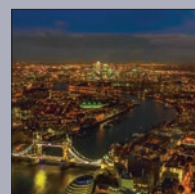


HOUSING MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

APR/MAY 2021



Warning signs
existed a decade
before Grenfell

Unlimited fines
in tough new fire
safety regime

Millions to be
spent on ending
rough sleeping

Ombudsman
reports on
individual cases

Huge fine for
rogue landlord



Ei1000G SmartLINK® Gateway

The smarter way to check every tenant's safety. At any time.



- Actively monitors a property's RadioLINK+ or SmartLINK enabled alarms
- Minimises the requirement of property access causing less disruption
- Utilises the best available mobile connection for reliable connection
- Collates data and provides real-time notifications
- Accessible intelligence that can be actioned, reported on and documented
- Enables solution focused asset management





Features

23 Industry Survey

Exploring current thinking in remote management and monitoring

Through a survey of 166 housing professionals across the UK, *Housing, Management and Maintenance* explores the benefits and barriers of remote management and monitoring, and its current perception in the sector.

37 Maintenance & Refurbishment: Bathroom Refurbishment

Waterproof wall panels: the modern option

In these turbulent times, waterproof wall panels may offer social housing providers and local authorities a more effective bathroom walling solution, explains Nicola Lewis of Fibo.

43 Safety & Regulation: Smoke & Fire Protection

The smart approach to specifying smoke vents

Tony Stevens of Bilco UK shares the top three considerations they believe housing professionals should focus on when specifying NSHEVs.

46 Safety & Regulation: Water Control & Legionella

Water-tight partnerships

James Homard of Urban Environments explores how housing professionals can maximise value from their water hygiene consultancy.

In this issue of **HOUSING MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE**

Industry News.....	04
Appointments & News	32
Directory.....	51



Products

Efficiency	
Air Quality & Ventilation.....	33
Heating & Renewable Energy	33

Maintenance & Refurbishment	
Bathroom Refurbishment	36
Concrete Repair	35
Doors, Windows & Glazing.....	39
Flooring.....	35
Landscaping & External Finishes	41
Roofing.....	40
Workwear.....	35

Safety & Regulation	
Smoke & Fire Protection	42
Water Control & Legionella.....	46

Technology	
Software & Apps	49

News Editor:
Patrick Mooney
patrick@netmagmedia.eu

Publisher:
Anthony Parker

Features Editor:
Jack Wooler

Studio Manager:
Mikey Pooley

Production Assistants:
Georgia Musson
Kim Musson

Account Manager:
Sheehan Edmonds

Sales Executives:
Ian Fletcher
Nathan Hunt

PR Executives:
Suzanne Easter
Kim Friend

Audience Development Manager:
Jane Spice

Managing Director:



Simon Reed

Cointronic House,
Station Road,
Heathfield,
East Sussex TN21 8DF

Advertising & administration:
Tel: 01435 863500
info@netmagmedia.co.uk
www.housingmmonline.co.uk

Editorial features:
Tel: 01435 863500
jwooler@netmagmedia.co.uk

Press Releases:
editorial@netmagmedia.co.uk

The manufacturer of the paper used within our publication is a Chain-of-Custody certified supplier operating within environmental systems certified to both ISO 14001 and EMAS in order to ensure sustainable production.

Subscription costs just £18 for 6 issues, including post and packing. Phone 01435 863500 for details. Individual copies of the publication are available at £3.25 each including p&p.

All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, including photocopying, recording or stored in any information retrieval system without the express prior written consent of the publisher. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy and reliability of material published in Housing Management & Maintenance, the publisher can accept no responsibility for the claims or opinions made by contributors, manufacturers or advertisers. Editorial contributors to this journal may have made a payment towards the reproduction costs of material used to illustrate their products.

Printed in England



Editor's comment

At long last, the firm action we've been waiting for!



Patrick Mooney,
News Editor

Well we've had to wait more than three and a half years for it, but at last we are beginning to see a serious response from the Government to the horrors of the Grenfell Tower fire which killed 72 people on a warm Summer's night in one of the richest capital cities on the planet. It remains to be seen how successful the various measures will be in preventing such an awful loss of life from ever happening again, but in many respects the responsibility for preventing such an awful tragedy also lies with all of us, particularly those who work directly in the construction, refurbishment and building maintenance sectors. I hope the new building safety regulator really does mean business when he says he will come down like a ton of bricks on any wrongdoing, such as cutting corners to increase profits, or using inferior quality materials, or failing to invest in staff training or competent supervision. Public confidence has taken an enormous hit and the time being taken to sort out the removal of dangerously flammable cladding from residential buildings and sort out who needs to pay for this, really is not helping matters. It is a shocking example of inertia and of people in power failing to demonstrate leadership.

EXPOSING WRONGDOING

However, there is only so much that can be achieved by regulation and inspection, as important as they are. Throughout the duration of the inquiry I have been struck by the lack of focus on whistleblowing. You know the sort of thing – encouraging people to put their hand up and say 'enough is enough, what's happening there is wrong, it needs to stop and be corrected immediately'. Many of the participants at the Grenfell inquiry have pointed their fingers at others and very occasionally at themselves and close colleagues. So why wasn't an entirely avoidable disaster averted? We do not live and work in a society where it is easy to identify, report on and put a stop to wrongdoing in the workplace. This means we are all, directly or indirectly, discouraged from highlighting and reporting poor behaviours and bad practices. No one wants to be seen as a snitch or a grass! We also fear the consequences of reporting on others and running the risk of losing our job. Those brave souls that do go out on a limb and report on their colleagues or managers usually live to regret it. They often find themselves exposed and ostracised, sidelined and forced to sign confidential non-disclosure agreements. Sometimes they are sacked, or forced to resign. There is little or no incentive for people to do the 'right thing', it can always be excused as someone else's responsibility. This is a culture and work ethos we need to change and to correct, without delay.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Whistleblowers can be our first line of defence in protecting the public, ourselves and our work colleagues from sloppy workmanship, cronyism, fraudulent behaviours and worse. But we need effective and confidential ways in which the alarm can be raised and for prompt investigations to take place. Where claims of wrongdoing are proven, proper corrective action needs to be taken promptly and the guilty parties dealt with – this could be a training issue, or it could mean prosecution. So much depends of knowledge, risk and intent. The new regulator could help by setting up a hotline for people to report their suspicions of wrongdoing and using experienced, forensic investigators to examine the evidence and to act quickly where necessary. Like the Ombudsman, it needs to increase accountability and transparency through its public reporting, but it also needs the time and space to investigate concerns quickly and with the full force of the law behind it. It must not allow itself to get bogged down in slow moving bureaucracy and red tape. Safety regulation is there for a good reason and we ignore it or under-resource it at our peril. It is worth repeating that there will not be any prosecutions over the Grenfell fire, until after the public inquiry has concluded and reported. This could mean that the survivors and relatives of the victims have to wait until next year or even until 2023 before they see some sort of justice taking place. In the meantime, we owe it to the victims to put our energy into ensuring there is no repetition of the fire or of the circumstances that lead directly to it. If we all commit to being actively responsible and safety conscious, not turning a blind eye to wrongdoing, then a massive step forward will have been taken. Collectively we should all be safer as well.

Patrick Mooney

On the cover...

The new Artifex development in Salford from Salix Homes. Photo Credit: Salix Homes

See page 32.



Government launches campaign to empower social housing residents to raise complaints and make things right

Social housing residents will be helped with improving their living conditions through a new Government campaign launched to raise awareness of the complaints process and the provision of straightforward advice.

'Make Things Right' will help residents raise complaints if they are unhappy with their landlord and struggling to get problems resolved, with clear advice on how to progress issues to the Housing Ombudsman if necessary.

The launch of the new campaign is a commitment from the Government as part of the social housing white paper – 'The Charter for Social Housing Residents' – which set out a comprehensive action plan to make landlords more accountable for the services they deliver.

The Charter aims to speed up the complaints procedure for social housing residents, by reducing decision times and ensuring effective resolution and improving access to the Housing Ombudsman.

The national campaign, 'Make Things Right', is running adverts on digital and social media channels, as well as music streaming sites, to raise awareness of the complaints process and barriers to these being progressed.

Housing Minister Eddie Hughes said: "The Charter for Social Housing Residents is clear that all social housing residents should receive a good service and reassurance that if you speak up, then things will be put right."

While most landlords work hard to put things right when they go wrong, we want to ensure that all residents know how to raise complaints if they have to, and how to approach the Housing Ombudsman to escalate their concern.

VOICES MUST BE HEARD

"That is why we are launching this new campaign to ensure those living in the 4 million social homes



The Charter aims to speed up the complaints procedure for social housing residents, by reducing decision times and ensuring effective resolution and improving access to the Housing Ombudsman

across England know how to access the complaints process to provide a greater voice for residents and refocus the sector on its social mission."

Councillor James Jamieson, Local Government Association Chairman, said: "Councils want all residents, regardless of tenure, to have the security

of a safe and well-maintained home which they are proud to live in. It is really important that the voice of all social housing residents is heard, and councils are supportive of measures which improve standards and empower residents.

This will give them confidence in ensuring that action can be taken to improve living conditions, where it is required."

The Charter will make landlords more accountable for the services they deliver, including access to a new information scheme for residents of housing associations and introducing a set of resident satisfaction measures that landlords will have to report against.

It has been created to ensure all social housing residents are treated with respect and dignity and sets out what every resident should expect from their landlord:

- 1 To be safe in your home.
- 2 To know how your landlord is performing.
- 3 To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly.
- 4 To be treated with respect.
- 5 To have your voice heard by your landlord.
- 6 To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in.
- 7 To be supported to take your first step to ownership.

This comes as Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government figures show that 59 per cent of issues raised by social housing residents do not make it through as an official complaint to the landlord, despite the resident being unhappy with the initial response received – with 35 per cent of residents listing concerns around retaliation by landlords and neighbours as a reason for not raising an issue.

Social landlords' repairs spending up by half in late 2020

Spending on repairs and maintenance by the largest 200 housing associations in England rose by 50 per cent in the last quarter of 2020.

The Regulator of Social Housing's quarterly survey for October to December 2020, revealed that registered providers in England spent £455m on capitalised repairs and maintenance over the period, which was close to pre-pandemic levels.

Despite this being a big rise on the £299m spent in the previous quarter, the figure was 24 per cent lower than was forecast, as the sector reported continuing delays due of lockdown restrictions. Repairs work had been forced to stop earlier in the

year as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

The quarterly survey provides a financial health check on England's housing association sector. It is based on information provided by 214 landlords, all owning or managing more than 1,000 homes.

Housing associations financial forecasts show they expect performance and plans to return to normal levels over the next 12 months, but the regulator warned this could be impacted if the Government's roadmap out of the pandemic is delayed.

Losses from rent arrears and voids "remained stable", the regulator said, although they are still

affected by the economic impacts of the COVID pandemic. Rent collection rates are matching normal seasonal trends, with the sector having "strong" underlying cashflow performance.

Will Perry, the regulator's director of strategy said: "The social housing sector continues to show financial strength and forecasts increased spend on maintenance and investment over the next 12 months. The continuing challenges caused by the coronavirus pandemic reinforce the need for providers to manage risk effectively and ensure they can both maintain services to tenants and plan and invest for the future."

New safety watchdog tells builders to 'get your act together'

Builders of high rise tower blocks with poor fire safety records have been warned they will be targeted for prosecutions by their new watchdog.

The new chief inspector Peter Baker said he was “determined the new building safety regime prevents anything like the Grenfell tragedy from ever happening again” and he hoped to avoid any repeat of the building safety crisis that has resulted in hundreds of thousands of leaseholders facing huge bills to fix fire safety faults.

Mr Baker said the regulator would deter builders from “dodging and weaving” safety responsibilities and he warned firms to “pull their bootstraps up” or they were risking stiff sanctions being imposed on them.

The new safety regime which is similar to that used in high risk industries, will give builders, developers and owners “risk ownership” for overall safety rather than the current system of relying on signoff by a building inspector.

The new regulator has the power to mount both civil and criminal prosecutions, which the Government hopes will act as a major incentive to the building sector to improve its practices, nearly four years on from the appalling fire at Grenfell Tower.

The new national watchdog for England will have to check projects at three key stages: planning approval, start of construction and handover. If it is not satisfied, it can stop works from proceeding. It is planning on recruiting 700 staff including fire experts and engineers to vet buildings.

The new system also takes significant building control powers away from local authorities. The Grenfell Tower inquiry heard that the building inspector at Kensington and Chelsea Council was overwhelmed with work after budget cutbacks, left him with 130 jobs on his hands at the same time as the high-rise tower was being refurbished.

“A measure of our success will be the absence of these sorts of disasters,” Baker said. “Industry needs to get on with this and anticipate what’s coming. We are not shy of taking enforcement action and we will do that from day one if necessary.”

He said the public had “lost complete confidence in the construction industry’s ability to build safe and good-quality buildings”, and he told the industry: “You need to get your act together.” He said his intent was to “give residents confidence the new regulatory regime is going to prevent this sort of issue arising again”.



Housing body introduces new professional standards

The Chartered Institute of Housing has introduced a new set of professional standards setting out the knowledge, skills and behaviour which underpin the work that housing professionals do every day.

With more than 100 years experience in learning and knowledge, the CIH has collaborated with hundreds of members, tenants and residents, housing organisations and other professional bodies to develop a set of standards that can be used by everyone working in housing, whatever their role or specialism.

The standards identify seven professional characteristics which encourage individuals to reflect on their professional development needs and identify where they can make positive changes. By using the standards, individuals can demonstrate their dedication to the sector, develop new and existing behaviours and champion the role housing professionals play in making a difference to the residents and communities they work with every day.

Gavin Smart, chief executive of CIH said: “We’re delighted to introduce this first phase of our professionalism work, the CIH professional standards. We want every housing professional to be recognised for their knowledge, behaviours, resilience and dedication to the sector.

“I believe that by applying the characteristics and standards, the housing profession will gain a higher degree of trust and credibility. It’s from this position of trust that we can best achieve our purpose – to create a future in which everyone has a place to call home.” The seven characteristics are as follows:

- **Integrity:** A housing professional has a clear understanding of their values and acts in accordance with them – they will do the right thing, for the right reasons, based on the best evidence and without partiality.

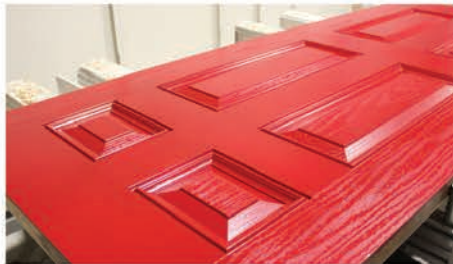
- **Inclusive:** A housing professional acts transparently and fairly; builds good relationships; and works collaboratively with partners, customers and communities to achieve better outcomes.
- **Ethical:** A housing professional acts fairly and makes choices and decisions by applying principles and values consistently. They understand the impact that poor decisions can have both on people’s lives and the reputation of their organisation and they challenge unethical practice in a fair and considered way.
- **Knowledgeable:** A housing professional has relevant and up-to-date practical and specialist knowledge as required by their job role, understands the bigger picture and has a passion for continuous learning.
- **Skilled:** A housing professional equips themselves with the relevant skills to deliver effective services to tenants, customers, colleagues and partners.
- **Advocate:** A housing professional acts as an ambassador for the wider housing sector and an advocate for the housing profession.
- **Leadership:** Housing professionals at all levels should demonstrate leadership, be forward-thinking and create opportunities. They find solutions to improve outcomes for their organisation, tenants and communities and demonstrate their ability to adapt to the latest ideas, situations and change.

In the coming months, the CIH will introduce new tools and materials that work alongside the professional standards to further support individuals and organisations on their professionalism journey. This will include a self-assessment function to score against each of the standards, exciting new training and development content and evolving materials to boost housing professionals’ knowledge and skills.



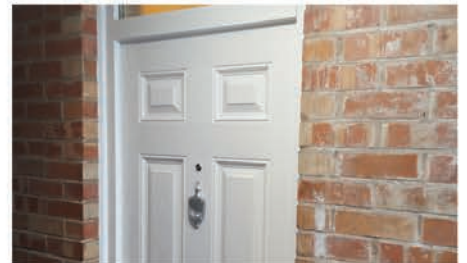
WWW.THEFIREDOOR.CO.UK

The Ultimate
Fire Safety Door.



Backed up
by extensive testing.

Astraseal are the first UK manufacturer to be
awarded third-party certification under the
new BM Trada Scheme STD170.



SAFE. RELIABLE. QUALITY ASSURED.

Fire Doors by Astraseal give peace of mind
as standard.

Visit our BRAND NEW WEBSITE today and discover
everything you need to know about
Fire Doors by Astraseal.



Unlimited fines for those who breach new fire safety regulations

Building owners could face unlimited fines as tough new measures are brought in to strengthen fire safety rules for the nation's housing nearly four years after the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the Home Office has announced.

As part of the Government's response to ensure people are safe in their own homes, the limitless fines will be handed out to anyone caught obstructing or impersonating a fire inspector, as well as to those who breach fire safety regulations under the Fire Safety Order.

The new measures were announced as part of the Government's response to the recent Fire Safety consultation exercise, which will come into force as part of the legislation package in the Building Safety Bill.

The measures will amend the Fire Safety Order and will include a requirement for fire risk assessments to be recorded for each building and improve how fire safety information is handed over throughout the lifetime of a building.

The Home Office has also announced a cash boost of £10 million for Fire and Rescue Authorities across England, on top of the £6 million already announced in the Fire Covid-19 Contingency Fund. This will help with additional tasks related to managing the pandemic – such as driving ambulances and assisting at testing and vaccination centres.

Making the announcement Fire Minister Lord Greenhalgh said: "Everyone should be safe in the buildings where they live, stay or work. Our new measures will improve fire safety and help save lives, but will also take firm action against those who fail in their duty to keep people safe."

SAFER BUILDINGS A PRIORITY

Roy Wilsher, National Fire Chiefs Council Chair, said: "We welcome the Government's response to its own fire safety consultation and the continued investment in fire and rescue services protection work. Ultimately, we want to see safer buildings for residents and are committed to working constructively with the Home Office and other partners on the Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations and other key fire safety policy areas." According to the Home Office, the new measures will:

- improve the quality of fire risk assessments and competence of those who complete them;
- ensure vital fire safety information is preserved over the lifespan of all regulated buildings;
- improve co-operation and co-ordination among people responsible for fire safety and making it easier to identify who they are;
- strengthen enforcement action, with anyone impersonating or obstructing a fire inspector facing unlimited fines;



"We welcome the Government's response to its own fire safety consultation and the continued investment in fire and rescue services protection work. Ultimately, we want to see safer buildings for residents and are committed to working constructively with the Home Office and other partners on the Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations and other key fire safety policy areas."

Roy Wilsher, National Fire Chiefs Council Chair

- strengthen guidance issued under the Fire Safety Order so that failure to follow it may be considered in court proceedings as evidence of a breach or of compliance;
- improve the engagement between Building Control Bodies and Fire Authorities in reviewing plans for building work; and
- require all new flats above 11 metres tall to install premises information boxes.

The Fire Safety Consultation took place last year to inform Government work on improving fire safety. The Government received feedback from over 250 stakeholders with an interest in building and fire safety, including residents, Responsible Persons and enforcing authorities, which have been used in formulating the new measures in response.

The Government intends to launch a further consultation on personal emergency evacuation plans this spring to seek additional views on implementing the relevant Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations.

The Home Office intends, subject to the Fire Safety Bill receiving Royal Assent, to lay regulations before the second anniversary of the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 1 Report which will deliver on the Inquiry's recommendations.

The Fire Safety Bill clarifies that the scope of the Fire Safety Order (FSO) and changes to the FSO outline above will be delivered through it. The Building Safety Bill will create the first national Building Safety Regulator and overhaul the way buildings in scope of the new regime are designed, built and managed when occupied.

We work harder to make your work easier.

Our range of mixer showers combine our patented technology with further safety features to meet the needs of specific markets and end-users.

All our products are tested and approved.



To discuss your next project, contact the Mira specification team at estimating@mirashowers.com, quoting **HMMMIXERS**.

www.mirashowers.co.uk

mira
SHOWERS

Grenfell Tower fire was predicted a decade beforehand

The Grenfell inquiry has heard chilling evidence that the company who made the highly flammable cladding panels knew about the dangers they posed at least ten years before the tragedy struck and had even warned another customer against using the panels on safety grounds.

The inquiry heard that Gerard Sonntag, a marketing manager from Arconic attended a presentation on fire safety in Norway in 2007, after which he sent an internal memo suggesting the company should stop selling the flammable aluminium composite material (ACM) version of its cladding panels.

These are the same type of panels that were subsequently used on the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower in 2014 and have been directly implicated in the rapid spread of the fire that killed 72 people.

Attendees at the presentation were shown pictures of a fire in Doha, Qatar, which developed quickly in the cladding system. In his memo sent after the presentation, Mr Sonntag said attendees at the event were asked: "What will happen if only one building made out of polyethylene (PE) is on fire and kills 60 to 70 persons."

His memo also went on to ask what the responsibility of the cladding supplier would be in that situation. Mr Sonntag recommended the company stopped selling the PE version of the cladding in favour of a fire-retardant (FR) type. He also said Arconic should cut its production costs so that the FR version could be produced at the same price as the cheaper PE version.

After the Dubai hotel fire involving PE panels, a senior Arconic employee emailed colleagues saying: "I hope that PE will be gradually excluded from facade cladding", but the company continued to manufacture and sell it

While Arconic admits making the raw materials for cladding systems, it has claimed it cannot be held responsible for the ways they have been used. It has also failed to disclose whether Mr Sonntag's recommendations were fully discussed within the company.

Senior representatives from Arconic are refusing to attend the inquiry to answer questions, so they have been 'empty chaired' with Richard Millett, senior counsel for the inquiry, revealing evidence from documents and reading aloud the questions they would have put to senior Arconic employees.

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION

Reading from internal company documents obtained by investigators, Mr Millett said that the company's marketing manager had been "very impressed" by a presentation on fire safety which he attended in 2007.

Millett also showed that in June 2011, Arconic warned a Spanish customer not to use its PE panels because they achieved the low fire performance rating E, which the customer remarked was "close to spontaneous combustion". But in 2014, Arconic sold the same panels to the Grenfell project on the

basis of a UK fire performance certificate that suggested the materials were rated B.

Millett showed that, in the months after April 2015, when Arconic processed a purchase order selling the PE panels for Grenfell, executives shared technical reports about 10 high-rise fires in different parts of the world using similar cladding panels, warning of the risks. The locations included Australia, Saudi Arabia, Dubai and France.

After the Dubai hotel fire involving PE panels, a senior Arconic employee emailed colleagues saying: "I hope that PE will be gradually excluded from facade cladding", but the company continued to manufacture and sell it.

Later that month there was another fire in the Wolleck tower in France, only 10 metres from a building clad in Reynobond PE. Claude Wehrle, technical chief at Arconic, told colleagues they were "very lucky" the wind had not changed direction and spread the fire.

"We really need to stop proposing PE in architecture! We are in the 'know', and I think it is up to us to be proactive ... AT LAST" Grenfell Tower caught fire 17 months later.

Fire barrier installation work on Grenfell strongly criticised by its maker

The quality of work done installing fire barriers on Grenfell Tower was heavily criticised by the manufacturer at the public inquiry, with senior staff saying it was among the worst they had ever seen.

Christopher Mort, technical officer for fire and facades manager, Ricky Kay at cavity barrier manufacturer Siderise, did not hold back in pointing the finger when giving evidence at the inquiry. They said on-site inspections of the work should have resulted in the barriers being removed and replaced with correctly fitted material.

Mr Mort had inspected the tower a year after the fire and said he found examples of areas where cavity barriers should have been with no holes drilled for fixing, leading him to conclude they had "not been installed at all" or fixed to the wall with silicone instead of a bracket.

He also found gaps of up to 140mm, well in excess of the 25mm which the barriers were designed to close, meaning they would have been unable to prevent the spread of smoke and flame in the cavity.

Vertical barriers were also installed incorrectly, with the bracket meant to hold them piercing the barrier and gaps left where there should not have been any, which would have allowed "fire, flame and smoke to travel behind the cladding".

The barriers were installed by Osborne Berry, with their workmanship inspected by site managers from cladding firm Harley, lead contractor Rydon, a clerk of works engaged by Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (KCTMO) and a building control inspector from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Mr Mort also highlighted mistakes in the design drawings for the tower's new windows, which showed a "weak link for fire".

While the cavity barriers were not the primary cause of the fire spreading across the cladding panels, they did fail to stop hidden fires from spreading through the gap between cladding panels and the insulation. The small gap included in them (to allow moisture to drain and evaporate) failed to close in the fire due to flaws in their fitting.

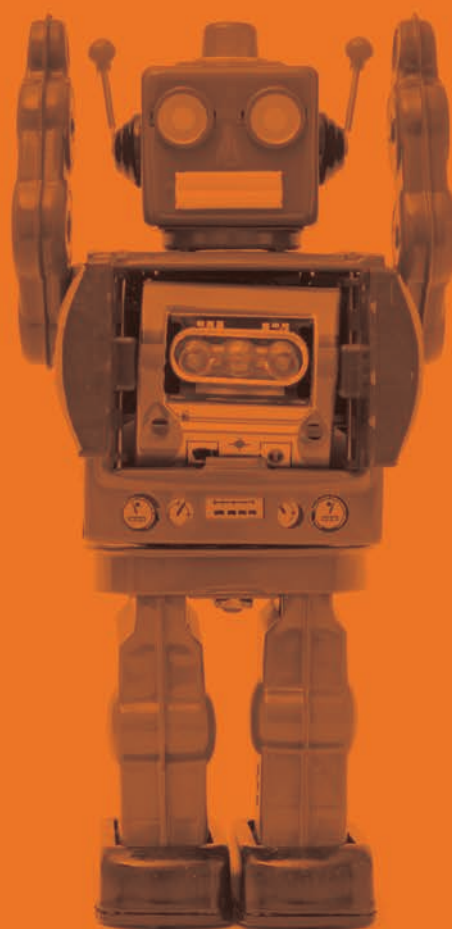
Mr Mort also highlighted mistakes in the design drawings for the tower's new windows, which showed a "weak link for fire". Mr Kay said Siderise had offered an inspection service as an optional extra but this was declined. They both criticised the high levels of non-conformance in the fitting and inspection work.



#1 FOR TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Industry research found
LABC Warranty offers the highest
levels of technical support across
the structural warranty market.

@labc_warranty | labcwarranty.co.uk



Independent research conducted in 2020 using a sample
of customers from the leading warranty providers.

LABC Warranty, a brand of MD Insurance Services Ltd. MD Insurance Services is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Housing Ombudsman starts publishing investigation reports on individual cases

The Ombudsman has started publishing all decisions on cases it has investigated and will continue to do so every fortnight, as part of a major step in increasing transparency of its work and of the social housing sector.

Publishing outcomes like this will provide an ever-expanding resource to promote learning across the sector and demonstrate the difference complaints can make for individual residents and be of wider benefit.

The first cases published highlight the wide range of issues considered, including Right to Buy, moving home, repairs and anti-social behaviour, as well as the type of outcomes following investigations. The landlord in each case is identified.

Highlights of the first group of decisions to be published are:

- A finding of maladministration (service failure) where Metropolitan Housing Trust failed to do enough or act quickly enough to address the anti-social behaviour issues reported, including noise nuisance (201905797).
- A Notting Hill Genesis case about the accuracy of information provided to a resident concerning their Right to Buy where an agreed settlement of £500 compensation was reached through a mediation process (201809422).
- A Stockport Homes case where no evidence was found that the landlord was required to reimburse a resident for improvements at a previous property and any alterations needed at the new property should be determined by an occupational therapy assessment (202002678).
- A finding of reasonable redress in a London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham case about repairs where the landlord took steps to acknowledge its failures in relation to delays and offered satisfactory compensation (202003176).
- A complaint about an application to move property where no maladministration was found



in how Thirteen Housing dealt with the resident's application but service failure was found in how it handled her complaint due to delayed responses and poor record keeping (201910486).

Richard Blakeway, Housing Ombudsman, said: "This is a crucial step towards greater transparency, accountability and demonstrating the difference complaints can make. The first cases published show the wide range of issues we handle, and the different outcomes we reach, investigating in an independent, fair and impartial way.

"Our investigations are a critical tool for learning. Our casebook provides essential knowledge, helping landlords to improve performance and services. I would encourage landlord staff – whether a board member or frontline staff – and anyone who cares

about achieving excellence to regularly consult our casebook to develop their organisation and improve the experiences of residents. The publication of our investigations is also important to help residents to understand our work and see the decisions we make about their landlord."

See all decisions published

This initial group of decisions provide lessons for service improvement, particularly in the way landlords deal with cases of anti-social behaviour, as well as highlighting a number of common complaint handling issues including poor record keeping, delays in responding and the lack of clear and timely communication. This first set of decisions to be published were issued in early December 2020 as they are published three months after the decision date.

Landlord apologises after window falls from fifth-floor flat

One of the country's largest social landlords has issued an apology after a window fell from the fifth floor of one of its blocks of flats in north London, landing on the patio of a ground-floor flat below.

Following the incident residents at the block in Bourne Place, South Kilburn, Brent, were advised to keep their windows shut while their landlord (L&Q) "urgently" carried out a full inspection.

Although no-one was hurt by the falling window, a spokesperson for L&Q said it was a shocking and worrying incident. They added that the association's surveyors assessed there was "no further immediate risk".

The spokesperson for L&Q said: "The safety of residents is our number-one priority, and we are very sorry for the concern this has caused. Our surveying team attended the site

immediately to make the window safe and begin a thorough investigation into why and how this happened.

"We were able to check the windows in the homes where we were able to gain access. Our surveyors have assessed that there is no further immediate risk but advised residents to keep windows shut while we urgently complete a full inspection."

DECORUS

for sage

Property management
software built with
you in mind.

Property Management
Software for Landlords,
Letting Agents &
Property Managers.

Suitable for:

- Residential lets
- Commercial lets
- Student housing
- Social housing
- Storage containers

Get in touch

www.decorus-pms.com

info@decorus-pms.com

0114 2307305

Updated for
Sage 2021
(v27)



Ombudsman finds case of severe maladministration against London council

The London Borough of Newham has been ordered to pay £800 in compensation to one of its tenants and provide training to staff in complaint handling following an investigation by the Housing Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman found the council took an excessively long time to deal with a complaint from Mr G about repairs following a waterleak and failed to apologise or offer appropriate compensation.

This is the second finding of severe maladministration against Newham Council by the Ombudsman, who said the delay was unreasonable for a relatively straightforward complaint.

Following a leak from a flat above, Newham Council temporarily moved the tenant into accommodation elsewhere. The tenant contacted the council several times to get the repairs carried out but was unable to get through.

Mr G then called the council's call centre and said he was told that he could conduct the work himself, which he did and subsequently requested reimbursement of nearly £2,300. The tenant complained after receiving no response from the council.

The tenant said he then had to pursue his complaint for more than 18 months before getting a final response, during which time the Ombudsman also contacted the council on at least seven occasions asking it to respond.

The council said it would not have advised Mr G to carry out the work himself, but telephone recordings were only retained for six months and



The Ombudsman found the council took an excessively long time to deal with a complaint from Mr G about repairs following a waterleak and failed to apologise or offer appropriate compensation

therefore the opportunity to review the call was lost.

The Ombudsman found the council had no specific policy on repairs, so was unable to determine who had responsibility for carrying out the repair and could not order the council to recompense the resident.

Richard Blakeway, the Housing Ombudsman, said: "The council took an excessively long time to respond to the formal complaint, failed to keep the resident informed, provide explanations for the delays or contact the resident despite numerous requests from this service. It also failed to check its

records for the content of the phone call during the stage one complaint despite having ample opportunity, which was unacceptable."

As well as ordering the council to compensate the tenant and provide training to its staff, the Ombudsman recommended the council produce a repairs policy that outlines the responsibilities of both parties and timescales for completing repairs. It also recommended the council produce a compensation policy to address how and when it will consider making financial redress to a complainant.

Dangerous cladding removal from tower blocks drags on

Over 100 high-rise buildings across the country still have dangerous inflammable Aluminium Composite Material cladding on them, as the fourth anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire approaches.

The total number of buildings identified with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet Building Regulations at the end of February stood at 465, an increase of four on the previous month, with the cladding status of a further 15 buildings awaiting clarification.

Of these 465 buildings, 242 have completed all remediation works (up by 26 since the start

of 2021) while works are in progress on a further 180 buildings. No remediation work has started yet on 43 buildings – 35 are privately owned high rise blocks, 7 are hotels and the remaining one is publicly owned, but is not used for residential purposes.

The rate of progress in removing ACM cladding appears to be slowest in the capital. Overall, remediation has been completed for 105 buildings in London (just 41 per cent of the ACM clad buildings identified in London), 40 buildings in Greater Manchester (55 per cent), and 97 buildings in the rest of England (70 per cent).

In its latest bulletin on progress, the MHCLG says by the end of 2021, it estimates that 85 per cent of all identified buildings will have completed remediation. Of the 68 buildings not forecast to complete remediation by the end of 2021, 38 are forecast to have removed their ACM cladding systems by the end of 2021 and a further eight are vacant.

There are approximately 10,600 to 13,000 dwellings in the 125 private sector

residential buildings that are occupied and yet to be remediated.

Remediation works for half of private sector residential buildings are being paid for by building owners or other industry funding solutions. Developers or freeholders have committed to pay for the remediation of 87 buildings and 21 were accepted under a warranty claim.

To protect leaseholders from the costs of remediation, the Private Sector Remediation Fund made £200 million of funding available to ensure buildings lacking a funding solution could be quickly remediated. MHCLG is working closely with those responsible for the remediation of the remaining six buildings without a funding solution in place to progress remediation and protect leaseholders from costs.

Ironically private high-rise blocks that have received funding from the Government's cladding remediation fund appear to be far less likely to have completed work than those that received no grant, according to the analysis of data released by the Housing Ministry.



A smoke vent and an access hatch? Your two solutions in one



That hatch with the ladder running up to it? Yes, it's a Bilco smoke vent.

You may know it as one of the best smoke vents on the market; CE-marked, self-actuating in less than a minute, excellent thermal properties, and so on. But simply add a fixed ladder with the optional LadderUp® Safety Post, and you also have a safe exit out onto the roof.

So the next time you specify a smoke vent, make sure it's a Bilco.



Surrey council left 83-year-old tenant without heating and hot water for almost three years

The Housing Ombudsman has found Woking Borough Council guilty of severe maladministration after an elderly female resident was left with no heating or hot water for nearly three years.

In addition to the finding, the Ombudsman ordered the council to pay its tenant compensation of £6,000, offer her alternative heating, provide her with a safe way to prepare hot food and demonstrate that it has a robust plan to repair the boiler and reinstate gas to the property.

The problem began in September 2017 when the tenant, a Ms J reported having no heating or hot water supply. An engineer called at the property but could not gain access and left a card. Six weeks later the landlord forced entry to the property and capped the gas supply to make it safe.

There was no evidence of any further action by the council until September 2018 when an engineer made an annual gas service visit and placed a 'danger notice' on the boiler. In advance of this appointment the landlord tried to contact Ms J by telephone but noted it did not hold a 'phone number for her. The gas supply remained capped and there was no evidence of further action.

Ms J refused access for gas safety inspections in 2019 and 2020 and so the gas supply remained capped. In June 2019 the landlord wrote to Ms J about the gas supply and boiler and said it wanted to help resolve the issues and carry out repairs so that she had suitable facilities in her home.

In her complaint to the Ombudsman, Ms J said that her flat was very cold in the winter and she had

In addition to the finding, the Ombudsman ordered the council to pay its tenant compensation of £6,000, offer her alternative heating, provide her with a safe way to prepare hot food and demonstrate that it has a robust plan to repair the boiler and reinstate gas to the property

to wash using a kettle for hot water. She said a relative sometimes paid for her to stay in hotels so that she could be warm.

Ms J made a formal complaint to the council in early 2018. In its stage one response, the council said it had been trying to access the property to carry out repairs to the heating system and, as a result of the difficulties it had making appointments and gaining access, it was necessary to stop the gas supply to the property.

The council explained to Ms J that it was legally obliged to ensure the property was gas safe and, as it had not been possible to arrange works, it had to take this step to ensure she was safe. The council said Ms J should have been provided with temporary heaters.

After being contacted by Ms J in late 2018, the Ombudsman made several attempts with the council to escalate her complaint through its processes. Other issues relating to damp and mould and anti-social behaviour pre-dated the gas being capped. The council noted that the property had been affected by a leak and it was undertaking

action to assist with the drying process and mould wash.

The council's repairs log did not give details of this work being completed and there is no evidence of any later reports of damp or mould on the repairs log. The council closed the anti-social behaviour cases as there was insufficient evidence to keep them open.

Richard Blakeway, the Housing Ombudsman, said: "While the council may have found this case difficult due to problems accessing the resident's property, its lack of action was deeply concerning. It left an elderly, potentially vulnerable, resident in need of assistance. The council missed opportunities to put things right, only making contact when an annual gas inspection was due.

"These failings demonstrated a lack of regard to the landlord's obligations as well as a lack of concern for any health and safety risks. The lack of heating and hot water caused the resident severe distress and inconvenience. Her case reinforces our concerns about the significant impact of heating and hot water issues on residents."

Benefits freeze will increase private tenants' rent arrears

The Government's decision to freeze local housing allowances in April will inevitably drive many thousands of low-income tenants deeper into debt, increasing levels of rent arrears to unprecedented levels.

As many as half a million private sector tenants are already estimated to be well behind with their rent payments and the freezing of LHA will make it harder for them to make ends meet, particularly where their rents have increased above last year's.

It is estimated by groups such as Citizens Advice and Shelter that the LHA decision could see some tenants lose more than £1,000 a year as a result of rising rents and the benefit freeze.

Polly Neate, the chief executive of Shelter, said: "Over half of private renting households on

Universal Credit don't receive enough housing benefit to cover their rent and April's freeze will only see this chasm grow. In some places, the shortfall is already more than £100 a month."

The affected tenants have limited options to pursue – they either have to find extra money from somewhere, try to negotiate a lower rent, move to cheaper accommodation or face growing rent arrears. Due to the Covid pandemic's impact on the economy their chances of getting higher paid work do not look good, so debt levels and rent arrears are expected to spiral.

The bans on evictions (recently extended until the end of May) except in exceptional circumstances, such as domestic violence, antisocial behaviour or fraud, is also making the situation a lot

worse for private landlords who are seeing their incomes come under severe pressure.

Calls for the Government to establish financial support packages for tenants and landlords have so far been met by a stoney silence from the Treasury. This is despite emergency aid packages being available since last year in Scotland and Wales.

LHA has been capped at the level of the lowest 30 per cent of private rents in a local area. Any tenant on benefits living in a property with a higher rent has to make up the shortfall.

The Government says the LHA freeze will protect payments to tenants in areas where rents are falling. But official data shows that, in the vast majority of areas, the 30th percentile of rents has actually risen.

Be part of a radical new development in the management of structures throughout the uk

Starting a new career doesn't have to be daunting. The D.A.M.P Alliance – backed by industry leaders Cornerstone - are bringing you a unique opportunity to become a certified Property Health Specialist, providing Property MOTs for residential and commercial structures

What is the D.A.M.P Alliance?

The D.A.M.P Alliance is a UK-wide membership body that provides insight, training, education and interaction opportunities for all those involved with managing and maintaining the health of buildings.

Bringing together experienced trainers in respective trade entities, we provide a wide selection of workshops, certified training, webinars and podcasts specifically created for those working and/or managing the ongoing health of structures and ultimately, the occupants. The overall aim of the D.A.M.P Alliance is to encourage the sharing of knowledge and provide a uniform proactive approach for those seeking the highest standards with property conditions management and maintenance.

What Accreditations can I get?



Ventilation MOT

Assesses all existing measures and certifies the performance in line with occupancy levels.



Moisture MOT

Creates moisture profile of a structure confirming its health and occupancy management.



Atmospheric MOT

Periodic remote sensor monitoring of designated entities to confirm a surveyed issue.



Insulation MOT

An assessment of existing insulation effectivity and a detailed determination for proposed installation.

What training do I have to do?

Property MOT surveyor training process is undertaken by trade experts and covers a credible overview of equipment use, data interpretation and their limitations. In addition all current regulations and guidelines associated with the respective MOT are covered with yearly updates to keep abreast of legislation and regulation changes. Training days are held in one of our training centres and cover all practical and theoretical elements alongside appropriate Health & Safety and GDPR legal requirements. Each training program will be supported by a Revision course prior to the applicable Examination.

Do I need specialist equipment?

Yes. We recognise there are numerous surveying devices available designed to embrace the specific data being sought. To ensure a uniform approach ensuring all data is accurate, an approved equipment list is provided before the start of the course. Which can be purchased through Cornerstone at a discounted rate.

What do I become?

After passing the exam, you achieve Certified MOT Surveyor status, meaning you will be able to conduct appropriate MOT surveys to suit either an existing business demand or to start a new career providing certifiable surveys for a host of property industry sectors. All qualified surveyors have access to a portal where their surveys can be obtained alongside the algorithmic calibrated Certificate.

What ongoing support is there?

To ensure the continued level of expertise is upheld a number of key supporting disciplines remain available to all qualified surveyors including:

Auditing:

Metering devices require calibration and periodic assessments of data being submitted to the portal will be analysed for any prevailing anomalies.

Technical Support:

All surveyors will have access to respective SMART Knowledge embedded in the dashboard and can ask for assistance and guidance when dealing with complex cases and situations.

Guidance Documents:

Changes to a process or applicable legislation will be made available to all surveyors.

Seminars:

Periodic seminars will be held to enable updates, improvements and two-way discussions ensuring the audience retains confidence with a support mechanism designed to uphold the credibility and long-term future of the platform.



Thousands of rough sleepers to be supported with £212 million investment in new homes

Thousands more rough sleepers will be helped to rebuild their lives away from the streets as a result of a multi-million-pound investment in dedicated homes launched by the Housing Secretary.

Homes will be made available in every region of England, enabling people who sleep rough, or are at risk of sleeping rough, to be rehoused in secure, long-term accommodation. This will provide some of the most vulnerable members of society with a place to live and help them to rebuild their lives as they transition away from a life on the streets.

Through the scheme, rough sleepers will be supported by specialist staff to access the help they need, such as support for mental health or substance misuse needs, so they can move towards training and work, and finding a permanent home.

This funding is the latest stage in the largest-ever investment in longer-term accommodation for rough sleepers, with 6,000 homes pledged by the end of this Parliament as part of the Government's ambition to end rough sleeping once and for all.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is leading the drive to eliminate rough sleeping with £750 million being spent over the next year to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

Housing Secretary, Robert Jenrick said: "Since the start of the pandemic, we made it a priority to protect rough sleepers through our ongoing 'Everyone In' campaign, which has supported more than 37,000 people into long-term accommodation.

"To build on this progress we are making the biggest ever investment in longer-term accommodation for rough sleepers so they can have a secure, safe and comfortable home and rebuild their lives.

Through the scheme, rough sleepers will be supported by specialist staff to access the help they need, such as support for mental health or substance misuse needs, so they can move towards training and work, and finding a permanent home

"Councils have played an outstanding role in protecting rough sleepers throughout the pandemic and this funding is a further opportunity to work together to achieve our mission of ending rough sleeping once and for all."

THE NEW NORMAL

Eddie Hughes, Minister for Housing and Rough Sleeping said: "Looking back at an incredibly challenging 12 months, everyone who has helped protect rough sleepers, including councils, charities, housing providers and support groups, should be immensely proud of the role they have played in our internationally recognised response.

"This new funding will play a vital role in maintaining this progress, with long-term, secure homes providing a safe place to live so that rough sleepers do not have to return to our streets."

Councillor James Jamieson, Local Government Association Chairman, said: "It is vital that we build on the success of councils, government and partners in getting rough sleepers off the streets during the pandemic and make this the new normal rather than a one-off emergency response.

"This investment will help to transform the lives of people sleeping rough and ensure they get the crucial support they need and a roof above their head.

Councils stand ready to play their part in the cross-government drive to end rough sleeping altogether and make sure no-one suffers the tragedy of becoming homeless.

The Government's unprecedented 'Everyone In' initiative was launched by the Housing Secretary at the start of the pandemic to protect rough sleepers – some of the most vulnerable people in our communities – and it has so far supported 37,000 individuals, with more than 26,000 already moved on to longer-term accommodation.

Data published in February showed that rough sleeping had fallen 43 per cent since hitting its peak in 2017 – with 2,688 people estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in Autumn 2020, compared to 4,677 in 2018.

Through the first year of the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme, the Government allocated more than £150 million, as well as investing in high-quality support over the next three years, so that vulnerable people helped through the programme can maintain their tenancies and move on from rough sleeping.

Councils are invited to bid for a share of the £212 million funding for the next three years as part of a total £433 million investment in safe, long-term, stable and supported housing for rough sleepers.

Homeless and rough sleepers prioritised for COVID vaccinations

The Government has prioritised homeless people and those sleeping rough for Covid vaccines, due to higher numbers of them having undiagnosed conditions and less day to day access to health services.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock agreed that homeless people should be put in Group six, for people with underlying health conditions that place them at greater risk of Covid.

In a letter to Hancock, the SAGE advisory committee noted that people who were homeless or sleeping rough had high rates of undiagnosed comorbidities and that half of them had no access to healthcare.

Many thousands of people who are normally rough sleepers are currently in accommodation, giving "a unique opportunity to in-reach vaccination to a population that is otherwise often

unable to access basic healthcare", the letter said.

In his reply on, Hancock said he was happy for NHS England to treat homeless or rough-sleeping people alongside others in Group 6, as part of a pragmatic approach to the dosing schedule.

He later said: "We know there are heightened risks for those who sleep rough and I have accepted the advice of the independent experts to prioritise those experiencing rough sleeping or homelessness for vaccination."

Professor Wei Shen Lim, the chair of the SAGE Covid-19 programme, said: "This advice will help us to protect more people who are at greater risk, ensuring that fewer people become seriously ill or die from the virus."

THE UK'S ORIGINAL **FULLY COMPLIANT** ALUMINIUM **FIRE RESISTANT** BALCONY DECKING SOLUTION



- Fire Rated to A1 & A2fl-s1
- Aluminium construction to 6063 T6 grade
- Slip-resistant and wear-resistant
- 30-year manufacturer product warranty

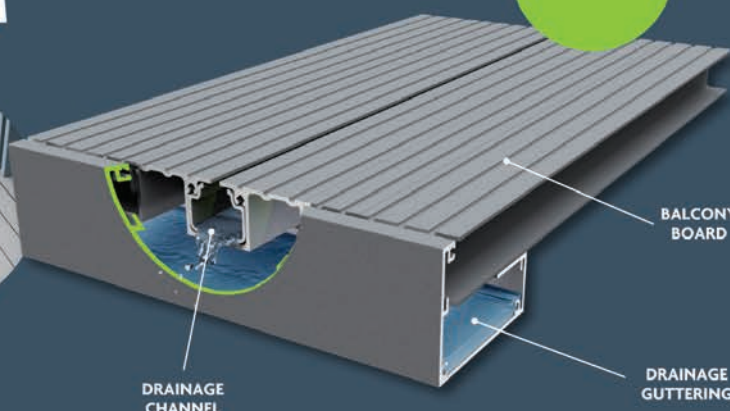
IDEAL
CHOICE TO
RESOLVE
EWS1

ALIDECK JUNIOR BALCONY BOARD

The 20mm AliDeck Junior Board is our most popular decking board, available in ridged and flat specification. Spanning up to 600mm, the cost-effective Junior Board requires less underside support than traditional decking and is non-combustible.

ALIDECK BALCONY DRAINAGE SYSTEM

This innovative drainage solution delivers positive drainage to balconies, with our Drainage Channel between the deck boards capturing and directing water to the Drainage Gutter for controlled evacuation to a specified outlet.



To find out more about the AliDeck System, call our team today!

Call: **01622 534 085**

Email: **info@alideck.co.uk**

www.alideck.co.uk

ALIDECK™
Aluminium Decking

Rogue landlord ordered to pay back nearly three quarters of a million pounds for illicit earnings on overcrowded properties

A Crown Court judge has ordered a landlord to pay back £739,263.58 in illicit earnings made from overcrowded properties in north west London. It is believed to be the largest such order for a planning breach made anywhere in the country so far this year.

The order was made against Mohammed Mehdi Ali of High Road, Willesden, following a prosecution brought by Brent Council's legal team. Mr Ali was told by the court that he would face a prison term of 5 years and 9 months if he did not pay the order in full within three months. He was also ordered to pay Brent Council £30,000.00 to cover its legal costs in the long-running case.

Judge Lana Wood made the order against Mr Ali at Harrow Crown Court. Mr Ali was found guilty of failing to comply with planning enforcement notices in April 2018 at Willesden Magistrates Court, after investigations by Brent's planning enforcement team. The case was then referred to Harrow Crown Court for confiscation proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

Detailed investigations carried out by Brent's financial investigators and Brent's planning enforcement officers revealed the extent of the number of illegal dwellings created and the illicit earnings made by illegally renting out the properties, which were owned by Mr Ali and his father. The properties were used as houses in multiple occupation and as undersized flats.

Planning enforcement officers at Brent Council discovered up to 15 people living in some of the homes including, in one property, a family of four in one room, a family of three in another and three single men in yet another. The council said the



housing, owned by Mohammed Mehdi Ali and his father, was some of the worst its officers had ever seen. It added that those renting the properties appeared to be largely from eastern Europe and Brazil.

Councillor Shama Tatler, Lead Member for Regeneration, Property and Planning, said "This is another huge win for Brent. The council will take robust action to prevent the creation of poor quality housing. This penalty sends a clear message that rogue landlords will not be allowed to get away with ignoring planning laws.

"The accommodation provided was some of the worst residential accommodation that officers have ever come across. Brent will not tolerate this type of behaviour, landlords providing such horrible conditions. Brent residents deserve better."

The prosecution follows an earlier £544,000

confiscation order against his father, Salah Mahdi Ali, in the court of appeal in 2014 that involved criminal earnings on two of the same properties. He had converted four homes into 38 flats without planning consent.

The largest part of Mohammed Mehdi Ali's illegal earnings came from a complex of flats built above and behind a minicab office, which earned him nearly £90,000 a year on average, largely from housing benefits payments, according to the council's investigators.

His father had earned hundreds of thousands of pounds on the same property before he was convicted of failing to comply with a planning enforcement order relating to its conversion into 12 flats without permission. The original 2010 crown court judgment said Salah Mahdi Ali had been living "a criminal lifestyle".

Bogus landlord is fined after years of illegal subletting

A head tenant who posed as a landlord has been hit with fines and costs totalling £9,047.50, after they illegally sub-let a flat in north west London to other tenants but left them exposed to a variety to safety and financial concerns.

Mrs Sonia Nascimento rented a converted, four-bedroom flat from a private landlord in St Paul's Avenue, Willesden from 2017, but subsequently went on to sub-let the property to other tenants. None of the other tenants had a tenancy agreement and their rental deposits were not protected in any way.

Last year one of the tenants reported Mrs

Nascimento to Brent Council's private housing services team, complaining about the lack of a tenancy agreement. A subsequent inspection of the flat discovered the property was without a House in Multiple Occupation licence, and that Mrs Nascimento, who did not live in the flat anymore, was in breach of housing management regulations.

The council issued Mrs Nascimento with a £5,000 Civil Penalty Notice but she refused to pay it, so the council took her to court. Willesden Magistrates Court found her guilty of failing to take measures to protect the occupiers of the HMO from injury. The magistrates heard a lack

of smoke alarms and a fire safety system put all the flat's occupants in danger, including a four-month-old baby.

Councillor Eleanor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Housing and Welfare Reform, said: "Most landlords recognise the important responsibilities that come with it. Landlords who fail to licence their properties or who are not following housing management regulations are breaking the law. Safety of tenants is our priority and we encourage anyone who suspect that their landlord may be acting outside the law to report their concerns to us."

Rough sleeping in the West Midlands at its lowest since 2010

Latest annual figures show a 62 per cent reduction in the number of people sleeping rough across the West Midlands Combined Authority area as the numbers fell from 115 in 2019 to just 44 in 2020.

Work undertaken by local authorities and partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors across the region throughout the unprecedented challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic has ensured greater numbers of people who are rough sleeping or at risk of homelessness, have been protected and supported into accommodation.

Andy Street, the Mayor of the West Midlands, said: "I am delighted that we have seen another significant reduction in the number of rough sleepers across the West Midlands, which shows what can be achieved through collaborative working. From local councils and the West Midlands Combined Authority, to homelessness charities and Government, we would not have been able to help the number of rough sleepers we have without the whole region working in partnership. To go from nearly 170 rough sleepers in 2018 to less than 45 in 2020 is a phenomenal achievement.

"Clearly the Everyone In initiative throughout the Coronavirus pandemic has had a major impact in helping rough sleepers across the West Midlands, but we would not have been able to make the reductions we have without the hard work and dedication of local authorities and their outreach teams, as well as pioneering schemes such as Housing First – which has now helped more than 350 people into permanent accommodation with wrap-around support – and Change into Action.

"But however well the region may have done over the last two years, it is far from job done. The Government's commitment to end rough sleeping by 2024 is fast approaching and we are still seeing a flow of new people coming onto the streets.

"As a region we remain determined to continue to tackle rough sleeping, but we must be supported by continued Government funding to ensure we can build on the work we have done in recent years."

Continued help for people sleeping rough has been provided and supported by funding which the region has attracted from the Government including £2.88m of money from the Rough Sleeping Initiative to provide local support to those living on the streets. And an additional £8.97m of funding came through initiatives such as the Next Steps Accommodation Programme, Protect Programme and Protect Plus Programme which aim to build on earlier work in the pandemic to provide longer-term accommodation for former rough sleepers.



It's good to stand out from the rest

The Ultimate Choice



Introducing the new fan in social housing

Titon Ultimate® dMEV

The new high performing Titon Ultimate® dMEV is an ultra quiet low profile fan, which is suitable for retrofit or refurbishment projects. One fan fits all and is ideal for bathrooms, kitchens and utility room applications.

It's the perfect solution for landlords who want to make sure that mould and condensation are not a constant problem. The Titon Ultimate® dMEV is easy to maintain, simple to monitor using its unique data logging facility and can be commissioned in minutes.

- The best dMEV performing fan on the market
- Unit running time and average RH Data logging available
- 4 button and LED display to allow for simple control
- Quick and easy commissioning and set up
- Extremely low running costs
- 3 configurable speed options (Trickle, Boost & High Boost)
- Constant flow to guarantee ventilation performance
- Low specific fan power down to 0.11 W/l/s
- Meets stringent 20 Pa back pressure requirement
- Quiet running, only 10 dB(A) at 3m, low speed
- Low profile aesthetic circular design
- High performance brushless DC motor
- Unique high performance impeller and guide vane design
- PCDB listed for inclusion within SAP



#UltimateChoice
#Ventilation
#dMEV
#BeatingMould
#FightingCondensation
#EasyInstall
#Bathrooms
#Kitchens

www.titon.com/ultimate

Titon
ventilation systems



H
HECKMONDWIKE
MANUFACTURERS OF FIBRE BONDED CARPETS

Iron Duke

Hobnail

**THINK APARTMENTS.
THINK HECKMONDWIKE.**

Transform apartments with our Iron Duke and Hobnail heavy contract carpet ranges. Manufactured in the UK, they are proven to deliver outstanding performance in residential communal areas.

**01924 406 161 | sales@heckmondwike-fb.co.uk
www.heckmondwike-fb.co.uk**

Image by Lyndon Douglas
Architectural Photography



**MULTI-AWARD WINNING ALL-IN-ONE
COMPACT SERVICE UNIT**

PKOM⁴
OPICHLER

*all you need,
is the air that you
breathe...*

- heat recovery ventilation
- heating
- cooling
- hot water
- energy efficient COP: 6.8
- ideal for super-insulated & airtight flats or townhouses

**send us floorplans for a quote
info@totalhome.co.uk
0345 260 0123 | totalhome.co.uk**

  proud to be part of  

INDUSTRY SURVEY

Exploring current thinking in remote management and monitoring

The physical access, management and monitoring of properties has always been a challenge for housing professionals.

Whether it is landlords wishing to enter their properties to enact vital maintenance, or for social housing professionals looking to check in on their vulnerable tenants, gaining physical access often causes inconvenience to the tenant and visitor.

The issues have been highlighted during the Covid-19 Pandemic, where physical access has hit an all time low. Tenants have been fearful of letting anyone at all inside their residence, worried about the spread of germs, and many housing professionals have been kept away from their offices during the UK's multiple lockdowns.

While physical access was once a necessity to manage or monitor a rental property however, an array of technologies have emerged to combat this, and they can allow landlords and housing providers to achieve many of the same tasks remotely and even automatically across the internet.

From smart electricity meters and remote fire, smoke and carbon monoxide alerts, to video conferencing and online tenant communication, such technologies can allow for virtual access to a property, its inhabitants, and its appliances, and even instant monitoring data on an appliance's functionalities and automated responses and actions as a result.

Remote technologies are wide ranging, and their benefits are similarly so. These include preventative intervention, catching issues before they are left to fester unreported; energy and cost efficiency, eliminating wasteful visits and identifying inefficient offenders; ease of servicing, with many physical visits now made redundant; the identification and monitoring of vulnerable tenants, who need more care than ever; the ease and efficiency of data gathering and worker convenience.

While these benefits are now being recognised however, and the technologies are being adopted and their use increasing, there are still many in the industry who push back against its implementation.

This reticence can come from a number of sources. Unwilling tenants can cause obvious issues, there are often concerns around regulation and legal uncertainties, a lack of a 'human touch' is often cited, and some landlords simply believe the technologies to cost too much at present.

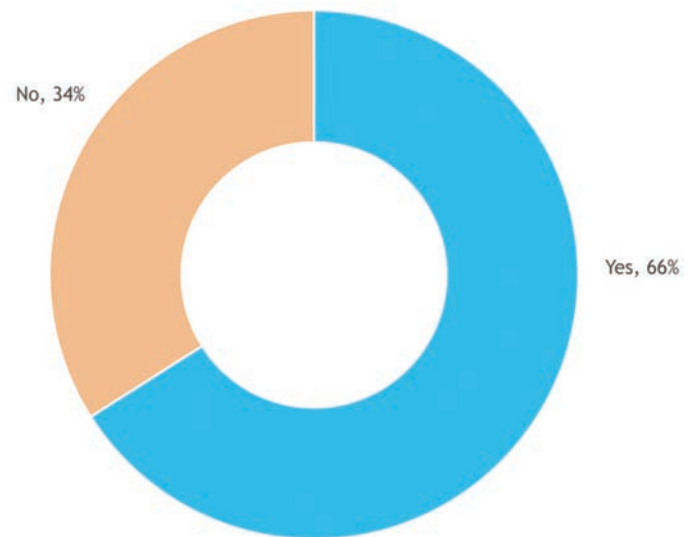
Through a survey of 166 housing professionals from across the UK, conducted by Housing, Management & Maintenance and supported by researchers at Edge Insight, it has been found that 91 per cent of housing professionals believe that remote technologies will be widespread in the next 10 years, and 66 per cent have already adopted them to some degree.

This White Paper will delve deeper into some of these technologies, their benefits and the issues they can solve, as well as attempt to ascertain what barriers are preventing the 34 per cent of respondents from adopting them, and what has prevented the wider adoption of its variants.

INTRODUCTION

WHAT REMOTE ACCESS IS

Remote access, management and monitoring in housing describes a range of technologies that allow housing professionals and tenants to perform a number



"Do you currently use any form of remote access, management or monitoring?"

of their normal functions - such as enter a home, communicate with one another, send documents back and forth, or check on the performance of boilers and fire alarms - over the internet, as opposed to the once essential need for a human on site.

Housing professionals can now remotely monitor appliances, security systems and fire, smoke and carbon monoxide alerts, they can work from home and still access all the relevant data online, they can video conference with colleagues and clients, and tenants can do the same, submitting forms online on their computer or phone, and remotely control their heating, cooling and lighting systems.

HOW IT GOT STARTED

A few years ago it seemed like science fiction - or at least exclusive to the rich and famous - that a home's lights could be controlled by voice, or its heating controlled remotely while holidaying on the other side of the globe, an 'internet of things' (IOT) connecting every device in a home to the internet and allowing them to communicate digitally.

These technologies are now becoming more commonplace in the home however, and the potential for their applications in social and rental housing are almost limitless.

Housing providers are now able to manage their entire stocks remotely and automatically, eliminating the requirement to gain physical access almost entirely, with all device data being transmitted wirelessly in real time via a secure cloud network.

THE TECHNOLOGY AS IT STANDS TODAY

It wasn't until the early 90s that the social housing sector even began to adopt computing technology in any serious way, and this late adoption directly reflects its approach to remote technologies.

Even now in 2021, 33 per cent of our respondents reported that they don't currently use any form of remote access, management or monitoring at all, 67 per cent of those have no plans to do so in the future, and many of those who do largely adopted such technologies due to the Pandemic and the need to work from home.

Times are changing, however. When asked when they believed remote access will be widespread in housing, only 4 per cent said it was never likely to catch on, 4 per cent that it would take over 10 years, 10 per cent in the next 10 years, 38 per cent in the next 5, 22 per cent in the next 2 years, and 22 per cent in the next year.

It is therefore clear that the adoption of this technology is inevitable in the near future, and as such housing professionals who are behind here must catch up.

PROBLEM ASSESSMENT

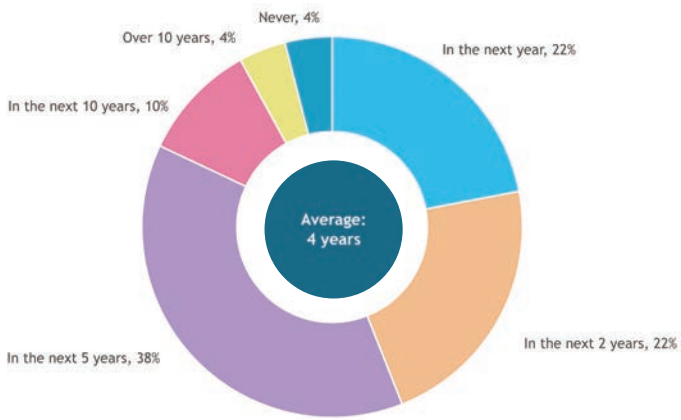
WHY IS THE TECHNOLOGY NECESSARY?

With overheads high enough across housing, there is not always the budget to adopt technologies simply because they are better than their predecessor.

There are however many important and even life-threatening issues in UK housing to which these remote technologies can directly address, and in many cases it is now becoming more cost-effective to use them than to not.

The reasons why people make the move to remote technologies are varied. When asked why they adopted the technology, 74 per cent of respondents who already use remote technologies reported that the Covid-19 Pandemic first prompted them to start. An even greater majority of all respondents, 80 per cent, said that they foresee the Pandemic increasing the need for remote practices.

One of the next highest reasons for adoption was tenant safety, at 28 per cent, alongside the related identification of vulnerable tenants at 12 per cent, and the ageing of tenants at 7 per cent. Age UK has predicted that the number of those aged 65 and over will rise to over 16 million by 2033 (up 40 per cent), so an increase in vulnerable tenants is inevitable in the years to come, meaning any technologies with the capability to address this will prove essential.



"When (if ever) do you believe remote access, management and monitoring in general will be widespread across the housing sector?"
Base: All answering (135)

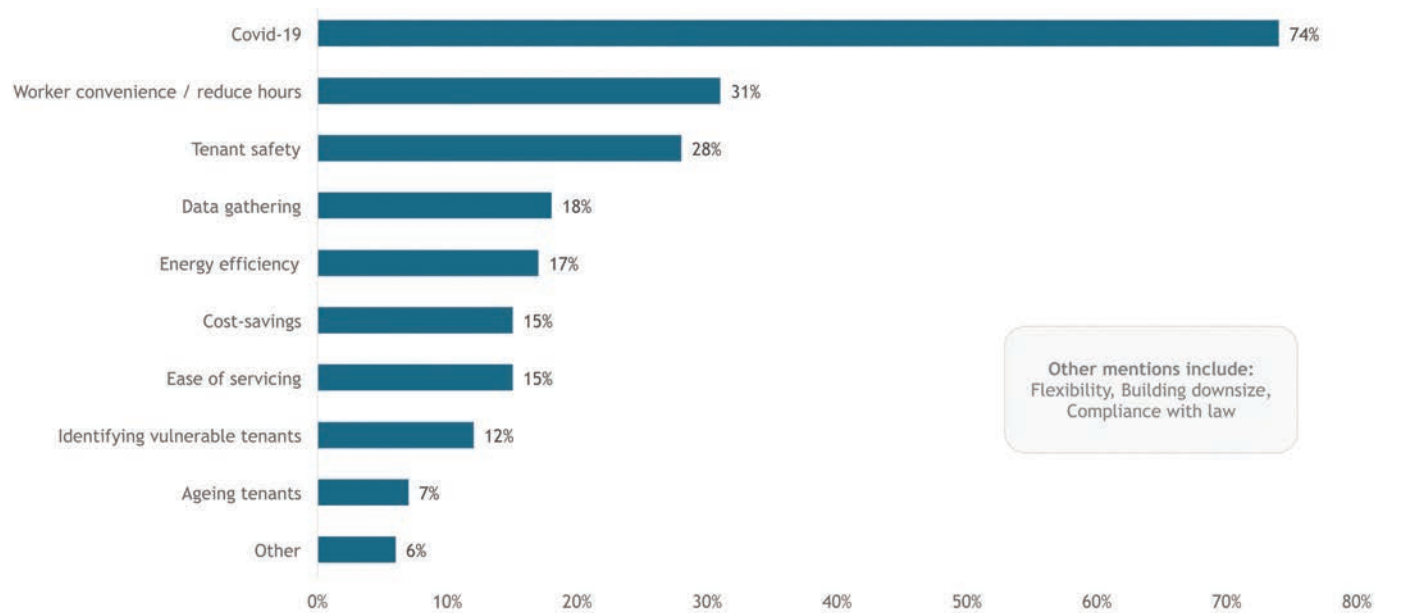
Matters of efficiency and convenience took up much of the rest of the responses. 31 per cent adopted the technology for worker convenience and reduced hours, 15 per cent for ease of servicing, 18 per cent adopted the technology to increase the ease and efficiency of data gathering, 15 per cent to save costs, and 17 per cent to increase the energy efficiency of their housing stock.

WHAT'S STOPPING ITS ADOPTION?

Despite all the issues the technology is able to address, its adoption is not entirely widespread across the sector as yet. Our research has uncovered multiple reasons behind this.

For those that don't currently use such technologies, when asked why - conversely to its cost-saving potential indicated in the earlier question - it was the initial cost that proved to be the biggest issue for respondents, at 29 per cent.

Uncertainties of performance covered a lot of the barriers respondents' worried about, with 7 per cent concerned about the technology's reliability, and 7 per cent unsure of the regulatory and legal issues around the installation and use of such technologies. Notably, no respondents cited security as a reason they



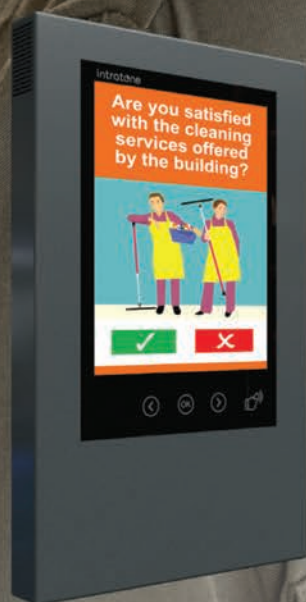
"What prompted you to start using these forms of remote access, management or monitoring?"
Base: All who currently use remote access, management or monitoring systems (all answering) (98)

With Intratone's digital noticeboards, I can get tenants' opinions and inform them of important building news without visiting the site.

NICOLA, HOUSING MANAGER
MACCLESFIELD

DRIVE THE conversation

with Intratone's
Interactive Digital Noticeboard



GSM technology

Durable / vandal resistant

Remotely managed

Find out more at

intratone.uk.com

intratone



Solve your
heating issues
with just **one**
phone call

MELCloud.com

MELConsole

Remote Maintenance & Technical Support >

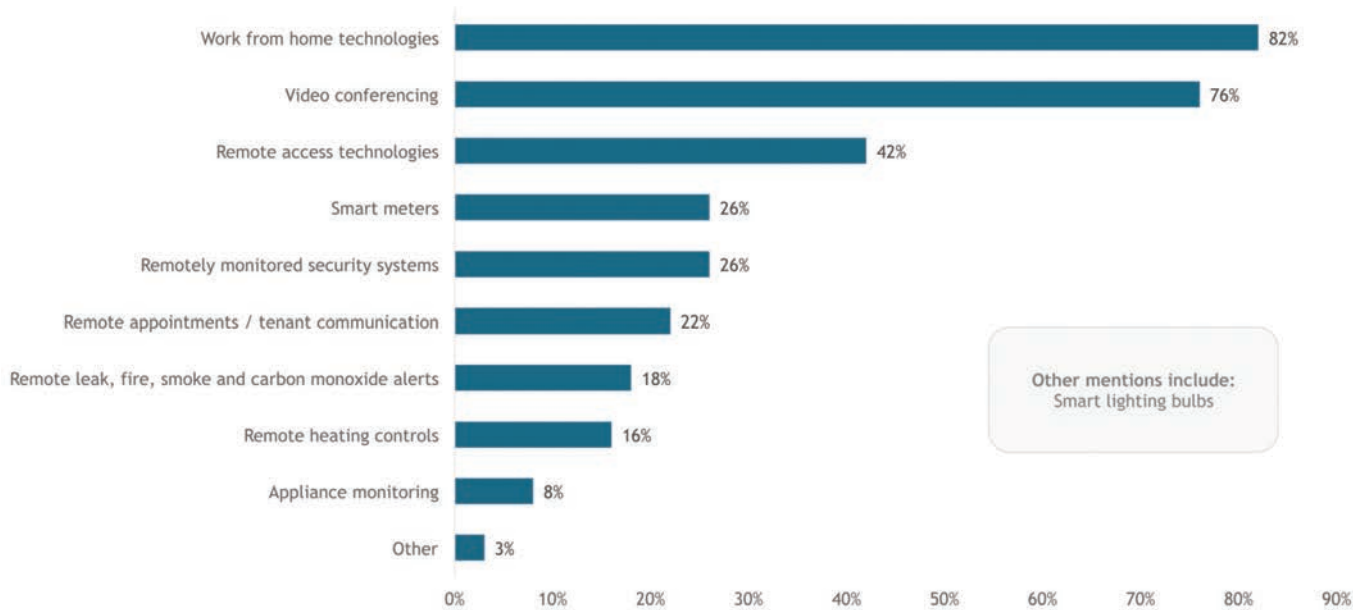
MELConsole from Mitsubishi Electric allows occupiers of an Ecodan Heating system with the help of our MELCloud remote monitoring app to interrogate and often fix heating issues **without needing a visit from an engineer.**

One phone call to our Technical Helpdesk provides instant remote access to full monitoring and fault diagnostics, meaning that issues with your **residents** heating can often be resolved over the phone. MELConsole is a service of the MELCloud App, the cloud-based solution for controlling Ecodan heating systems, either locally or remotely.



heating@meuk.mee.com

Ecodan.co.uk



“Which of the following forms of remote access, management or monitoring systems do you currently use?”
Base: All who currently use remote access, management or monitoring systems (all answering) (101)

43 per cent of all respondents said that they believed cost savings were one of the biggest benefits of the technology

When monitoring energy usage and temperature levels in a home, whether through a human or an automated computer algorithm, housing providers can far more easily identify and support vulnerable tenants who may be struggling with fuel poverty, for example.

While only 22 per cent of respondents said that the identification of vulnerable tenants was one of the biggest benefits of remote technologies, 71 per cent agreed that remote technologies can positively impact the health and safety of vulnerable tenants.

When commenting on how remote technologies have impacted the health and safety of tenants in their work, respondents cited a “sense of security and wellbeing” being provided, and that it has enabled them to “manage properties with disabled tenants who are reluctant to let visitors into their homes, detecting a lack of movement where necessary.”

FIRE SAFETY

One of the most important reasons building owners need to gain access to a property - especially after any lapses in access caused by Covid - is to assess the level of risk each resident and property poses, and this is especially important with regard to fire safety.

Using a cloud-based gateway, ‘smart’ fire safety technologies can allow for instant real time remote monitoring of smoke, heat and carbon alarms, enabling housing providers to achieve full traceability, audit and compliance management across their housing stock.

And, as mentioned previously, such technologies now go further than just the ability to monitor devices, but are often able to send data such as alarm diagnostics across the cloud instantly to warn housing providers when they might be likely to need replacement, and give in-depth information as to just how each alarm is performing, with some manufacturers even developing artificial intelligence approaches to provide stratification of risk across entire housing stocks.

Multiple comments were made about the positive outcomes of such technologies when asked about the impact of remote technologies on the health and safety of their tenants, with one noting that they “identified a fire and called the fire brigade before residents could, with a positive outcome,” and another stating that “remote smoke alarms allowed [them] to monitor vulnerable tenants and see trends.”

Despite these clear benefits however, only 18 per cent of respondents who use remote technologies currently have remote leak, fire smoke and carbon monoxide alarms installed in their housing stock.

COST-SAVINGS

With narrowing margins for landlords and tightening budgets for social housing providers, cost savings are often vital where possible.

Metering, monitoring, surveillance and billing are all able to be achieved online, often removing the burden of managing the system and lowering the man-hours necessary. Financial savings can be made across the board here, with all the solution advantages listed able to reduce costs to some degree by lessening human involvement.

While only 15 per cent of respondents who already use remote technologies cited that they originally started doing so to save costs - and in fact 29 percent of those who don't use such technologies haven't done so because of the initial costs - 43 per cent of all respondents said that they believed cost savings were one of the biggest benefits of the technology.

Cost-savings were also reported in the comment box when asked how remote technologies have impacted the health and safety of their tenants, with one respondent stating that “remote 24/7 monitoring is very cost-effective compared to daily visits of one hour or less.”

DATA GATHERING

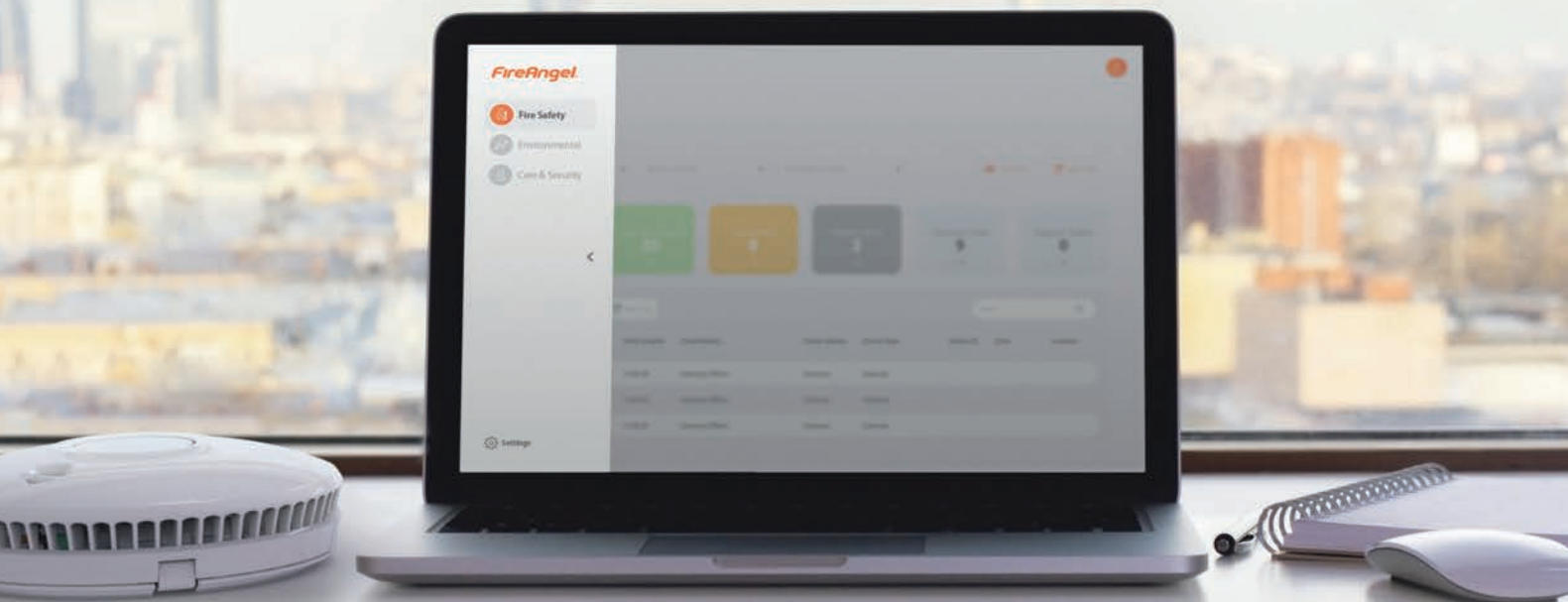
In the modern era, data gathering is forming the major business model for tech giants such as Google, the dissemination of this data now being the main product of many online business ventures.

Data has always been important in housing also, and its digitalisation is providing benefits across the board, the cost savings it can produce growing larger than ever.

Remote data is proving beneficial in housing for many reasons, from enabling better communications with tenants through contact information and

FireAngel CONNECTED

The **Connected** solution for **Social Housing** that enables active fire risk management and prepares properties for a smarter future.



**Fire | Carbon Monoxide | Humidity and Temperature | Water Leak
Panic Button | Smart Siren | Room Occupancy | Dashboard | Tenant App**



Fire Risk Mitigation

FireAngel Predict™ provides an instant, real-time fire risk level unique to each property, allowing you to actively mitigate risk and prioritise intervention for those who need it most.



Manage data and insights

Integrate data into your existing asset management system or use our dashboard to monitor conditions within the property or when devices are activated, are removed or require maintenance.



Smart Network Infrastructure

Create a compliant network of protection that prepares properties for a smarter future and can be enhanced as resident needs evolve, with robust connectivity that doesn't depend on tenant Wi-Fi.

preferences, to 'self-service' options that can allow tenants to access the information necessary themselves and engage with providers online (reducing workloads), to the ability to provide staff with data on housing in the field or at home, in real time.

While only 18 per cent of respondents who already use remote technologies said they started doing so in order to gather data, 28 per cent of all respondents listed data gathering as one of the biggest benefits of remote technologies in housing, 86 per cent agreed that data is essential in enabling housing providers to communicate with their tenants more effectively, and 78 per cent agreed that remote and self service technologies make the collection of data easier and more effective.

It was not only access to tenants' properties that was hampered by the Pandemic, but each lockdown has prevented many housing professionals from even accessing their offices.

Much of this would have been impossible without remote technologies. In order to perform their jobs from home, workers need to access the data necessary over the cloud.

With 80 per cent of all respondents foreseeing that Covid has increased the need for remote practices, respondents' comments on the reasons why included

that the “new normal will inevitably change the way we do things,” that the “world will never be the same again, but these changes will be for the better,” and that they “don’t want to lose the benefits that [they] have experienced during the last year.”

With 82 per cent of our respondents believing that remote technologies will be widespread in the next five years, and 10 per cent more in the next 10 years, its adoption across the sector seems all but inevitable.

Despite this, 33 per cent of respondents are yet to take up any forms of remote technology in their work. Many of those who already do use the technologies appear to have had their hands forced by Covid, with 80 per cent saying it has increased the need for remote practices.

Takeup of many of the other solutions, however, remained relatively low in comparison. Costs, unwilling tenants and reliability were among the causes of this, yet cost savings and the reduction of physical access to tenants' homes were two of the largest benefits of the technology reported by those who have adopted it. 42 per cent of respondents believe there is not enough information available on such practices, which perhaps explains this dissonance to some degree.

Though its uptake has been relatively slow, the wider benefits that the technology brings have been shown in the data. Whether it's improving ecology, safety or convenience, the easing servicing of data gathering, the identification of ageing tenants, or preventative intervention, remote technologies can not only solve issues across the housing spectrum, but increase the quality and efficiency of many of the tasks it faces on a daily basis.

While much of the industry has already adopted these solutions to some extent, there are many remote technologies that the majority of housing professionals are still missing out on. Any housing providers who do not already understand remote management and monitoring, its benefits, and how much the sector is likely to rely on it in the near future, should action this now, or be left behind.

FOR A FULL VERSION OF THIS SURVEY PLEASE VISIT
WWW.HOUSINGMMONLINE.CO.UK WHERE YOU CAN
DOWNLOAD THE WHITE PAPER

IoT property monitoring service: Protect assets and protect tenants



iOpt.

- Proven ROI on preventative savings
- Early identification of fuel poverty
- Defend disrepair claims
- Greater engagement with tenants

Salix Homes launches new brand to deliver more housing



A Salford housing association has launched a new brand to deliver more affordable homes and help tackle the housing crisis.

Salix Homes, which owns 8,000 homes across Salford, has launched Willo Homes in a bid to increase housing choice and deliver more affordable housing opportunities in the city.

As a not-for-profit organisation, any profits will be reinvested back into improving homes and communities across Salford.

Sue Sutton, chief executive at Salix Homes, said: “The launch of Willo Homes marks another major milestone in the Salix Homes journey and will help us deliver our vision to build more desperately-needed new and affordable homes.

“While Salford has been experiencing something of a housing development boom in recent years, the shortage of affordable homes in this area is well documented. Homeownership has become out of reach for many ordinary people, so we’re passionate about creating more affordable housing options.

“As a trusted social housing provider, with our foundations firmly rooted in Salford, we’re confident that we’re perfectly placed to deliver the

right type of housing in the right places and ultimately help tackle the housing crisis.”

Willo Homes will specialise in affordable homeownership options including Help to Buy, Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy, as well as homes for market sale.

ARTIFEX

To coincide with the launch, Willo Homes has announced the first properties available for expressions of interest at Artifex – the flagship high-rise development in Trinity.

The £15million apartment block comprises 108 one and two-bedroom apartments, which will all be available under the Rent to Buy Scheme.

Artifex is named in honour of the late Canon Peter Green – a much-respected writer and minister at the nearby St Philips Church.

During the First World War and until the 1950s, Canon Peter Green wrote a weekly column in The Manchester Guardian – which was later to become The Guardian – under the pen name ‘Artifex’.

He wrote about pacifism and compassion as well as articles about social injustice and the importance of housing, and is fondly remembered as a ‘real man

The £15million apartment block comprises 108 one and two-bedroom apartments, which will all be available under the Rent to Buy Scheme

of the people who loved the Salford people’.

Terry McBride, development manager at Salix Homes, added: “Our aim at Willo Homes is to offer high quality homes for affordable homeownership to not only help people onto the property ladder, but also to give them a sense of belonging.

“Salford is a fantastic place to live and work and we aim to provide a home for every need, from city centre apartments to family homes, so we’re excited to unveil our first properties at Artifex. It’s a fantastic new development with a wonderfully rich history behind it, offering modern apartment living on the edge of Manchester City Centre.”

Improve Your Understanding of BS 8629 with Advanced

Fire protection solutions manufacturer Advanced, has launched two new courses to aid understanding of the BS 8629 Code of Practice recommendations and the EvacGo system designed to meet them.

'A Guide to Meeting BS 8629' is a continuing professional development course, approved by the FIA and the CPD Certification Service, suitable for all those responsible for fire safety in tall residential buildings. Delivered online by the Advanced evacuation alert team – Ken Bullock, Advanced's Business Development Manager and Shaun Scott, Applications Engineer for Evacuation Alert Systems – the one-hour session covers a range of essential BS 8629 facts, from key clauses, evacuation alert zones and siting of devices, to evacuation alert control and indicating equipment, its commissioning and handover.

As well as the accredited CPD course, Advanced has also launched a new training programme for its EvacGo evacuation alert system. Aimed primarily at installers and engineers, the training course covers practical content including panel and software configuration guidance.

Ken Bullock, Business Development Manager – Evacuation Alert Systems said: "Over the past year we've witnessed increasing demand from our customers and end users for online education and training opportunities. This has led to the introduction of our webinar programme, online

training modules and our video tutorial series.

"At a time when many fire industry professionals are viewing lockdown as an opportunity to upskill, our new CPD presentation is a great way to improve understanding of the BS 8629 Code of Practice, the relevant evacuation alert system equipment, and your responsibilities as a consultant, fire risk assessor or fire protection specialist.

"As an added bonus to participants, all content is approved by the CPD Certification Service and the FIA, who have both recognised it as a robust training offering that helps to boost competency and knowledge of the latest standards."

Alongside its CPD, Advanced's EvacGo training programme offers partners free workshops which not only cover theory, but also applied exercises and tests, ensuring good working knowledge of all aspects of the EvacGo equipment and software.

BS 8629:2019 is the new Code of Practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of evacuation alert systems for use by fire and rescue services in England. In place since November 2019, this code of practice recommends the installation of a dedicated evacuation alert system intended for the sole use of the fire and rescue services and separate from the building's fire alarm system. It is relevant to blocks of flats with a storey located at a height of more than 18 metres above ground level.

Although not yet a legal requirement in England,



evacuation alert control and indicating equipment (EACIE) installation is already mandatory in new buildings containing flats over 18 metres in Scotland and considered best practice by a number of fire and rescue services.

Advanced, owned by FTSE 100 company Halma PLC, protects a wide range of prestigious and high-profile sites across the globe – from London's Shard to Abu Dhabi International Airport and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau bridge.

Halma is a global group of life-saving technology companies with a clear purpose to grow a safer, cleaner, healthier future for everyone, every day.

0345 894 7000 www.advancedco.com

From Infinity to Beyond VEKA is leading the way in the future of recycled PVCu

This month, VEKA plc has unveiled plans to grow usage of recycled material beyond its existing Infinity system.

VEKA has been the industry leader in recycling and sustainability throughout its history with the first VEKA recycling plant opening in Germany in 1993. In 2007, VEKA Recycling opened its doors, the UK's first windows recycling plant. Last year, the company's ongoing commitment to sustainability has seen VEKA Recycling invest £150k in six new silos to increase the storage capacity at its state-of-the-art Wellingborough recycling plant, the most advanced of its kind in Europe.

VEKA plc led the way in recycling PVCu launching its Infinity profile in 2010 - a dedicated system with an environmental conscience that contains up to 80 per cent recycled material.

The coming months will see VEKA start to roll out recycled material across a number of its mainline profiles starting with cills and following with frame extensions with potential to expand further throughout the course of the year. VEKA has committed to a strong focus in driving further usage of recycled PVCu in the coming years.

Recycling has become a crucial part of VEKA's strategy and over the last five years more than 24,000 tonnes of PVCu has been diverted from landfill.



Dawn Stockell, Marketing Director of VEKA plc commented:

"Recycling and sustainability are a core focus as part of our overall CSR commitment and a key objective for both VEKA plc and the broader group. Our investment into future proofing our products has seen us increase our co-extrusion capability, replacing aging tools with co-extrusion tools allowing for greater use of recycled PVCu. Committed to driving increased usage of recycled compound, our partnership with growing sister company, VEKA Recycling, will ensure that

together we continue to make best-in-class PVCu window systems that care about the environment and can continue to be recycled for years to come."

Simon Scholes, Managing Director of VEKA Recycling added:

"We've invested £15 million into the plant at Wellingborough – ensuring we can continue to lead the way in recycled PVCu. Our products are as close to virgin polymer as is possible. To get recycled PVCu of this quality takes some work and ultimately does not result in a more cost-effective material – in fact using recycled PVCu is cost neutral but carries an important ethical message. In the past, recycled products have often been seen as second best, however with today's PVCu, along with our technology and skills, we can ensure that the recycled product is a better product – one that is suited to being reused time and time again. We can now put in a frame that will last another 40 years with just one window or door frame offering up to 350 years of usage. In fact, the recycled products that are going in now will only need to be recycled by my successor's successor. Now that is a sustainable legacy to be proud of."

01282 716611
www.veka.co.uk

Pendock – thinking inside the box

When evaluating cost reduction opportunities in social housing refurbishment or retro-fit fire sprinkler installation projects, it's unlikely that pipe boxing would feature highly, yet Pendock products are helping HAs and LAs save time and money on site.

The Pendock Profiles range of specialist casings and pipe & fire sprinkler boxing has been a common feature in social housing for well over 30 years and is used on countless heating system refurbishments, boiler upgrades and fire-sprinkler installations by most UK social landlords.

By replacing traditional site made MDF or wood pipe boxing with pre-formed plywood boxing, significant economies are being achieved across a large number of local authority and housing association projects.

The popular TK pipe boxing; MXF fire sprinkler boxing and BC boiler casings from the Pendock Profiles range, are all manufactured in the UK from pre-formed plywood and are supplied pre-finished in durable melamine. This means there's no need for time consuming on-site fabrication or painting, enabling Pendock boxing can be fitted in around half the time of site made alternatives.

The widespread use of Pendock MXF fire sprinkler boxing to conceal surface mounted sprinkler pipework, on high-rise and low-rise residential fire safety improvement projects, has helped speed installation, as they're quick and



Pendock MXF fire sprinkler boxing

easy to fit, using just screws batten and a range of dedicated accessories.

Concealing boiler pipework, valves, regulators and filters is equally simple with the BC range of boiler pipe casings. Four casing options are available, which include jointed and joint-less one piece designs, as well as a bespoke casing, which is manufactured by Pendock to exact project specifications.

Where exterior pipework needs protecting and concealing, the CHM and MXM metal pipe boxing range is engineered to enclose building services and other utilities, often as part of district heating schemes, whilst also providing added protection against accidental damage, theft or vandalism.

01952 580 590 www.pendock.co.uk

Mental health volunteers welcomed

A new scheme to help workplace employees through the worries and concerns of the COVID crisis has been welcomed by staff at **Designer Contracts**. A snap poll of the company's mental health volunteers showed that most people were pleased to know there was someone they could turn to for help – or simply have a private chat with about any concerns. Said HR and health and safety director Stacey Brereton: "The company introduced its mental health volunteer scheme back in October as a way of encouraging employees to open up about mental health. We currently have 10 mental health volunteers and one mental health first aider in place and are rolling the scheme out to all 15 regional depots."

01246 854577 www.DesignerContracts.com



Lo-Carbon Revive 7 protects landlord

Lo-Carbon Revive 7 fans from leading ventilation manufacturer, **Vent-Axia**, are proving crucial in a social housing disrepair case. The fans were installed as part of an extensive renovation of a social housing property to alleviate condensation and mould issues. Yet the problems persisted. Thanks to the fans' datalogging ability, it has been proven that the fans have been tampered with by the resident. This data is proving crucial in protecting the landlord from being prosecuted. Without this datalogging capability, the landlord could have faced court action from the resident for failing to provide a habitable home. However, armed with this information the landlord can now prove that they are not at fault.

0344 856 0590 www.vent-axia.com



ESi launches latest 6 Series heating controls

ESi Controls has launched its new, top of the range, 6 Series WiFi Programmable Room Thermostat, offering the latest in heating control for homes and commercial premises. Fully OpenTherm compatible, this new range of controls allows full control via the room thermostat or via a mobile phone or tablet, with a range of features to impress even the most demanding specifier, installer or homeowner. It includes Optimum Start/Stop, Domestic Hot Water (DHW) setpoint, Hot Water time and temperature control when working in conjunction with a wireless cylinder thermostat, full 7 day, 5/2 day or 24 hour programming options, a boost facility, a helpful Holiday Mode and is an ERP Class 5 Product.

01280 816868 www.esicontrols.co.uk



Stelrad announces Heavy-duty Deco

Stelrad Radiators has announced the addition of a new Heavy Duty Deco radiator to its Heavy Duty radiator family. This robust version of the popular Deco design comes with a 3.2mm combined thickness tough outer steel fascia to provide additional protection where the radiator is used in an environment where contact is likely and there is a need to take knocks in its stride. It's a high-end specification product built to withstand high impact, yet it retains its high heat output whilst remaining price competitive. For installers, piping connections are exactly the same as the Stelrad Compact radiator. Please contact Stelrad Radiators for more information and brochures.

0844 543 6200 www.stelrad.com



Give us your worst property and we will fix it for you!

Book your FREE survey today!





Before



We Can Survey



We Can Treat Mould



We Can Ventilate




After

Call now for friendly free advice 01823 690 292
info@airtechenvironmental.co.uk www.airtechenvironmental.co.uk #NoMoreMould



AIRTECH
Condensation, Mould & Radon Specialists


A bigger, better Ubbink



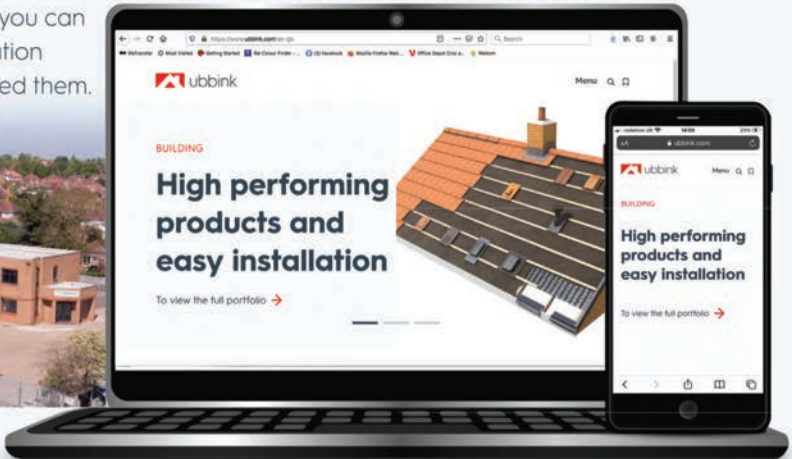
ubbink
Build smart.

- New warehouse & offices
- New website
- New look

The future is bright for UK construction. That's why we've invested in new infrastructure, enabling us to maintain our excellent service levels as we continue to grow. So you can expect the innovative, high quality roofing & ventilation products you need – right when and where you need them.



VISIT US ON-LINE TODAY



Ubbink UK Ltd

• ☎ 01604 433000 • @ info@ubbink.com • 🌐 www.ubbink.com

Peace of mind through intelligent design.

The Kinemagic is no ordinary shower.

The same size as a standard bath, this clever cubicle is suitable for all the family, with anti-slip flooring, grab bars and rails and a fold-down seat for less mobile users.

As if that's not enough, installation can be completed in a day,* thanks to its silicone and grout-free design, plus it comes covered by a reassuring two-year guarantee. Genius.



SILICONE FREE

NO LEAKS

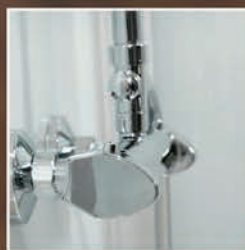
CRISTAL PLUS GLASS



2 YEAR GUARANTEE

Kinedo



*It's possible to fit a Kinemagic Serenity + in one day with two people. This is subject to site situations and the competency of your installer.



Follow us on  

kinedo.co.uk

Waterproof wall panels: the modern option

In these turbulent times, waterproof wall panels may offer social housing providers and local authorities a more effective bathroom walling solution, explains Nicola Lewis of Fibo.

This past year has been an unusual one for social housing providers and local authorities. Individuals across the sector have had their ability to work as before hampered by lockdowns and social distancing measures, and common tasks, such as repairs, maintenance and renovations, are now much more difficult to conduct. As such, those entrusted with these responsibilities must begin to find new ways to operate, which conform with the new normal.

Within the bathroom sector, waterproof wall panel solutions offer a suitable option. These systems provide a genuine alternative to traditional bathroom tiles and are more suited to the current climate.

FASTER THAN EVER

Given the current challenges that social housing providers and local authorities face, access to properties is more difficult and time-sensitive than ever before. Therefore, there's now a significant incentive for those in the sector to adopt solutions that allow for faster and easier installation, such as waterproof wall panels.

In short, whereas standard tiles may take around five days to install, from wall preparation through to grouting, waterproof wall panels can be fitted in a matter of hours. This enhanced speed can make a major difference during this unprecedented moment, enabling those fitting the solutions to get on and off sites more quickly – and allow more installations to be completed in one day.

Better still, leading waterproof panel suppliers are able to manufacture solutions which are large enough to cover rooms, from floor to ceiling. As such, installers are able to complete large swathes of wall space in a single session.

Additionally, unlike standard tiles, waterproof wall panels can be affixed to any secure wall surface, meaning walls do not need to be prepared before application. The panels need not be mounted by individuals with specific tiling expertise either, as they can instead be handled by anyone with basic carpentry skills.

STRONG PERFORMANCE

While installation speed is an important factor when specifying bathroom solutions for properties, it's also essential to consider performance levels. In fact, it's important to try and mitigate the need for repairs and maintenance by ensuring high-performing solutions are installed from the outset.



Waterproof wall panel solutions are able to excel within this area and provide performance levels that are equal to traditional tiling solutions, both in regard to watertightness and durability.

Additionally, when looking to find solutions that go above and beyond what has come before, social housing providers and local authorities should incorporate new multi-layered solutions, which come with extensive warranty agreements.

It's also important to ensure that any chosen product has been PEFC certified as a minimum, as well as being certified under the 'Class 2 Spread of Flame' test, in accordance with BS 476-7: 1987.

STYLE WITH SUBSTANCE

The performance of a system is a major factor, but for some tenants the way a bathroom actually looks is more important to them. As such, social housing providers and local authorities must continue to deliver contemporary styling across their properties. In doing so, this will help to engender happier tenants, which in turn can lead to longer tenancy periods and may even help to grow referral business.

Thankfully, waterproof wall panel solutions make this easy to achieve and are available in a wide range of design options. Design versatility is especially helpful for local authorities who often operate an extensive portfolio of different social housing properties, which can greatly vary in style.

What's more, thanks to new innovations in manufacturing capabilities, leading suppliers can now produce waterproof wall panels which feature a routed-in grout line, as opposed to it merely being printed on, offering a far more realistic tile look and feel.

THE RIGHT OPTION

Tiles are often seen as the only choice for bathroom installations, despite issues around the speed of installation, availability of skills, and maintenance.

Waterproof wall panels however are a high performing, reliable alternative, which social housing providers and local authorities should begin to adopt to ensure properties can be renovated quickly, with little disruption to tenants.

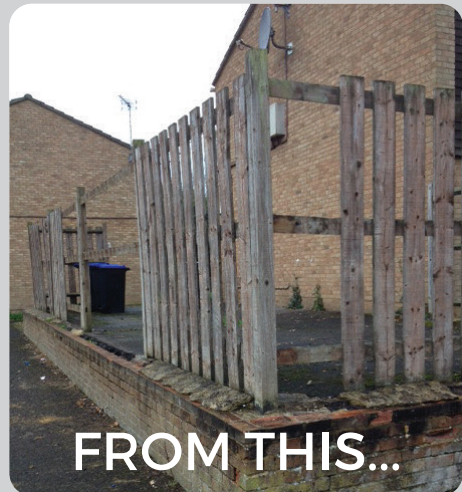
Nicola Lewis is marketing manager at Fibo



The Agora Planter

NORMANDY BIN BAY SCREENS

Do you want to bin ongoing maintenance costs in your recycling areas?



FROM THIS...



...TO THIS



The Matrix 05

Maintenance free • Easy to clean – jet washable • Louvre style panels prevent the build-up of unpleasant smells • Made from Govaplast® – the leading brand of recycled plastic • Goplastic also specialise in designed benches and planters in a range of styles and colours

www.goplastic.co.uk info@goplastic.co.uk
02922 801 294 / 01920 469 926



Fast setting concrete repairs with Mapegrout SV T. Now available in grey.

Mapei's Mapegrout SV T is a quick-setting and hardening thixotropic mortar for repairing concrete slabs, both flat and sloped, and for repairing concrete elements such as drains and urban fixtures. Mapegrout SV T can also be used for bedding, setting and fixing of manholes, drains and street furniture. Due to its thixotropic nature, it can also be used on vertical surfaces.

Produced in the UK, the shrinkage compensated mortar is suitable for repairing concrete slabs, industrial floors, and for construction work in areas that need to be reopened to traffic quickly, such as roads and other places including airports, ports, shopping centres and warehouses.

Mapegrout SV T is also suitable for fixing road signs, crash barriers and fences in place.

Due to its excellent hardening properties, Mapegrout SV T can be subjected to both foot and vehicle traffic in less than two hours after application.

This one-component, high strength pre-blended mortar comes in powder form and can be applied up to 120mm on horizontal surfaces and up to 50mm in one application of vertical surfaces.

Available in black and grey for all concrete repairs.



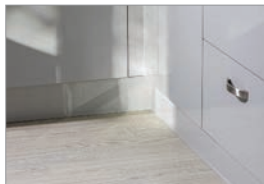
For more information, please visit the Mapei website.

01215 086 970
www.mapei.co.uk



Altro flooring now standard for housing

Altro flooring will now be fitted as standard in all new-build programmes undertaken by Adra, a leading affordable housing provider in north Wales. The most recent of these projects is a large scheme of mixed housing units in Caernarfon, Gwynedd, where Altro Wood™ has been fitted in all kitchens and Altro Aquarius™ in all bathrooms. Elli Owen, Senior Development Surveyor at Adra, says: "We have a longstanding and very strong relationship with Altro. Our decision to exclusively use their flooring going forward will ensure consistency and a high level of quality, durability and aesthetics across the homes we have available where we have developmental control."



01462 489 516 www.altro.co.uk

Enhanced visibility and safety with Hi-Vis

Snickers Workwear takes personal wellbeing at work very seriously. That's why this range of Hi-Vis protective wear is streets ahead of anything else. With updated styles and designs added to the extensive range of Jackets, Trousers, Shorts, Toolvests, Shirts and Fleece for men and women, there's a host of garments in the range to satisfy the specific requirements of Classes 1, 2 and 3 protection levels. These 'outstanding' products combine Snickers' unrivalled hallmarks of functionality and comfort with the requirements of the EN20471 standard for high visibility warning clothes. With advanced designs and high-tech fabrics that are windproof and water-repellent.



info@snickersworkwear.co.uk



BE WISE WHEN YOU ADVERTISE
HMM IS INDEPENDENTLY VERIFIED BY ABC





BEAUTIFUL BATHROOMS

by
AKW.


The new range of contemporary and durable baths, basins and WCs from the name you've trusted for over 35 years.

The range has been complemented with stylish brassware, glass screens, electric and mixer showers, fitted furniture, towel warmers and accessories to make a lasting impression.

Functionality combines with intelligent design and superior reliability for products that lift any bathroom to another level.

Discover more today.

If you would like to discuss Beautiful Bathrooms with your local AKW representative call **01905 823274**, email **marketing@akw-ltd.co.uk** or visit **beautifulbathrooms.akw-ltd.co.uk**









LITE SLATE

authentic, sustainable, lightweight slate

BRITMET
LIGHTWEIGHT ROOFING

sales@britmet.co.uk | 01295 250998 | www.britmet.co.uk | #FitBrit

RAISING THE STANDARDS IN LIGHTWEIGHT ROOFING

-  Lightweight weighing less than 13kg per m²
-  Proudly Manufactured In Britain
-  40-Year Weather Penetration Guarantee
-  BS476-3 Fire Rating
-  Manufactured Using Over 90% Recycled Polymers
-  Largest Standard Colour Range in the UK
-  Pitches as Low as 14 °
-  Quick Delivery Available

AliDeck launch balcony configurator tool

In keeping with their reputation for continually innovating, AliDeck have announced the launch of a new balcony configuration tool for architects and specifiers. Well known in the industry for their non-combustible aluminium decking range, AliDeck recently expanded their product offering to include balcony soffit cladding and balustrade systems. The launch of their balcony configurator now allows specifiers to interrogate the full range of AliDeck balcony component systems, easily understand the available options, and receive datasheets and DWG files for simple specification. The AliDeck balcony configurator can be accessed through their website.



www.alideck.co.uk www.balconycomponents.co.uk

Astraseal is the first under new scheme

Astraseal is the first UK Manufacturer to be awarded third party certification under the new BM Trada Scheme STD 170. The company has also been awarded certification for Installation (STD052) and Maintenance (STD058). Astraseal Fire Doors have been fire tested from both inside and outside to BSEN1634-1.



Astraseal's third party certification follows its independent factory production audits, verifying its door sets for both fire and security manufacturing consistency. Astraseal fire doors are available in various designs, including glazed options and can be made with a fixed glazed top fanlight above the door and a TS008 compliant letterbox.

www.astraseal.co.uk

HOUSING MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

Enjoy reading Housing Management & Maintenance but find it's not always convenient to have the printed magazine? Or has your workplace turned paper-free? The digital issue offers you the same content, delivered straight to your inbox and accessible via smartphone, tablet or desktop computers. Housing Management & Maintenance also offers regular updates with the monthly newsletter, offering news on products, services and events.

Available online at www.housingmmonline.co.uk



DULL BLOCK PAVING? LET IT SHINE

Treat your block paving to our new High Gloss Block Sealer and say goodbye to oil stains, weed growths and dull appearance.



bond it

Head Office: Unit G16, River Bank Way, Lowfields Business Park, Elland, West Yorkshire HX5 9DN
Tel: +44(0)1422 315300, Email: salesuk@bonditgroup.com, www.bonditgroup.com



SILICONES • SEALANTS • PU FOAMS • ADHESIVES • BUILDING CHEMICALS • TILE ADHESIVES & GROUTS • PLUMBING SOLUTIONS • BITUMENS

Smoke Vents by DYER



DYER ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS LIMITED

Part of the **D+HE** Group

Dyer offers a comprehensive range of Natural Smoke & Heat Exhaust Vents (NSHEVs) for a wide range of applications for removing smoke from buildings.

As required by the Construction Products Regulation, all of our NSHEVs are certified to EN12101-2.

Whether the requirement is a roof vent at the top of a stairs, or louvre at the end of corridors, we can provide the service and back-up to meet your requirements.

In addition to our standard range of sizes, we are able to offer bespoke sizes and versions where required.

We can also provide experience and knowledge to assist in providing solutions for your refurbishment and repairs, with on-site surveying where needed.



Controls & Maintenance:

Please also contact us for any smoke vent control requirements – we can provide full building smoke ventilation system installations, as well as providing a dedicated Service & Maintenance department.



Our range of certified NSHEVs: 



Window

Made to order to suit openings and free area requirements.



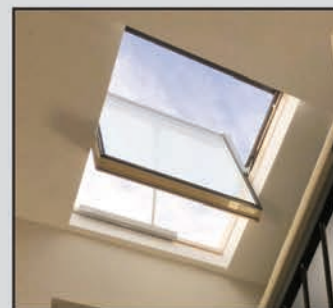
Dome vent

Installed on flat and pitched roofs. Ideal for staircases and corridors.



Louvre

Ideal for end of corridor, particularly within high-rise buildings.



Rooflight

Centre pivot window for pitched roofs. Perfect for head of stairs.



Ring or email us to discuss your requirements:

dyerenvironmental.co.uk | 0161 491 4840

enquiry@dyerenvironmental.co.uk

The smart approach to specifying smoke vents

Tony Stevens of Bilco UK shares the top three considerations they believe housing professionals should focus on when specifying NSHEVs.

Natural Smoke and Heat Exhaust Ventilators (NSHEVs), more commonly known as smoke vents, provide essential ventilation in the event of a building fire. Installed in the roof, they open by sensors or remote control in response to exhaust smoke and noxious fumes.

Suitable for installation in a range of buildings, from educational spaces such as universities to commercial environments such as warehouses, the aim of a smoke vent is to make a dangerous situation safer for all individuals.

1. UNDERSTANDING THE SERIOUSNESS OF SMOKE

While many may presume that the biggest danger of a fire are the flames, smoke inhalation can be far more dangerous and life threatening. Statistics from the UK Fire & Rescue Services stated that the most common cause of fire deaths and injury between 2018 and 2019* was 'being overcome by gas or smoke.'

As a fire develops inside a building, it burns the oxygen in the air, removing most of the available oxygen as part of 'incomplete combustion,' which in turn produces toxic and potentially deadly carbon monoxide.

When a fire ignites in an enclosed space, the smoke rising from the fire gets trapped by the ceiling. It then begins to spread, forming an expanding layer that leaks into any gaps in the floors or walls. This can lead to individuals becoming disorientated, with their vision becoming increasingly clouded, hindering safe evacuation.

The installation of smoke vents in appropriate locations around a building will protect occupants in the event of a fire by preventing the excessive build-up of smoke and noxious fumes. This subsequently reduces the risk of smoke inhalation, horizontal fire spread and secondary ignitions as the smoke is quickly exhausted, enabling fire-fighters to safely enter the building to tackle the blaze and building occupants to exit quickly.

2. KNOWING YOUR REGULATIONS

As a specifier or contractor, ensuring the right product is used in the correct context is paramount to not only ensuring it is fit for purpose, but also compliant with relevant regulations and provides the highest levels of safety.

When specifying a smoke vent for a roof, it should be compliant with the Construction Products Regulation 305/2011, CE-marked with a Declaration of Conformity. It should also be manufactured to meet the demands of Building Regulations, Approved Document B, BS9999 and BS EN12101-2.

Choosing a smoke vent that meets all of these legislations will help to not only achieve compliance, but ensure the operational reliability and performance of the smoke vent throughout its lifetime.

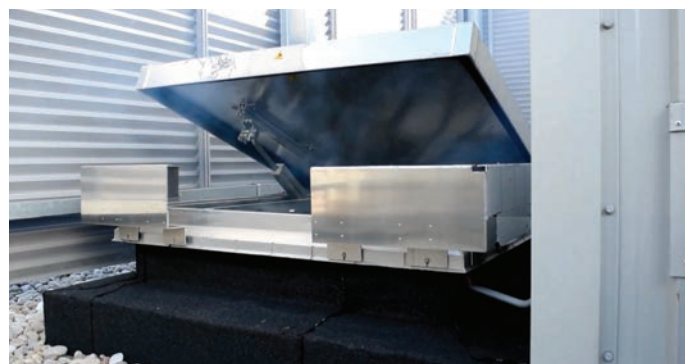
The control of the smoke vent should also be considered, whether this is in the form of a dedicated management system or a solution integrated into a wider networked fire alarm system.

3. CUSTOMISING YOUR SPECIFICATION

While the functionality and quality of the smoke vent will be the primary consideration, aesthetics can also be an important factor. Here a 'one size fits all approach' shouldn't be applied, as specifiers and contractors have a wide range of elements to choose from to ensure the product is tailored to meet the project's unique needs. Customisation may include elements such as hardware, paint finishes, curb liners, manual or automatic control units, open-close switches and rain and wind sensors.



When specifying smoke vents, it's important to explore the individual requirements for each development



While an NSHEV plays a pivotal role in fire protection by successfully exhausting smoke, they can also be utilised for comfort ventilation, removing the requirement for additional roof penetration. The vents also adopt the role of a skylight, allowing natural light to filter through into the space below.

By installing the smoke vent with the addition of a fixed vertical safety ladder, you can provide an adequate means of escape from the roof and offer access to contractors for infrequent maintenance.

FIT FOR PURPOSE

When specifying smoke vents, it's important to explore the individual requirements for each development and work closely with manufacturers at the specification stage to design a bespoke solution that is fit for purpose, while also ensuring compliance with all relevant legislations.

Tony Stevens is technical estimator at Bilco UK

Aico launch new eco-fit range – minimal packaging, maximum protection

As part of their drive to be more environmentally conscious, Aico have announced the launch of their new eco-fit range of alarms.

Aico are continuously evaluating and innovating their product ranges and services; this new range contributes to the company's wider commitment to sustainability and the environment.

The eco-fit range is Aico's most eco-friendly range to date and is exclusive to the technologically advanced 3000 Series of single and multi-sensor alarms: providing maximum protection with

minimal packaging.

Featuring the award-winning Heat and Carbon Monoxide Multi-Sensor, the Aico 3000 Series provides whole property coverage from one series. All alarms in this series contain intelligent sensors and utilise Aico's next-generation of wireless interconnection – SmartLINK, integrating seamlessly with the innovative Gateway for remote monitoring.

While retaining all of the features and benefits that the 3000 Series is renowned for, the new eco-fit range is available as head unit only, meaning there



are no easi-fit bases, screw packs or dust covers included. This is due to the easi-fit base being universal to all current Aico products, so unless damaged, the bases do not need replacing and are often redundant, contributing to waste plastic. To combat this, the eco-fit range provides a reduction in plastic of 100%. The eco-fit range is ideal for upgrading and retrofitting properties where easi-fit bases are already in situ, making asset management greener and more sustainable.

In the UK, it is estimated that five million tonnes of plastic is used every year, nearly half of which is packaging, with plastic packaging accounting for nearly 70% of our plastic waste. The eco-fit range is available in packs of 10 in minimal, fully recyclable packaging, with a reduced instruction leaflet. This is a more sustainable and environmentally friendly alternative to individually packaged alarms and uses up to 58% less cardboard and paper than individual 3000 Series alarms – minimal packaging, maximum protection. This reduction in packaging means that the eco-fit range is 20% smaller, taking up less storage space.

Aico Product Development Manager Michael Wright commented "The new eco-fit range has been created with sustainability in mind – Aico are committed to reducing waste where possible and providing high quality, sustainable products. eco-fit packs are the ideal solution where existing easi-fit bases are already installed as they provide a simple way to install new alarms with minimal packaging waste. The packaging itself is also fully recyclable, all of which helps to support users of our products to reduce their waste when installing alarms".

This new eco-friendly range comes as part of Aico's wider commitment to the environment and their Corporate Social Responsibility programme. The company's new HQ was sympathetically designed to benefit the area with four acres of landscaping, a large pond, habitats for natural wildlife and a solar garden on the roof for a renewable energy source.

To find out more about the new eco-fit range, please visit the Aico website.



01691 664100

www.aico.co.uk/product/eco-fit-range

**OVER
3 MILLION
FOBS IN USE
IN THE UK**

- » SimpleKey Web is the UK's leading Cloud based Communal Door Access Control Solution
- » Save time and money on fob administration
- » Integration with Digital Notice Boards and Building Management compatibility

CLOUD BASED ACCESS CONTROL MADE EASY

CAME  KMS

Tel: +44 (0) 1494 531099
E-Mail: info@kms.uk.net

kms.uk.net

ABGO 

PRODUCT CATALOGUE NOW AVAILABLE



<p>FireAngel</p> <p>BASIC SMOKE & HEAT ALARM PACK</p> <p>FA-KIT1 Basic kit for a fire alarm building including wireless alarm to be fitted on both front door & landing and a Heat Alarm in the kitchen.</p> <p>Add to this kit by purchasing additional Smoke, Heat or Carbon Monoxide Alarms and a Smart RF Radio Module for each device.</p> <p>This pack contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 x FS12017 Smoke Alarms 1 x FS12067 Heat Alarm 2 x FS12040027 Smart RF Radio Modules <p>7 YEAR BATTERY CO ALARM</p> <p>CO-EX-PP One of the most affordable smoke alarms on the market. The small and compact design does not compromise its functionality, reliability or performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electrochemical sensor LED status indicators 20 year battery (10 year) Easy to install, and replace 7 years covered for its battery Complies to BS EN14091-1: 2012 and BS EN14091-2: 2012 <p>Location: Living areas, bedrooms, kitchens, boiler rooms</p>	<p>Honeywell</p> <p>DIGITAL 10 YEAR CO ALARM</p> <p>HC1000 Highly sensitive digital alarm with multi function LCD screen display.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blended alarm tone with battery LED display Alarm and Heat Heat Predefined alarm action message Redundant alarm level test Can be interconnected wirelessly using the plug-in module HW100 <p>EZSENSE GAS DETECTOR</p> <p>SPGL1 Portable device used to detect the presence of flammable gases including methane, propane, LPG and LNG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Battery operated (2 x AA) Detects methane, propane, butane, LPG and LNG Interacts immediately to the relevant levels of gas For the 30 second alarm up period Calibrated based sensor requires no calibration Confirms the source of leaks Audible alarm and LED indicator upon detection CE marked 	<p>Firehawk</p> <p>SMOKE, HEAT & CO ALARM PACK</p> <p>Firehawk Wireless/100 In addition to the latest wireless kit, this kit has a wireless CO detector.</p> <p>This kit includes all Wireless interlinking devices, and all devices comply with new legislation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 x FS12067 Wireless Optical Smoke Alarms 1 x FS12067 Wireless Heat Alarm 1 x FS12067 Wireless CO Detector <p>10 YEAR CO ALARM</p> <p>COPL-100 Battery operated compact smoke alarm with 10 year battery life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test button for weekly testing Automatic monitoring mode End of the indication Removable battery Provides low battery warning for 10 hours LED indicator for alarm, alarm & fault <p>Location: Living areas, bedrooms, kitchens, boiler rooms</p>
--	--	--

LEADING DISTRIBUTOR OF SAFETY ALARM PRODUCTS

Water-tight partnerships

James Homard of Urban Environments explores how housing professionals can maximise value from their water hygiene consultancy.

Many housing providers and landlords appoint a specialist water hygiene consultancy to manage Legionella control. Particularly for those with extensive portfolios this is a sensible move, but signing up third party expertise doesn't automatically mean the compliance box is ticked and landlords can sit back and relax. Don't forget, the property owner still has ultimate legal responsibility for Legionella compliance.

As with any client/supplier relationship, the real value lies in the quality and closeness of the working relationship, so by putting the right systems in place, you'll save time and money in the long run.

GETTING OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT

Whether you are selecting your water hygiene consultancy from a supplier roster or running your own tender process, make sure you get the basics right:

- Can the consultancy cover all necessary geographical areas?
- Do they have the relevant expertise? E.g. water sampling and analysis, remedials, monitoring
- Are they fully accredited and certified? Look for membership of the Legionella Control Association as a minimum

Once you've found the perfect partner and signed them up, invest time in preparing for your first 'kick-off' meeting and ask them to provide a mobilisation plan. This lays the groundwork for a smooth working relationship and will reduce the likelihood of future problems.

The first things to establish are lines of reporting and the nuts and bolts of the contract. Who are the key people at the client and supplier, responsible for day-to-day matters? Who are the designated 'responsible person' and 'dutyholder', as defined by the HSE's L8 Approved Code of Practice? What is the chain of command? What are the processes for dealing with problems?

Share full contact details and ensure that these are kept up-to-date; it's amazing how often someone moves jobs or an email address changes and the information isn't passed on.

Accuracy of information is also crucial for the water hygiene engineers out on site. If they have trouble accessing a building or discover a problem with the water system that needs urgent attention, they must be able to contact the caretaker or building manager. Again, be certain that such information is kept up-to-date. There are so-called 'no entry' costs associated with engineers not being able to access a property, so this will help to reduce the problem and save you money.

Maintaining and sharing an accurate list of your properties is essential too. If your Legionella control partner doesn't know that you have bought or sold a building, they can't uphold compliance. Visiting the wrong building because information hasn't been passed on is costly and time-consuming (and it happens all the time!). Similarly, supplying a comprehensive asset register of all the components of the water system for each building is also a basic requirement.

STREAMLINED ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

Regular (ideally monthly) progress meetings, either in-person or via video conference, are a must where all aspects of the Legionella monitoring programme should be reviewed. Using a digital compliance tool (such as CAT-SI) will provide full reports, enabling real-time tracking of site visits, risk assessments, remedials and KPI achievement.

At these meetings, any problems should also be discussed, with all parties able to raise concerns. Collaborative working to find solutions will ensure both client and supplier can continuously improve.



As with any client/supplier relationship, the real value lies in the quality and closeness of the working relationship, so by putting the right systems in place, you'll save time and money in the long run

HEADING OFF PROBLEMS

While carrying out Legionella risk assessments, engineers are likely to come across areas of concern which need to be addressed, such as corrosion, limescale or dirty water tanks. They should create a complete list of remedial work, repairs and cleaning tasks so you can collectively decide how best to handle them. If they are logged via a digital compliance tool it can automatically create a schedule of works.

It's vital that your Legionella risk assessments are not just put in a desk drawer and forgotten about. One of the benefits of a rolling risk assessment programme is that it gives you detailed information about the water systems across your property portfolio. This data is a valuable resource which – in conjunction with a comprehensive remedials programme and monitoring scheme (where required) – will help you save time and money by dealing with repairs before they become large, expensive or dangerous problems.

COMMUNICATION COUNTS

Open lines of communication between all parties will minimise complications and save resources. This includes communicating with tenants, so work with your water hygiene consultancy to provide information to tenants about Legionella control and how they can help.

If tenants understand the importance for their health of reducing Legionella risk, they are more likely to cooperate when engineers need to access their homes. They can also help control the risk by simple measures such as descaling, running little-used taps/outlets regularly and reporting problems with water temperature.

James Homard is technical director at Urban Environments Ltd



PORTHOLES



LOUVRES



POWER TRANSFER UNITS



LOCKS AND CYLINDERS



FLUSH BOLTS



VISION FRAMES



FINGER PROTECTION



DOOR STAYS



PANIC HARDWARE



ACOUSTIC SEALS

**SPECIALIST
ARCHITECTURAL
HARDWARE SUPPLIERS
TO THE DOOR
OPENINGS INDUSTRY**

ZERO SEAL SYSTEMS LTD
UNITS 43-45 LADFORD COVERT SEIGHFORD STAFFORD ST18 9QG
TEL - 01785 282910 E-MAIL - SALES@ZEROPLUS.CO.UK
WWW.ZEROPLUS.CO.UK

ZEROplus

T M E
TECHNOLOGY IN TEMPERATURE



MM7000-2D
Barcode water assets and log the results with our 1D & 2D Barcode Scanning Thermometer for fully paperless spot checks



KS20-S
High-Speed Reinforced Dual surface/immersion probe for pipes AND water



CLEGG3
Compact Legionella Temp Kit includes thermometer with integral timer plus dual surface/immersion probe

Save time and money on legionella risk management

Streamline your water temperature monitoring with these innovative solutions for the prevention of Legionnaires' disease.



Boxed-in pipework, TMVs or high level tanks?

Ask about our exclusive TC Wall Port for hidden valves, pipes and water tanks for accurate temperature readings from up to 20 metres away.



www.tmethermometers.com
+44 (0)1903 700651 • sales@tmthermometers.com



**urban
environments**

Working in partnership with leading housing associations for over 25 years

Comprehensive water hygiene services managed via the CAT-SI compliance system, including Legionella control, risk assessments, monitoring, sampling & analysis and remedials.



Feedback from some of our G15 clients:

“ We work seamlessly with Urban Environments to manage Legionella control across our portfolio. The integrated use of the CAT-SI compliance app ensures that all information is at our fingertips and we have complete trust in them and their team.”

“ Urban Environments is a very competent and professional company delivering a high standard of work. Every aspect is flawless.”

Visit urbanenvironments.co.uk
or call us on 01732 743003



Legionella Control Association
KEEPING WATER SYSTEMS SAFE



bsi
ISO 9001
Quality Management System
CERTIFIED
FS 637215

The next generation of composite fire doors



The Guardsman Fire Door from ODL Europe is a gamechanger for the fire door sector and gives architects and specifiers the fire safety credentials they require. ODL Europe's managing director Nathan Barr explains.

For architects and specifiers specifying a fire door for a project, the requirement on the face of it is simple: it must deliver the required level of fire protection. But beneath that headline requirement, there are a wealth of other factors at play. For example, the door should show consistency over a range of test results and across a range of fabricators. Only then can there be the confidence that the door that has been specified truly has the necessary credentials.

Our mission at ODL Europe is to build value into building products. So when we started to develop a 30-minute fire door two years ago, our aim was simple: a door that eliminated the unknown elements of a composite fire door's performance and delivered tried and tested, consistent test results. In other words, a fire door that was a gamechanger.

We partnered with the engineers at our partners Capstone, the world-leading supplier of composite door slabs, and a select number of experienced fire door fabricators who shared our ambitions. And we set the bar high.

Any 30-minute fire door we brought to the market would need to pass the European fire test standard of EN 1634, which is the more onerous test standard required by Part B of Building Regulations. We could have relied on British Standard test evidence, but while this ticks all the boxes legally, we knew it doesn't take a door out of its comfort zone so wouldn't meet the standards we had set for ourselves.

We also needed to eliminate the phenolic foam that forms the core of an industry-standard 30-minute composite fire door. We knew a solid



core was the way forward and the material we are using is Agrifiber. It is a board material made from resin-bonded agricultural fibres and is a renewable source so has good environmental credentials. Unlike a foam, it is capable of delivering very consistent material densities and at the right density it has both superb structural properties and excellent fire resistance.

The result of our six-figure development investment is the Guardsman Fire Door.

It has been tested in glazed and unglazed versions. It has also been tested across multiple manufacturers. And in the most recent tests to EN 1634, we have achieved an average of 100 per cent overrun past the 30-minute mark. At the extreme, our 30-minute Guardsman fire door achieved over 70 minutes.

The doors have been tested as part of a doorset including our TriSYS glazing cassette and a TS008

letterplate. They have reached test ratings they have never achieved before, which demonstrates the importance of the solid core in the construction.

Of course, while safety is rightly the first priority for a fire door, day-to-day practicalities also matter.

As a Capstone door it has hardwood stiles and rails and a 2 mm GRP skin. It means it has all the pedigree you would expect from a composite door developed by a manufacturer with Capstone's credentials. It is a durable and robust door that is virtually maintenance-free and more than capable of withstanding the realities of everyday use while still maintaining a good-looking appearance.

We believe the Guardsman Fire Door is the first in the next generation of composite fire doors, a generation that delivers better, more reliable protection in the event of fire.

0151 933 0299 www.odleurope.com

Smoke vents – safe and secure for residents

Dyer Environmental Controls is providing retrofit smoke ventilation solutions for residents across the country. Whether within tower blocks or care homes, through housing associations or private rental stock, Dyer can provide solutions to meet all certification requirements and regulations. From venting a stairwell to installing a mechanical fan-assisted smoke ventilation system, Dyer is able to bring its experience and knowledge to meet the needs of remedial and refurbishment work to existing buildings. Dyer can help clear corridors and stairwells of smoke, thereby allowing a safe means of escape as well as providing a clear path for fire fighters.

The company's wide range of NSHEVs and controls can provide the solution to meet your needs, whatever the building type. Dyer's high-quality installations and repairs match its German-manufactured products for quality and reliability. It is then able to provide the assurance and peace of mind by providing comprehensive service and maintenance contracts, offering both PPM and reactive repairs. Check out Dyer's case studies on its website highlighting the recent work that it has completed at www.dyerenvironmental.co.uk/case-study-overview. Contact Dyer Environmental Controls via email or phone and they shall guide you through to the most efficient solution.

0161 491 4840 enquiry@dyerenvironmental.co.uk



False fire alarm fatigue

Alarm fatigue occurs when a person becomes desensitised to an alarm due to repeated false alarms and as a result, fails to react appropriately in an emergency – having potentially fatal effects. False fire alarms allow for a laissez-faire attitude towards evacuations, however, they can be prevented. Recommended in BS 5839-1:2017, manual call points can be fitted with a protective cover preventing false alarms. Safety Technology International manufacture a range of protective covers, from integral covers to outdoor and sounder models; there are variations to suit all applications. These covers are specifically designed to prevent false alarms whether accidental or malicious.



www.sti-emea.com

Save £1,000s with Cornerstone

Cornerstone, Finance Monthly Insurance Awards 2020 winners, have used their 30 years of expertise to create a Property MOT® platform designed to help Landlords save £1,000s and stop disrepair claims in their tracks. Each Property MOT® is all-encompassing and evaluates respective aspects of a property both internally and externally. The platform consists of Ventilation MOT, Moisture MOT, Insulation MOT and Atmospheric MOT. All surveyed elements align to existing Building Regulations and applicable British Standards assisting landlords in upholding the Health of a structure in line with all current statutory requirements. To book your free consultation or trial, visit the website.



propertymot.uk

Alarm Fatigue?



Safety Technology International




Alarm fatigue occurs when a person becomes desensitised to a fire alarm, due to repeated false alarms - it could have a dangerous delay on a fire evacuation, putting lives at risk.

Preventable with Protective Covers.

www.sti-emea.com

info@sti-emea.com

01527 520 999





Carbon Zero has to start with good data



In this article, Andy Flook, Business Development Director at Sava discusses the struggles housing providers are facing around legislative changes and their data; and addresses the journey of overcoming these issues.

The decarbonisation journey is a daunting one to consider, many organisations are still trying to get to grips with the carbon footprint of their existing housing stock as until they know where they are, it's not worth thinking about where they are going.

It shouldn't come as a surprise when I say we're in a challenging time where we are surrounded by government papers and legislation driving action on tackling fuel poverty with a push for more energy efficient housing stock and maintenance of fair fuel pricing policies, as well as providing funding mechanisms such as ECO or the Green Homes Grant to encourage improvements to properties. The Clean Growth Strategy and the Ten Point Plan has set the scene for the long term aims of improving and decarbonising our working and living environments. All these changes are positive, to some extent, and as an aside from the consistent and justifiable argument that the government are not doing enough, it is without question that most of these legislative drivers are driving behaviour in the right direction. However, what is especially challenging, is how we can pull everything together in a meaningful way to ensure that whilst we are working effectively towards clean growth targets, we are also making appropriate decisions around tackling fuel poverty and ensuring that we are drawing on any funding opportunities such as ECO or the Green Homes Grant to assist with any budgetary constraints for stock improvement activity.

SEEING THE WOOD FOR THE TREES

Housing providers responsible for maintaining properties face a continuous struggle managing their housing data to enable strategic improvement



Andy Flook, Business Development Director at Sava



decisions for their stock as a whole, as well as considering each property and tenant in isolation. There is no silver bullet and whilst specific Asset Management System software exists to assist, ultimately, it is the quality of data available, the effective consolidation of data sets from different sources (e.g. EPCs, Gas Safe Certificates, Condition surveys, Maintenance paperwork etc.), and confidence in the information presented, that is vital in successfully managing and improving housing stock. Software products like Sava's 'Intelligent Energy' can certainly help with planning the improvements and future costings, but it all has to start with a dataset you have belief in.

Gathering accurate insight of the properties by physically going out and inspecting them can often be quite fragmented and not always provide reliable and consistent information. This is predominantly because it is likely the individual visiting the property is capturing the data required as a by-product of the intended reason for the visit. For instance, when a heating engineer visits 7 or 8 properties each day to conduct servicing or maintenance, spending additional time to check the boiler, controls, associated services and overall condition for data purposes is not always at the top of their agenda. App-based data capture has certainly helped the situation, but there is still a lot that can be done, particularly in terms of educating field teams on the importance of capturing accurate and reflective information and understanding the consequences of not doing so.

100 per cent data quality, 100 per cent confidence in the data and 100 per cent effective consolidation of data from multiple sources sounds ideal, however for most of us it is a bit of a holy grail. That said,

much like any huge task, taking baby steps in the right direction and consistently striving to increase our percentages in each of these areas can make the vision a reality. We need to accept it will certainly be a journey and to get started we should be lining up each piece of legislation in front of us and considering all elements appropriately before making any big decisions. During the process, we should start to feel an improved level of confidence in the data from which we act upon. It is certainly still the case that many of the Housing Providers I speak with have not quite established enough confidence to rely solely on utilising their Asset Management Systems for making effective decisions around their stock, and I'm sure there will still be a big pile of spreadsheets acting as an in-house security blanket in the meantime. But the evolving world of big data means we must begin working towards a consolidated, single version of the truth. We do not need to look too far back into the past to recall when a vast array of the incoming information regarding our stock that came from void inspections, inventories, improvement work and so on, was just written down on a piece of paper and often completely illegible. So, on reflection, we have made progress but there is still a lot more progress we can make, and we need to act sooner rather than later to reach the end goal.

If you would like to speak to Sava about how we can help you work towards consolidated data and mapping out your Carbon Zero journey then please get in touch at technology@sava.co.uk. We would be happy to have an informal chat about how we can assist you.

01908 672787 www.sava.co.uk

Air Quality & Ventilation

Airflow Developments Ltd
Tel: 01494 525252
www.airflow.com

HRV Group
Tel: 003 0223 4180
www.hrv-group.com

Nuaire Ltd
Tel: 0292 085 8486
www.nuaire.co.uk

Solarcrest
Tel: 01625 423020
www.solarcrest.co.uk/mvhr

Total Home Environment
Tel: 0845 260 0123
www.totalhome.co.uk

Vent-Axia
Tel: 08448 560 580
www.vent-axia.com

Balconies & Balustrades

Schock
Tel: 0845 2413390
www.schoeck.co.uk

Bathroom Refurbishment

AKW
Tel: 01905 823 299
www.akw-ltd.co.uk/retro-fit

Mira Showers
Tel: 0800 001 4040
www.mirashowers.co.uk/expert

Saniflo
Tel: 020 8842 0033
www.saniflo.co.uk

Building Products

Encasement
Tel: 01733 266 889
www.encasement.co.uk

Coatings & Paints

Wilko Retail Ltd
Tel: 01909 505505
www.wilko.com

Doors, Windows & Glazing

1st Folding Sliding Doors
Tel: 0208 997 2448
www.1stfoldingslidingdoors.co.uk

Astraseal
Tel: 01933 227 233
www.astraseal.co.uk

Canopies UK
Tel: 01254 777002
www.canopiesuk.co.uk

Cooke Brothers
Tel: 01922 740011
www.cookebrothers.co.uk

Intratone
Tel: 0207 0926 613
www.intratone.com/gb

Nationwide Windows & Doors
Tel: 0808 1234 000
www.nationwidewindows.co.uk

Windoor UK
Tel: 0870 0678810
www.windooruk.co.uk

Eco & Green Products

Kedel
Tel: 01282 861 325
www.kedel.co.uk

Finance & Insurance

Premier Guarantee
Tel: 0800 015 5513
www.premierguarantee.co.uk

Seam Capital
Tel: 020 3743 6036
www.seamcapital.co.uk

Floors & Flooring

Designer Contracts
Tel: 01246 854 577
www.designercontracts.com

Gerflor
Tel: 01926 622 600
www.gerflor.co.uk

Floors & Flooring

Mapei UK Ltd
Tel: 0121 508 6970
www.mapei.com

Guttering & Drainage

Yeoman Rainguard
Tel: 0113 279 5854
www.rainguard.co.uk

Heating & Renewable Energy

Baxi Heating UK Ltd (Potterton)
Tel: 0844 871 1525
www.baxi.co.uk

Evinox Energy
Tel: 01372 722277
www.evinox.co.uk

Johnson & Starley Ltd
Tel: 01604 762 881
www.johnsonandstarley.co.uk

Kingspan Environmental Ltd
Tel: 028 3836 4400
www.kingspanenv.com

Mitsubishi Electric Europe BV
Tel: 01707 276 100
www.mitsubishielectric.co.uk

Roofing

A Proctor Group
Tel: 01250 872261
www.proctorgroup.com

Hambleside Danelaw Building Products
Tel: 01327 701 900
www.hambleside-danelaw.co.uk

Ubbink
Tel: 01604 433000
www.ubbink.co.uk

Scaffolding & Safety Equipment

Layher Ltd
Tel: 01462 475100
www.layher.co.uk

Smoke & Fire Protection

Aico
Tel: 01691 664100
www.aico.co.uk

BAFE
Tel: 844 335 0897
www.bafe.org.uk

Envirograf
Tel: 01304 842 555
www.envirograf.com

Fire Protection Association (FPA)
Tel: 01608 812 500
www.thefpa.co.uk

Kidde Fyrnetics
Tel: 01753 685 148
www.kiddefyrnetics.co.uk

SE Controls
Tel: 01543 443060
www.secontrols.com

Whitesales
Tel: 01483 271371
www.whitesales.co.uk

Yeoman Shield
Tel: 0113 279 58 54
www.yeomanshield.com

Software Providers

Kirona
Tel: 01625 585511
www.kirona.com

Street Furniture

Go Plastic Ltd
Tel: 02920 864 095
www.goplastic.co.uk

Tiling & Sealants

British Ceramic Tiles
Tel: 01626 834774
www.britishceramictile.com

Water Hygiene & Sanitation

Vexo International Ltd
Tel: 0207 953 1154
www.vexo-int.com

HOUSING MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

Website

The Housing Management & Maintenance website is an online provider of past and present products and news items. www.housingmmonline.co.uk is a one-stop source for all the latest press releases providing any visitor with access to information about products and services that they may require for their project as well as news relevant to professionals in the social and private rented sectors.

Newsletter

The monthly Housing Management & Maintenance email newsletter is designed to provide you with the latest products and services, direct to your inbox. You can quickly gather a snapshot of information from up to 12 carefully selected companies and easily follow links through to further information on the website or go directly to the company's website. Go to the Housing Management & Maintenance website to subscribe.

Digital Issue

The Housing Management & Maintenance digital issue provides all the same content as the print issue with the added advantage of being instantly available whenever and wherever you have access to the internet. In addition to its ease of access, the Housing Management & Maintenance digital issue gives direct links to advertisers, allowing you to visit a potential supplier's website with the click of a mouse. Subscribe on the Housing Management & Maintenance website.

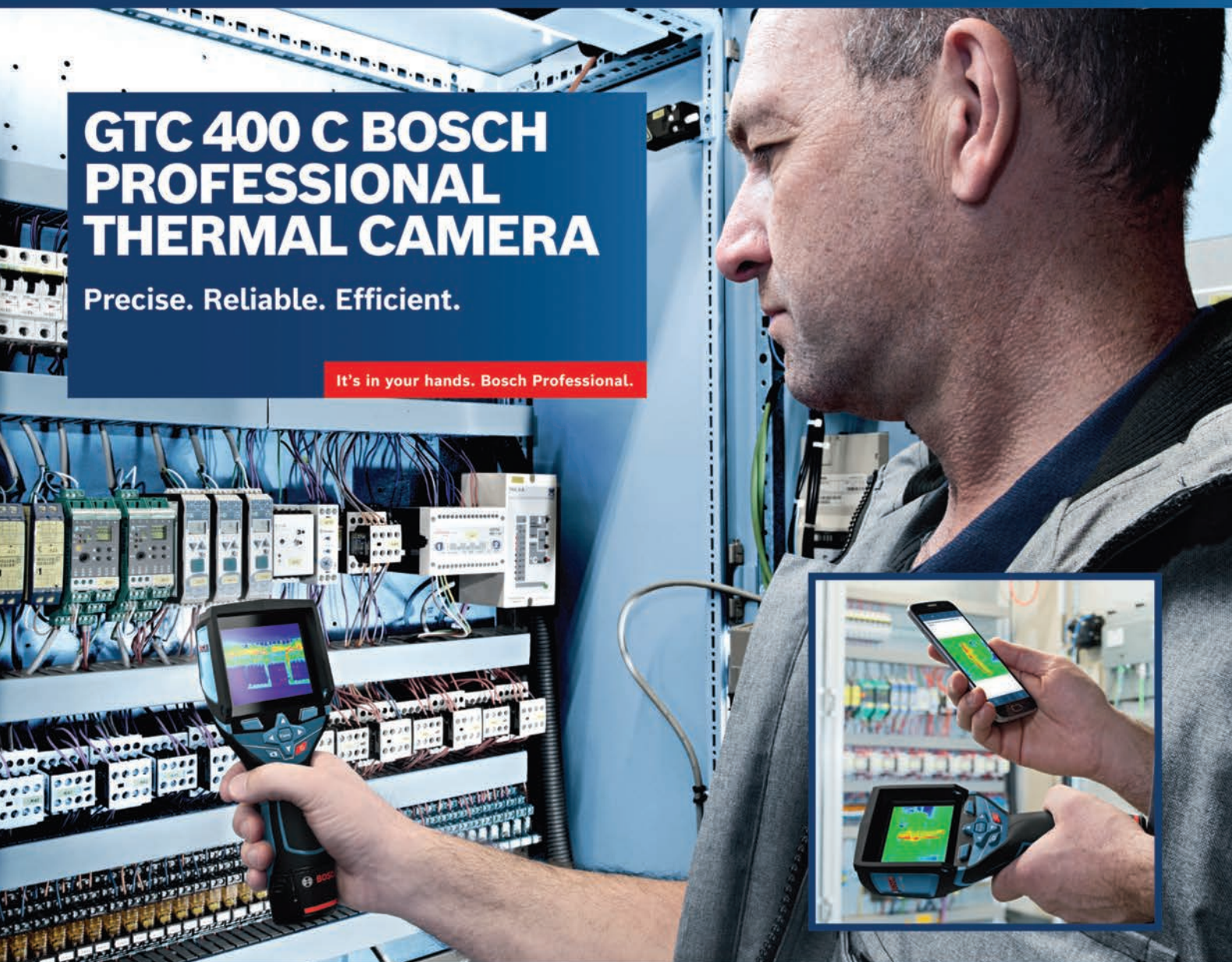


BOSCH

GTC 400 C BOSCH PROFESSIONAL THERMAL CAMERA

Precise. Reliable. Efficient.

It's in your hands. Bosch Professional.



Large 3.5" Display

3.5"

DISPLAY

For clear readability with overlay thermal and real images to clearly understand and contrast findings. Ensures high-quality work conducting tasks like checking in and outflow and checking fuse boards for overheated parts.

Dual Power Source



Flexible power supply using the Bosch 12 V batteries from the blue family or 4 x AA batteries for versatility on site.



Simply Connected

Download thermal measurements via the GTC 400 C's Wi-Fi hotspot to your smartphone or Micro USB to laptop. Communication with clients can be simplified to show markers and highlight findings.



Robust IP 53 Housing

IP53 protection makes the GTC dust and splash proof for added security on site.



www.bosch-professional.com/gb/en/