

# Social Impact Report for the University of St Andrews Halls of Residence

A Final Report by HLM Architects and  
Hatch Regeneris

February 2020

HLM  
Architects

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# POWELL HALL

# Executive Summary

# Social Impact Report

HLM Architects (HLM) commissioned Hatch Regeneris to carry out an assessment of the social value it has delivered in the design of two new student halls of residences at the University of St Andrews, Scotland: Whitehorn Hall and Powell Hall.

The project aim was to create a new socially driven and environmentally sustainable model for student accommodation. This study captures the contribution made by HLM to achieving the project aim. The methodology supporting this report included consultations with key stakeholders, a post occupancy evaluation (POE) survey and deskbased analysis of the consultation and survey results, including Social Return on Investment.

HLM applied a research-led and engagement-centred approach to the design process. They developed and expanded on a relatively short project brief by working with the University to better understand their strategic needs, conducting research into best practice, and engaging with a variety of stakeholders. This approach was the basis for an informed design process, which directly responded to the evidence and insights that were uncovered through HLM's scoping work and accounted for the needs of a broad range of stakeholders as much as possible. The key design decisions were:

- To create a modern, non-institutional design
- To provide high quality bedrooms
- To include a variety of shared spaces
- To encourage lively circulation routes.

Research into client feedback and end user experience has shown that the project has been very well received. Based on the social impact scores from the POE survey, the SROI assessment has suggested that as a result of the design of Whitehorn Hall and Powell Hall, a total of **£1.18 million of social value** is generated for the students living there each year. Over a period of 20 years, or the lifetime of the asset, this accrues to a total of **£17.9 million**. The SROI is also provided for each of the halls separately, and by individual student, to give a direct comparison on which design is proving to be most impactful from a social value perspective:

- Whitehorn Hall is generating £530,000 per year for its 184 residents, which equates to over £2,800 per individual student resident per year
- Powell Hall is generating £640,000 per year for its 205 residents, which equates to over £3,100 per individual student resident per year.

The social impact assessment study has evidenced that the student residential projects at St Andrews have been delivered in a way that maximises the value of engagement with client and end user groups, draws this insight into an informed design process, and shows the impact generated as a result for the students living in the halls for years to come.

# Purpose of the Study

# HLM Architects commissioned Hatch Regeneris to carry out an assessment of the social value it has delivered in the design of two new student halls of residences at the University of St Andrews, Scotland.

HLM recognises the importance of the economic, environmental and social value of design. The practice is driven by a sense of social purpose and thoughtful design is a core principle to ensure they make a positive contribution to individuals and society in general. HLM also recognises the importance of early stakeholder engagement, informed design practices, and consideration of outcomes and impact across the design process and during operation.

Social value is changing the way that organisations consider and demonstrate their contribution to society in the UK. The Public Services (Social Value) Act in England, Future Generations Act in Wales and Procurement Reform Act in Scotland are driving change in how public service contracts are being commissioned. In 2019, central government consulted on a new procurement framework to mandate for social value more clearly, including its evaluation not just its consideration, across goods and works as well as services, and a proposed weighting of 10% across contracts has been suggested. London Boroughs and Local Authorities are also continuing to increase the quality weighting given to social value in bids and tenders, and this is set to increase to 30% in Greater Manchester in 2020.

These changes are driving a requirement for architects and designers to be able to capture and articulate the impact of their design to end users, stakeholders and local communities. The recognition and embedding of social value in architecture is further encouraged by awards which celebrate architects' achievements in creating social value, such as the RICS Social Impact Award.



## Purpose of the Study

### RICS Social Impact Awards

This report forms a part of HLM's submission of the University of St Andrews student residence project to the RICS Social Impact Award.

The RICS Social Impact Award recognises built projects which make a particularly strong contribution to society<sup>1</sup>. This is the first year that RICS have remodelled their awards to focus on social impact, further evidence for the growing prominence of social value to the design and construction sector.

Entries to the awards are judged within 12 UK regions before successful schemes are taken forwards to be judged at national level. The projects will be assessed on the social impact they deliver across the themes of human, social and environmental impact, collaboration and innovation, as outlined across.

The content presented in this report mainly contributed to HLM's submission in the Human impact and Social impact categories, and provided wider insight for the other categories.

<sup>1</sup> RICS website, RICS Social Impact Awards 2020, <https://www.rics.org/uk/training-events/rics-awards/call-for-entries/>

#### Human Impact:

How lives have been changed, improved or been given new opportunity.

#### Social Impact:

A positive social contribution, community involvement and benefit, showing inclusion factors and economic viability.

#### Environmental Impact:

Consideration given to the sustainable development/management of the project, and its positive impact on the environment.

#### Collaboration:

A positive contribution of the project team and surveyor from concept to delivery, including challenges faced and overcome.

#### Innovation:

An intelligent approach to embracing innovation, creativity, new approaches, technology, flexibility and adaptability for the future.



## Purpose of the Study

### The Project

HLM was commissioned in 2016 as part of a joint venture with Campus Living Villages to provide the architectural and interior design services for two new student halls of residences at the University of St Andrews. The buildings delivered through this project were:

- **Whitehorn Hall**, which sits in the grounds of an existing student residence, the Grade B listed University Hall, and accommodates 184 undergraduate bedrooms;
- **Powell Hall**, which is situated on the North Haugh Campus, providing 205 postgraduate bedrooms.

Both buildings seek to create a new socially-driven and environmentally sustainable model for student accommodation.

The original client brief focused on commercial and practical requirements, encompassing a commercially viable extension of current student residence buildings to be completed for the 2018 term start with strong sustainability factors. HLM worked closely with the client team to scope and develop a broader brief that recognised the wider opportunities of the project including its potential to contribute towards key strategic priorities of the University.

A key aspect of the project was its status as the largest

expansion of student residences in over a decade. It represented a significant part of the University's plans to increase student numbers from 9,000 to 10,500 by 2025. Any increase in student numbers is particularly important to St Andrews given that the University population is essentially as large as the number of residents in the town itself. Significant increases in student numbers can put pressure on the already costly private housing market, making university accommodation a critical factor in the economic health of the town.

As a result, it was important that the accommodation provided through this project was closely aligned and responded to student requirements. HLM worked with the client team to ensure the design was informed by a range of consultation and engagement work, and ultimately, would make a positive contribution to student experience, health and mental wellbeing across the student population.

The project team was also required to respond to the unique context of the two sites. The University has a range of heritage-built environment and natural assets, such as the Grade B listed University Hall and the Hepburn Gardens Conservation Area, and the designs needed to respond to these constraints and contexts.

The project was successfully delivered for October 2018. Table 1.1 provides further information on the project and team.

**Table 1.1**

<b>Dates</b>	2016 - 2018
<b>Size</b>	389 rooms (184 Whitehorn Hall, 205 Powell Hall)
<b>Value</b>	£30m
<b>Client</b>	University of St Andrews and Campus Living Villages Joint Venture
<b>Interior Designer</b>	HLM
<b>Architect</b>	HLM
<b>Project Managers</b>	Gleeds AGC (representing the University of St Andrews)
<b>QS</b>	Gleeds
<b>Structural Engineer</b>	Woolgar Hunter
<b>M&amp;E Engineer</b>	Atelier Ten
<b>Contractor</b>	Sir Robert McAlpine

# Our Approach

## Our Approach

The aim of this study has been to act as a pilot for a social impact assessment approach that could be replicated across a range of other projects and typologies.

The aspiration is to capture and showcase the contribution made specifically by HLM to the overall project. This means capturing the impact of the operational design itself and the impact of HLM's design practice and approach, rather than a wider impact assessment that might include construction impacts, economic regeneration impacts, or commercial returns.

The evidence required to capture and measure the contribution of HLM through the operational design and their approach to design practice, can be challenging to collect. Ideally, doing so requires some level of engagement with the stakeholders and end users, and any other beneficiaries. This can be achieved through stakeholder engagement approaches during the project process, as well as through people-focused Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) once the project is completed and occupied.

Our approach included:

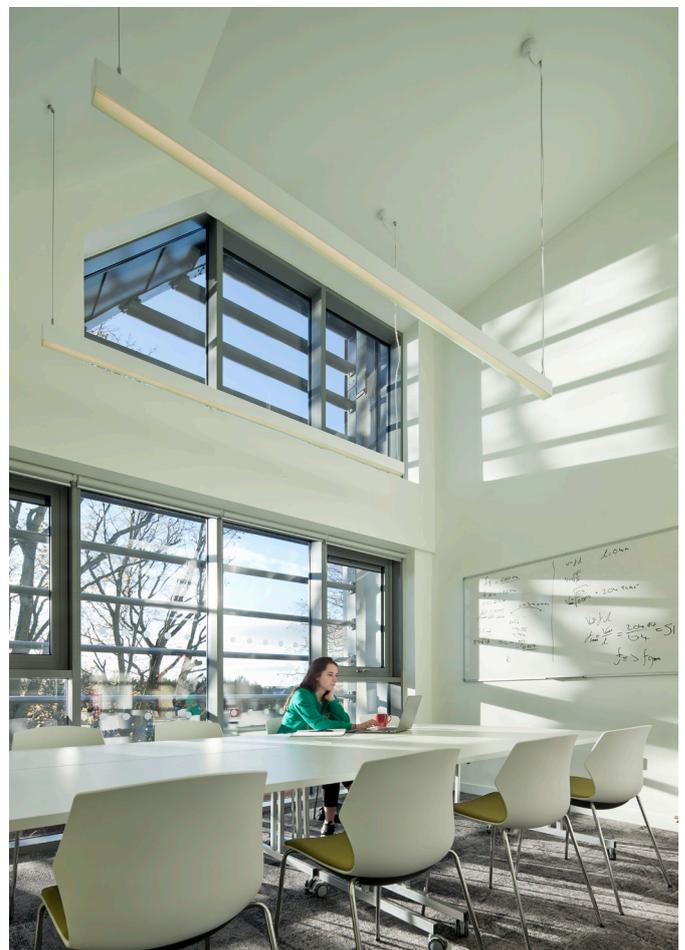
- **Telephone consultations** with key members of the HLM project team and the core client team
- **Bespoke POE survey** disseminated digitally to the current student residents of the two halls
- **Desk-based analysis** of the consultation and survey results, including Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis to produce a range of evidence on the impact of the scheme, including qualitative narratives, quantitative summaries, and monetised metrics.

The consultation aide-memoire and the POE survey are included as Appendices to this report.

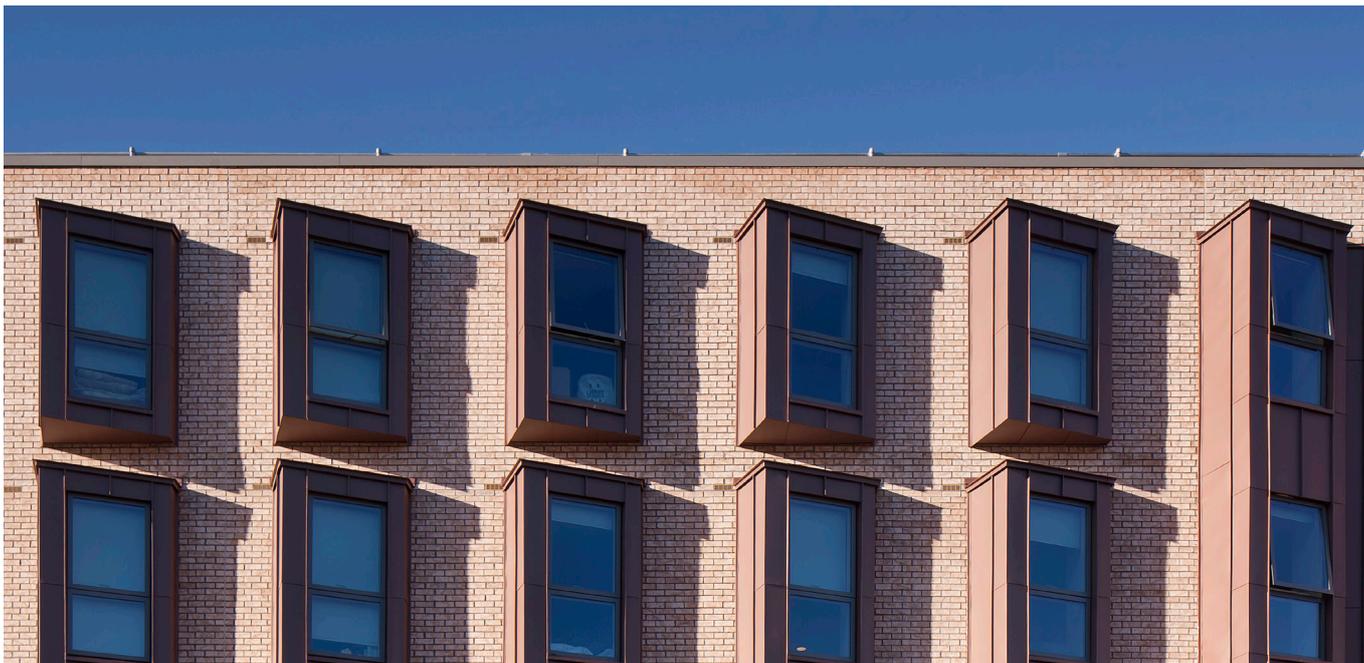
## Capturing Social Impact

The study has focused on social impact across the design and operational stages of the project. In this context, social impact refers to the impact of the project on the lives of people interacting with the scheme: specifically the students living and working in the buildings. While typically more intangible than economic impact, social impact can be quantified using wellbeing valuation approaches:

*Wellbeing valuation provides a methodology for quantifying how people value non-market goods. For example, the value that accrues to an individual as a result of increased social interaction, or from living next to open spaces. These things are important but are not commonly expressed or measured in monetary values. Our approach uses the HACT community investment values from the Social Value Bank to help determine wellbeing values for the outcomes of the project. Our methodology accounts for deadweight (i.e. what would have been achieved anyway, regardless of the intervention), as well as attribution (i.e. how much of the outcome is attributable to the building design rather than other factors). We also apply standard HM Treasury discounting rates when projecting the value of the social impacts across the full lifetime of the project –we have used a 20-year period.*



# Social Value Assessment



### Briefing and Early Concept

The University of St Andrews supplied a relatively short brief which outlined their basic requirements such as commercial viability, types and numbers of rooms, and required energy supply. HLM were proactive in developing and expanding on the original brief by working with the University to better understand their strategic needs, conducting research into best practice, and engaging with a variety of stakeholders.

This research-led and engagement-centred approach was the basis for an informed design process, which directly responded to the evidence and insights that were uncovered through HLM's scoping work and accounted for the needs of a broad range of stakeholders as much as possible. The impact of this approach and the completed project is evidenced in the way the buildings are being used and in feedback from the University Residences and Business Support (RBS) team and from student residents themselves. This is set out in the following sections.

### Client and Stakeholder Engagement

The HLM team sought to deliver a needs-informed and context-sensitive scheme, beyond the scope of the original brief. They worked hard to help the client realise the true scope and opportunity. This required close working with the University RBS team, a key part of the core client group, as well as with student groups and members of the public from the local town, to gain a deep understanding of the key requirements for the project. The project also had a particularly condensed work programme of three months for complete design work on the two buildings.

HLM's innovative quick-fire engagement approach is outlined in the following consultation quote:

“An intense [design] programme for the delivery of two buildings in three months necessitated a fully collaborative approach across client and design team to interrogate and capture requirements and to quickly develop designs using 3D plans, visualisations, and online engagement. Our team embedded themselves within the university to conduct briefing sessions, understand the existing estate and develop responsive designs which focussed heavily on context, community, social aspects and student experience.”

HLM used innovative techniques to engage stakeholders widely and clearly. On top of the progress meetings, HLM also provided two drop-in sessions for each hall to allow the client and stakeholder groups to review and comment on designs, and they used online channels to disseminate information openly. To ensure the designs were accessible to everyone, including non-designers, HLM used 3D building models, fly-throughs and photos of proposed views from the building windows to help stakeholders to visualise emerging plans.

## Social Value Assessment

The main elements of HLM's engagement with the client and project stakeholders are shown in the flowchart below.



### Informed and Thoughtful Design

HLM directly fed the insights, information and ideas which emerged through the client and stakeholder engagement into the design process. HLM took the following key design decisions which ultimately influenced the success of the project:

- To create a modern, non-institutional design
- To provide high quality bedrooms
- To include a variety of shared spaces
- To encourage lively circulation routes.

The following sections outline each of these key design decisions in turn.

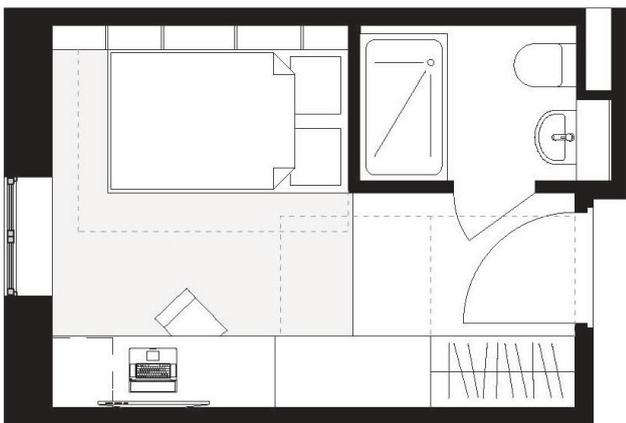
#### Modern, non-institutional design

Early in the engagement process, University of St Andrews staff and student representatives demonstrated to HLM that the existing stock of student residences at the University was outdated and the halls often felt clinical and impersonal. Flowing from this, a key design decision was to ensure the new student residences avoided the institutional feel of traditional halls of residences and where possible included features which enhance student experience and wellbeing. There were a variety of ways HLM achieved this. The buildings were designed to make the most of space available and with large floor to ceiling windows to let in light and views of the surrounding green space where possible. The interior design was also used to reflect St Andrews, using the designs of local artists and naming

the buildings and rooms after prominent local people. The eclectic mix of colours, patterns, furniture and fittings was used to give the buildings their own character to encourage a sense of community and give the rooms an organic feel more akin to a self-decorated, shared home. Our post-occupancy findings reflect residents' appreciation of the modern design, presented in the next section.

#### High quality bedrooms

In designing student bedrooms, HLM was working to meet a variety of criteria. The University was keen that the rooms were high quality and enhanced student wellbeing, but they also required an affordable mix to meet different student budgets. Students wanted lots of space, yet also wanted the rooms to feel cosy and provide a space for them to study, whilst the University was keen on drawing students out of their bedrooms to encourage socialising and the student community. To ensure bedrooms fit the students' needs for quality and affordability, HLM designed a mix of en-suite and standard rooms to give students a range of choice. In order to maximise available space, rooms were designed with built-in furniture with a high level of storage space. To draw students out of their high quality rooms, as well as providing a range of study and social spaces, HLM kept the ratio of students to each kitchen low. This decision emerged from the consultation finding that if there are not enough dining spaces in the kitchen for every student sharing it, students are more likely to get into the habit of returning to their rooms to eat, and this can lead to lower social wellbeing.



**Variety of shared spaces**

The original brief for the project did not specify a need for shared study space, based on the traditional model of students studying in library spaces. Student representatives at progress meetings and consultations highlighted the pressures on existing study space around the University and the difficulties students can have in accessing these facilities when their halls of residence are located some distance away. This tends to lead to students spending a large amount of time studying alone in their bedrooms. HLM and the RBS team agreed that study space should be included in the design. Drawing on the models of best practice seen during site visits undertaken early in the project, HLM advocated for the inclusion of mixed types of study space to suit different types of study. HLM built flexibility into the study space designs, including individual spaces for quiet reflective study, spaces with white boards for group study and ‘touchdown’ points for more casual or social study. This design reflects the variety of learning needs of different students to improve their productivity, facilitating the sharing of knowledge and ideas, and improves student wellbeing by reducing the time students spend studying alone in their bedrooms. HLM’s approach is:

“The shared spaces include living, kitchen, private dining, cinema and music rooms, and a range of curated study spaces providing for interactive, creative and reflective learning needs. The aim is to get students out of their bedrooms and spending time communally, a key focus for mental wellbeing in higher education. We advised on the mix of study spaces, drawing on the insight gained through client and end user consultation work, with provision on every floor and a range of options and transitional spaces to suit all personalities.” (HLM submission to RICS Social

Impact Award)

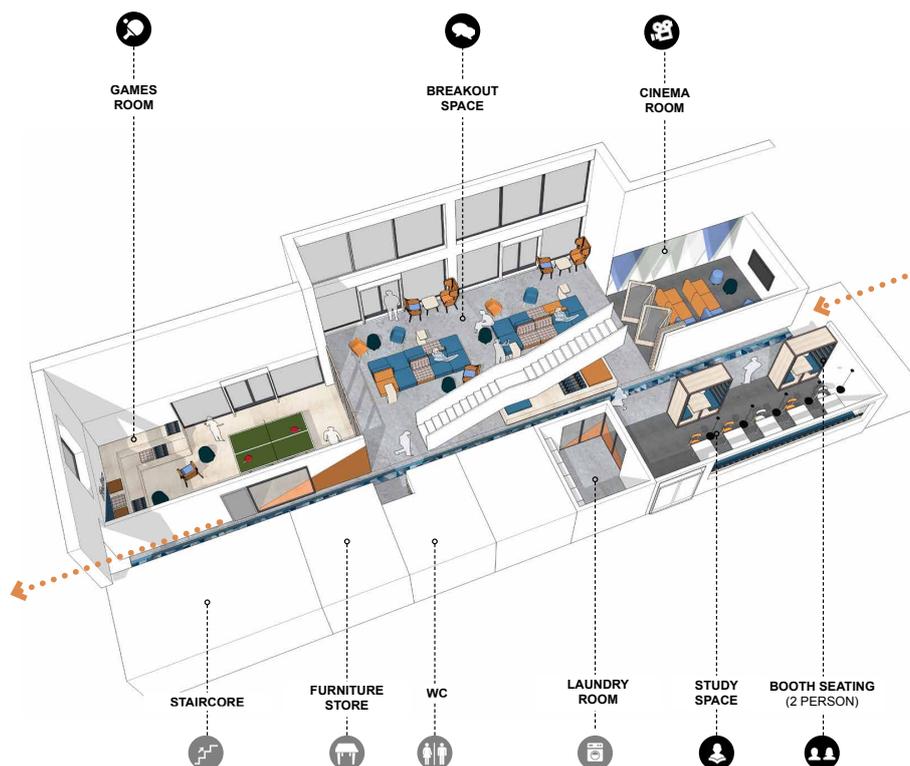


### Lively Circulation Routes

A key aim of the project was to encourage an excellent quality of student experience. It was noted through consultations that a sense of community was highly valued by students living in the other University of St Andrews halls and HLM recognised how community bonds can improve student wellbeing. Student wardens attending progress meetings reported that students were more likely to use a space when it is visible and accessible as they walk through the building, especially where they can see other students using the space. In reaction to these findings, HLM placed the circulation routes to create a lively pathway with lines of sight through the buildings' shared spaces. This placement gives students the opportunity to see who is using the space and speak to or join them if they would like to. This design decision has been very effective, and the shared spaces are well-used and the residents report high levels of wellbeing. HLM's approach is shown below:

social spaces to encourage the opportunity for interaction. The halls are also open to the wider student community with shared facilities across the cohort, adding to community cohesion at a University level. Our design solution has encouraged further social uses, including cooking demonstrations, Christmas parties, and other social events.” (HLM submission to RICS Social Impact Award)

“Alongside the range of interactive and shared spaces provided, generous atriums give a sense of arrival into a thriving community, and the circulation routes purposefully cut through these



### Client and End User Experience

Research into client feedback and end user experience show that the project has been very well received. These findings draw on discussions with the University’s RBS team and student resident representatives, University data on the numbers of applications from returning students, and a post-occupancy evaluation (POE) survey disseminated digitally to current student residents.

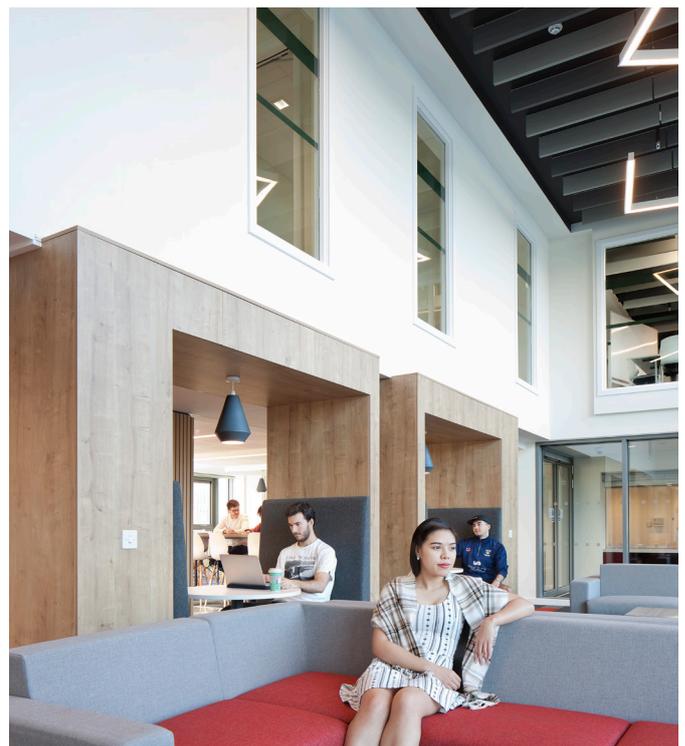
#### Feedback from the Core Client Team

Representatives from Residential and Business Services, a core part of the client team, were highly positive in their feedback on the two buildings. Many members of the team commented on how the final output met and exceeded their expectations and explained how HLM worked with the University and wider stakeholders to ensure this.



“Such a lovely building, and the students love it. Lots of study rooms that are very well used, and by students from other halls.”

Client, Residential Services Manager



**Client Feedback on Whitehorn and Powell Hall**

“We’ve never seen anything like it. [The] mix of catering, ensuites, study spaces, social spaces, [is] close to perfect for what students want at the moment. They hit the jackpot with the design.”

Finance and Project Manager on Whitehorn Hall (RBS)

“We’re absolutely delighted with both residences. When we look at it in comparison with previous projects, the mix of social space and bedrooms is excellent, the design of social space is in keeping with [the wider] environment, [and] you know you are in St Andrews because of the interior graphics [e.g. wallpaper]. It is well used, [and] well looked after, so clearly students appreciate the space.”

Operational Manager, RBS

“[The project] represents a step change in the styling and interior design... a move away from that clinical feel to student accommodation”

Head of Design Quality, Professional and Technical Services Team

“[The project] met our aspirations and more”

Deputy Director, RBS

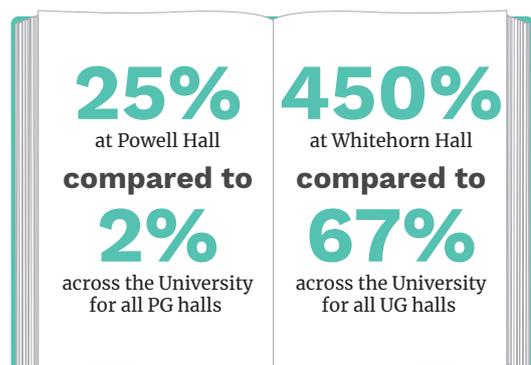


**Data and Feedback from Student Residents**

A useful measure of the success of the project is the number of applications to the halls from returning students. Returning students have an informed view of the different halls of residence offers, and will directly compare halls before making their top choices. This metric is strong evidence that the project has performed very well, and is at least in part due to the design decisions, as well as the fact they offer new and high quality accommodation. A particularly high proportion of returning students chose to apply for rooms at both Powell and Whitehorn Hall:

- Rooms for returning students were oversubscribed by 25% at Powell Hall, compared to 2% across the University for all postgraduate halls, and almost 450% at Whitehorn Hall, compared to 67% across the University for all undergraduate halls.
- Looking across all available rooms, there were 2.6 first choice applications per available room at Whitehorn Hall from returning students alone.

Rooms for returning students are oversubscribed by:



**Headline POE Survey Findings**

HLM commissioned a POE survey to gain valuable student feedback on the project. A fair proportion of residents from both halls responded to the survey, giving confidence in the representativeness of the findings:

- 22% of total residents responded (87 out of 389 residents)
- 19% of Whitehorn Hall residents responded (35 out of 184 residents)
- 25% of Powell Hall residents responded (52 out of 205 residents)

Students spend most of their time in the buildings and a high proportion of this time is in shared social or study spaces<sup>2</sup>.

- Students spend almost 15 hours each day (24 hour period) in the buildings, which is over 40% of their time awake, assuming 8 hours is spent asleep.
- When students are in the buildings, they spend almost three hours each day in shared spaces. This is almost half of all time they spend in the halls when awake.

The POE survey also asked residents for their feedback on the quality of the spaces within Whitehorn and Powell Hall and the buildings overall, plus more general thoughts and feedback on their experience of the new halls of residence.

<sup>2</sup>There was very little variation in reporting of time spent in the halls between Powell Hall and Whitehorn Hall, so these findings are presented together

**Resident Views on the Quality of Internal Spaces**

Residents rated the spaces provided very highly. Overall, 89% of residents rated the bedrooms as good, very good or excellent.

- 91% in Whitehorn
- 87% in Powell

*“I like the bedroom space. It is a good layout and is easy to study and sleep in.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“I love the size of the bedrooms and the kitchen.”* Powell Hall resident.

Across both halls, the social spaces were rated by 85% of residents as good, very good or excellent.

- 91% in Whitehorn Hall
- 81% in Powell Hall

*“Kitchens are ace, rally good that they contain sufficient storage but have a great semi private area to relax and socialise and lovely dining area. The amount of natural light in most areas of the building is another bonus for me. The study rooms facing the football pitches and the computer room are great examples of this.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“Social aspect is lush! Having a living area in kitchens makes it so much easier to get along with kitchen mates and just chill!”* Powell Hall resident.

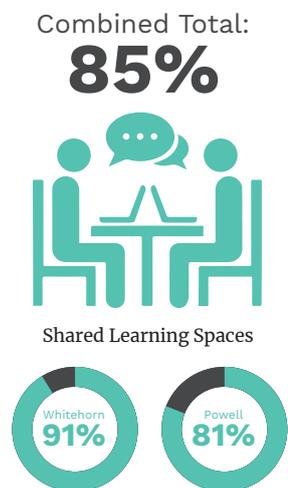
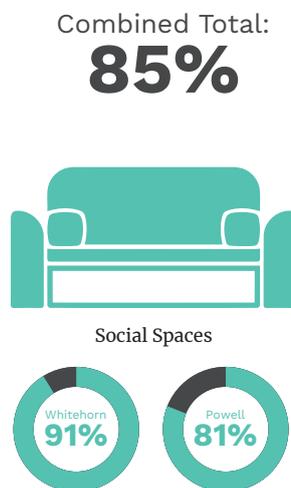
The shared learning spaces were rated by 85% of residents as good, very good or excellent.

- 91% in Whitehorn hall
- 81% in Powell Hall

*“[The] study spaces are the buildings best asset”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“I love the shared spaces e.g. kitchens, study rooms, computer room. They are so useful and over revision period I studied there regularly.”* Powell Hall resident.

**Quality of Spaces**  
% students rating the spaces as “good”, “very good” or “excellent”



### Resident Views on Building Quality

When asked to rate their level of agreement with a range of statements on a scale from 0 to 1 (where 1 denotes full agreement), residents' responses were particularly positive when rating the range of spaces and overall satisfaction with the building:

#### “Are you happy with the range of spaces provided by the building?”

- 0.85 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents
- 0.76 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

Residents commented on their appreciation of many of the spaces provided, and in particular that there is such a variety of spaces available, and the choice and ease of access that this allows them.

*“[I particularly like] the shared atrium, the different types of rooms, the layout of the bedrooms.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“I do use the computer room as it is much more convenient to have one in the building rather than having to move from one building to the other and other learning spaces.”* Powell Hall resident.

#### “Does the furniture suit your needs?”

- 0.80 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents
- 0.73 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

On the furnishing of the halls, residents remarked on how space efficiently and provide good storage options. They particularly like: the rooms are comfortable, use space efficiently and provide good storage options. They particularly like:

*“The open social spaces, the music room, the well-designed, compact but comfortable, bedrooms.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“The booth tables in the common area. They're cosy and have very good lighting! The couches and tables are generally very nice as well.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“The amount of storage space it provides.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“Large windows with lots of light coming into the rooms and [the] bookshelves above the beds”* Powell Hall resident.

*“The furnishings are great, and the colour scheme really adds life to the place. The smaller rooms next to the big dining room have lovely wallpaper and are ideal for group study.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

#### “Are you happy with the internal environment (temperature, lighting, noise etc) of the building?”

- 0.65 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents
- 0.62 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

While residents were very happy with the temperature and the lighting of the buildings, views were more mixed on the noise aspects of the environment in both halls. Students like:

*“The large windows with lots of light coming into the rooms.”* Powell Hall resident.

*“I like that it's modern and very warm.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“The level of sound isolation.”* Powell Hall resident.

*“The walls between bedrooms are quite soundproof, although the doors are not.”* Powell Hall resident.

*“[To improve the hall, I would] muffle noise from hallway and other room[s].”* Whitehorn Hall resident.



## Social Value Assessment

### “How accessible are the entrances to the buildings?”

- 0.65 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents
- 0.63 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

Although residents were generally satisfied with the accessibility to the buildings, some residents at both halls would have preferred more entrances.

*“Multiple entrances are definitely useful. I can access the building without delay whether I’m coming from Sports Centre, the Library (via Uni Hall Main entrance), or North Haugh (via stairway).”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“[I would like to] make more entrances accessible so that you don’t have to walk as long to reach your room.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“[I would like to improve] the amount of entrances to the building, as we are only allowed to enter from the front and it is difficult at times.”* Powell Hall resident.

### “I am satisfied with the building.”

- 0.80 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents

- 0.70 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

Residents of both halls responded very positively on overall satisfaction with the buildings, noting that they like the range and design of spaces including their modern, spacious and light feel.

The high satisfaction score at Whitehorn Hall seems to be linked to the furnishings and availability of study space.

*“It’s a great building to live in.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“The study rooms are a great incentive, and the rooms are furnished to a high standard.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

The slightly lower score at Powell Hall seems to be mainly related to elements that are not linked to actual design of the building (i.e. shower drainage). Noise cancellation and the number of entrances were also noted as things which could be improved.

*“I like the relative newness of the building and the clean designs.”* Powell Hall resident.

*“It is a lovely building and space for post graduate students”* Powell Hall resident.

**“The study rooms are a great incentive, and the rooms are furnished to a high standard.”**

Whitehorn Hall resident

**“It is very nice to live in Powell. The spaces are beautiful and relaxed, and it is easy to interact with other students.”**  
Powell Hall resident

**“I love the shared spaces e.g. kitchens, study rooms, computer room. They are so useful and over revision period I studied there regularly.”**”

Powell Hall resident

## Social Impact

The POE survey also included a series of social impact questions, to capture evidence about the impact of the halls’ design on student residents’ feelings of wellbeing, community and productivity, amongst others.

### Resident Social Impact Scores

When asked to rate their level of agreement with a range of statements on a scale from 0 to 1 (when 1 denotes full agreement), residents’ responses were particularly strong in terms of wellbeing, quality of life and productivity.

#### “I have a feeling of wellbeing when I spend time in the building”

- 0.71 average level of agreement across both halls
- 0.71 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents
- 0.72 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

*“The computer lab, study spaces, and kitchen allow variation in one’s environment. The computer lab is very useful. The bookcases in the room are very handy and the lighting in the rooms is well done.”* Powell Hall resident.

#### “I feel I have a good quality of life as a resident of this building”

- 0.76 average level of agreement across both halls
- 0.82 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents
- 0.72 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

*“Thanks for providing a great living space that really adds to University Hall and my University life.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

#### “I feel I am productive when I spend time in the building”

- 0.61 average level of agreement across both halls
- 0.70 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents

- 0.55 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

*“I love the range of study spaces available, which help me focus when I am struggling to study in my bedroom.”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

Residents responses were less positive around feelings of belonging, pride, as well as a sense of community. This is to be somewhat expected in the student residential sector where developing a sense of community is inherently challenging in a transient population that tend to be based in the building during term time, and usually only for one year at a time. This is an innovative study that applies social impact questions in a POE survey for a student residential environment, and as a result there are no benchmarks to compare these scores to.

#### “I have a feeling of belonging when I spend time in the building”

- 0.53 average level of agreement across both halls
- 0.51 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents
- 0.54 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

*“Perhaps it is because I am self catered but I feel like Whitehorn is very isolating compares to Old Wing for example. I feel like everyone in Old Wing is friends with each other – but this could be due to being catered. However, in whitehorn the only people I know are from my kitchen and we don’t socialise apart from in there. I don’t know anyone else even on my floor. But again this could be because of self catering and not meeting as many people as you would if you were catered. But all in all, I really like it!”* Whitehorn Hall resident.

*“Powell Hall does not feel like a community because we’re all self-catered. We don’t come together for meals like we usually do in catered residences so nobody really knows each other, except for the people in our kitchen, and maybe those along our floors.”* Powell Hall resident.



## Social Value Assessment

### “I have a feeling of pride when I spend time in the building”

- 0.47 average level of agreement across both halls
- 0.60 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents
- 0.39 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

“[I particularly like] the modern feel, it sets it apart from other halls.” Whitehorn Hall resident.

“It is a lovely building and space for post graduate students it just needs some hardware repairs.” Powell Hall resident.

### “I feel there is a strong sense of community in the building”

- 0.45 average level of agreement across both halls
- 0.42 average level of agreement from Whitehorn Hall residents
- 0.47 average level of agreement from Powell Hall residents.

“[The building] lack[s] of sense of community, the building gives a feeling of a hotel rather than home.” Powell Hall resident.

It is interesting to note where there are commonalities and differences between the social impact scores from the two halls:

- Wellbeing outcomes are consistent between the two halls at 0.71 and 0.72
- Quality of life is also relatively consistent with both

halls producing positive scores, although Whitehorn outperforms Powell by 0.10

- On outcomes of pride and productivity, Whitehorn Hall outperforms Powell by some way, and Powell has a negative score for pride at just 0.39
- Belonging outcomes and a sense of community are the outcomes where Powell outperforms Whitehorn, although it is relatively marginal. Powell being the postgraduate hall, there is some logic that a more condensed cohort of students may rate their feelings of belonging and community a little higher, however, it is worth noting that the attribution score (also asked as part of the survey) is the lowest for these outcomes, coming in under 0.40. Attribution is a measure which tests how much of the outcome is due to the design rather than other factors, and this suggests that the higher belonging and community scores at Powell are more to do with other factors, rather than the design.
- The attribution scores are highest for quality of life (over 0.60), productivity and wellbeing (both over 0.50), which are the three highest scoring social outcomes.



### Social Return on Investment Assessment

The social impact scores from the POE survey have been fed into a Social Return on Investment (SROI) assessment. This provides monetised metrics that represent the value accruing to the students residing in the accommodation as a result of the social outcomes they experience due to the design of the halls.

The SROI assessment has suggested that as a result of the design of Whitehorn Hall and Powell Hall, a total of **£1.18 million of social value** is generated for the students living there each year. Over a period of 20 years, or the lifetime of the asset, this accrues to a total of **£17.9 million<sup>3</sup>**.

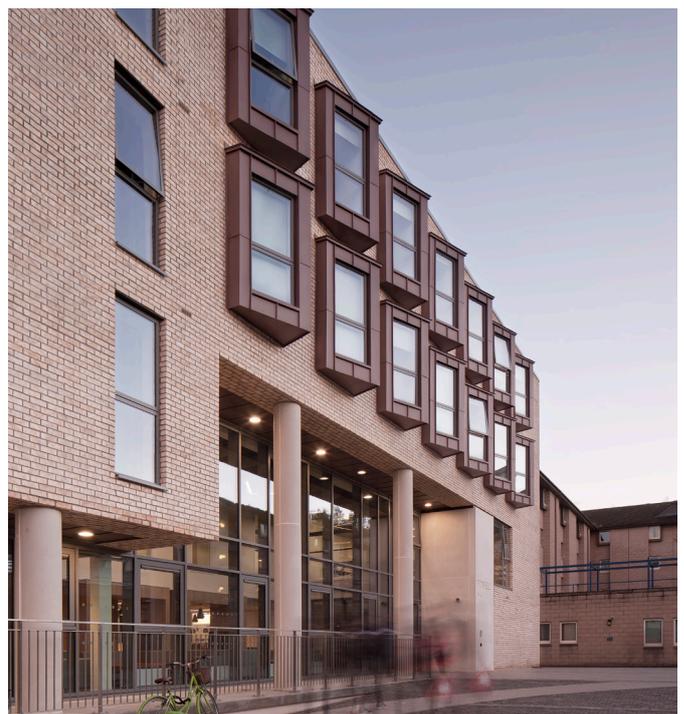
It is possible to look at the SROI for each of the halls separately, and by individual student, to provide a direct comparison on which design is proving to be most impactful from social value perspective:

- Whitehorn Hall is generating **£530,000 per year** for its 184 residents, which equates to over **£2,800 per individual** student resident per year.
- Powell Hall is generating **£640,000 per year** for its 205 residents, which equates to over **£3,100 per individual** student resident per year.

This suggests that Powell Hall is generating the most social value per student, and as a result of there being more student residents in Powell Hall, it is generating the most social value at a building level also.

<sup>3</sup>Discounted using HM Treasury rates.

<sup>4</sup><https://www.hact.org.uk/social-value-bank>



### Using SROI in Post-Occupancy Evaluation

The social impact scores from the POE survey are fed into an analysis that draws on the HACT community wellbeing values in the Social Value Bank<sup>4</sup>.

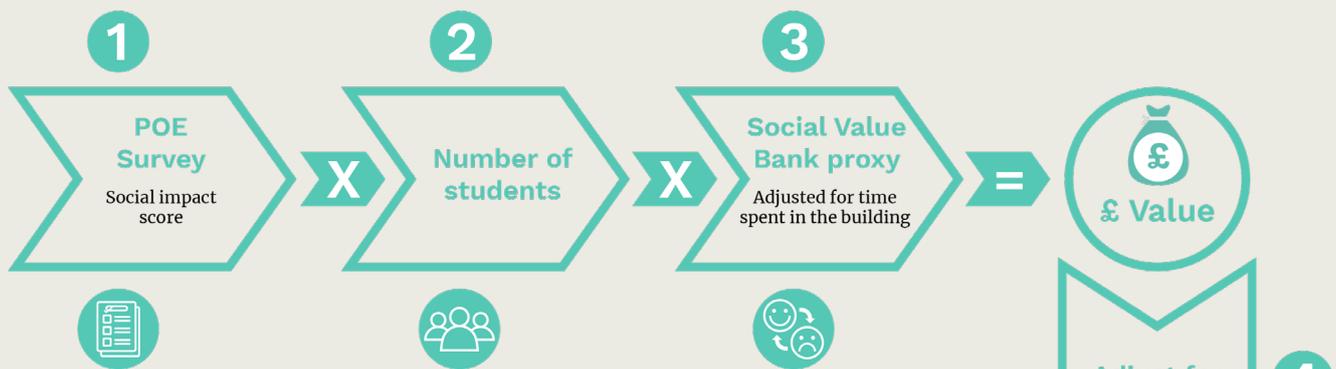
The total number of student residents is multiplied by the Social Value Bank proxy most appropriate for the social outcome under study, which has been adjusted based on the average amount of time spent in the building by residents according to the survey. This is multiplied by the social impact score for that outcome to provide a figure for the impact generated. This figure is then adjusted for deadweight using the measure advised in the Social Value Bank guidance, and finally, adjusted for attribution, using the score collected through the survey data.

This generates a final impact figure (adjusted for deadweight and attribution) for that social outcome.

Not every social outcome has been monetised in this way, as they are complex outcomes which relate to each other closely. This avoids double-counting. The outcomes monetised are wellbeing and sense of community (which is actually a disbenefit in this case).

The final impact figures are presented as an overall metric that represents the social value generated for the students living there, as a result of the design of Whitehorn and Powell Halls.

The figure is also presented as accumulative figure across the project life cycle, based on a 20-year period, and discounted to present day values using standard HM Treasury discounting rates.



## Social Return On Investment Calculation Methodology



### Calculation Methodology

\*Deadweight is a counterfactual measure of what would have happened regardless of the intervention, in this case the design of the new halls. The Social Value bank includes guidance and suggests a deadweight measure to be subtracted for each proxy.

\*\*Attribution is a counterfactual measure of how much of the impact is caused by the intervention, rather than other factors. Our POE survey includes an attribution question, and the average self-reported score has been subtracted.

\*\*\*HM Treasury discounting rates should be applied across required period.

# Conclusions

## Conclusions

The social impact assessment study has evidenced that the student residential project at St Andrews has been delivered in a way that maximises the value of early consultation and engagement with client and end user groups, draws this insight through into an informed design process, and shown the impact generated as a result for the students living in the halls for years to come.

The report also demonstrates the potential of applying social value methods through more traditional POE approaches to generate different types of information and data about completed schemes. The combination of qualitative insight and narratives collated through the consultation work, with the quantitative data and monetised SROI metrics, have produced a powerful case study about the added value of HLM's approach and practice, as well as the impact of your designs themselves, once operational and occupied.

There is a real opportunity for HLM to capitalise on this insight by developing an internal process to close the social feedback loop on design. Ensuring that the lessons are learnt from this project, and fed into the next student residential project is the ultimate way to maximise the value of this commission. The current project at St Andrews is a logical next step to doing so.

