

Public Performance Report

2022/23

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# 1.0 Background

The Assessor for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board is an independent statutory official who is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the Valuation Rolls and Council Tax Valuation Lists for East and West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Councils. The Assessor has also been appointed as the Electoral Registration Officer for these three areas and he is therefore required to prepare and maintain their Registers of Electors and Absent Voting lists.

The service is conducted from two main offices located at the addresses above.

# 2.0 General Information

During the year to 31st March 2023, the organisation had a full-time equivalent staff of 48.03 and a staffing budget of £2.3m. A total of 367.69 full-time equivalent days (7.66%) were lost through illness, an increase from 4.33% in 2021/22.

The COVID Pandemic has had lasting impact on how services are delivered with some staff favouring a blended approach to office and home working. We have recently introduced an Agile working policy which allows staff to request to formalise blended/agile working arrangements. Survey work has returned without restriction, however we continue to utilise information sources which negate the need for full site visits where appropriate.

# 3.0 The Council Tax Valuation List

The Council Tax Valuation List contains all domestic properties and shows their allocated Council Tax band which is based on the market value of the property as at 1991. The bands shown are used by our constituent authorities for the production of Council Tax bills.

As at 31st March 2023, the Valuation Lists for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute contained 147,973 subjects. Of the 1,231 houses added to the List between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022, the time between the date of occupation/completion and the issue of the Notice of Banding is shown in the following table. The 3 month target was missed by 2% this year and the 6 month target surpassed by 2%. Whilst the total number of new entries was down on the previous year it is noted that 2022/23 was the third highest year in the past 11 years for total number of new entries.

The targets which we have set for 2023/24 are 90% within 3 months and 97% within 6 months.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Number** | **Within 3 Months** | | **Within 6 Months** | |
| **Target** | **Achieved** | **Target** | **Achieved** |
| 2022/23 | 1231 | 90% | 88% | 95% | 97% |
| 2021/22 | 1395 | 96% | 88% | 98% | 96% |
| 2020/21 | 917 | 86% | 88% | 95% | 96% |
| 2019/20 | 1061 | 96% | 96% | 98% | 99% |
| 2018/19 | 992 | 96% | 96% | 98% | 98% |
| 2017/18 | 832 | 95% | 96% | 98% | 98% |
| 2016/17 | 932 | 95% | 96% | 98% | 99% |
| 2015/16 | 1077 | 95% | 94% | 98% | 99% |
| 2014/15 | 1269 | 95% | 97% | 98% | 99% |
| 2013/14 | 1074 | 95% | 95% | 98% | 98% |
| 2012/13 | 1110 | 93% | 96% | 98% | 99% |

# 4.0 Non Domestic Valuation Rolls

Valuation Rolls contain the rateable values of all non-domestic properties within the valuation area. The rateable values shown are used by the Joint Board’s constituent local authorities for the production of non-domestic rates bills, and for the calculation of various different relief schemes operated by local authorities and Scottish/UK Governments. They are also used by water suppliers for calculating water bills for non-domestic properties.

As at 31st March 2023 the Valuation Rolls for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute contained 15,403 subjects with a total rateable value of £365.5 million. Of the 847 amendments made to the Valuation Roll between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023, the performance reflecting time between the effective date of the alteration and the issue of the Valuation Notice is shown in the following table, along with previous years’ data. The performance was below the 3 months target and the 6 month target and was impacted by a number of factors including the delivery of the 2023 general rating Revaluation.

The targets we have set for 2023/24 are 70% within 3 months and 90% within 6 months.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Number** | **Within 3 Months** | | **Within 6 Months** | |
| **Target** | **Achieved** | **Target** | **Achieved** |
| 2022/23 | 847 | 75% | 55% | 90% | 73% |
| 2021/22 | 949 | 75% | 70% | 90% | 87% |
| 2020/21 | 984 | 76% | 63% | 91% | 80% |
| 2019/20 | 928 | 86% | 88% | 95% | 95% |
| 2018/19 | 1084 | 85% | 85% | 95% | 95% |
| 2017/18 | 989 | 83% | 85% | 95% | 94% |
| 2016/17 | 848 | 83% | 74% | 95% | 84% |
| 2015/16 | 969 | 80% | 81.9% | 94% | 95.4% |
| 2014/15 | 950 | 80% | 82% | 94% | 91% |
| 2013/14 | 892 | 80% | 78.4% | 94% | 90.5% |
| 2012/13 | 1369 | 80% | 78% | 92% | 91% |

# 4.0 Electoral Registers

The Electoral Registers list the name and addresses of everyone who is registered to vote.

Local Government Elections were held in May 2022 which saw plans enacted to continue to service the anticipated increase in demand of applications to vote by post, and also of emergency proxy applications where voters were affected by Covid.

The final Absent Vote lists contained 47,831 electors, a slight decrease from the peak position at the Scottish Parliamentary Elections the previous year. The electorate for the election was 224,600.

The newly reformed Canvass continued in 2022 with a more targeted approach to the canvass. This allowed the ERO to issue different forms to households dependant on whether he believed that a change to the existing registered electors at that address was likely.

Annual Registers were published on 1st December 2022. The total electorate figure was slightly down on the total at publication in November 2021.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Electorate at Publication** |
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| 2022 | 226,626 |
| 2021 | 229,336 |
| 2020 | 224,800 |
| 2019 | 219,861 |
| 2018 | 219,637 |
| 2017 | 222,507 |
| 2016 | 221,078 |
| 2015 | 218,668 |
| 2014 | 223,594 |

# 5.0 Other items of note

During the year the organisation:

* Published a Draft 2023 general Revaluation Roll and issued Draft Valuation Notices to ratepayers on 30 November 2022.
* Published the Final 2023 general Revaluation Roll and issued Valuation Notices to ratepayers on 31 March 2023.
* Compiled and uploaded Portal Rented Property Lists (PRPL) for subjects valued on the comparative method of valuation which were valued with reference to a rate per square meter.
* Continued work on the expansion of the number and type of Non-Domestic valuations available online at the SAA Portal.
* Undertook initial ICT development to build a system for logging and tracking of NDR appeals following appeal reform. Draft legislation with requirements laid in December 2022 for implementation in April 2023.
* Facilitated automation of Revaluation processes, requiring over 15,000 less manual operations to be carried out.
* Appointed a new Assessor & ERO (Jan 2023) and Depute Assessor and ERO (March 2023).
* Had 11 members of staff (around 20% of the total) retire, resign, or move to another post within the organisation, including 60% of the management team.
* Introduced an Agile working policy which allows employees to apply for agile/blended working pattern.
* Delivered registers and absent vote lists on schedule for the 2022 Scottish Local Government Elections.
* Continued disposal of 2017 Revaluation Appeals, with all appeals dealt with, or having been subject to referral to the Lands Tribunal for Scotland in line with legislation.
* Completed a Progress Update Review, and received positive feedback from the Keeper of Records on progress with our Records Management Plan.
* A review of the Code of Conduct, to reflect the Board’s new Public Interest Disclosure Policy and make explicit the Board’s zero tolerance to fraud and corruption, was finalised and presented to the Board for approval.
* Our Vision and Mission was reviewed, with an addition providing clarity that we will use and care for the data we hold in an appropriate way.
* Testing of our Business Continuity processes for Electoral Registration took place, with systems and processes performing as expected.
* To ensure its relevance and to reflect changing technologies, the Board’s ICT Strategy was reviewed and updated, and approved by the Board.
* The Health and Safety Committees merged to form a single Health and Safety Working Group, enabling consistent approach and guidance to be applied throughout the whole organisation.
* Following an internal audit report, new procedures were put in place to define procedures for overtime working.
* The Boards scheme of Delegated powers was reviewed, and received a minor update.
* The Boards support services agreement with West Dunbartonshire Council received an extensive review, and was agreed by the parties.

Our customer satisfaction survey showed that last year 94% of respondents reported that their dealings with our services were brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

A copy of the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer’s Annual Report is available on request from either office and also online at [www.saa.gov.uk/dab-vjb/best-value/annual-report-financial-statement](http://www.saa.gov.uk/dab-vjb/best-value/annual-report-financial-statement).