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Public Performance Report 2020/21

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Background

The Assessor for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute is an independent statutory official who is responsible for the preparation and the maintenance of the Valuation Rolls and Council Tax Valuation Lists for East and West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute. 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. The Assessor's service is conducted from two main offices located at the addresses above.

You can contact us by e-mail at assessor@dab-vjb.gov.uk

General Information

During the year to 31st March 2021, the Assessor had a full-time equivalent staff of 51.3 and a staffing budget of £2.3m. A total of 374.5 days (3.4%) were lost through illness, a slight increase from 3.19% in 2019/20.

The COVID Pandemic had an impact on how services were delivered with our offices closed for periods during the year and survey work suspended for periods. Our staff have largely been working remotely during the year with an office presence only to undertake essential work that could not be carried out remotely.

Council Tax List

The Council Tax List contains all domestic properties showing an allocated Council Tax band which is based on the market value of the property as at 1991. The bands shown are used by the local authorities within the Joint Board's boundaries for the production of domestic Council Tax bills. As at 31st March, 2021, the Council Tax Lists for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute contained 146,143 subjects. Of the 917 houses added to the List between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, the time between the date of occupation/completion and the issue of the banding notice is shown in the following table. Both the 3 month and 6 month targets were exceeded.

The targets which we have set for 2021/22 are 96% within 3 months and 98% within 6 months.

Year	Number	Within 3 Months		Within 6 Months	
		Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved
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%

Valuation Roll

The Valuation Roll contains the rateable values of all non-domestic properties within the area. The rateable values shown are used by the Joint Board's constituent local authorities for the production of non-domestic rates bills.

As at 31st March 2021 the Valuation Rolls for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute contained 15,359 subjects with a total rateable value of £365.6 million. Of the 984 amendments made to the Valuation Roll between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, 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.

The targets we have set for 2021/22 are 75% within 3 months and 90% within 6 months.

Year	Number	Within 3 Months		Within 6 Months	
		Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved
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%

Electoral Registration

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

There were no major electoral events scheduled during 2020/21 but two Local Government by-elections took place in March 2021. Preparations for the Scottish Parliament Election due to be held in May 2021 started this year with plans enacted to service the anticipated increased demand in applications to vote by post, including the appointment of a number of temporary staff.

The Canvass conducted during 2020 was the first carried out under revised legislation that allowed 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.

At 1st December 2020 the total electorate figure was up on the total at publication in November 2019.

Year	Electorate at Publication
2020	224,800
2019	219,861
2018	219,637
2017	222,507
2016	221,078
2015	218,668
2014/15	223,594

Rolling Registration is the process of dealing with applications for changes to the register which are not part of the canvass project. Between publication and 31st March 2021 there were 9,238 additions to the register and 4,441 deletions from the register. IER requires a pro-active approach to change throughout the year and we have continued use a variety of sources of information to initiate the issue of Invitations to Register.

Other Items of Note

During the year we also:

- Made preparations for the expansion of the number and type of Non-Domestic valuations available online.
- Made preparations for the implementation of the Business Growth Accelerator (BGA) marker within the Valuation Roll.
- Responded to the COVID pandemic while maintaining our statutory duties, including rolling out home working for all relevant staff.
- Responded to enquiries arising out of various Scottish Government COVID business grants schemes.
- Continued disposal of 2017 Revaluation Appeals. The vast majority of 2017 Revaluation Appeals (69%) have been withdrawn without any adjustment to the issued valuation.
- Prepared for the implementation of a revised Customer Complaint Procedure in line with the requirements of the Public Sector Ombudsman's Model Complaints Handling Procedure.

Our customer satisfaction survey showed that last year 89% 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



*Dumbartonshire and Argyll & Bute
Valuation Joint Board*