



# Case Study



Vienna House,  
Vancouver

*“ Sapphire Balconies check a lot of boxes of the goals of the Vienna House project charter - they’re durable, support resilience by providing passive shading, and they improve quality of life for residents.”*

*John Wall, Principal & Co-Founder, Public Architecture*





# Vienna House, Vancouver

**Client:** BC Housing

CPA Development Consultants

**Contractor:** Kindred Construction

**Architect:** Public Architecture & Communication

**Location:** Vancouver, British Columbia

**Balconies:** 70 balcony lifts



## History

In response to the global cost of living crisis and issues with housing affordability across Canada, BC Housing has taken a leap in East Vancouver by developing Vienna House, a brand-new and near-zero-emissions rental apartment community designed with the future in mind. Sapphire are incredibly pleased to be a part of this project and provide our innovative, prefabricated, modular balconies to this incredible next step in sustainable Canadian residential development.

Mayor of Vancouver, Ken Sim, has previously spoken on the project at the ground breaking ceremony, stating:

“I’m thankful to our partners at the Province of British Columbia, BC Housing, More Than A Roof and [our knowledge-sharing partners] the City of Vienna for making this possible. Excited to build 123 more affordable rental units for Vancouver. Through strong Ministry of Housing partnerships and a focus on energy efficiency designs, we’re not just building homes, but shaping a future where affordable living is a reality for all Vancouverites.”





## Streamlined by Innovation, Delivered by Sapphire

principles and prefabricated wall panels to address climate change and housing affordability.

The groups, however, were constrained by a focus on their balconies. Balconies across Canada have typically been constructed using a poured concrete method, but due to the thermal bridging issues that can arise with concrete, the building could have become severely energy inefficient over time as increased use of gas-burning central heating systems would have to compensate for heat lost through concrete balconies.

BC Housing and Public Architecture brought Sapphire on board as a response to these concerns to provide Vienna House with a new type of prefabricated aluminum balcony that intends to help the project become streamlined by innovation.

The prefabricated balconies have helped to increase the speed of installation (shaving “a full month” off project timelines on one project in Hamilton, Ontario, according to one developer), increase safety by all-but eliminating fall risk as the balconies can be installed from inside the patio door openings and, perhaps most importantly when compared with traditional concrete pouring methods, the prefabricated balconies will permit just a fraction of heat to escape the building.

As the balconies at Vienna House are thermally broken by design, attaching to the building via hooks, slide-on brackets and suspension rods, they transfer very little heat to the outdoors and so increase the embodied energy performance of the building throughout its lifespan.



# NBS Specification

## Vienna House, Vancouver

**Manufacturer** Sapphire Balconies Ltd 11 Arkwright, Road Reading, RG2 0LU  
0344 88 00 553  
[support@balconies.global](mailto:support@balconies.global)  
[www.balconies.global](http://www.balconies.global)

**Reference** Tie-Rod aluminium balconies with laminated structural glass

**Balcony anchor** M16 stainless steel tie-rod connections tack welded to stud connector

**Arms** n/a

**Cassette® structure** Standard 400mm modular balconies

**Soffits** Polyester powder-coated aluminium-controlled draining soffits

**Deck finish** Innova® A2-rated decking fixed with hidden clips

**Handrail** 70 x 38 mm aluminum extrusion with sloped top, polyester powder-coated

**Guarding** Laminated structural glass with 6063 grade aluminum posts, toughened 'Arctic White' infill to glass

**Base fixing** Mechanically fixed to balcony

**Fascias** PVB laminated, "arctic white" translucent glass





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