

2021 Annual Report

Including agenda for the Annual General Meeting



President's introduction

Welcome to our annual report, presenting the story of another successful year for our society.

Sitting down to write this introduction and reflecting on my second year as president, I'm delighted to have both maintained continuity and brought about some significant changes during the most challenging environment I have known in my public service career to date.

It is during such tough times that we see the absolute best of Socitm, supporting the public sector delivering so much for communities across the UK. Adapting to and overcoming disruptions in these most severe times has also provided new opportunities that, ordinarily, we may not have realised so quickly.

Learning from the last couple of years to help inform future plans is something I have found myself regularly discussing. Chairing Socitm's Share Scotland conference in March, I used my opening remarks to set the scene on just how far we have come and more importantly what it could mean going forward.

It won't be a surprise to any of you that this revolves around resilient people, communities and places. In practice, this comprises:

- Building on the phenomenal response of local authorities and the wider public sector to Covid-19.
- Sustaining the step changes that local public service providers have taken.
- Harnessing digital – cultures, capabilities, technologies, and data – to enhance the resilience of people, communities, organisations, and places.

I am confident we can continue this excellent work with the collective feeling of togetherness that has been apparent during my term this year. We have come together virtually and physically to provide support, share resources, learn from each other, and simply let off a bit of steam knowing we are all feeling the pressure.

The pandemic will continue to challenge us. This, combined with the events in Ukraine, food poverty, cost of living, climate change and a myriad of other problems, will place additional demands for support from local authorities, as well as routine, day to day delivery. I know that Socitm, its members, and the public sector, stand by ready to rise to these tough challenges and the opportunities to harness digital technologies and data to improve outcomes for people, places and communities.

It makes me incredibly proud to have served as president for an extra year. I look forward to remaining an active member of the Socitm community in my role as immediate past president. I encourage you all to make the most of this wonderful society that connects us in so many positive ways.

This report follows our infographic style from the previous year, to highlight just a few of our achievements. Please do take a few minutes to read and reflect on the messages it contains.

Finally, thank you to all the members, colleagues, and staff within the Socitm family who, together, make this such a vibrant and diverse organisation of which to be proud.

Sam Smith
Socitm president



Our key priorities

The continued challenges generated by Covid-19 meant adapting our operations to ensure we provided the support our members value. While we didn't experience the sudden turbulence from the previous year, we took the decision early to host all our events virtually. Although this took away the physical connections enjoyed before the pandemic, it did allow us to host more events, including a weekly webinar. It also attracted a wider contribution from across the society and beyond, all of whom found the ease of online meetings to be navigable.

We continue, like all our members, to benefit our way through constant change. I am pleased to provide a positive annual report with good news across all our society's activities. Various initiatives are highlighted in the infographic, together with a more detailed financial report from me found further down.



Nadira Hussain
Chief executive officer (CEO)

Increased engagement throughout our membership

An adaptable organisation, strengthening its relevance within the sector

Connecting members to represent sector views within national government

Financial stability and growth

Our 5 policy themes

	Ethical use of emerging technologies and data 2021 policy lead: Mark Lumley	splunk> 2021 KEY PARTNER
	Leadership, diversity and skills 2021 policy lead: Sandra Taylor	NO PARTNER
	Modernising ICT service delivery 2021 policy lead: Alison Hughes	Capita 2021 KEY PARTNER
	Healthy and well communities 2021 policy lead: Sam Smith	AvePoint TANIUM 2021 KEY PARTNER
	Service design and transformation 2021 policy lead: Huw McKee	Microsoft 2021 KEY PARTNER



Digital trends has become a regular feature in the Socitm calendar, with the report being our most downloaded publication of the year. Some of the themes that were proved right in 2021:

- The growing (and changing) role of IT.
- Dependency on 'digital' for better public service outcomes.
- Adoption of specific technologies, such as collaboration tools and cloud.
- Unprecedented levels of local collaboration and innovation.

Digital ethics: Inspirational stories confirmed the positive impact we are making

Our digital ethics resource hub collection lead current thinking about ethical, digital place-making. They have featured in a wide range of conferences, webinars and media, including external events hosted by UK Authority, ALGIM (Association of Local Government Information Management), MCE (Major Cities of Europe) and LOLA (Linked Organisation of Local Authority ICT Societies).



ALGIM

LOLA

Digital identities and trust

Our digital identities policy briefing stimulated a joint approach by LGA, Solace and Socitm to embrace local public services in the GDS One Login programme and DCMS UK Digital Identity and Trust Framework.

Resilient places, people and communities: post-Covid recovery

We hosted a St George's House consultation in November, strengthening partnerships with the Local Government Association (LGA), the Institute of Government & Public Policy (IGPP) at the University of East London and the Work Foundation, and building an emerging picture of people and place-based regeneration, sustainability and connectivity.

Integrated care

A successful multi-agency workshop built a body of knowledge on digital enablement of integrated care and provided the foundations for research and learning from international examples

Hybrid working: Socitm's unique take on person-centred working

We presented a focus group, our 'From place to person' report and a new leadership development course.

Representation on key groups and networks

These include the Local CIO Council (LCIOC), Local Government Digital Committee (LGDC), Cybersecurity Technical Advisory Group (C-TAG), IGPP Board and IStand Board.

IGPP Institute of Government & Public Policy

Members have joined us and our partners at...

MORE THAN **91** EVENTS IN 2021 ...at meetings, webinars, workshops, conferences and training programmes.

You have discovered...

- Digital Accessibility Maturity Assessment (DAMA)
- Cyber briefings
- Transformation best practise
- Diverse and inclusive leadership techniques
- Emerging picture of Covid-19 recovery
- Private sector innovation
- My Account section on website

22 ...training sessions and programmes delivered within Leadership Academy.

This included **three pilot workshops** - one Cyber Breach and two Valuing Diversity.

84 ...total participants at our personalised training sessions.

This involved **19 participants** for Empowering Women Wales and **65 participants** at Managing and Motivating Remote Teams.

89 PARTICIPANTS ...at the alumni event in December 2021.

Our mentoring programme was announced during this event.

217 MEMBERS ...graduated from the Leadership Academy during 2021.

Number of coaching sessions* completed:

- 8** Empowering Women
- 52** Top Talent

*Excluding external Empowering Women programmes

Our expanding leadership alumni community is now... **414** STRONG

The present and future of public sector leadership.

Alumni coffee hour set up in September 2021 ...allowing the network to meet in a relaxed atmosphere.

The Gambia project

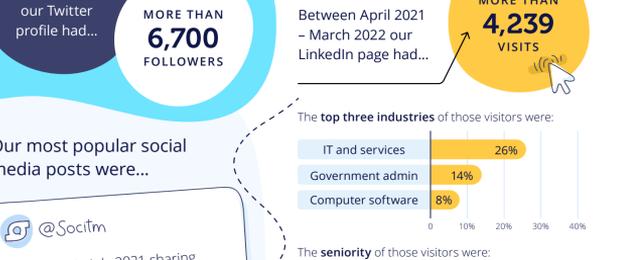
A pilot programme delivered to 10 Gambian women to help with their technical and business skills development.

Alumna colleague Iftaz Hussain appointed as vice-chair of Yorkshire & Humber region.

Actively encouraged attendance at regional meetings.

67 people completed the Socitm / LGA Returners programme to help get them back into an ICT job with a local authority.

Circle of investment



Financial overview by David Bryant, finance and commercial director

During 2021, due to the ongoing Covid pandemic, we had to continue delivering all our events virtually, despite originally planning to return to physical events as they are a key part of our engagement strategy for members. Unfortunately, the reduction in income due to this was £197,000.

We also found that the demand for the Improve benchmarking services during the year remained very low as it was not a priority for our members' organisations. The income from Improve was only £49,000, some £110,000 below the budget for the year. However, we have used the reduction in activity to undertake a full review and update of the complete set of Improve products, which have been relaunched successfully in 2022.

We have also invested in enhancing and upgrading the membership benefits, the leadership development courses and research publications, including the new resource hub and website account functions available via the completely rebuilt website.

Offsetting the reduction in income, we were able to make savings, particularly in venue costs for Share events (£123,000), costs of leadership training (£34,000) and reduced costs for travel and subsistence (£30,000).

We continued to benefit from the shares in Socitm Advisory, which generated a £200,000 contribution to the 2021 income. As reported last year, we have been evolving away from the Socitm Advisory invoicing being undertaken by Socitm Ltd and there were only £100,000 of Socitm Advisory invoices raised by Socitm Ltd in 2021, compared to £2.36m in 2020. This continued to decrease the overall turnover from £3.5m in 2020 to £1.33m in 2021. This transition is now complete and the turnover reported for next year will not include any Socitm Advisory invoicing. This has meant that the gross profit has further improved to 84% compared to 27.9% in 2020 and 10.5% in 2019.

Our balance sheet position continues to strengthen and is currently £823,000, with the amount of cash in the business remaining healthy. As we do not require immediate access to all the cash, £250,000 has been invested in a unit trust so the value is not eroded by inflation.

I would like to finish by thanking the incredible team of people that work for Socitm, our volunteers, local teams, our expert consultants, strategic and private sector partners and of course, our members.

David Bryant
Finance & commercial director

The following is a summary of the financial accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 as reviewed by our auditors, Cottons Accountants.

Income statement*

	2021	2020
Turnover	1,326	3,472
Cost of Sale	209	2,502
Gross Profit	1,117	970
Overheads	983	973
Furlough	0	19
Investment	21	0
R&D Tax	0	64
Surplus	155	80

Balance sheet summary*

	2021	2020
Investments	255	0
Debtors	571	648
Cash at Bank and in-hand	852	1,017
Creditors (amounts due within 1 year)	855	997
Net Assets less all liabilities	823	668
Total Reserves	823	668

* Numbers are shown in £,000s

Improved communications and member engagement

By the end of March 2021 our Twitter profile had...

MORE THAN **6,700** FOLLOWERS

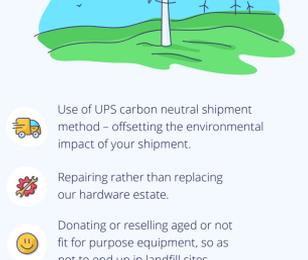
Between April 2021 - March 2022 our LinkedIn page had...

MORE THAN **4,239** VISITS

Our most popular social media posts were...



The top three industries of those visitors were:



The seniority of those visitors were:



During June our Twitter profile had...

MORE THAN **7,938** VISITS

Increase in users viewing the website on mobile devices

...with mobile users accounting for nearly 25% of website traffic.

Regional engagement and activity

Our regional committees, members and wider team provided a platform to share local experiences and best practice.

We committed to listening to our members ...through initiatives including focus groups, an annual check-in and director one-to-ones.

Sustainability

In the past year, we have modernised and innovated our use of technology and tools available to us, to improve our working practices and take a significant step towards being more sustainable.

- Participating in international environmental events such as Plastic-free July and Veganaury.
- Focusing on eliminating our employees' use of single use plastics in the locations in which we operate.
- Starting the Socitm Woodland initiative to celebrate personal and organisational achievements by planting trees.
- Working from home: reduction of paper and electricity usage, as well as carbon reduction from minimised travel
- Reusing our shipping boxes and packing.

- Use of UPS carbon neutral shipment method - offsetting the environmental impact of your shipment.
- Repairing rather than replacing our hardware estate.
- Donating or reselling aged or not fit for purpose equipment, so as not to end up in landfill sites.
- Recycling any equipment beyond economical repair, using a licensed e-waste provider in line with government guidelines.

Annual General Meeting

The agenda for Socitm's Annual General Meeting on 14 June 2022 is now available.

View the 2022 AGM agenda