HOUSING MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

JUN/JUL 2021





Increased help to end rough sleeping

Marked loss of social rent properties

Differences in safety approaches exposed

Huge rise in evictions feared

Grenfell Tower landlord failings revealed





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Editor's comment

Have the lessons of **Grenfell Tower and** other disasters been learnt from?



News Editor

As we near the four-year anniversary since the Grenfell Tower disaster in which an avoidable fire killed 72 wholly innocent people, it is both sobering and appalling that similar disasters are only being narrowly averted on a regular basis. Despite the increased focus and expenditure on safety, fires continue to break out and spread in residential settings. Building owners and managers continue to argue over who will bear the cost of cladding removal while the occupants both fear for their lives and for their financial futures. I don't think many us would have thought four years ago that we would be in a position in June 2021 where dangerous materials are still wrapped around the homes of tens of thousands of people and there is not a public

At the public inquiry into the Grenfell fire, accounts continue to emerge about how the Tenant Management Organisation was slow to react to earlier safety warnings and the preparations for dealing with a major incident, such as a fire, were full of holes because the needs of vulnerable residents, many of them with limited mobility, were not properly taken account of. Too much focus at the TMO and its parent council, the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, was trained on the refurbishment costs and aesthetics such as the colour of the cladding panels, rather than on the safety of the tenants and their families and how to respond to their concerns and complaints. Surely important lessons have already been learnt and are being implemented by social landlords across the country.

Therefore, it was very worrying to hear via a television news crew at ITN that appalling living conditions were being experienced by Croydon Council tenants in south London, where a water leak in a 11 storey tower block was left unrepaired for four years - resulting in tenants' flats being left uninhabitable as a result of extensive mould, dangerous electrics and water running down walls and through ceilings. Once again it appears that tenants were raising their concerns, but their voices were largely ignored by an uncaring and incompetent landlord. It all just sounds too familiar doesn't it, except in this particular case thankfully no-one lost their life. There is only about 12 miles between the Regina Road block in Croydon and the site of Grenfell Tower in west London, but they may as well have been on separate continents.

We cannot continue behaving like this or running our housing services in this way. Tenants are clearly not being treated like valued customers, they are still being treated like they are second class citizens, with only limited rights. In the weeks and months following the Grenfell fire, Government ministers embarked on an extensive series of consultation events and visits, meeting and talking with hundreds of tenants. Out of this we were promised wholescale changes, so the stigma of being a social housing tenant would disappear and be consigned to the dustbin. In its place a modern, respectful relationship would develop. Tenants would be equal partners and given a big say in determining service standards and quality levels. Sadly it appears a lot more work needs to be done if the culture within many social landlords is to be transformed for the good.

The Housing Ombudsman is flexing his muscles and soon a building safety regulator will begin its work to ensure residential properties are safer places to live in, but something is still missing from the housing landscape. In the recent past we had a national housing inspectorate who conducted visits to all social landlords in a similar way to how Ofsted inspects schools. The current social housing regulator conducts checks on the work of housing associations, but these focus much attention on how the organisations are governed and whether they provide good value for money. They do not focus sufficiently on the experiences of tenants or the quality of housing, nor do they apply to local authorities who are landlords. This is an illogical gap and one that badly needs filling. Ministers should take the opportunity in the coming months to ensure that all tenants in the social housing and private rented sectors are protected by an effective inspection regime charged with changing the culture and practices of landlords, backed up by legally enforceable powers. By all means let's try to persuade people to change, but if this does not prove effective then prosecutions need to follow. It may be the only way to guarantee decent standards of housing and proper services are provided and there are no more Grenfell Tower fires, or Regina Road floods.



Patrick Mooney



On the cover...

Project: Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust ModPods Manufacturer: Shelforce, Birmingham Contractor: Just Solutions Ltd, Coventry

See page 31

Research finds big discrepancies in how landlords deliver safety measures

report by Plentific shows wide-ranging discrepancies in how social housing and private landlords deliver on different aspects of resident safety, despite the increased focus on the issue in recent years.

Almost a half of tenants (46 per cent) living in privately rented accommodation in the UK do not believe their gas appliances have been checked in the last 12 months, compared to just 18 per cent of social housing residents. All landlords are required to ensure sufficient attempts are made to inspect gas appliances and failure to do so can result in a fine or even a prison sentence.

While many tenants may be unaware, landlords also have a responsibility for their renters' safety and must put in place measures to ensure that. The research report 'What really matters to residents? Perceptions within UK housing', includes the results of a survey, conducted by 3GEM, of 1,000 social and private housing renters. The research found that in addition to failing to carry out gas safety checks:

- More than a quarter (27 per cent) of renters do not have a smoke alarm on each storey of their home, private renters (32 per cent) are less likely than social (20 per cent) renters to have them;
- Almost half (44 per cent) of all renters do not have a Gas Safety Certificate, significantly higher for private (52) than social (32) renters.
- Just over half (51 per cent) of all renters do not have a carbon monoxide alarm, significantly more likely for private (56) than social (44) renters; and
- Two-thirds (66 per cent) have not seen their home's Electrical Performance Certificate (EPC), which is significantly higher for social (73) than private (61) renters.

Cem Savas, CEO and Co-Founder at Plentific said: "Resident safety should be of paramount importance to landlords and failing to comply with legal requirements could put both residents and landlords at risk. There are a number of complexities involved and landlords must ensure they understand the rules and different requirements of legislation to ensure they do not fall foul of the law."

CONDITION OF RENTAL PROPERTIES

Despite concerns around safety, in general, UK renters are happy with their accommodation. Most respondents (83 per cent) said they feel safe in their homes and local area, while just 7 per cent rate their home as being in poor condition. However, the vast majority (86 per cent) of renters have requested repairs or maintenance from their current landlord at some point. The most common issues are:

- Damage to the garden (26 per cent);
- Damage to the property (24 per cent;)



"Renters should be able to rely on their landlord to provide the repairs and maintenance services that they need and, if they do not, it not only impacts resident satisfaction but also leaves landlords without oversight"

Cem Savas, CEO and Co-Founder at Plentific

- Property maintenance, not due to damage (21 per cent); and
- Electrical issues (20 per cent).

On average, it takes approximately 10 days for requested works to be completed. Private landlords are often much faster at getting the work done, with 40 per cent of private renters having work completed within three days - compared to 33 per cent of social housing residents.

TAKING MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS

Despite landlords completing works relatively quickly in the majority of cases, more than a third (37 per cent) of tenants in the UK have taken it upon themselves to organise contractors to carry out repairs on their behalf, including 20 per cent who had permission from their landlord and around 16 per cent who did not.

The services people are most likely to arrange themselves are plumbers (31 per cent), electricians (31) and handypeople (25). Three quarters (75 per cent) say they have had to resort to taking action

because it was an 'emergency', including a third who felt it was very urgent. Interestingly, social housing residents who have done this are more likely to feel it was not an emergency.

Savas said: "Residents should not be required to act on maintenance issues themselves and the fact that plumbers, electricians and gas engineers are among the most frequently used professionals in these circumstances suggests that something is going wrong.

"Renters should be able to rely on their landlord to provide the repairs and maintenance services that they need and, if they do not, it not only impacts resident satisfaction but also leaves landlords without oversight.

"Without a level of control of the work taking place within their properties, landlords will have little idea of what to expect when they take the property back, which could be a costly mistake."

To download the full report, visit www.plentific.com/en-gb/resident-manager/ residents-at-the-heart-of-the-home/report

Controversy over plans to demolish **Grenfell Tower**

Government plans to demolish Grenfell Tower have been rejected by former tenants and the relatives of residents who lost their lives in the fire, who are putting forward their own plans to turn the building into a "vertical forest".

A group representing people who lost family members are suggesting that nature be allowed to take over the high-rise block in west London, with 72 species of plants covering the structure - one for every person who died in the fire.

In mid May the Government published a letter revealing it was considering if and when Grenfell Tower should be "carefully" taken down. This sparked strong opposition, with some relatives saying they would use legal action to thwart any attempt to demolish the building.

The Government said it had received important advice from structural engineers about the condition of the tower, but it did not share this with the local community.

A favoured alternative option among some relatives is a living tower, based on the vision of Italian architect Stefano Boeri, who has designed numerous "vertical forests" on buildings across Europe.

The idea for Grenfell to follow suit originated from a former resident of the tower who lost a child in the blaze. A spokesperson for the Grenfell Next of Kin group said: "It is a progressive option when compared with knocking the building down and releasing all the pollution and debris and asbestos as well as the huge trauma it will cause everyone."

It was also revealed in May that at least four households who lived in Grenfell Tower at the time of the fire, are still living in temporary accommodation almost four years on from the fire, as Kensington & Chelsea Council has yet to find them suitable permanent housing which is acceptable to the families concerned.



Over 400 homeless households helped into private rented housing in Nottingham

ver the last year, 409 homeless households have been given somewhere to live thanks to a support service provided by Nottingham City Council.

The council's Nottingham Private Rented Assistance Scheme (NPRAS) has worked with individuals and families to find them homes to rent, by providing support and incentives to landlords and homeless people in the city. This includes the following:

- · Helping people to search for accommodation and negotiating with letting agencies and landlords on their behalf;
- · Helping with deposits and rent in advance, carrying out accompanied viewings and applicant checks and referencing;
- Helping with inventory and inspections and checking that every home is legally compliant and safe;
- Offering tenancy training, which prepares people for a new tenancy and includes rights and responsibilities, such as paying rent, how to carry out basic repairs such as unblocking a sink and bleeding radiators, and advice about benefits and how to claim; and
- Supporting landlords in the scheme with a free service that addresses any issues in a tenancy. This includes work to prevent evictions and families being made homeless again, by helping with mediation, rent arrears, disrepair issues, anti-social behaviour and support with Universal Credit.

The team recently helped a mum and three children who found themselves homeless when they had to flee their home from domestic abuse. They were living in a family member's spare room but could not stay there long-term. The team helped the family to search for privately rented housing, which was safely away from threats of violence and they negotiated with landlords on their behalf.

One of the landlords working with NRPAS longterm had an empty house and was able to offer this family a tenancy. The team helped the landlord by carrying out all the paperwork, including right-torent checks, helping to pay towards the rent in advance and issuing a written bond in lieu of a cash deposit, making sure that benefit claims were up and running so that rent would be paid.

Councillor Linda Woodings, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Heritage, said: "There are many reasons why people may become homeless.

Increasingly we're finding working families are having to live temporarily in hostels and hotels because they've been unable to find a privately rented home due to repeatedly failing credit checks. Our team works to make sure that people and families can move into safe and affordable homes and we support landlords to have a smooth tenancy."

The team is looking for more landlords to house homeless individuals and families, if a landlord would like to get involved in the scheme then they need to contact the NPRAS team. More information and how to contact NPRAS is here: www.npras.co.uk/



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Grenfell landlord criticised at inquiry for slow response times and failure to address safety issues

he landlord of Grenfell Tower took five years to replace a smoke ventilation system that had suffered "catastrophic failure" in a fire in 2010 that spread smoke across 11 storeys and injured three people.

The inquiry heard the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation was told by the London Fire Brigade that the ventilation system needed a full test after it failed, causing injuries to residents

But the smoke extractor was not replaced until the refurbishment and only after the KCTMO admitted in 2015 that the fire alarm and ventilation system were "beyond economic repair". The system broke down again six days before the fatal fire on 14 June 2017 that claimed 72 lives. Many of the residents died from the inhalation of smoke and toxic gases.

Shahid Ahmed was chair of the Grenfell Tower leaseholders' association and he told the inquiry that for years before the fire, the TMO was unresponsive to resident concerns about safety, and he strongly criticised its complaints process.

"I thought the complaints procedure was a way for the TMO to be judge, jury and executioner," he said. "Their strategy was to refer me to the complaints procedure and exhaust GTLA. I felt their replies never gave sincere attention to GTLA's serious and grave concerns in Grenfell Tower. The complaints I made never achieved anything. That was why I repeatedly requested that Grenfell Tower be subjected to an independent health and safety review in 2017."

POOR ATTITUDES

"I was sure that they were not taking the risk of another fire seriously," Mr Ahmed told the inquiry. "I was scared for all of the residents.

In spring 2017 Mr Ahmed drafted a statement, with the help of a barrister, to the Housing Ombudsman and others titled "Health and safety and serious fire risk hazard". It raised concerns about gas pipes being installed in stairways, the safety of the evacuation system and lift breakdowns. In March 2017 the TMO again refused his request for independent safety checks on the tower.

"The real problem with Grenfell Tower was not the age or state of the building, it was the attitude of the council and the TMO."

The inquiry also heard about problems with the TMO's communications with non-English speakers in the tower. There were very few translation requests for tenants' newsletters, even though some contained important fire safety guidance.

The inquiry was told that 52 of the block's 120 flats had disabled occupants. On the night of the

Shahid Ahmed was chair of the Grenfell Tower leaseholders' association and he told the inquiry that for years before the fire, the TMO was unresponsive to resident concerns about safety, and he strongly criticised its complaints process

fire a TMO document only listed 10 disabled residents. Fifteen of the 37 residents classed as vulnerable in the block were among the 72 who

The TMO did not create escape plans for disabled residents and instead relied on telling people to "stay put" despite fires in 2015 and 2016 at nearby tower blocks, Adair Tower and Shepherds Court which both required evacuations.

Grenfell expert witness claims the fire risks of cladding used on the tower were well known

An expert witness to the Grenfell Tower inquiry has said the combustible nature of the panels used on the high rise block's façade should have been well known to contractors working on the refurbishment.

An experienced facade engineer, Jonathan Sakula listed 20 serious cladding fires around the world in the years preceding the June 2017 disaster that people in the industry knew about. Sakula said the construction industry had displayed a "head in the sand view" and "a failure of imagination" because the fires had not led to "great loss of life".

He told the inquiry: "The combustibility of these panels was, in my opinion, well known in the industry, particularly since the UAE fires in 2012 to 2016."

Regarding the plastic foam insulation used behind the panels on Grenfell, he added: "In my experience, the reasonably competent

Jonathan Sakula listed 20 serious cladding fires around the world in the years preceding the June 2017 disaster that people in the industry knew about

cladding contractor would have known that they were combustible."

"The UAE fires were reported at the time as being specifically exacerbated by the ACM [aluminium composite material] cladding," Sakula said. "Those involved in the cladding industry would, or at least should, have been aware of the dangers inherent in using this type of cladding on

"As a general observation, I would expect the manufacturers of relevant materials to have been aware of these fires, and their implications, to a greater degree than cladding contractors. I would expect such manufacturers to draw to the attention of their customers the relevant risks."

Sakula said the main reason for using the combustible plastic-core cladding panels used on Grenfell was their cheapness compared with fireretardant alternatives, and because they were lighter, which made them easier to install. The inquiry has previously heard that the saving from switching to the cheaper combustible panels was just under £300,000 on the £10million refurbishment.

The inquiry has also heard that builders and designers relied on certificates about the performance of the plastic materials, which in some cases were obtained through manipulation of test systems, and that they believed their use complied with building regulations.











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400,000 private sector tenants in danger of being evicted

ver 400,000 private tenants may be in significant rent arrears by the end of 2021 and facing the threat of losing their homes when the suspension of eviction proceedings is lifted according to a report by the London School of Economics and Political Science.

The report uses the Government's projection of unemployment rising to 6.5 per cent this year - and the likely impact that this will have on private tenants and their ability to pay their rent - to inform this calculation.

Currently around ten per cent of private tenants are thought to be unemployed – this is double the average unemployment rate - and six to seven per cent of them appear to be in arrears. This is around twice the proportion of a 'normal' year.

Many tenants are also at risk because their Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs) have not been renewed. Data from the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA) suggest that only around 20 per cent of landlords have issued new tenancies to existing tenants, while over 30 per cent have allowed ASTs to become Statutory Periodic Tenancies - short-term rolling contracts of usually one month.

As a result, only tenants with a current AST and who are up to date with their rent or are less than eight weeks in arrears, are safe from being evicted. This means that large numbers of tenants are likely to feel increasingly insecure.

However, large numbers of tenants will not immediately find themselves homeless because, even when eviction suspensions are relaxed, the courts will not be able to cope with the huge volume of cases. At the moment the courts are struggling to deal with egregious cases involving anti-social behaviour, domestic violence or very long-standing

rent arrears in a timely manner.

Before the pandemic it was taking between 10 and 12 months for arrears cases to reach the repossession stage. This has risen to almost twice that long. What happens when eviction notices are enabled is totally unclear - but if nothing specific is done it could take years to return to normality. Meantime many landlords will be receiving no rent for months on end.

PROTECTIONS IN OUESTION

Homelessness and rough sleeping in the time of Covid says that greater protections need to be put in place to protect private tenants and landlords. This includes immediately stopping 'no fault' (Section 21) evictions while speeding up court proceedings for extreme cases of failure to pay the rent - such as being over six months in arrears.

Professor Christine Whitehead, Emeritus Professor of Housing Economics at LSE and coauthor of the report, said: "Most evictions remain on hold until after the 31 May. Depending on what the government announces will happen after this, many tenants could be vulnerable to being asked to leave their homes.

"However, we do not expect an immediate surge in evictions since, in many cases landlords and tenants have found ways of coping through rent holidays and lower rents during the crises, and some renters have moved in with family or friends."

The report recommends that the Government should support greater investment in services that will help people stay in their homes including Discretionary Housing Payments for those claiming Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

More help should also be provided to tenants without access to UC but who are in rent arrears. Currently around ten per cent of private tenants are thought to be unemployed - this is double the average unemployment rate – and six to seven per cent of them appear to be in arrears. This is around twice the proportion of a 'normal' year

This could be through low interest rate loans for those who are less than six months behind on their

So far nothing has been done to help landlords facing significant losses from rent arrears. Already a third of NLRA members say they have lost more than 10 percent of their rental income and NRLA data also suggests over 30 per cent of landlords are thinking of reducing their investment in rental properties or leaving the market altogether.

Dr Nancy Holman, Associate Professor of Urban Planning and co-author of the report, said: "Unfortunately, these solutions are partial. In a crisis of this magnitude there are no easy answers. Even if there is a rapid transition back to normality, the long-term arrears and loss of creditworthiness among tenants and loss of income and confidence for landlords will continue to scar both individuals and the private rented sector for many

Allowing more pets in lets

Less than one in ten of private rentals are petfriendly properties but a new survey from Direct Line has shown that nearly half of landlords back the Government changes to allow 'well-behaved' pets in rental flats and houses.

A new standard tenancy agreement template announced by the Government earlier this year aims to prevent landlords from issuing blanket bans on tenants with pets, for 'no good reason'.

Instead, consent for pets is the new default position and landlords will have to object in writing within 28 days of a written pet request from a tenant and provide them with a good reason for refusing consent.

But the proposal has hit various roadblocks with the pandemic slowing down Government business and letting agents have largely failed to adopt the

new model tenancy agreement which allows pets.

The MP who proposed the changes, Andrew Rossindell spoke out to encourage uptake of the changes saying "An animal is a living, breathing creature with feelings and attachment to its owner. It's not just traumatic for the owner if they [lose] their pet but can you imagine the trauma for the animal, particularly dogs, being taken away from the owner that they love and who cares for them.

"I think the current rules are cruel, they lead to horrible situations and I really hope that what I'm promoting here will lead to a better society and a better way of treating both humans and animals."

One pet friendly landlord is supporting the changes and encouraging other landlords to adopt the scheme. Opening their first pet-friendly property, Vantage Point, in September 2016, the

London-based apartment rental company Essential Living believes pets are a vital part of a home and a family.

Nick Woodward, Head of Lettings at Essential Living explained: "Unlike many other landlords and letting agencies, we have a flexible pet policy. We'll sometimes ask tenants to attend a 'pet interview', where we will meet their pet just to double-check that it will fit in with the rest of the community and that it's veterinary records are up to date.

"Since April, we have seen a huge increase of over 200 per cent in people viewing our 'pet-friendly' pages online compared to last year. Not only do dogs encourage daily exercise but they also help reduce stress and prevent loneliness during these isolated times. We are glad to have continued permitting dog-friendly access, but as more people have taken up pet ownership during lockdown, we hope to see more landlords weighing up the benefits."



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40 per cent of leaseholders unclear what their service charge pays for

esearch has found the majority of leasehold homeowners consider service charges unfair, with a lack of transparency around how they are spent also a prominent issue.

Along with ground rents, service charges will be paid by most leaseholders to cover the cost of maintaining the building in which their property is located. They can also be charged by the owner of a building for any work required to maintain the value of the property. While there is no cap on what can be charged, the owner or landlord does have to prove the cost is justified in line with any work carried out.

Generally, service charges will cover the ongoing upkeep of a building with multiple residences, including but not limited to the cleaning of communal areas, heating the building, staff costs such as a concierge, building insurance, maintenance and repairs and groundskeeping.

This cost can vary regionally and Keller's research shows that the average service charge will cost leasehold homeowners in excess of a thousand pounds in London (£1,900), the South East (£1,301), the East of England (£1,182) and the South West (£1,121), while in the North East it averages only around £650.

So while service charges can be hefty they do play an important role in maintaining

Do you think it's fair to charge service charges for the upkeep of leasehold homes?

Answer	Respondents
No	74%
Yes	26%

leasehold homes and it is perhaps surprising that Keller Williams found that 74 per cent of leasehold homeowners do not think it is fair to

However, the research also shows this could be down to how their money is spent, rather than the requirement of paying to upkeep the building itself. A huge 96 per cent of leasehold homeowners said they would like to see more transparency on how their service is calculated and why they are paying the required sum.

CEO of Keller Williams UK, Ben Taylor, commented: "Service charges are an integral part of maintaining the wider community areas and

Do you think there should be more transparency on how service charges are charged and spent?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	96%
No	4%

standards of living in many leasehold buildings and so it's quite surprising that so many leasehold homeowners believe them to be unfair.

"Of course, this attitude seems to stem from a lack of transparency on how they are spent, rather than having to pay them in the first place. I think many appreciate that their service charge could increase should there be a substantial maintenance job required. However, this friction point between leaseholder and freeholder could be greatly reduced by placing an emphasis on educating and informing leaseholds as to how their money is being spent."

Housing Review for 2021 highlights huge fall in number of social rented homes

The supply of social rented homes - council housing and housing association homes let at genuinely affordable 'social' rents - has fallen by almost 210,000 in England between 2012 and 2020, according to the Chartered Institute of Housing's annual UK Housing Review 2021.

Despite 70,000 new social rented homes being built, over 280,000 have either been sold, converted to higher rents, or demolished since April 2012, creating a net loss of 209,351. The two biggest reasons for this being right to buy sales (121,000) and conversions of letting to higher ('affordable')

The review warns that the position is likely to get worse due to the pandemic. Just 10,531 affordable homes of all types were started under grant-funded programmes in the first half of 2020/21, compared with 17,980 for the equivalent period in 2019/20.

The Government has promised 32,000 new social rented homes outside London in the next five years, but this is just 4,000 more than in the previous five years and will not replace future losses through Right to Buy sales.

Gavin Smart, chief executive of the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) said:

"The Review shows the drastic effects that policy changes over the past few years have had on the supply of homes at lower 'social' rents. CIH has called for the investment needed to build 90,000 homes per year at social rents to address the backlog of housing need that has built up. It has also asked the Government to suspend Right to Buy to help deal with the housing crisis, which the pandemic has only made worse."

As in previous years, the UK Housing Review features chapters on a variety of housing-related issues written by leading analysts. It contains statistics and analysis about housing, households, and welfare benefits across the UK and internationally, making it the prime source of information and analysis for all concerned with housing policy and finance.

Mark Stephens, professor of urban studies at the University of Glasgow and one of the Review's main authors said: "Our work shows that only 11 per cent of new 'affordable' homes built in England are at



genuinely affordable social rents, compared with nearly 70 per cent in Scotland and over 80 per cent

"In contrast to England, Scotland's social rented stock has grown by 25,000 over the last five years. Scotland and Wales have both halted the Right to Buy. The Review makes clear that building social rented homes addresses the most urgent housing needs and is the best use of public money."

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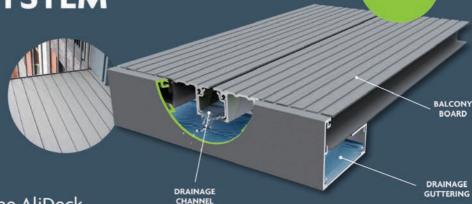
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Lukewarm response given to Queens Speech by CIH

The main professional body for those working in the social housing sector has given a mixed response to the Government's planned legislation programme for the next Parliamentary session.

In a briefing to its members the Chartered Institute of Housing said: "There is much to be positive about in the Queen's Speech including the establishment of a new Building Safety Regulator and the commitment to enhance the rights of those who rent." But it then went on to highlight a range of shortcomings.

"While the proposals for a tenancy reform package are good news, we will be pressing the Government not to delay bringing forward the end of Section 21 'no fault' evictions, which it already consulted on in July 2019.

"A firm commitment to a social housing bill was notably lacking and it is disappointing that measures to address the long-standing issue of social care funding and reform were not included. Decent housing also has an important role as a route to supporting social care reform.

"The heavy focus on home ownership, while unsurprising, is also disappointing when we know how pressing the need is for affordable homes across the country of all tenures (particularly homes at social rents). There was also a heavy emphasis in the speech on boosting housing numbers."

The CIH recognises that building new homes is important, but it stresses the quality of new homes and neighbourhoods is as important and has a vital part to play in supporting healthy, independent living.

The briefing continued with "The planning bill will have significant implications for affordable housing providers and the provision of affordable housing given the proposal to replace S106 contributions with a new Levy, as we expressed in our consultation response to The Planning White Paper.

"CIH will continue to urge government to invest in social rented homes and to ensure that people on low incomes have the help with housing costs they need. We will also continue calling for government to take action to tackle the acute shortage of accessible homes and to require the principles of healthy homes and neighbourhoods in the planning and supply of new homes."



Number of second homes in UK rises to almost half a million

he number of second homes in the UK has risen by 30 per cent over the last five years, to a record high of 495,000 according to an analysis of official data by Houst, a leading flexible lettings service.

The vast majority (451,000 of the 495,000) or 91 per cent of the second homes are located in England. Houst says that rising incomes, property's continued draw as an asset class due to steadily rising house prices, and the shift to more flexible and remote working, are likely to have been the main reasons behind the rise in second home ownership over the period.

The rise could also have been driven in part by the reduced value of the pound, making it more cost-effective to purchase property in the UK rather than in Europe, for example, that acts primarily as a holiday home.

Houst explains that the last decade has seen a boom in the use of technology-driven property lettings companies, such as Airbnb and Booking.com, which have made it more attractive and far easier for second home owners to generate income from second residences.

Tom Jones, Co-Founder and Chief Commercial Officer of Houst, says: "The likes of Airbnb and other platforms have revolutionised second home ownership and have certainly been one of the main driving forces behind second home ownership. Owners are now able to generate income from their second home extremely easily, almost all vear round."

"One of the things, however, that second home owners still struggle with is the administration behind second homes. With staycations on the rise - even pre-pandemic - it's almost like a second full-time job. Owners are constantly checking

emails and enquiries from all the different platforms, ensuring the property is clean and ready for renters, and always looking ahead for opportunities to let out their properties."

Houst says that the Coronavirus pandemic, the time period of which the latest data from the MHCLG does not cover, presents some interesting questions for the future of second home ownership

On one hand, many people have seen reduced incomes and job opportunities, which could have triggered some to sell their second properties to boost cash reserves. Additionally, wealthier, older members of the workforce have opted to take early retirement and move into second homes in the countryside, choosing to sell – rather than rent out - their primary residences often close to larger cities and business hubs.

On the other hand, businesses have been forced into adopting work-from-home procedures, which may have encouraged some to move into their second homes, often in the countryside, to see the disruption through. Houst says that the last 12 months, and many business' commitment to part or even full-time remote working in the future, could have convinced some to invest in second homes, retaining often more city-based properties for use only when they are required to attend the office.

Tom Jones continues: "The restrictions on travel over the past year will have seen many second home owners debate the next steps for their second homes. Those that decide to continue letting properties - rather than selling or moving into them on a more permanent basis – will need to ensure they're squeezing every pound out of their property."



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Number of overseas landlords reaches a five-year high

he number of overseas landlords owning property in the UK has hit a five-year high of 184,000 - marking an increase of 19 per cent over the last five years according to residential property market experts Ludlowthompson.

The rise in the number of overseas landlords shows that Brexit has not been a deterrent for those looking to invest in UK property. In fact, many overseas investors have capitalised on the drop in the value of Sterling between the EU referendum and the Brexit deal to add to their portfolios. Favourable exchange rates have meant foreign buyers were able to get more for their money, opening the market up to a wider pool of investors.

Ludlowthompson says despite tax changes, including a two per cent Stamp Duty surcharge that will increase costs for overseas investors, property in the UK will remain an attractive long-term investment prospect for investors from many overseas jurisdictions.

The UK property market has traditionally been resilient in times of economic uncertainty and a structural shortage of properties has kept rental yields relatively strong.

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of Hong Kong buyers of UK property. This is expected to rise following the launch of the new visa for Hong Kong British National Overseas passport holders.

The reputation of schools and universities in the UK has also benefitted the property market. Ludlowthompson says many overseas landlords



who have purchased property have done so to provide accommodation for their children who were studying in the UK.

Overseas landlords have been benefitting from the Stamp Duty holiday, which has enabled buyers to save as much as £15,000 on properties worth up to £500,000. The holiday is set to run until June 30th after which point Stamp Duty will be reintroduced on properties worth £250,000, and will apply to properties over the £125,000 threshold from September 30th. While overseas landlords have benefited from the holiday, from April 1st they will be liable to pay a 2 per cent Stamp Duty surcharge on property investments.

Stephen Ludlow, Chairman at Ludlowthompson says: "Fears that Brexit might dampen the appeal of UK property amongst overseas investors have been unfounded, with the number of overseas landlords reaching a record high."

"Many canny investors took advantage of the temporary drop in Sterling's value to purchase properties in the UK and benefited from both an increase in property prices and a recovery in sterling. Investments by overseas landlords into UK buy-to-let properties has ensured that there has been a steady stream of capital into that sector, which has kept the quality of rental stock far higher than would have been the case with these investors."

About 700,000 tenants served with 'no-fault' eviction notices

An estimated 700,000 private tenants have been served with "no-fault" eviction notices since the start of the pandemic, despite a Government promise to scrap them.

Section 21 eviction notices are still in use and ministers are facing calls to deliver on their promise from a new coalition for reform of renters' rights, which includes the charities Generation Rent, Crisis and Shelter, as well as Citizens Advice and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

The renters' reform bill, which promised to abolish no-fault evictions, was announced in the last Queen's speech in December 2019 but has not vet been delivered.

Of private renters who responded to a Survation survey, eight per cent had received a Section 21 notice from their landlord since March 2020, which would represent 694,000 private renters across England. A further 32 per cent were concerned they would be asked to move out this year.

"It is a massive relief and hugely welcome that the government has decided to drop its proposal to massively loosen the duty for developers to build affordable homes."

Tom Fyans, the deputy chief executive of CPRE

Polly Neate, the chief executive of Shelter, said private renters have "had a bad deal for too long living at the mercy of a broken and unfair system". "As we emerge from this crisis, Boris Johnson must keep his promise to bring the bill forward and give every renter the security and rights they need,"

Campaigners have welcomed a U-turn by the Government on one aspect of affordable housing policy. Ministers have signalled that they will not raise the minimum threshold at which developers of new housing estates are

required to provide affordable units from 10 to 40 or 50 homes, as originally proposed in draft planning reforms.

Tom Fyans, the deputy chief executive of CPRE, said: "Rural communities are facing unprecedented pressure when it comes to housing - rising house prices and low rates of affordable housebuilding are only making this situation more precarious. So, it is a massive relief and hugely welcome that the government has decided to drop its proposal to massively loosen the duty for developers to build affordable homes."







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Support for tenants extended but with reduced notice periods

The Government has extended the protection from eviction to October, but has reduced the notice periods which renters must be given to end their tenancies from six to four months.

The current ban on bailiff-enforced evictions, introduced as an emergency measure during the first lockdown, was due to end on 31 May.

Bailiffs have been asked not to carry out an eviction if anyone living in the property has COVID-19 symptoms or is self-isolating.

As part of a phased approach to return protections to pre-pandemic levels, the evictions ban has been extended until 1st October subject to public health advice and progress with implementing the Roadmap.

The measures will ensure renters continue to be protected with longer notice periods over the coming months, while allowing landlords to access justice - 45 per cent of private landlords own just one property and their income streams are highly vulnerable to rent arrears.

Housing Minister Christopher Pincher said: "From the beginning of the pandemic, we have taken unprecedented action to protect renters and help keep them in their homes. As restrictions are eased in line with the Roadmap out of lockdown, we will ensure tenants continue to be supported with longer notice periods, while also balancing the need for landlords to access justice."

Courts will continue to prioritise the most serious cases, such as those involving fraud or anti-social behaviour, with many of the evictions waiting to be enforced when the ban lifts predating the pandemic.

In May the Government announced that a White Paper will be published in the autumn that will set out proposals to create a fairer private rented sector that works for both landlords and tenants.

This includes proposals for the abolition of Section 21 'no fault' evictions to give tenants greater security and a new 'lifetime deposit' to ease the burden when moving house.



Tenants invited to play lead role in council's drive to improve its housing services

roydon Council in south London has pledged to deliver major improvements to ✓ its housing services including giving council tenants a much greater say in how services are run, after a highly critical report on appalling living conditions within a high-rise block were broadcast on national TV.

A leaking water supply pipe into the 11 storey block on Regina Road, in South Norwood left tenants living in mould ridden flats with water running down internal walls, through ceilings and collecting in puddles on sodden carpets. Rooms within flats were left uninhabitable and electrical supplies were left in a dangerous condition. Tenants' personal possessions were ruined.

After the ITN broadcast in late March, the Council commissioned an independent investigation from Ark Consultancy. The consultants' report exposed a wider series of flaws and shortcomings in service delivery, including a poor culture within the housing service, as well as weak performance management and poor use of data and intelligence.

The water leak had initially been reported four years beforehand, with tenants regularly reporting problems within the block but their complaints were poorly handled. The Regina Road block also suffered from roof leaks.

The council re-housed a number of the worst affected tenants and has begun a series of stock condition surveys on all its high-rise blocks, as upto 25 tower blocks across the borough dating from the mid 1960s to early 1970s, are understood to suffer similar building design and component faults. More

widely, repairs and complaints procedures are also being reviewed and improved as a priority.

The council is drawing up a programme of improvement works to make its housing services fit for purpose and setting up a Housing Improvement Board to oversee this work. The board is to include tenant representatives and an independent chair, will hold regular meetings in public and examine the council's housing services, both in terms of resident satisfaction and overall performance.

Existing vacancies and skills gaps are being addressed immediately to boost service delivery and two new specialist teams are being set up to improve both investment in housing stock and performance including repairs, complaints handling and contract management. Alison Knight who was previously Executive Director, Neighbourhoods at Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council has been appointed as interim executive director to oversee the changes.

Councillor Hamida Ali, leader of the council, said: "Ark's report raises some very concerning issues about our housing services, and on behalf of the whole council I apologise to the residents who we've let down.

"We fully accept the report's findings, and although we have taken urgent steps to address immediate issues highlighted at Regina Road, it is clear we must do much more to improve things for all our residents.

"This will be much more than repairing bricks and mortar; we must, most importantly, also repair our relationship with our council residents, build back their trust and make sure they are listened to and heard as we make these changes.

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Kent teenager was left to live in tent during Covid crisis

Kent teenager was left to sofa surf and live in a tent for almost two months by Medway Council during the Covid pandemic after his family was left homeless, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has found.

The Ombudsman determined the council missed at least five opportunities to house the teenager and his mother during the summer of 2020, but instead they were left to sleep rough.

When the mother first approached the council, it decided it had no duty to house her and her 16-year-old son under its homelessness obligations. However, it did place the family in temporary accommodation because of its child protection duties.

The family became homeless in the middle of July 2020 when the children's services department asked them to leave their temporary accommodation. In making the family homeless, the council failed to consider Government guidance in force during the lockdown, which asked landlords to work with renters who may experience hardship as a result of the pandemic.

When they left the temporary accommodation, the family had nowhere to go. The teenager called the council saying he and his mother were sleeping in a tent. The mother continued to contact the council throughout July. She filled in a change of circumstances form at the beginning of August explaining she and her son had been on the streets for a few weeks. There is no record of the council taking any action upon receipt of the form.

The family became homeless in the middle of July 2020 when the children's services department asked them to leave their temporary accommodation. In making the family homeless, the council failed to consider Government guidance in force during the lockdown, which asked landlords to work with renters who may experience hardship as a result of the pandemic

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

At the beginning of September, the mother contacted the council with the help of Shelter to say she and her son had been homeless since 13 July. The council told the mother it would not provide her with temporary accommodation and she should find her own private rented accommodation.

The mother contacted the Ombudsman on 8 September. The investigator asked the council to make an urgent review of the case. The family were moved to bed and breakfast on 11 September. During the investigation, the council offered them a two-bedroomed property.

Michael King, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, said: "The council in this case failed in its duties to a vulnerable teenager who was sleeping rough and it missed numerous opportunities to ensure he was safe. I do, however, welcome the swift action the council took when we

alerted it to the family's situation, and hope the training it has agreed to provide to relevant staff should ensure cases such as this do not happen in future."

In this case the council has agreed to apologise to the teenager and his mother, and pay them £1,500 each to reflect the distress and hardship they were caused. It will also pay the mother an additional £200 to reflect the fact she was not listened to when she reported being homeless on a number of occasions.

The council has also agreed to decide whether the teenager is owed any duty or service under the Children Act and provide that service, and it should also consider if it owes him any duty under the Housing Act. It will also decide whether the mother is owed the full housing duty and issue her with a written decision on her homelessness application.

Welfare system's fraud and error rates at record high

Fraud and errors on the main Universal Credit benefit have reached record levels with a staggering £8.4billion lost in 2020/21, up from £4.6bn the previous year.

According to figures from the Department of Work and Pensions the rise is almost entirely due to fraud while the number of people claiming UC has doubled to six million since the start of the pandemic. Overall more than £200 billion is being paid out annually in benefits.

Officials say the increased level of fraud is a result of more people applying for the benefit and the monetary value of each fraudulent case rising, rather than a higher proportion of people engaging

The overall level of fraud and error across the whole of the benefits system increased by almost two-thirds, from 2.4 last year to 3.9 per cent, the highest ever reported rate. But the fraud rate on Universal Credit increased by more than 50 per cent over the past year and now stands at 14.5 per cent.

Cases of fraud vary from individuals claiming money to which they are not entitled (such as not declaring income from other sources) to criminal gangs stealing people's details to apply for advance payments of UC. It is believed the majority of identity thefts affect vulnerable tenants on lowincomes, who then face the threat of eviction if they rack up debts and cannot pay their rent.

Despite the huge increase in fraud, the DWP still says the vast majority of claims are genuine and the benefit provides a vital safety net for people in need.

In response to a massive increase in claims at the beginning of lockdown, in March and April

It is believed the majority of identity thefts affect vulnerable tenants on low-incomes, who then face the threat of eviction if they rack up debts and cannot pay their rent

the Government relaxed some admin rules identity checks were processed on-line and some information such as rent levels were taken on trust.







Two councils under investigation by Ombudsman for complaint procedure failures

he Housing Ombudsman confirmed it has issued 10 complaint-handling failure orders, part of its new armoury of powers given to the Ombudsman last year, in the first three months

All of the social landlords involved have complied with the new orders with the exception of Lambeth and Enfield councils in London, which means they are now within the Ombudsman's formal remit for investigation.

Since January the Housing Ombudsman has had the power to issue complaint-handling failure orders in circumstances where a landlord is failing to comply with the Ombudsman's new Complaint Handling Code.

"The purpose of complaint handling failure orders is to ensure that a landlord's complaint handling process is accessible, consistent and enables the timely progression of complaints for residents," the Ombudsman's report said.

To date, the Ombudsman said it has issued the orders either because of "unreasonable delays" in the landlord progressing the complaints process, or because of delays in providing complaints information requested from them.

In the case of Lambeth Council, the Ombudsman said: "Following numerous requests for the landlord to respond to the complaint an order was issued. This was not complied with and we decided the case had exhausted the landlord's internal complaints procedure." In the case of Enfield, the ombudsman said the council did respond to the order, but this was outside the date of compliance.

The new orders are part of wider changes to the Housing Ombudsman scheme that were first implemented last year and were laid out in the Government's post-Grenfell Social Housing White Paper.C hanges include the new Complaint



All of the social landlords involved have complied with the new orders with the exception of Lambeth and Enfield councils in London, which means they are now within the Ombudsman's formal remit for investigation

Handling Code, which social landlords are required to self-assess themselves against. The Ombudsman has also begun publishing the details of cases it has determined on its website, alongside data on individual landlords' complaint volumes, categories and outcomes.

Housing Ombudsman Richard Blakeway said: "It is crucial residents are listened to when they make a complaint and that landlords' procedures are focused on timely resolution, not putting residents off complaining or a series of stages in order to reach the ombudsman.

"Our code sets clear expectations for efficient, effective and accessible complaint-handling and we issue orders where landlords fail to meet them.

These orders can now be made whilst the complaint is still within the landlord's procedure. In most cases where we issued handling failure orders, the landlord responded well and sought to resolve the complaint, making clear the benefit of these orders to earlier resolution.

"However, it is disappointing that in two cases landlords did not comply, and we have taken these complaints into formal investigation. We received some really positive feedback from residents about the difference these orders have made to their experience of the complaints process, and I hope this report will promote transparency, accountability and learning across the social housing sector."

Safety crisis sees social landlords increase maintenance spending

Social housing landlords have increased repairs and maintenance spending by 15 per cent over the last three years in response to the post Grenfell building safety crisis, according to the Regulator of Social Housing in England.

The regulator's annual value for money report showed that capitalised major repairs, total repairs and maintenance costs increased between 2017 and 2020 to reach £5.7bn.

The median headline Social Housing Cost metric has increased by 3.8 per cent to £3,830 per unit

annually. Overall, more than half of the sector reported an increase in repairs and maintenance spend of greater than 5 per cent, which the regulator said was attributable to higher building safety spend and health and safety compliance costs.

The regulator also said there has been a "significant increase" in investment into existing and new social stock over the past three years. Total reinvestment in new or existing social housing properties increased from £9.6bn in 2019 to £12.2bn in 2020.

Elsewhere the regulator noted that the one per cent rent reduction, introduced in 2016, continues to have an impact on the sector's operating margin for its social housing lettings activity. Over the past five years, the margin has fallen from 32.1 per cent in 2016 to 27.8 in 2020.

Fiona MacGregor, chief executive of the regulator, said: "At a time when registered providers face a growing range of competing pressures and will be forced to make difficult choices, the importance of focusing on value for money has never been more important. These hard choices and trade-offs will demand informed strategic decision-making and will benefit from transparent and open conversations with key stakeholders."

English councils get further £203m to help rough sleepers off the streets



ore rough sleepers in England will be helped off the streets and into housing as part of a £203m Government funded programme, although campaigners have warned the extra money "will only

The new funding is an 81 per cent increase on the £112m provided last year and is part of £750m pledged to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping this year, as part of the drive to end rough sleeping by the end of this Parliament.

The Government says its Rough Sleeping Initiative has already reduced rough sleeping by nearly a third compared to areas that have not taken part in the programme. Up to 14,500 beds and 2,700 support staff will be funded through the new investment, Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick said.

Overall 2,688 people were estimated to be sleeping rough on any single night in England last autumn. Mr Jenrick said the money will be given to councils, charities and other local groups to support shelters and specialist mental health or addiction services, with the aim of getting rough sleepers off

But homeless charity Crisis warned that while additional funding was welcome it was insufficient. Jon Sparkes, chief executive of Crisis, said the work in the past year to get people off the streets has been "vital". "But the number of people helped by this funding will only scratch the surface," he added.

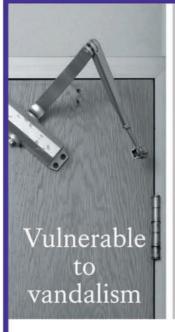
The announcement "falls short" for those with multiple support needs who require specialist help, like housing first Mr Sparkes said, adding long-term solutions were needed. "Without such sustained support, those helped off the streets today risk returning to them tomorrow."

The number of people sleeping rough across England has fallen for the third year in a row, and by 37 per cent in the last year alone. The Rough Sleeping Initiative was launched in 2018 to help local areas provide tailored services to those living on the streets.

With this year's investment, the Government has now allocated almost £400 million to 281 councils through the programme - which supports co-ordinated projects across areas including housing, mental health, addiction support and

This is alongside the Government's Everyone In initiative, launched by the Housing Secretary at the start of the pandemic to protect rough sleepers, which has so far supported 37,000 people, with more than 26,000 already moved on to longer-term accommodation.

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Providing support and training to housing associations, councils and ALMOs

ico are pleased to announce their recent partnership with Housing Quality Network (HQN), a best practice membership organisation, delivering high-quality advice, tailored support and training to housing associations and councils in the UK.

Aico, the leader in home life safety, work closely with social housing providers across the country through the provision of Fire and Carbon Monoxide alarm systems and educational events. The partnership formed due to the companies' mutual interest in supporting the social housing sector.

Aico will utilise their collaboration with HQN, to gain a true understanding of the key issues impacting the sector and aim to deliver continuous and unrivalled support to organisations operating within social housing.

As a result of the partnership, HQN members, organisations and charities can access webinars and events hosted by Aico, that will provide advice and guidance surrounding safety and compliance within social housing in order to facilitate long-term change.

Tina Mistry, Relationships Manager for Aico, says of the partnership: "Aico understand the pressure within the sector right now. With various priorities surrounding the safety agenda, Net Zero, building and fire safety, resident engagement, and building new homes, while balancing the challenges and major responsibility of meeting regulatory compliance within social housing, such as electrical, fire and gas safety across the array of workstreams. We want to support and give back to the social housing sector, HQN members, by facilitating discussions and

sharing best practice with a collaborative approach within and out of the sector to drive long-term improvement."

Working together, Aico and HQN will create a platform for discussion, clarity, and the opportunity to share best practice around all aspects of safety and compliance.

Jon Land, HQN's Head of Networks and Events, comments: "We're delighted to be working with Aico over the next 12 months. As a market leader in Fire and Carbon Monoxide protection, it will be great to make their expertise and practical know-how available to HQN's members. We look forward to collaborating with them on a range of activities."

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The flooring industry is preparing for CFJLIVE - its first official event in over a year - which takes place on Thursday 1 July. The free-to-attend global exhibition is the UK industry's first ever virtual event, bringing together over 100 global exhibitors. It will be broadcast live from a main stage - at FITA's training centre in



Loughborough - and from exhibitors' showrooms, offices and factories around the world. "The format is flexible, to suit schedules and time zones, and the content is shaping up to be incredibly exciting!" commented John Heath, Kick-Start Publishing's CEO. Fast registration can be accessed now.

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Case study: Compact service unit

Bryn Bragl is a development in Wales where 14 homes were built to become one of the first energy-positive social housing schemes. The development, by Wales & West and Zenergy Design, were built to be energy-positive homes where more energy is put back into the National Grid than used. The aim was to ensure low running



costs for their residents and provide a comfortable, healthy environment. The PKOM 4 compact service unit, from Total Home Environment, ventilates the homes whilst recycling heat. The beauty of the system is that it has two heat pumps, one to provide either heating or cooling and the other to concentrate on domestic hot water - this makes the PKOM 4 one of a kind!

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A classic Parisian apartment is benefitting from the thermal effectiveness of the introduction of the innovative ultra-thin Spacetherm* WL insulation. Property owner Keirnan Murphy has made a significant investment in the renovation of the apartment to improve overall comfort, energy efficiency and to reduce



heating costs. Keirnan explains: "We are very pleased with the results and we noticed that when leaning up against the Spacetherm WL you can feel your back warm against the insulation. The A. Proctor Group were extremely helpful in addressing all the questions from the architect and ourselves."

01250 872261 www.proctorgroup.com

Marley strengthens roof system offer through acquisition of Viridian Solar Ltd

Roof systems manufacturer, Marley is enhancing its roofing portfolio with the acquisition of Viridian Solar Ltd, a leading supplier of roof integrated solar panels. With demand for sustainable energy solutions on the increase, this strategic acquisition ensures Marley can provide a single-source supply for a fully integrated solar roof system. Solar panels have formed an ever-expanding feature of the UK roofscape and, more recently, this has shifted to integrated solutions that offer better aesthetics, durability and ease of installation. Recent announcements on forthcoming Building Regulation changes open up these opportunities even further, with the prospect for roofs to become a mainstream element of the renewable energy economy.

Viridian Solar was established in 2003 and has gone on to build a strong reputation as an innovative manufacturer of highquality, integrated roof solar solutions. Viridian Solar's Clearline Fusion PV technology is behind Marley SolarTile*, a roof-integrated solar panel solution launched in 2020. Marley SolarTile* works seamlessly with existing roof structures to directly replace roof tile sections and is a quick and simple way to provide a greener and cost-effective energy source. Paul Reed, Chief Operating Officer for Marley, comments: "This is an exciting acquisition for Marley as we further strengthen our position as a single-source supplier for full roof systems."

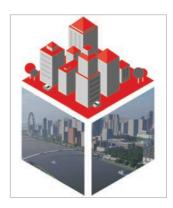


01283 722588 www.marley.co.uk

ROCKWOOL® unveils Interactive City for easier specification and product visualisation

ROCKWOOL has further enhanced its range of resources for specifiers, contractors and building owners with the launch of the ROCKWOOL Interactive City, a 3D environment that makes visualising, specifying and learning about its non-combustible stone wool insulation easier. Intuitively designed using cutting-edge augmented reality, the ROCKWOOL Interactive City allows users to explore its solutions across the whole of the built environment from housing and offices, to transport hubs and education in a single simulated space. Through features like zoom, 360° views and pan-able application build-ups, the city provides a virtual 'hands-on' experience when it's not possible to touch, see or hear products in practice. Featuring a wide variety of applications, the tool can also be used to explore the versatility of ROCKWOOL's solutions, understanding where its non-combustible products can enhance thermal, acoustic or fire performance in places users might not expect. As well as saving specifiers' time and aiding building design, these capabilities lead to smoother, faster decision making and a more collaborative process for project stakeholders. The ROCKWOOL Interactive City has also been developed to help achieve the all-important golden thread of construction data. Each 3D application provides a complete package of suitable ROCKWOOL solutions, with quick links to product documentation, installation guides and BIM objects that can be downloaded for use offline or integrated into construction modelling software.

01656 862 621 www.rockwool.com/uk/interactive-city



Tackling radon to keep residents safe

Exposure to radon gas is a real health risk. James Kane of Airtech Solutions explains how landlords and housing providers can protect residents.

ince the introduction of the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, landlords are more aware of the importance of ventilation to keep condensation and mould at bay and improve indoor air quality to protect

However, perhaps less discussed is radon, which is listed as a hazard under the Act too and also affects indoor air quality - causing more deaths a year than carbon monoxide.

Under the Homes Act 2018, properties are assessed on a range of criteria, and they will be deemed unfit for habitation if there are serious defects in one or more of them. Radon falls under the category 'Hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System,' and so it's essential that Local Authorities and private landlords alike ensure residents are protected from this potentially hazardous gas.

THE FACTS

So, what is radon? It's a naturally occurring colourless, odourless radioactive gas that occurs through the presence of uranium in most rocks, soils, bricks and concrete. Usually, radon is naturally dispersed into the atmosphere, however, warm air in houses draws the gas in through floors and cracks and, in this confined space, the gas can build up to unacceptable levels and become potentially harmful. Once inhaled, these products can attach themselves to lungs and airways, particularly affecting asthma sufferers and smokers, and increases the risk of lung cancer. It's estimated that 1,000 to 2,000 deaths each year are caused by exposure to the gas.

The amount of radon gas released varies greatly depending on region, and is more likely to be found in areas where the geology features concentrations of granite and limestone. Interactive maps, such as the one published by Public Health England, show where radon levels are higher, with Wales and the South-West of England particularly affected. Buildings in these areas need to be tested for radon and, if discovered, high levels can be reduced with simple measures. And, since landlords have a responsibility to their residents under the Homes Act to provide a safe home, radon is a major consideration for social housing providers.

So, what can landlords do to meet their duty of care? Put simply, they need to check, measure and take action.

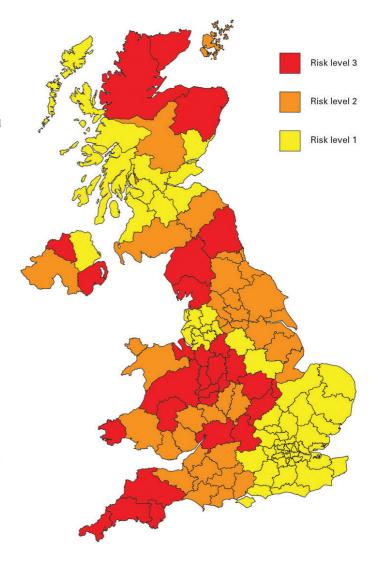
CHECK FOR RADON

Housing providers should test housing stock for radon through an efficiently organised programme which ensures all required properties are tested within an appropriate time scale. To ensure accurate testing, test pods should be left in properties for a three-month period so a representative sample of radon readings can be collected, as the level of radon in a property varies over time by day and month.

It is recommended that testing is conducted using two small unobtrusive radon detector pods placed in the most widely used rooms, usually the bedroom and lounge. To achieve the best outcome, it is worth using a radon expert to place and collect the pods since this results in a very high return rate, helping to ensure robust data.

MEASURE RADON LEVELS

Once the pods are collected, they are then analysed to determine the radon level in the property, expressed in Becquerels per cubic metre (Bq/m3).



Radon area map

The average level in the UK is around 20 Bq/m3, and if a home is above 200Bq/m3 then remediation measures should be taken.

TAKE ACTION

When it comes to tackling radon the type of remediation measures will vary by location and level detected.

For low levels of radon, it can be as simple as improving ventilation in the home coupled with sealing cracks in walls and floors.

Where higher levels are detected, Positive Input Ventilation (PIV) systems are a proven and effective way of significantly reducing radon gas levels. PIV forces



Social housing providers in radon risk areas can gain peace of mind that they are meeting their duty of care to residents by working with experienced companies that can offer a complete solution to radon reduction

contaminated air out of a home by introducing fresh air into the property. Located in the loft, PIV systems draw fresh air into the loft cavity where it is filtered via high grade ISO 45 per cent Coarse (G4 grade) or ISO ePM2.5 70 per cent (F7 grade) filters and warmed before being slowly added into the habitable areas of the house.

In properties with very high levels of radon an active radon sump may be necessary, fitted with a fan. Sumps work effectively under solid floors, and under suspended floors if the ground is covered with concrete or a membrane, drawing the gas out of the building and venting it to the atmosphere

Once installed, it's important the equipment is serviced to ensure they remain in good working order to maintain maximum efficiency and keep radon at safe levels. This will also help stop the build-up of grease and dirt damaging the systems and avoid future breakdowns.

Social housing providers in radon risk areas can gain peace of mind that they are meeting their duty of care to residents by working with experienced companies that can offer a complete solution to radon reduction. From testing, through to installing solutions and on-going maintenance, radon can be effectively tackled to keep residents safe.

James Kane is sales director at Airtech Solutions



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Protecting and improving the nation's health

Radon is a radioactive gas



Radon enters buildings from the ground and can reach high concentrations



More than 1,100 lung cancer deaths per year are linked to radon





Radon is identified as a potential hazard in HHSRS

A map of radon affected areas and details of PHE services are online at

www.ukradon.org



We advise government and the public on radon-related issues, and have four decades of experience and expertise in delivering radon programmes for landlords and workplaces. We provide information on the risk of harm from radon, how to check your housing stock and workplaces and what to do when action needs to be taken. Our expertise includes the field of radon research, policy setting and running effective radon measurement programmes for our customers.

We remain independent of companies providing remedial services and our advice is impartial.

It is expected that all radiation protection services currently provided by the Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards (CRCE) within PHE will transfer into the new UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) with effect from October 2021.

Contact the Radon Group at PHE by email: radon@phe.gov.uk or phone: 01235 822622 for more information and guidance

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Available online at www.housingmmonline.co.uk

Senior's artful display at University

Senior Architectural Systems have helped create a warm and welcoming accommodation scheme for the students of Arts University Bournemouth. Senior's patented low U-value PURe® aluminium windows and PURe® SLIDE aluminium doors have been installed alongside the thermally-efficient SF52 aluminium



curtain wall system, with the scheme achieving a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating. The project also features Senior's thermally-broken SPW500 aluminium commercial doors and SPW600 aluminium windows. For additional safety and security, Senior's barrier load tested Louvre Guard System has been fitted to all bedroom and kitchen windows.

 $01709\ 772600\ www.seniorarchitectural systems.co.uk$

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Permanance and sustainability

Among the many benefits aluminium has to offer, Andrew Cross of Kestrel Aluminium discusses its ability to forecast the cost of maintenance over a system's design life.

ith increasing pressure to specify building systems offering clearly defined sustainability, the use of materials that embody recycling as an inherent feature is becoming increasingly significant.

Aluminium as a key building component is now used across a wide range of sectors and, as a matter of interest, is still arguably the most valuable item in our recycling collection. From an emissions perspective, the use of pre- and post-use aluminium greatly reduces energy consumption and adds tangible value to the economics of production. To put this into perspective, it saves around 95 per cent of the energy consumed in the 'primary' production process.

For those specifying metal window and door systems, there is, therefore, a clear incentive to use a raw material that can be reused on an infinite basis. In terms of enabling building designs to achieve the highest level of BREEAM certification, aluminium can also provide tangible benefits in terms of assessment of an asset's environmental, social and economic sustainability through the use of standards developed by BRE. In addition, it enhances specific aspects of technical performance such as thermal, acoustic and energy efficiency.

The use of natural materials - timber in particular - undoubtedly has its supporters, but most offer little potential for recycling. Deforestation, dwindling





To achieve greater efficiency in terms of thermal transmittance, high-performance fenestration design is becoming increasingly sophisticated

resources and a generally adverse effect on the environment can only become a bigger issue as demand for greater sustainability increases. By contrast, aluminium products made using recycled material present consistently low environmental impact while offering strength, durability, stability and greatly reduced weight compared to steel. Among the many other benefits it has to offer, natural corrosion and UV resistance enable the specifier to forecast with considerable accuracy the cost of maintenance over a system's design life.

MODPOD

To achieve greater efficiency in terms of thermal transmittance, highperformance fenestration design is becoming increasingly sophisticated. Aluminium can be formed into complex and diverse profile shapes, a feature that makes it ideal for contemporary designs. From a manufacturer's perspective, working alongside specifiers offers considerable benefits in terms of product development. This is being seen across the construction spectrum and is highlighted, for example, in the construction of affordable homes such as the prototype two-bedroom detached 'modpod', Birmingham City Council's first

Built in answer to the need for affordable housing in the area, particularly on brownfield sites, The Council's housing arm, Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT), chose Just Solutions Ltd to deliver the 'ModPod' for a property, situated in Hockley. Shelforce, a leading window and door manufacturer based in Erdington fabricated the aluminium windows and doors which met the exacting standards of Approved Document L. Used in conjunction with low Uvalue double glazed units, this ensured the new homes are energy efficient. They not only provide high performance and aesthetic value but will easily be broken down into their component parts when the need for replacement arises.

To complement the installation, a PAS 24 accredited aluminium rebate door system was specified offering peace of mind that the building is safe and secure. This utilizes the same profiles and hardware as the windows and thus offers commonality of design. All profiles were dual colour powder coated which is more cost-effective in the long run than paint, with the added benefit that the finish is more durable and resilient. Powder Coating also offers a protective coating to the aluminium, extending the life of the metal as well as offering a seamless look between horizontal and vertical surfaces great for the aesthetics of

The 'ModPod' comes as ground and first floor units, both essentially steel frames with insulated walls and customizable façades. It features a 4mm thick acrylic brick finish on the ground floor and a corrugated aluminium exterior on the first. Sleeping up to four people, it has everything expected of a modern home, including upstairs and downstairs bathrooms and a master bedroom with

The unit took an hour to crane into place onto a pre-prepared site and was available to occupy the same day. It took around 20 weeks to construct though on a live production line Just Solutions estimate the build time will be just two weeks. BMHT already has Council approval, subject to planning consent, to build a further 54 units across six sites. The aim is to deliver these homes before a further review of the modular housing programme.

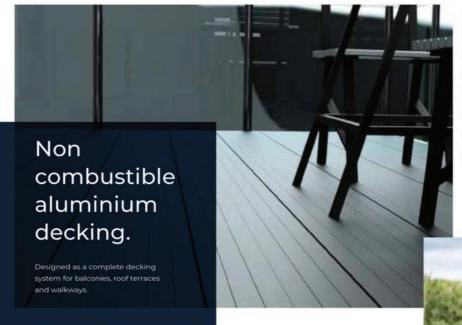
PERMANENCE

Aluminium's 'permanence' and its undoubted flexibility and versatility will pave the way for products of increasing environmental value.

If we add to this the widely accepted ecological argument against the use of PVCu and tangible evidence provided by aluminium window and door systems with a design life that has already spanned several decades the case for its use has never been stronger.

Andrew Cross is marketing manager at Kestrel Aluminium

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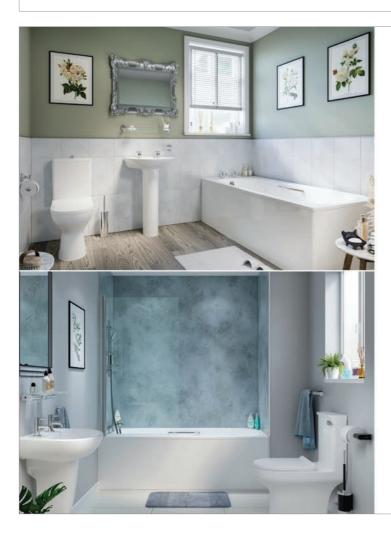
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Take the lead on lead

Steve Leigh of Groundbreaker asks housing providers, is your property's drinking water harming your tenants?



wareness of the potential health problems caused by lead in the water supply, particularly in infants and children, is growing. Houses built before 1970 would have been constructed with lead water supply pipes and if still in place can be causing developmental harm to young occupants.

Although the use of lead in plumbing has been banned in the UK for more than 50 years, there are still many properties where lead contamination of water is a risk. In some areas of the UK, up to a third of these older properties are still receiving their water through these original lead pipes.

In properties with lead supply pipes, the only totally secure method to reduce lead levels in the water supply is to replace the original supply with modern plastic pipe. These new materials can also provide the additional benefits of improving flow rates and reducing pipe noise.

Traditionally, any lead replacement program requires major excavations outside a property and causes huge disruption within. Resulting in mess and disturbance to householders over several days. This disruption has often been the cause of users' reluctance to have the work undertaken, but new solutions mean it doesn't have to be this way.

REPLACING LEAD WATER SUPPLY PIPES

An innovative solution to water supply pipe replacement which significantly reduces disturbance, time and cost is the routing of the new supply pipe up the external face of the building.

There are still many properties where lead contamination of water is a risk. In some areas of the UK, up to a third of these older properties are still receiving their water through these original lead pipes.

Traditionally, pipes needed to be within the thermal envelope of the building or buried to minimise the risk of frost damage and freeze thaw bursts.

Today's new materials however allow for a simpler solution, that keeps pipes on the surface, reduces the risk of leaks developing, and allows for easy repair and maintenance.

Insulated ducting products, for example, are designed to provide long lasting and effective thermal protection to water pipes and fittings outside the thermal envelope of a building.

To achieve the level of protection required by British Standard 5422 and all relevant Water Regulations for frost protection, the ducting must be carefully fabricated to provide long lasting protection and should be tested and approved to Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations, Regulation 4 or listed as an approved product by WRAS Approvals.

EASY INSTALLATION

Installation of a new supply using such a product can be as straightforward as the following:

- 1. From the main service supply, run a single unjointed supply (up to 32mm OD), either at 750mm underground or insulated through insulated ducting.
- 2. Cut a core (100mm OD) through the wall to the point of delivery inside the
- 3. Line the core with twin wall ducting and insert the ducting.
- 4. Slide the insulation and duct into the core and seal to comply with Building Regulation Part C section 5.2

This can enable most water supply replacements to be completed within a couple of hours, without the traditional mess and disruption to the householders or occupiers.

The improvement in work efficiency and reduction on the impact to occupants is a win for both contractor and customer. There is also little impact to the exterior appearance of the property, as the system provides a neat, clean finish to the job.

Insulated ducting allows the new water service to be routed up the external face of the building and connected to the internal plumbing above ground level, whether this is the ground floor or upper storey. In multioccupancy properties, some products can also allow multiple supply pipes to be installed.

RECOGNITION

The use of insulated ducting also allows compliance with British Plumbing Employers Council (BPEC) best practice of joint free supply installation.

In their recently launched Groundworker, Service Pipe and Meter Housing Installation Training the use of joint free installation is recommended and is recognized to minimize the risk of future joint failure and leaks.

In addition to providing a simple, compliant solution to lead free water



provision, insulated ducting can be used in association with surface mounted meter housings.

UK water companies are now trialing or, as in the case of Portsmouth Water, for example, moving completely to surface mounted meter housings, with a surface mounted water management system housing the meter above ground, removing unsightly street furniture and allowing for easy meter reading. The product also allows for future proofing the network, providing the option of the installation of ultra-smart (5G) two-way metering and 'internet of things' (IOT) technologies.

Steve Leigh is managing director of Groundbreaker

Replace lead water supply pipes in under 2 hours... no major excavations, minimal disruption with INSUduct®

NSUduct® is an innovative solution. Minimising disturbance, time and cost. Unlike traditional methods, INSUduct® allows the new water service to be routed up the external face of the building and connected to the internal plumbing above ground level, whether this is the ground floor or upper storey. In multi-occupancy properties INSUduct® allows multiple supply pipes to be installed, as it is designed to provide frost protection for up to three 32mm OD water pipes installed to the exterior of the building.

INSUduct only requires one simple core drilled hole through the wall, at an appropriate point to connect with the internal plumbing. This enables most water supply replacements to be completed within a couple of hours, without the traditional mess and disruption to the householders or occupiers. The improvement in work efficiency and reduction on the impact to occupants is a win for both contractor and customer. There is also little impact to the exterior appearance of the property, as the INSUduct system provides a neat, clean finish to the job.

Groundbreaker products are designed to provide long lasting and effective thermal protection to water pipes and fittings outside the thermal envelope of a building. They offer frost protection for 3 days or more with temperatures as low as -15°C, temperatures we rarely reach in



the UK - even with today's erratic climate! Carefully fabricated to provide long lasting and effective thermal protection to water pipes and fittings in external situations, the products exceed British Standard 5422 and all relevant Water Regulations for frost protection and is on the

"approved list" of most UK water companies.

Steve Leigh, developer of the range and Managing Director of Groundbreaker, has over 40 years' experience in the Water Industry. "We've been putting pipes in holes in the ground to protect them from frost for decades, he explained. "Although it works, todays new materials allow for a much better solution. Keeping pipes on the surface reduces the risk of leaks developing and allows for easy repair and maintenance. It's just a must better method of working."

This isn't just Steve's opinion in 2018 Groundbreaker were recognised by the HBF (Home Builders Federation) as the Utility Company of the Year for their innovative range that meets the highest standards in both product specification and leak free installation design.

Lead Water Supply replacement has become a priority for water companies across the UK. Systems such as Groundbreaker can overcome user reluctance and provide and time and costefficient methods of water supply pipe reluctance.

For more information and applications, why not sign up for Groundbreaker's occasional newsletter for up to date industry information and product news via email or online?

01379 741993 www.groundbreaker.co.uk



Turn down the volume

Karen Wilding of Forbo Flooring Systems explains how noise can be minimised in multi-occupancy buildings by retrofitting acoustic flooring solutions.

ccording to the World Health Organisation (WHO), excessive noise seriously harms human health and interferes with people's daily activities.

In social housing, where multi-occupancy flats and house-shares have become increasingly common, the potential for nuisance noise where tenants live above, below and adjacent to one another is understandably high, as sound can easily travel from floor to floor and room to room.

If left uncontrolled, it can become a real problem, causing stress, affecting individual's ability to sleep, or even leading to the increased risk of developing cardiovascular diseases, as well as contributing to a greater likelihood of hearing loss.

It is therefore clear that lower noise pollution is essential to promote the wellbeing and comfort of tenants – but this cannot be achieved without acoustic treatment.

The good news is, advances in sound insulation solutions mean that noises coming from inside or outside of a building can now be significantly reduced.

There are a number of solutions available, which can be used individually, or together, as part of a broader acoustic scheme. However, the best way to minimise impact sound is at the source, and the choice of flooring can deliver an important contribution in reducing noise in buildings - just as effective when retrofitted into existing properties to improve living standards. Acoustic floor coverings, for example, are manufactured with high performance backing

Poor acoustics can impact the overall living environment and excessive noise can be a major nuisance. Even at lower levels, it can affect attention span, increase stress levels and cause negative effects on health and wellbeing

foam to enhance impact sound reduction, which mitigates sound transmission between floors once installed.

As you can imagine, the clatter of footsteps can quickly become deafening if measures were not previously taken to reduce impact sound. Managing impact sound is underpinned by standard EN ISO 717-2 and when evaluating potential floor coverings, social housing providers can compare acoustic performance against this standard to find the most effective solutions.

Historically, acoustic vinyl offers one of the highest levels of noise reduction performance. Perfect for areas subject to heavy foot traffic, such as communal areas or corridors, these solutions combine acoustic performance with optimal

Maintenance & Refurbishment Flooring Feature

resistance to indentation, as well as excellent durability. Solutions are typically available in 15 dB and 19 dB variants, and the choice will depend on specific requirements. The latest developments in design also means that there is an unrivalled choice of colours, graphics and designs to choose from, ensuring that the aesthetics of a space are not compromised.

For areas that require a softer finish, such as bedrooms, flocked floor coverings combine warmth, comfort and impact sound reduction properties with outstanding hardwearing performance. They are also easy to clean and maintain. With products available on the market that can reduce impact noise by up to 22 dB, this flooring can minimise the sound of footsteps, voices and ambient noise. It is also worth looking out for products that have been awarded the Allergy UK Seal of Approval™ too, as these can make a further positive contribution to occupant health and wellbeing.

When it comes to refurbishing existing properties, while the ideal scenario for social housing providers would be to ensure that work is carried out while rooms and buildings are vacant, this may not always be the case. The urgent need to bring some properties up to higher acoustic standards is likely to mean that tenants will still be living in their homes during any building work, and refurbishments should be programmed to minimise disruption and downtime in order to avoid disturbance. For these situations, it is now possible for social housing providers to turn to acoustic vinyl solutions that offer an adhesive free, 'fast fit' installation.

Adhesive free acoustic vinyl solutions, as their name suggests, require no adhesive, tackifier or double-sided tape, which can reduce installation time by over 50 per cent compared to their standard, glued down counterparts. Quick and easy to install, even while the property is still in use, there is little to no noise, dust or lingering odours. In fact, all of the usual constraints associated with adhesives are eliminated, including setting times and drying times. The floor can even be walked on immediately after installation, meaning that areas are only out of action for a minimal amount of time, enabling enhanced acoustic performance to be achieved rapidly. These solutions are ideal for keeping installation costs and time to a minimum.

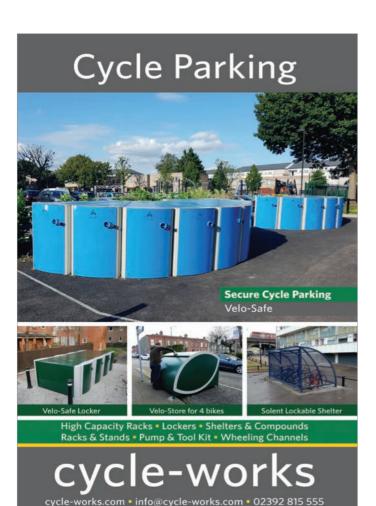


What's more, the acoustic offering also expands to luxury vinyl tiles, which is perfect for areas where beautiful floor design is key. In wet rooms and kitchens, acoustic safety flooring offers sustainable slip resistance. And with greater emphasis on the need to make environmentally conscious decisions, acoustic linoleum options offer those managing multi-occupancy properties, as well as tenants, a low maintenance solution, which can be cleaned easily, without the need for specialist tools or chemicals.

Poor acoustics can impact the overall living environment and excessive noise can be a major nuisance. Even at lower levels, it can affect attention span, increase stress levels and cause negative effects on health and wellbeing. Therefore, it is key that social housing providers put measures in place to ensure a quiet and comfortable living environment for current and future tenants.

Social housing providers should work together with acoustic flooring experts to ensure that residential buildings are fitted out with the most appropriate solutions.

Karen Wilding is segment marketing manager for housing at Forbo Flooring Systems



Cycle-Works install successful cycle lockers

Bike theft is a growing problem, especially in communities with high rise flats and flat fronted properties where residents lack a safe place to store their bicycles at home.

Cycle-works has worked extensively with local councils, such as Tower Hamlets, Reading and Portsmouth City Council, to



install and successfully manage cycle lockers and Hangars for residents to park their bikes securely. All these locations have proved extremely popular as residents welcome the safe lockable bike storage units, which make cycling more accessible in exchange for a small annual rental fee. This can all be managed by Cycle-Works.

info@cycle-works.com www.cycle-works.com

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F. Ball launches floor finishing compound

F. Ball and Co. Ltd. has launched Stopgap Micro Rapid, a new ultra-smooth, flexible, rapid-drying floor finishing compound for creating a flawlessly smooth subfloor finish. Stopgap Micro Rapid can be applied to a seamless feathered edge to fill indentations formed by screws used to secure plywood and hardboard sheets as



well as the gaps at joints between the panels. It can also be used to repair minor surface defects in a wide range of other absorbent surfaces, including sand/cement and calcium sulphate screeds. It is ideal for use where an ultrasmooth surface is required to prevent imperfections affecting the finished appearance of new floorcoverings.

www.f-ball.com

Designer Contracts increase stockholding

At Designer Contracts, the strategy has always been to invest heavily in significant stockholding levels. As a result of recent supply chain issues, Designer Contracts took the decision to significantly increase stockholding which is currently at £2.75m. It is important to Designer Contracts that customers have the reassurance that



whatever else they might struggle to source, flooring is not one of them. There have been difficulties recently with supply, but the strengthened stock strategy has been hugely successful, not only securing continued business from existing customers but also attracting new ones where their normal supply chain has been compromised.

01246 854577 www.DesignerContracts.com

Setcrete offers 30 minute set time

Setcrete Rapid Set Repair Mortar repairs damaged or worn concrete in just 30 minutes. The water-mix mortar can be used internally or externally and applied up to 25mm thick on horizontal surfaces or 10mm on vertical surfaces. It is suitable for repairing a wide range of nonstructural concrete elements, including



floor screeds, paving slabs, beams and lintels, stair treads and risers, balcony edges and concrete soffits. With a working time of 10-15 minutes, Setcrete Rapid Set Repair Mortar is walk on hard after 30 minutes (depending on ambient temperature) and can be covered, for example with a floorcovering, after 24 hours.

www.setcrete.co.uk

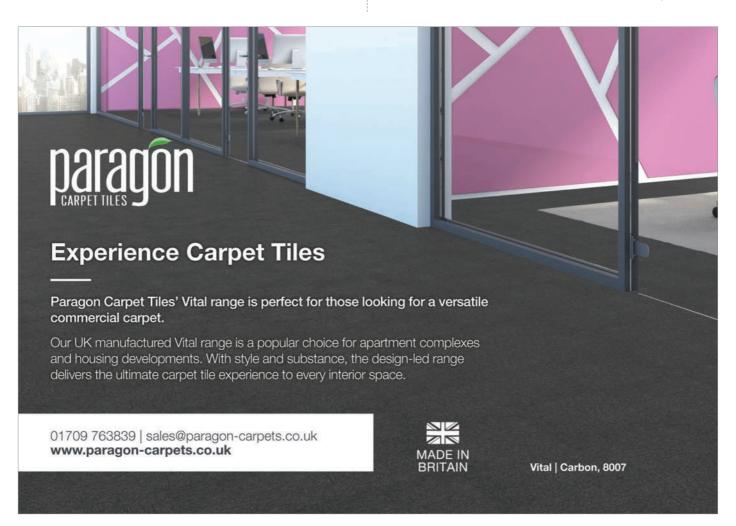
Comfort = Wellbeing and performance

Everyone wants to be cool, and comfortable at work this summer - and to do their bit for saving the planet. That's why Snickers Workwear has integrated improved 37.5° fabric technology and 'Verifiable Sustainability' into its T- and Polo-shirts. The new AllroundWork styles are made from highly functional waffle-



structured 37.5° fabric for optimal ventilation, cooling and moisture transport to keep you feeling fresh for longer. And, with the aim of being at the forefront of sustainability in Workwear, the new lightweight Polo and T-shirts are made of 100% recycled polyester with a bio-based, anti-odour finish with a smooth texture and efficient moisture transport for great working comfort.

sales@hultaforsgroup.co.uk





Significant SmartSecure Addition

The FUHR autotronic 834 lock has been added to Carl F Groupco's suite of SmartSecure electronic door locking and access control solutions. As one of the most important additions to the company's upcoming 2021 catalogue, the highly versatile hybrid product is a major expansion to the SmartSecure brand. The



834 provides a combination of automatic locking and electronic motor driven unlocking: as such, it is an appealing option that is fully compatible with all existing SmartSecure locking and access control variants. The autotronic offers a practical solution for multiple occupancy buildings. SmartSecure has been the most significant development in Carl F Groupco's 70+ year history.

01733 393 330 www.carlfgroupco.co.uk

Housing Management & Maintenance

The Housing Management & Maintenance (HMM) website is an online provider of past and present news items dedicated to keep professionals within this sector updated with a wide range of topics including legislation, projects, products and more.



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. From the website, you can find links to digital issues that have live links to advertisers' sites, as well as email alerts to keep you as informed as possible.

www.housingmmonline.co.uk



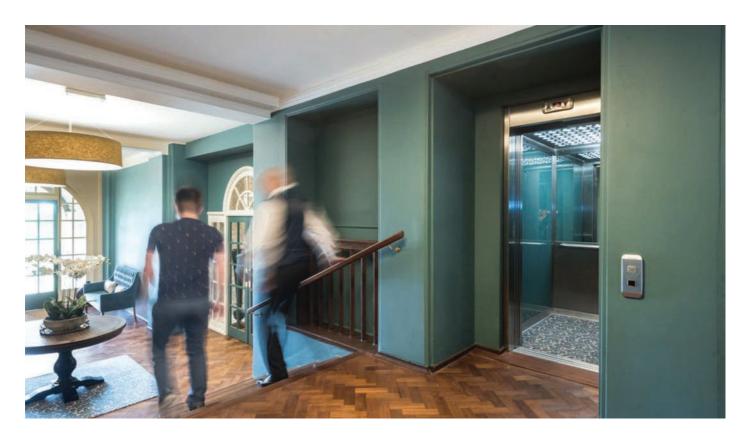


Tel: +44 (0) 1494 531099 E-Mail: info@kms.uk.net

kms.uk.net

Lifts in housing

Alastair Stannah of Stannah Lift Distribution & Service (UK) answers some of the most frequently asked questions around the emergency use and upgrading of lifts in the housing sector.



oday, there are estimated to be more than 50,000 operational lifts in UK housing, and at least half of these lifts were installed more than 25 years ago.

Many tower blocks in the UK pre-date modern lift standards, which are in place to improve safety, so an appointed lift service provider should provide ongoing maintenance and give advice on upgrades.

HOW DO PASSENGER LIFTS TYPICALLY WORK IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

Typically, lifts are not used in the event of a fire or evacuation - most go to the ground and shut down in the event of an alarm (with doors open and

This behaviour of lifts in the event of a fire (BS 81-73) enables all lift passengers to evacuate the building and for fire-fighters to ensure there is no one trapped inside.

CAN A LIFT BE USED AS PART OF YOUR BUILDING EVACUATION PLANS?

In general, no, it isn't appropriate to use lifts when there is a fire. There's the danger of people getting trapped in an immobilised lift, hence why a standard is

It's also true for platform lifts. Though they do not conform to the same standards, the concern remains of lift users becoming trapped between floors.

If the desire is to use a lift as part of an evacuation strategy, a thorough risk assessment and consultation with your lift service and insurance companies is required.

ARE THERE ANY LIFTS YOU CAN USE IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE? OR FOR EVACUATION?

There are certain types of passenger lift that can aid the fire and rescue service and emergency evacuation in the event of trouble.

Many tower blocks in the UK pre-date modern lift standards, which are in place to improve safety, so an appointed lift service provider should provide ongoing maintenance and give advice on upgrades

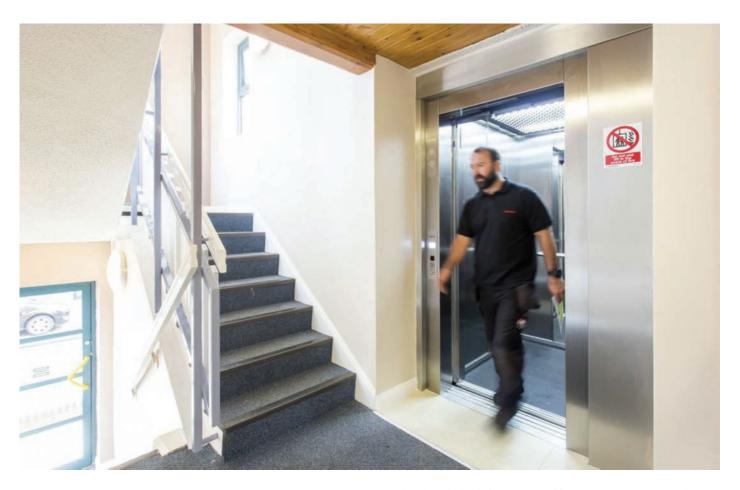
These lifts operate as standard passenger lifts with the capability to switch into an emergency state if required.

WHAT'S A FIRE-FIGHTING LIFT?

As far back as the 1940s, the use of lifts with dedicated control features for firefighters was recognised in the UK and has been essential in high-rise buildings. We've had a standard for these lifts since the 1980s.

Modern fire-fighting lifts have additional protection, with controls that enable them to be used under the direct control of the fire and rescue service to contain and eventually quell a fire. British Standard EN81-72 compliant firefighting lifts feature:

- Interface between the lift control, fire detection and alarm system
- Trap doors and ladders for rescue operations
- Electrical components in the shaft and on the car are protected against water
- · Emergency intercom system and lift operation
- Separate power supply to enable the lift to remain in use even if building electrics are compromised



The proper maintenance, service and repair of existing lift stock plays an important role in enabling people to flow in apartment blocks

In new housing, a fire-fighting lift is required if the building has a floor more than 18 metres above, or more than 10 metres below, the fire-service vehicle

In some circumstances, a fire-fighting lift may be provided as part of a management plan for evacuating people. In such cases, the lift installation may need to be appropriately located and protected, e.g. refuge areas at landings.

WHAT'S AN EVACUATION LIFT?

Evacuation lifts can aid the fire and rescue service and emergency evacuation in the event of an emergency as part of an evacuation strategy.

They enable the use of the passenger lift by a designated warden to evacuate those less ambulant. Evacuation lifts comply with BS 81-76 lift regulations, with features requirements similar to fire-fighting, but excluding water protection.

Typically, they are larger capacity passenger lifts to evacuate disabled users, patients in beds or stretchers, e.g. in hospitals or large nursing homes.

CAN AN EXISTING LIFT BE UPGRADED TO EVACUATION? **OR FIRE-FIGHTING?**

For existing tower block lifts, where there is an emergency provision requirement, there is guidance on modernising in BS 8899: Improvement of fire-fighting and evacuation provisions in existing lifts.

It is a fundamental assumption of BS 8899 that the elements of the building design necessary for the fire protection and safety of the lift, including secondary power supplies, are provided as part of the building design.

Typically, the only way to tell if a lift upgrade is possible is with a site visit: to assess both the current lift specification and whether the building design will

provide at least the level of protection and features necessary to protect the

Due to the exacting requirements, there are often limitations that prevent full or even partial compliance. These can only be assessed on a case by case basis.

AND OTHER POSSIBLE UPGRADE OPTIONS?

Lift refurbishment can cover a range of improvements, from minor updates to significant repairs. Typical lift upgrades include:

- Safety improvements, such as the cost-effective upgrade of updating old light to modern LEDs for energy savings
- Cleaning, retrofitting and replacing any worn parts for the equivalent ones
- Replacing door operators, putting in new control panels and updating
- Improving aesthetics and lighting to give the lift car and entrances a more
- Upgrading a regular passenger lift to heavy-duty, to suit tougher environments and heavier use. Examples include stainless steel car finishes, vandal-resistant buttons and CCTV in lift cars

As refurbishments and replacements are typically in occupied buildings, a lift company will work with property owners and tenants. Ensuring lift work is carried out safely, causes minimum disruption and providing a means of access for all building users - including temporary stairlifts to aid movement if required.

On average passenger lifts have a lifespan of 20-25 years so, eventually, the most economical solution will be complete removal and replacement. Again a site survey will establish what lift options are possible.

The proper maintenance, service and repair of existing lift stock plays an important role in enabling people to flow in apartment blocks. Not to mention that housing lifts are often in constant use! To prevent upset tenants, we'd always recommend regular and thorough lift inspections with 24hr service cover.

Alastair Stannah is managing director at Stannah Lift Distribution & Service (UK)



Not all riser doors are fire tested equally. Ensure legal compliance with bi-directional testing



Our renowned INTEGRA 4000 Series riser doors have always been specified by architects for delivering the highest standards in third party fire certification without compromising on architectural design.

Unlike the rest of the industry, we fire test our riser doors from both sides to ensure legal compliance and still achieve 240 minutes certified fire rated performance. Given the choice, why would you specify anything less?



Housing utilises Aico's Ei1000G **SmartLINK Gateway**



ornerstone Housing, Exeter's largest independent housing association, is a company that puts housing people first and focuses on quality homes and services.

Cornerstone operates a rolling programme of Electrical Inspection Condition Reporting (EICR) and an Electrical Improvement Programme. As part of these upgrades, Cornerstone are installing Aico's new technologically advanced Multi-Sensor detectors and innovative Ei1000G SmartLINK Gateway. The first properties to receive these are at Beacon Avenue, Exeter through their Improvement Programme and the new Affordable Rented houses under construction at Otterton near Budleigh Salterton.

Reaching out for assistance from Aico's Regional Specification Manager for the South West, Steve Bulley, Cornerstone are currently adopting the Grade D1 LD2 specification on all new installations and any detection upgrades. Cornerstone is utilising Aico's Ei1000G SmartLINK Gateway as well as the Multi-Sensors with Radio Frequency (RF) interconnection for ease of installation and minimal disruption to residents. Steve Bulley introduced the Ei1000G SmartLINK Gateway and associated

benefits to both Cornerstone and their residents, providing training and on-site support to the housing provider.

The Ei1000G SmartLINK Gateway utilises the next generation of wireless technology to interface the SmartLINK Gateway with all Aico alarms, assuring easy installation and reliable connection. This allows full visibility of connected RF systems via an online, cloud based SmartLINK portal system. This is an essential piece of technology, meaning that appliances can be checked remotely by Cornerstone to ensure they are functioning correctly. Cornerstone are utilising the Ei1000G in conjunction with Aico's Ei3024 Multi-Sensor Fire Alarm, a technologically advanced detector, built on the same high quality, reliable and proven technology that all Aico Alarms are renowned for and contains the latest high-tech enhancements such as dust compensation technology, making it the most effective domestic fire alarm on the market.

Chris Read, Compliance Manager for Cornerstone commented "As an organisation we want to be at the forefront of technology and with Aico being the specified alarm range within our properties, it

felt natural to partner with them as we introduce a range of IoT (Internet of Things) solutions into our stock, whilst at the same time achieving compliance to BS5839:6 2019+A1:2020, all enabled by the Ei1000G SmartLINK Gateway. We have been supported through the whole process by Steve Bulley, Aico's local support in the South West, which has included training and in-depth technical support for our operatives."

Steve Bulley said of the project "Cornerstone are an incredible housing provider to work with that are always striving to deliver for their residents. I would like to thank both Tim Lewry and Chris Read for allowing us to share their vision with them and I look forward to many more years of collaborative working with Cornerstone."

Cornerstone Housing is a well established traditional housing association with over 1,400 homes in Exeter and the surrounding Districts of East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge, providing quality affordable homes for over 3,000 tenants.

01691 664100 www.aico.co.uk/smartlink-gateway

Encasement fire sprinkler boxing – saving time and money

here fire sprinkler systems are being retro-fitted in social housing tower blocks and flats, Encasement's 'Versa' range provides a cost effective, durable and easyfit solution when boxing-in surface mounted fire sprinkler pipework.

Manufactured from pre-formed FSC* certified plywood and pre-finished in a durable white melamine, Versa 'L' shaped boxing is available in either 5mm or 8mm thicknesses for use within flats, as well as communal areas, such as corridors and lift lobbies.

Available in a wide range of sizes, Versa sprinkler pipe boxing helps save on installation time, as there's no need for fabrication or painting on site. All that's required is for the boxing to be cut to length and holes drilled for the sprinkler heads, before securing to the wall or ceiling.

Designed for use with standard sprinkler heads or concealed 'pop-out' units with cover caps, Versa fire sprinkler boxing provides a more aesthetic finish to each project while also containing sprinkler system components and acting as a visible barrier to potential tampering.

Also, where flame retardant boxing is specified, Versa FR boxing is available within the range and has been specifically developed to meet this requirement. Manufactured from flame retardant Euroclass B compliant board, Versa FR is designed primarily for use on high-rise residential projects.



Encasement's experience working with contractors on countless social housing pipe-boxing projects, has demonstrated that Versa can usually be fitted in less than half the time of site made alternatives.

Also, as they're pre-finished with durable white melamine, there's no painting required on site. This makes them cost effective to install and helps minimise disruption for tenants, due to the

shorter timescales involved. All Versa pipe & fire sprinkler boxing is FSC* 'Chain of Custody' compliant, which certifies that they are manufactured from sustainable timbers. Versa pipe boxing is part of a range of casing solutions for the housing sector from Encasement.

01733 266 889 www.encasement.co.uk





Discover the benefits from Advanced

Advanced's latest line of EasySafe low-voltage, LED emergency luminaires and exit signs offers higher performance and greater energy efficiency benefits than ever before. All EasySafe products are designed to work with LuxIntelligent, Advanced's emergency light testing system. Powered directly from the LuxIntelligent panel, Advanced's EasySafe devices require no local power supply. All devices are compatible with any existing LuxIntelligent luminaires and exit signs, enabling the easy installation of devices onto existing wiring to form a single, comprehensive intelligent emergency lighting system. The low-voltage lights offer quick and easy fitting and service, with a simple 'twist and click' installation onto a first-fix base. EasySafe has been designed to offer true scalability, with just one LuxIntelligent panel supporting up to 200 EasySafe devices alongside an additional 796 locally-powered devices. Switching to EasySafe's low-energy LED emergency lighting is quick, simple and will on average deliver 20 per cent energy efficiency savings compared with fluorescent alternatives.

0345 894 7000 www.advancedco.com

Firestopping solutions start with Sika

Sika's comprehensive range of passive fire protection solutions can restore the fire resistance of walls and floors disrupted by linear seals, cavity barriers or penetration services, helping to contain and control the spread of fire. Sika can also provide detailed technical evaluations for more complicated joint specifications.



Fully compliant with both national and international standards including EN 1366 and EN 13501, Sika's extensive range comprises fire-resistant sealants, coatings, wraps, collars, fire boards, compounds and ablative pads for both linear and penetration seals.

01707 394 444 www.sika.co.uk/passivefire

System health with Fernox

By adopting the Fernox Express Inhibitor Test and Water Test App, housing association Magna Housing has been able to dramatically streamline its ability to service central heating systems. Heating Services Manager at Magna Housing, David Royle said: "Fernox has vastly improved our operations and streamlined



how we're able to manage and conduct annual boiler servicing for each of our properties. As a housing association, using the Express Inhibitor Test has made it easier than ever to comply with important boiler and heating system regulations whilst ensuring our customers' boilers operate efficiently." For further information, please visit the Fernox website.

0330 100 7750 www.fernox.com

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

The Housing sector in the UK is about to undergo major change.... some would say not before time

The sector is absolutely critical to the health and wellbeing of the country and yet it could run far more efficiently and safely. Housing is run by many good people doing their best to maintain the quality of the properties they manage and to maintain or improve the lives of the people who live within those properties. Why then does it take something like the tragedy of Grenfell or the Hackitt Report to instil significant change?

Fear of the unknown and change is normally the answer. Some will say cost but in reality, the cost savings and benefits far outweigh the cost of change.

Internet of Things (IoT) technology has been around in many guises for decades and so really should not be seen as an unknown. ATM cash machines have been around for decades and vet we use them regularly for important transactions. Energy networks literally keep the lights on for society and they use the IoT extensively. Why then can't we use well reliable, secure technology with proven benefits and returns in housing?

The answer is... there is no good reason. We need to embrace digital tools as recommended in the Hackitt report for well managed homes to make teams more efficient, improve conditions. It can also help to ensure compliance with regulations such as Fitness for Human Habitation



that are only going to get more onerous, and for good reason.

The only limit to what we can do is our imagination. Pick any of the challenges you have in running your housing stock, especially the mundane repetitive jobs and contact us here at iOpt to see how technology can give you back more resources to deliver a safer, better, healthier service not only for your customers but also vour team.

iOpt, the Internet of Property Things experts for social Housing.

info@ioptassets.com www.ioptassets.com

End-to-end repairs and maintenance management with MRI Software



Planned, responsive, void and cyclical repairs under one solution



Job management and dynamic scheduling to optimise operative efficiency



Uber-style engineer tracking to enhance customer service





Learn more: mrisoftware.com/uk/solutions/social-housing/



Pr@perty M@T ∘



Atmospheric MOT

Cornerstone, Finance Monthly Best Restoration Award 2020 Winners, have used their 30 years of expertise to embrace IoT sensor technology with proven property behaviour knowledge.

The use of SMART IoT sensor technology is not new in the ongoing management of atmospheric conditions within buildings however, the addition of SMART Knowledge and algorithmic alert criteria...is.

The all-new Property MOT® platform encompasses an Atmospheric MOT® surveying process

Similar to a Health or Vehicle MOT, a Property MOT® surveys a structure and provide a Certification of Health. However, it is also recognised an MOT is a time constrained service hence, the Atmospheric MOT® can serve to endorse prevailing conditions that may give rise to reported issues.

Our significant number of surveys undertaken show issues with mould or damp are most likely down to how the space is utilised, rather than the condition of the building.

Therefore, to take control of a potential disrepair event, the Atmospheric MOT® has pre-calculated alerts embedded in the dashboard that, when data is submitted, such alerts align with prevailing conditions and the location and orientation of the building as this has also proven to affect the IoT data being recorded.

The SMART Knowledge centre imparts likely causes of the 'trend' that can be proactively utilised to conduct investigations in advance of the issue being evident.

Easy...

Due to the intelligent process design, inbuilt knowledge and simplistic data capture protocols, anyone can be trained and certified to undertake the Atmospheric MOT®. Save time and money with Better Decision Making

Training to embrace the Atmospheric MOT® includes SMART Knowledge but also SMART IoT sensor deployment for optimum performance and credible data capture replicating the internal environment being monitored.

Take back control of disrepair claims

With a proactive stock management approach, landlords can look to regain control for claims made by tenants and their legal representatives with a defined fact-based systematic approach with built-in regulatory compliance.



The capability of IoT

MRI Software explores how the Internet of Things (IoT) can improve safety in social housing.



or some time, anticipation has been building for the capability of the IoT ◀ to transform social housing. The path to mainstream adoption has been slow, but a mixture of private take-up of devices, the success of early pilots and regulatory change placing digital transformation at the heart of resident safety, is set to change that.

As of 2019, only 20 per cent of social housing providers had implemented an IoT solution in more than 100 homes. Applying smart technology that monitors factors like humidity, Co2 or movement can assist housing providers in making informed decisions while upholding high safety standards for their tenants and managing costs. As the sector has seen, the consequences of poor building management and safety can be dire and, as the saying goes, 'wilful blindness can be no defence'.

For social housing, there is a range of prospective opportunities that lie in adopting IoT technology, particularly in relation to the safety of buildings. IoT devices in housing could include connected appliances, leak detectors, smart meters, fire safety door devices, lone worker tracking and more.

In the next few years, a driving factor for embedding IoT in homes will be updated safety regulations. The Golden Thread requirement in the latest Building Safety Bill for example, will mean allocating one person within a housing provider who will be responsible for harnessing data to prove due diligence. Furthermore, organisations wishing to align themselves with recommendations from The Hackitt Review will be influenced to make the most out of digital technologies to ensure safety.

Arguably, while the Internet of Things (IoT) can enable efficiencies for operations and maintenance, it is the promise of analytics that offers the most business benefits; the enhanced technology around analytics detects patterns and trends, allowing you to make more intelligent decisions about the business moving forward.

Uncertainty is driving firms to look toward best-in-class innovations that offer predictive analytics, fuelling the demand for long-term portfolio planning, risk mitigation and streamlined strategic planning.

WHAT CAN IOT IMPROVE?

FIRE SAFETY

The peace of mind that smart technology could give providers is considerable. The English Housing Survey revealed that 25 per cent of social renters had never tested their smoke alarms, putting their own lives and others at risk. Smart alarms however can detect when batteries are failing or detectors are

otherwise faulty, alerting maintenance operatives to replace equipment proactively to protect the resident and others living in their building.

The tech available now is also increasingly sophisticated, knowing the difference between danger and a minor cooking disaster and alerting the housing provider accordingly. In the case of the former, smart lighting in communal areas of a building can also highlight routes to safety.

Smart locks can be installed as extra protection for homes with front doors at street-level, moreover if keys are lost, residents can be granted access remotely to their home. In the same way, repair operatives can be let into a home without the residents needing to be present in order to carry out routine safety checks in a COVID-safe way. As teams may become more remote for housing organisations, smart locks could also enable local officers to perform welfare checks if concerns are raised.

DAMP, MOULD & FUEL POVERTY

The link between damp and ill-health is well-documented; when left unchecked it can become a threat to both resident and building safety.

Smart sensors measuring humidity and temperature can engage residents with proactive advice to improve ventilation in the property when necessary.

Flagship Homes have already found success in using sensors to inform preventative works to address mould and damp in their homes. Wolverhampton Homes meanwhile, found that providing data to their residents around environmental conditions in the home reduced the risk from damp and mould by 30 per cent. What's more, residents saved up to 10 per cent on their energy

For housing providers, another opportunity lies in comparing a home's temperature and humidity data against a resident's financial vulnerability. Using analytics to spot who is at risk of fuel poverty and in need of support, income teams can access the evidence necessary to build resilient tenancies that keep residents safe.

COVID-19

Coronavirus is a public housing health issue, and with IoT having the propensity to build healthier homes, it is an opportunity that cannot be missed.

Tools that track when communal areas are crowded, much the same as those seen on commuter trains, could help mitigate the spread of the virus helped by inefficient housing.

Similar technology has been deployed across Shanghai and Beijing to measure air quality both inside and outside buildings so people can plan to traverse the cities or stay inside - wherever the air quality is safer.

Now is the time for housing providers to map out what their organisation could look like with singular adoption of IoT technologies

WHOLE-SYSTEM SAFETY

As more assets are built and upgraded with fully integrated IoT networks, there will be opportunities for multi-agency collaboration.

Further down the line, IoT sensors can feed digital twins of full asset portfolios. Grand plans from the Cambridge Centre for Digital Built Britain (CDDB) call for the establishment of a National Digital Twin Programme, eventually allowing the integration of data between service providers.

Now is the time for housing providers to map out what their organisation could look like with singular adoption of IoT technologies and the benefits to the residents and assets that they could bring. Beyond this, becoming a fully integrated, networked business can mean that housing providers begin moving further towards proactive and preventative asset management that ensures the safety of their residents.

From MRI Software

How housing associations can overcome digital challenges

n a sector where the demand far outpaces supply, and as the cost of living continues to rise in the UK, housing associations are under increasing pressure to deliver affordable housing.

Spindogs addresses the challenges faced by housing associations and discusses the opportunities offered by digital.

Technological capabilities and tenant expectations are rapidly changing, placing even greater pressures on housing associations. Increased demands create an increased need to invest in new technologies to better service users.

When housing associations get digital 'right' they have been able to achieve:

- · more efficient service delivery
- a better, more convenient tenant experience
- · increased job satisfaction for staff
- · savings that can demonstrate value for money

MAKING THE DIGITAL SHIFT

The digital shift is not only about building a new website, but improving internal operations; creating more effective communication channels with tenants and driving efficiency through closer operational relationships with suppliers and facilities management teams.

Housing associations are often experiencing shared challenges of:

- Slow moving IT systems
- Lack of understanding on the right solutions that will resonate with tenants
- Fear of failure: will the investment deliver expected results?
- Will new functionality stand the test of time?
- How can digital uptake amongst internal teams be encouraged after the project is completed?

BEFORE GETTING STARTED WITH DIGITAL

There are six key questions to ask your Board to formulate a digital strategy:

- 1. What will it take to meet our customers' expectations in a digital world?
- 2. Do our business plans reflect the full potential of technology to improve our performance?
- 3. Is our portfolio of technology investments aligned with opportunities and threats?
- 4. Do we have the capabilities required to deliver value from the technologies?
- 5. Who is accountable for digital and how do we hold them to account?
- 6. Are we comfortable with our level of digital risk?

KEYS AREAS OF TECH TO TRANSFORM HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

New technology is transforming the way housing associations operate:



AUTOMATION

- · Offers the ability to free up staff to take on more meaningful roles
- Can reduce the amount of paperwork and manual processes required
- Staff more available to provide more support to tenants and the business
- · Moving transaction processes online offers significant cost savings - online payments are 20 times cheaper than phone transactions and 50 times cheaper than face-to-face

DATA ANALYSIS & RECORD KEEPING - KEEPING ALL CUSTOMER DATA AND RECORDS ONLINE

- Provides greater security for keeping online records safe and secure
- Excellent opportunity for better data analysis and
- Better access to edit as required for up-to-date, easy to manage information

BETTER CONNECTED: WITH DEVICES AND **SMART METRES**

- · Better identifies how people are using their accommodation
- · Allows providers to alter services, such as heating, in real-time
- Repairs or replacements can be commissioned quicker to minimise costs and disruption

IMPROVED CUSTOMER SERVICE

• Help and advice can be made available 24 hours a day, seven days a week with the help of a

- knowledge portal and accessible online account
- · Completing actions online means customers have no restrictions on when they can resolve their issues or speak with the correct department
- · In turn this delivers considerable reputational benefits, impacting positively and directly on brand experience
- · Communication channels between housing associations and tenants become far more easily accessible

A REMOTE WORKFORCE

- · Cloud technologies allow housing association teams to work remotely
- · Reduces the need for multiple physical office
- · Allows staff to be more connected with those that need help the most
- · Less time spent on mundane transactions
- · More focus can be made on enabling the organisation to become more human with greater face-to-face interactions

If you want to know more on how digital can transform your business, take a look at our free courses, with everything from how to create a brand with impact, which CMS you should choose and how to create a powerful digital marketing strategy to our dedicated Housing association content.

02920 480720 www.spindogs.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

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

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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

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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

www.layher.co.uk

Scaffolding & Safety Equipment Layher Ltd Tel: 01462 475100

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.vexoint.com

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