the task of reviewing our job descriptions with the help of Novo Property Management who have a vast experience in working with Housing Co-ops.

As part of this process, with the recommendation of myself as chair supported by the Treasurer and with the agreement of the MC, we invited Novo Property Management to undertake an assessment of the organisation's processes and procedures with a view to improving and streamlining operational workflows and providing recommendations for improvement.

The outcome and recommendations were presented in a report covering the following areas: enhancing transparency and accountability, improving communication channels, strengthening financial oversight, and the establishment of performance indicators and review cycles. All these recommendations were aligned with the principles of good governance as outlined by the Regulator of Social Housing's Governance and Financial Viability Standard and Seymour's adopted Code of Governance.

This was a huge undertaking and cannot be underestimated. It has opened the way for 2 new members of staff as well as more open and accessible ways of working.

In January 2026 I stood down as Chair and Titta M Laattala, an MC member and Finance subcommittee member, was voted in as Chair.

Secretary's Report

Dear members of Seymour Housing Co-operative –

As Secretary, it is my responsibility to ensure that Seymour Housing Co-operative fulfils its statutory obligations.

I report that to the best of my knowledge it has done so in the past year.

I should report that a member referred the Co-op to the Housing Ombudsman and that the Ombudsman found that the Co-op had allowed too much time to pass in actioning the member's rent arrears and that its communication tone sometimes lacked empathy. It is not possible to give more details without breaching confidentiality. This matter is resolved.

The Management Committee is continuing the programme of updating Co-op policies. In the King's Speech the government announced further tweaks to the law governing housing co-operatives. The Social Housing Bill has been through House of Lords Committee Stage and we do not yet have a date for its First Reading in the House of Commons. I do not see that the current Bill text affects our Co-op significantly: it is mostly concerned with changes to the right to buy, which does not apply to us as members of a fully mutual co-operative. There are deeply technical measures to protect tenants who are victims of domestic abuse.

If I continue as Secretary I shall of course keep an eye on this, and in any case will do my best to assist the Secretary.

Treasurer's Report

The Co-op's financial position remains healthy, as confirmed by the auditors. We continue to explore opportunities to maximise income, such as moving funds into higher-interest accounts, while also working to reduce expenditure and minimise rent arrears.

Repairs and major maintenance projects continue to represent the largest area of expenditure. These costs are expected to increase over time due to rising industry costs and the investment required to meet new regulatory standards.

While no major redecoration projects were undertaken in 2025, the internal refurbishment of Daventry Street is on-going, and the external redecoration of Seymour Buildings is scheduled for 2027. In addition, several kitchens and bathrooms are planned for refurbishment in the near future. These improvements will enhance the quality of our housing stock but will also place additional demands on the Co-op's finances in the coming years.

We have introduced measures to improve the efficiency of financial management. These changes will provide a clearer understanding of the Co-op's financial position over the next 5–10 years and will help with short- and long-term planning.

Members involvement also plays an important role in maintaining a strong financial position. Greater participation can help reduce costs by limiting the need for external contractors where appropriate. Members are encouraged to contribute to suitable tasks, where practical and safe, such as minor maintenance, gardening, and cleaning.

Members can also support the Co-op's financial health by ensuring that rent payments are made on time, helping to minimise arrears and maintain a stable income stream for the benefit of the Co-op as a whole.

The Co-op will require a Treasurer to take over and continue with the improvements we've put in place so far. Training and support can be provided.

Auditor's Accounts

Maintenance Manager's Report

(Repairs reported between 01 Jan 2025 and 31 Dec 2025)

1. Order Summary

Orders Raised	330
Orders Completed	329
Orders Invoiced	323
Orders Unpaid	9

In 2025, overall order volumes were lower compared with 2024, with orders raised falling from 445 to 330 (-25.8%). Completion performance remained strong, with 99.7% of orders completed. A total of 323 orders were invoiced during the year, with 9 contractor invoices remaining outstanding at year end, compared with 3 in the previous year. Overall, service delivery remained effective, with high completion rates maintained and close control of outstanding invoices.

2. Order Analysis by Priority and Target

Order Type	Raised	Completed	Completed on time		Target Response (days)	Av. Response (days)	Diff
Emergency	5	5	5	100%	1	1	0
Urgent	70	70	69	98.57%	7	2.57	4.43
Normal	124	124	113	91.13%	28	12.07	15.93
Long Term	131	130	110	84.62%	35	21.18	13.82

In 2025, performance against target response times remained strong when compared with 2024. Emergency works continued to achieve full compliance, with 100% of orders completed within target in both years.

Urgent and Normal categories both showed improvements in on-time delivery compared with 2024, supported by broadly stable average response times. Urgent performance in particular strengthened, with a higher proportion of orders completed within target.

Long Term orders saw a slight reduction in on-time performance and a marginal increase in average response time when compared with 2024, although overall delivery times remained well within target thresholds.

Overall, performance remains consistent year on year, with improvements across most categories and only minor variation in average completion times.

3. Order Analysis by Value

Less than £500	21
Between £100 and £500	214
Between £500 and £2,500	73
Over £2,500	15

In 2025, the distribution of work by value band, compared to 2024, remained broadly consistent, with the most notable change seen in the £100–£500 category, which saw a significant reduction in the number of orders. Lower-value and mid-range work both showed modest declines, while higher-value orders increased slightly. Overall, the profile of work shows a stable distribution pattern with a small shift towards higher-value orders.

4. Total Cost Analysis

	Costs	Paid
Total Net Cost	£148,691.60	£148,494.70
Total VAT	£28,331.85	£28,307.85
Total Gross Cost	£177,053.40	£176,832.60

In 2025 compared to 2024, overall costs were lower, with gross spend reducing from £220.6k to £177.1k (-19.7%). Paid amounts closely matched recorded costs in both years, with no significant variances between what was incurred and what was paid. Overall, spend reduced year on year while maintaining a consistent and well-aligned payment position.

[Please contact maintenance@seymourhc.org if you need any further information regarding the data above.]

5. Daventry Street – Major Works (Internal Communal Refurbishment & Fire Safety Works Project)

The current status of the Major Works project at Daventry Street is that it remains live and ongoing. The project commenced in November 2025 and was originally due for completion in February 2026. However, completion has been significantly delayed due to a range of issues, primarily relating to the fire safety works to the flat entrance doors.

The project is still in the main delivery stage and has not yet reached the snagging phase. I am actively engaged in discussions with both the project consultant (Ingleton Wood) and the contractor (BSPS) to address the outstanding issues and progress the works, with a view to completion by the end of July.

From a financial perspective, the Co-op has currently paid approximately £165k of the £200k project value. This figure excludes the standard 5% retention, which is being withheld separately as per normal practice for projects of this type.

Both I and the relevant Co-op committees are reviewing options should further delays occur. At the time of writing, I have not yet received a revised completion date from the consultant/contractor; however, if this is provided prior to the AGM, I will update accordingly.

Housing & Co-Operative Service

Manager's Report

Since starting at Seymour Housing Co-Operative in May 2026 I have been focussing on gaining a solid understanding of the current status, needs and plans of the Co-op.

A significant proportion of my work going forward will be centred around compliance, policy and procedures. The social housing and co-operative housing sectors are in the middle of some significant policy and governance changes. My intention is to make sure that Seymour keeps abreast of legislative developments while also updating internal systems to ensure that changes are effectively incorporated into the way in which the Co-op operates.

Partly in order to support the Management Committee and sub-committees, I will also be looking at ways to increase involvement in co-operative activities and strengthen community ties within the Co-op. With this year marking the 50th anniversary of Seymour's registration as a co-operative, it would be fantastic to see as many members as possible utilising their skills, resources and knowledge in order to help manage Seymour and ensure the health of the Co-op for many more years to come.

In a change to the way in which the Housing Manager role has operated previously, I will be setting up surgery times for members to visit me or contact me by phone at the office. These surgeries are for matters which require consultation directly with myself – for instance in-person reporting of complaints, discussion of administrative issues around tenancies and so forth – and replace the existing drop-in system.

These surgeries for in-person visits and phone calls will take place weekly on Mondays 15.30-16.30 and Wednesdays 11.00-12.00. There will be an additional hour open for me to take phone calls which will take place weekly on Tuesdays between 14.00-15.00.

Members are requested to keep enquiries to within these surgery windows where possible. If you are unable to arrange for attendance during these hours but have an issue you wish to discuss then you are welcome to contact me by phone/email and we can schedule a time for meeting.

Members will, of course, still be able to contact me outside of these times regarding matters which require urgent or emergency attention – note that my general working pattern at Seymour is Monday-Wednesday.

Maria McCarron and I remind members to update standing orders for payments in advance of the rent and service charge increase which came into effect on 06/07/2026 if you have not already

done so. Exact amounts are included in the letters which will have been delivered to your address on or before 08/06/2026. Members in receipt of Housing Benefit payments will need to notify Universal Credit of any increase - this includes members whose Universal Credit payments are made directly to Seymour.

Members with rental arrears are asked to contact Maria on rents@seymourhc.org in order to discuss their situation and arrange agreements to pay. This includes members in receipt of Housing Benefit payments who have accrued arrears after previous rent increases and may need to explore the possibility of getting payments backdated by Universal Credit.

Contact Us

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office@seymourhc.org

www.seymourhc.org -