

HOUSING MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

AUG/SEP 2021



Disrepair scandals
uncovered by
news crews

Huge repayment
order on illegal
subletting



Shocking levels
of discrimination
revealed

Fears over benefit
clawbacks
affecting thousands



What is PAS 2035?

Richard Jenkins of Nuaire explains what PAS 2035 is, and how local housing authorities can improve their ventilation strategies



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Editor's comment

Shining a spotlight on disrepair



Patrick Mooney,
News Editor

Over a number of weeks in the Spring and early Summer months an ITV News team broadcast packages on national television, about the experiences endured by social housing residents living in homes with damp, mould and other types of serious disrepair. The bulletins featured residents in both local authority and housing association homes. They didn't make pleasant viewing.

Frankly the conditions shown to viewers were disgraceful and nothing short of a scandal. Any landlord can claim that the situations being filmed were one-offs and did not represent their normal levels of service. The trouble is as the weeks went on, so we the viewers, got to see more and more examples of how perfectly ordinary and normal decent people were expected to live in wholly unacceptable and abnormal conditions. They had all complained about relatively simple things such as water leaks or rodent infestations, but their landlords had all failed to complete even the most simple and routine repairs.

Without a timely or proper solution, all of the problems had magnified and grown until they created unsanitary and dangerous conditions, with the homes not fit to be lived in. Of course in all of the instances we were shown, the residents were still expected to pay their full rent, with no discounts or rebates for their inconvenience. ITV uncovered disrepair issues in properties owned by a number of social landlords, including Croydon Council, Clarion, L&Q and Bromford – two of them are the biggest social landlords in the country.

Interestingly in one of the later bulletins the ITV team highlighted that in the last three years the number of complaints made by HA tenants to the Housing Ombudsman had risen by 35 per cent from 5,409 in 2018/19, to 7,316 complaints in 2020/21. But while complaints against the associations had gone up, so had the salaries paid to their chief executives. The sector's highest paid chief executive earns £436,681, while every chief executive in the ten biggest housing associations earns more than £284,000. There is a question to be asked about whether the sector's leaders are still in touch with their customers and deserve such large salaries. Frankly I have no idea what the answer is to that!

Most large housing associations in England are members of the National Housing Federation and clearly embarrassed by the investigation's findings, the NHF sought a meeting with the programme makers. Chief Executive Kate Henderson offered her sincere apologies with these words: "The stories we've seen on ITV News are just not acceptable, not only because of the levels of disrepair in these homes, but also because the residents have not felt listened to. I'm sorry that these residents have been let down. They deserve better.

Housing associations take these issues very seriously, and last year invested £5.7bn in repairs and maintenance. But clearly, as a sector it is vital we learn from what has gone wrong in the cases uncovered by ITV."

Ms Henderson told us that action was being taken. "First, last year the National Housing Federation launched a new set of standards for housing associations. It was developed with residents and allows them to hold their housing association to account. This will take time to roll out, but we believe it will make a real difference and will ensure residents are heard. Second, since the ITV News stories have aired we have been working with housing associations in every region of the country to understand what more we in the social housing sector can do to tackle disrepair, including damp and mould. This is part of our commitment to work closely with the ongoing review by the housing ombudsman to develop practical solutions to put things right." Let no one be in any doubt, the sector is on notice and needs to improve.

Across the River Severn, the Welsh government has written to every housing association in the country seeking assurances that tenants are not living in poor conditions. In a major intervention, ministers have asked for details of every unresolved disrepair claim across the 240,000 social homes in Wales. They demanded responses by late July and they're writing to local councils seeking a "general assurance statement" and the breakdown of disrepair claims. Housing providers are being asked to provide the address, date, nature of the disrepair claim, and a summary of its progress. It is really good to see the Welsh government taking such an active interest in this issue, which rather begs the question what is the English Government doing and should the English Regulator of Social Housing have been ahead of the curve and doing the sort of investigations which ITV News have been doing?

Patrick Mooney



On the cover...

Richard Jenkins of Nuaire explains what PAS 2035 is, and how local housing authorities can improve their ventilation strategies. See page 39.

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Shocking revelations about housing discrimination revealed

A housing emergency in the UK means that Black, Asian and disabled tenants are more likely to face discrimination while looking for a home and they will often end up living in shoddy, unsafe and unsuitable accommodation, according to one of the country's leading campaigning organisations.

The charity Shelter surveyed 13,000 people about their housing experiences and if the results are applied to the whole UK population, they suggest that 17.5 million people are living in housing that is substandard or hazardous, unaffordable, or unfit for their needs.

Polly Neate, chief executive of Shelter, said: "Decades of neglect has left Britain's housing system on its knees. A safe home is everything, yet millions don't have one. Lives are being ruined by benefit cuts, blatant discrimination and the total failure to build social homes."

The survey's results are published in a 35 page report, 'Denied the right to a safe home'. It's headline findings are:

- Black and Asian people are almost five times more likely to experience discrimination when looking for a safe, secure and affordable home than white people (14 per cent against 3 per cent);
- More than one in 10 disabled people, and 7 per cent of those earning under £20,000 a year, found it hard to find a safe and secure home;
- Twelve per cent of black people and 14 per cent of Asian people reported safety hazards in their homes, such as faulty wiring and fire risks,

compared to just 6 per cent of white people;

- Fourteen per cent of black people and 16 per cent of Asian people reported living in a property with significant defects with walls or roof, compared with only 8 per cent of white people; and
- Overall, 56 per cent of black people are affected by the housing emergency, compared with 49 per cent of Asian people and 33 per cent of white people. 54 per cent of disabled people are affected compared with 30 per cent of non-disabled people and 58 per cent of single parents are also being affected.

NEW HOMES AND LAW CHANGES NEEDED

In response, Shelter is calling for 90,000 new social homes to be built every year to stem the crisis of affordability and to cut the estimated 1 million people on council waiting lists.

High housing costs and specifically the failure of housing benefit to keep pace with rising rents means that for 20 per cent of people housing was a source of stress, while 14 per cent admitted they cut back on food or fuel to prioritise paying the rent or mortgage.

Shelter says the pandemic shone a stark light on the state of Britain's housing, with poverty and poor and overcrowded accommodation recognised as a key factor in many areas where Covid infections and deaths were highest.

Structural racism and discrimination meant black, Asian, and disabled people, gay people, people on low incomes and single parents are overwhelmingly more likely to experience poor and inadequate housing, the charity said.

Black and Asian people are almost five times more likely to experience discrimination when looking for a safe, secure and affordable home than white people

As well as being more likely to be on low incomes, racial minorities are more likely to be offered poorer homes or "steered" into certain neighbourhoods, Shelter said. So-called "No DSS" discrimination and the ineligibility of some migrant workers for housing support further diminished the housing chances of marginalised groups.

Despite big changes in the housing market in recent decades, Shelter says that housing laws have changed little since the 1980s, trapping many in a series of short-term private lets and creating a "permanent state of stress and instability" for many tenants.

An estimated 1.5 million people are bringing up children in the private rented sector (twice as many as 15 years ago) while hundreds of thousands of older people are likely to be renting privately in years to come, "facing unaffordable rent increases at a time when most owner-occupiers are starting to be mortgage-free".

Supreme court rejects challenge to UC 'two-child limit'

Fears over rising rent arrears and increased eviction levels have followed the country's highest court rejecting a challenge to the Government's "two-child limit" for welfare payments.

Dating from April 2017, the rule restricts child tax credit and Universal Credit to the first two children in a family, with limited exceptions. The challenge was brought by two single mothers and their children, supported by the Child Poverty Action Group, on behalf of all those affected by the policy.

The Supreme Court justices were asked to decide whether the limit was compatible with human rights laws, including the rights to respect for private and family life, to found a family and to freedom from discrimination, as the policy disproportionately affects women.

The judges dismissed the case, upholding previous decisions of the high court and court of

appeal. The judges concluded that while the policy did have a greater impact on women, who make up 90 per cent of single parent families, there was an "objective and reasonable justification" for that effect, namely to "protect the economic wellbeing of the country". They also concluded that any impact of the policy on children in families with more than one sibling is "justifiable".

The families who brought the challenge have both been affected by the limit, as they have children who were born after the new rule came into force under the Welfare Reform and Work Act on 6 April 2017.

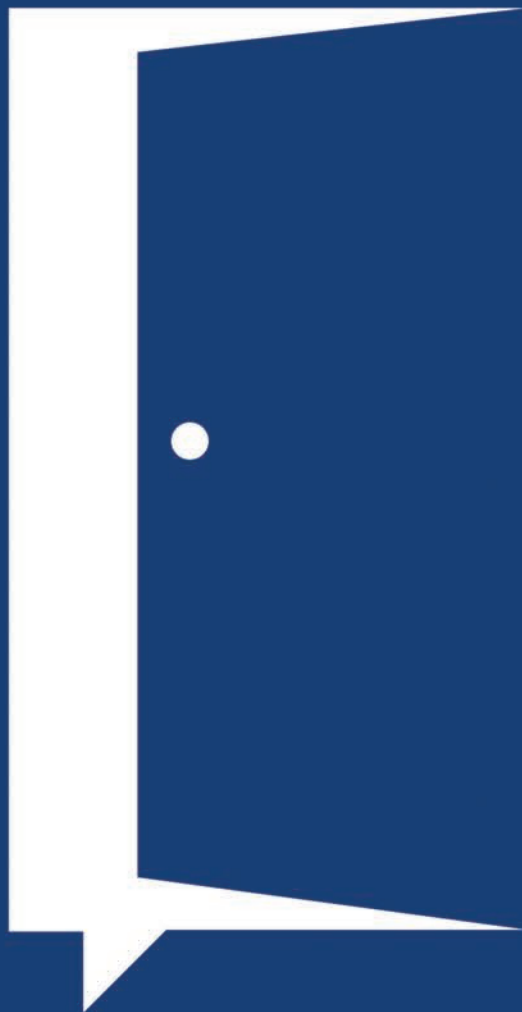
Carla Clarke, the head of strategic litigation at CPAG, said: "This is a hugely disappointing judgment, which fails to give any meaningful recognition to the reality of the policy on the ground and its desperately unfair impact on children.

"We know the two-child limit increases child poverty, including child poverty in working households, and forces women to choose between an abortion and raising their families without enough to live on.

"We continue to believe that the policy is unlawful and, together with our clients, are considering taking the matter to the European court of human rights so that no child is left out of the social security safety net purely because of their birth order."

There are now fears that welfare payments will not be increased for many low-income families and that rent arrears, already under huge pressure during the Covid lockdowns, will increase significantly. This in turn could see a big jump in evictions from September onwards, with the easing of rules which have discouraged landlords from taking back possession of their properties.

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Mega repayment order follows flat's 12 year illegal subletting

A woman has been ordered to repay more than £155,000 by a court after she was found guilty of illegally letting a housing association flat in south east London for more than 12 years.

Adejoke Patience Ologe let out the two-bedroom flat in Camberwell, which she rented from Riverside housing association. Ms Ologe had not lived in the flat since at least 2008 and was renting it to two women and their children.

The illegal arrangement sublet was discovered by Oxford City Council's counter-fraud team, which investigates suspected cases of tenancy fraud on behalf of Riverside.

At Clerkenwell and Shoreditch County Court a judge granted Riverside possession of the property. The judge also made an Unlawful Profit Order in the sum of £145,178 together with a demand that Ms Ologe repay £3,000 of rent arrears and £9,955 of legal costs.

The amount was based on the belief that Ms Ologe had received £216,000 over the 12-year period. A spokesperson for Oxford Council said they believed the Unlawful Profit Order was the second largest of its kind ever issued in the UK.

Patrick New, executive director of customer service at Riverside, said: "This was a blatant, dishonest fraud. With social housing in huge demand, it's vital we pursue such cases in order to make properties available to families and individuals who will act honestly and deserve them."

Scott Warner, counter-fraud manager at Oxford City Council, said: "This is a landmark case that really demonstrates the value of our partnership working approach with Riverside. Social housing fraud is often seen as a hidden crime but the effect is felt far and wide.

He added: "With the demand for social housing, unlawfully subletting a property means a deserving family are unable to occupy a home and may need to reside in expensive, unsuitable temporary accommodation for longer than is necessary."

Huge demand for household adaptations revealed

Around 1.9 million households in England had one or more people with a health condition that required adaptations to their home, according to the latest English Homes Survey findings.

In 2019/20, 8 per cent of all households in England (1.9 million) had at least one person with a long-standing physical or mental health condition and said that they required adaptations to their home. This has not changed since 2014/15.

Most households that required adaptations felt their home was suitable for their needs.

In 2019/20, 81 per cent of households that required adaptations to their home due to their health condition felt their home was suitable for their needs. The 19 per cent of households (374,000) that required adaptations and who considered their accommodation unsuitable accounted for 2 per cent of all households in England. This has not changed since 2014/15.

Younger people were more likely than older people to report that their accommodation was unsuitable for their needs and were more likely to want to move to more suitable accommodation.

Households with a person aged under 55 that required adaptations were more likely to report that their accommodation was unsuitable (30 per cent) than those that required adaptations in older age groups (20 per cent or less). Households with a person aged 75 or over that required adaptations were least likely to state their accommodation was unsuitable (13 per cent).

Overall, 17 per cent of households with someone under 55 that required adaptations wanted to move to more suitable accommodation compared with 12 per cent of households with someone aged 55 to 64 years and 7 per cent or less for those aged 65 or over.

HIGH LEVELS OF UNSUITABLE PROPERTIES

Owner-occupiers who required adaptations were less likely to say that their home was unsuitable for their needs.

In 2019/20, 17 per cent of owner-occupiers that required adaptations reported that their accommodation was unsuitable for their needs. By comparison, 25 per cent of private renters, 25 per cent of local authority renters and 21 per cent of housing association renters that required adaptations said that their home was unsuitable for their needs.

The most common adaptation needed inside the home was hand or grab rails in the kitchen or bathroom.

In total, 42 per cent of households that required adaptations reported that they needed a hand or



The 19 per cent of households (374,000) that required adaptations and who considered their accommodation unsuitable accounted for 2 per cent of all households in England

grab rail in their kitchen or bathroom, representing around 819,000 households.

The number of households that reported that they did not have all the adaptations that they needed has increased.

In 2019/20, 47 per cent of households that required adaptations had all the adaptations they needed in their home. Consequently, 53 per cent (1 million) of households did not have all the adaptations that they needed, an increase since 2014/15 when 45 per cent (864,000) of households that required adaptations lacked one or more of the adaptations they needed.

Middle-income households were most likely to not have all the adaptations they needed.

In 2019/20, 63 per cent of households in the middle income quintile did not have all the adaptations that they needed. By comparison, 51 per cent of households in the lowest income quintile and 52 per cent of households in the highest income quintile reported that they not have all the adaptations they needed.

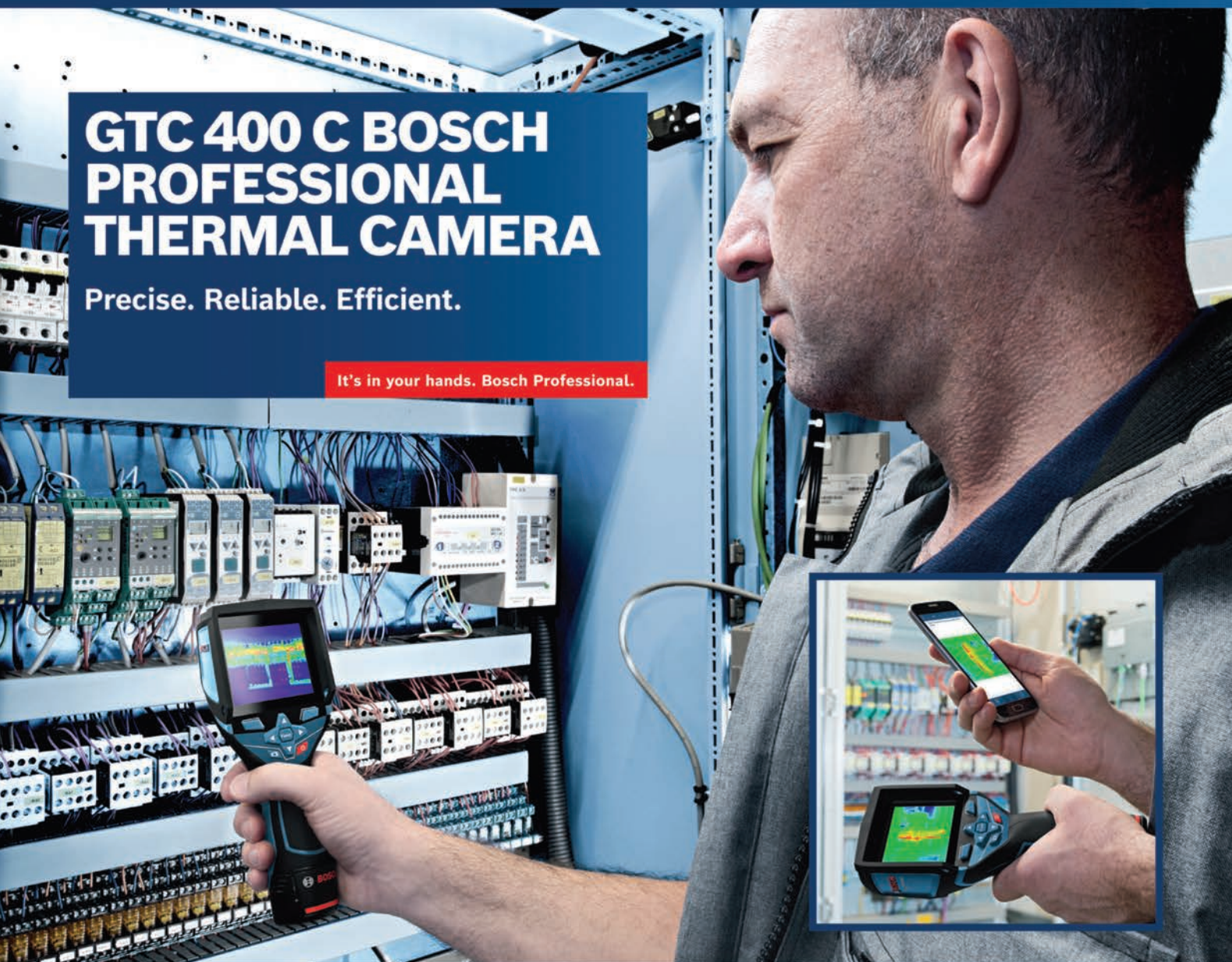


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Energy efficiency of English homes has improved over the last decade

The latest results from the English Housing Survey provides encouraging news on energy efficiency, but gives strong pointers to where further improvements should be targeted.

The proportion of dwellings in the highest EER bands of A to C, increased from 12 per cent in 2009 to 40 per cent in 2019, 47 per cent were in band D (44 per cent in 2009), 10 per cent in band E (32 per cent in 2009) and 3 per cent in bands F or G (12 per cent in 2009).

Social rented homes remain the most energy efficient, though there have been marked improvements across all tenures in the last decade.

In 2019, social rented homes were generally the most energy efficient (61 per cent in bands A to C, up from 23 per cent in 2009). Meanwhile, 38 per cent of homes in the private rented sector and 36 per cent of owner occupied homes were in bands A to C in 2019 (up from 13 per cent and 8 per cent respectively in 2009).

Over two thirds of homes with lower energy efficiency, of D or below, could be brought up to band C for a cost of less than £10,000.

It would cost less than £10,000 to improve over two thirds of dwellings (69 per cent) to a band C, and about £15,000 or more to improve 11 per cent of dwellings.

The average cost to raise dwellings with an EER band D to G into an EER band C was estimated to be £8,110. The average cost was highest for owner occupied homes (£8,579), followed by the private rented sector (£7,646). The average costs for local authority and housing association dwellings were similar at £6,067 and £5,910, respectively.

FUEL SAVINGS

Average fuel savings for dwellings that could be improved to a band C were almost £300 a year.

For those dwellings that were able to be improved to an EER band C, the average fuel cost savings were £298 per year. Owner occupied dwellings had the highest average fuel cost saving at £324, followed by private rented dwellings, at £279. The average fuel cost savings for local authority and housing association dwellings were lower, at £162 and £167 respectively.

Owner-occupiers were more likely to have a boiler system with radiators and gas central heating than renters. Half of dwellings with heat pumps were also owner occupied.

Most (90 per cent) English homes have a boiler system with radiators as their main heating system. Such systems were more prevalent in owner occupied dwellings (94 per cent) than local authority (89 per cent), private rented (83 per cent) and housing association (83 per cent) dwellings.

Dwellings in the private rented sector were more likely to have room heaters as their main heating system compared with all other tenures whereas social rented dwellings were



Social rented homes remain the most energy efficient, though there have been marked improvements across all tenures in the last decade

more likely to have communal heating than other tenures.

Of the 103,000 dwellings that had a heat pump in 2019, half were owner occupied (50 per cent), around a quarter were owned by housing associations (23 per cent), and 16 per cent were owned by local authorities. The remaining 11 per cent were in the private rented sector.

CHANGING SUPPLIERS

Over three quarters of households had not changed their electricity or gas supplier or tariff in the last 12 months. Owner-occupiers were more likely to report switching suppliers or tariffs than renters.

In 2019, 23 per cent households mentioned having changed suppliers, 19 per cent had changed both electricity and gas, 3 per cent had just switched their electricity supplier and fewer than 1 per cent changed their gas supplier only

Owner-occupiers were more likely to have changed both their electricity and gas suppliers (21 per cent) compared with private renters (15 per cent), housing association renters (14 per cent) and local authority renters (13 per cent).

Owner-occupiers were also more likely to have

changed both electricity and gas tariffs (15 per cent) compared with private renters (7 per cent), housing association renters (6 per cent) and local authority renters (5 per cent).

Vulnerable households were more likely to have problems with serious damp.

In 2019, around 2 per cent or 455,000 dwellings had a problem with damp while overcrowded households were more likely to experience problems with damp (6 per cent) compared with households living at the bedroom standard (3 per cent) or under occupying (1 per cent) their home.

Serious damp issues were more prevalent where the head of the household was unemployed (7 per cent) compared with households where the head was inactive (3 per cent), in part-time work (3 per cent), full-time work (2 per cent) and full-time education (1 per cent).

Lone parents with independent children (4 per cent) and lone parents with dependent children (3 per cent) were more likely to have serious damp issues in their home than couples with no children (1 per cent). Couples with no children were also less likely to have issues with damp (1 per cent) than couples with dependent children (3 per cent).

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Social housing EHS main findings

There are 4 million households in the social rented sector. The sector is home to more vulnerable groups than other tenures, likely due to the way social housing is allocated on the basis of need.

Over half, 54 per cent, of households in the social rented sector had a household member with a disability or long-term health condition, compared to 31 per cent of owner occupiers and 25 per cent of private renters.

Social renters tend to have lower income than other tenures. Just under half (47 per cent) of social renters were in the lowest quintile, greater than the proportion of owners and private renters (13 per cent and 20 per cent respectively).

In 2019/20, the social rented sector has the highest proportion of lone parent households (22 per cent), compared to owner occupied (6 per cent) and private rented sectors (13 per cent).

The social rented sector has the highest rate of overcrowding, and the lowest rate of under-occupation.

In 2019/20, 9 per cent of homes in the social rented sector were overcrowded, the highest level recorded since 1995/96. This was higher than the proportion in the owner occupied (1 per cent) and private rented (7 per cent) sectors.

Rates of overcrowding were higher amongst local authority tenants (11 per cent) than housing association tenants (7 per cent).

London had the largest proportion of overcrowded households, compared to any other region. Of social renters in London, 17 per cent were living in overcrowded accommodation, compared to 7 per cent for the rest of England.

In the social rented sector, ethnic minority households had higher levels of overcrowding (18 per cent) than white households (at 7 per cent).

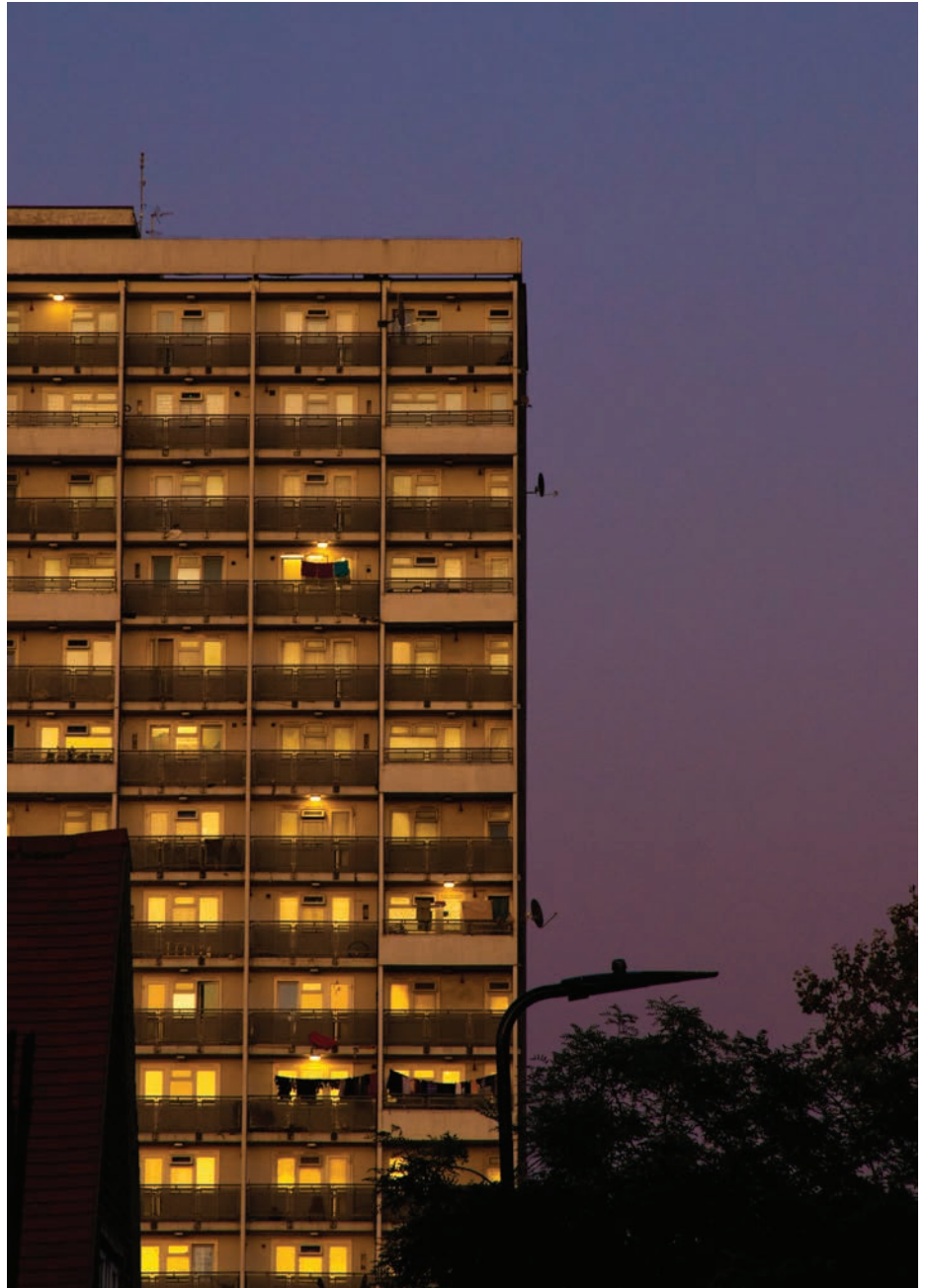
In contrast, 10 per cent of households in the social rented sector are under-occupied (i.e. have two or more spare bedrooms). This was lower than the proportion of under-occupied homes in the private rented (15 per cent) and owner occupied (52 per cent) sectors.

Most social renters are satisfied with living within the social rented sector, their accommodation and the area they live. However, the level of satisfaction is generally lower than for owners and private renters.

Over three quarters (78 per cent) of social renters said that they were satisfied with their accommodation. This was lower than the proportion of owners (95 per cent) and private renters (83 per cent) who said they were satisfied with their accommodation.

Most (80 per cent) social renters reported that they were satisfied with being a social renter. This was lower than the proportion of owners who were satisfied with being owners (98 per cent), but higher than private renters (70 per cent).

79 per cent of social renters said they were satisfied with their area. Satisfaction with the area



was higher among private renters (84 per cent) and owner-occupiers (90 per cent).

Those who rent from a housing association have higher levels of satisfaction than those who rent from a local authority.

Housing association tenants reported higher levels of satisfaction with accommodation (80 per cent) than local authority tenants (75 per cent).

Similarly, a higher proportion of housing association residents said they were satisfied with their area (80 per cent) than local authority tenants (76 per cent).

While many social renters are satisfied with the housing services provided by their landlord almost a third had considered making a complaint in the last 12 months. Of those who had complained,

the majority were unhappy with the response they received.

In 2019/20, 70 per cent of social renters said they were satisfied with housing services provided by their landlord and 30 per cent had considered making a complaint about housing services in the last 12 months. This was higher than the proportion of private renters who considered making a complaint (15 per cent).

Of social renters who considered making a complaint, 63 per cent complained to the landlord, 21 per cent to the management organisation, whilst 18 per cent made no complaint at all.

Continued overleaf...

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Of those who made a complaint, most were unhappy with the response to their complaint (59 per cent). The majority (84 per cent) of those who were unhappy with the response to their complaint did not escalate it, for example to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Although most social renters said they found it easy to pay their rent, almost a quarter (23 per cent) of household had been in rent arrears at some point in the last 12 months.

Almost three quarters (73 per cent) of social renters said they found it easy to pay their rent. Despite this, 23 per cent of households had been in arrears at some point in the previous year. This was higher than the proportion of private renters (8 per cent).

Almost half (47 per cent) of social renters in the bottom two income quintiles spend more than 30 per cent of their income on their rent.

The household type most likely to spend more than 30 per cent of their income on their rent were single person households, 61 per cent of whom were in this situation in 2019/20.

Compared with the private rented sector, there are relatively few movers in the social rented sector and social renters have lived in their current home longer.

The average length of residence in their current home for social renters was 12.2 years. This was lower than owners (17.4 years) but higher than private renters (4.3 years).

Overall, 62 per cent of the social renters have lived in the sector for over 10 years, with 37 per cent having lived in the social rented sector for over 20 years.

Of all those who moved into a social rented property within the last year, just over half were already in the social rented sector (52 per cent). Over a quarter (27 per cent) had previously lived in the private rented sector, 18 per cent were new

In 2019, 12 per cent of social homes failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. This compared with the 23 per cent of private rented sector stock and 16 per cent of owner occupied housing stock

households and 3 per cent were previously living in an owner occupied home.

Homes in the social rented sector are more energy efficient and are less likely to have poor housing conditions than other tenures. The costs to make homes decent and more energy efficient are lower in the social rented sector than the private rented and owner occupied sectors.

In 2019, 12 per cent of social homes failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. This compared with the 23 per cent of private rented sector stock and 16 per cent of owner occupied housing stock.

Similarly, 5 per cent of social rented dwellings had at least one Category 1 hazard, a lower proportion compared with owner occupied (10 per cent) and private rented (13 per cent) dwellings.

On average it would cost £5,077 to make a non-decent home in the social rented sector meet the Decent Homes Standard. This is less than in the private rented (£7,912) or owner occupied (£7,832) sector.

The majority of dwellings in the social rented sector were in EPC Bands A to C (61 per cent), compared with 38 per cent of private rented sector dwellings and 36 per cent of owner occupied dwellings.

The average cost to improve a social rented home to at least EPC Band C was £5,979, lower than for private rented homes (£7,646), and owner occupied homes (£8,579).

Low income social renters were more likely to live in a home that had a Category 1 hazard or that did not meet the Decent Homes Standard than higher income social renters.

Social renters in the lowest income quintile (13 per cent) were more likely to live in a non-decent home, than those in the fourth income quintile (8 per cent).

Similarly, those in the lowest and second quintiles (both 6 per cent) were more likely to live with a Category 1 hazard than households in the fourth income quintile (2 per cent).

Social renters are less likely to have private outside space, but more likely to have shared outside space than all other tenures.

62 per cent of homes in the social rented sector had a private plot (for the sole use of the dwelling) and a further 37 per cent had a plot shared with other dwellings. The remaining 1 per cent did not have a plot at all.

Social rented homes were less likely to have a private plot than owner occupied (93 per cent) and private rented homes (67 per cent). Meanwhile, social rented homes were more likely to have shared plots than private rented (28 per cent) and owner occupied (6 per cent) homes.

The variation in prevalence of plot type across tenure was likely driven by dwelling type; 42 per cent of social sector homes were purpose-built flats (low and high rise) compared with 28 per cent in the private rented sector.

Building Safety Bill: mixed response from NHF

The long-awaited Building Safety Bill setting out the legislation for the new building safety regulatory regime to ensure the safety of people and their homes, has left lots of questions unanswered.

The National Housing Federation welcomed the Bill, but has called for more clarity and help for social landlords and shared owners facing huge bills to remediate residential buildings. They fear that billions of pounds could be diverted away from building new homes, to be spent on safety work.

The Bill introduces significant changes to building safety regulation, as recommended by Dame Judith Hackitt in her Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, and introduces the new Building Safety Regulator to

oversee the new safety regime. Responding to the publication of the Bill, Victoria Moffett, Head of Building and Fire Safety Programmes at the National Housing Federation said: "We welcome the publication of the Bill as an important milestone. It is the next step in overhauling the building safety regulatory system to make sure a tragedy like the fire at Grenfell Tower never happens again.

"It's positive to see the Government acknowledge that private developers are ultimately responsible for the poor workmanship which has led to so many safety issues. And, that these developers should therefore cover the costs of the work, rather than homeowners or those in social housing.

"But many questions remain about what will happen in practice. Giving leaseholders longer to pursue private developers for compensation could help some people, but unfortunately not everyone who is struggling to pay enormous building safety bills. There was also no announcement about other financial support for leaseholders today.

"The Government has rightfully made it a legal

requirement for building owners to pursue all other options before passing any building safety costs on to leaseholders. Not-for-profit HAs have already been doing this but we are concerned to hear of cases where they have not been successful and associations will have no other choice but to still pass on costs to homeowners or shared owners in their buildings.

"There was also no funding for HAs remediating social housing announced today. Charitable associations have so far been unable to access existing Government funds. They are already diverting billions of pounds away from the upkeep of their social homes and away from building new social housing in order to make safe homes they bought in good faith.

"If the Government want to avoid bills being passed on to homeowners and fewer affordable homes getting built over the next decade, they will need to cover all building safety costs upfront and claim the costs back later from the companies they acknowledge are responsible – such as private developers."

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Huge increase in B&B spending for people who are homeless reveals urgency for more social housing

Rising numbers of people who are homeless are being placed in bed and breakfast hotels due to a severe shortage of housing meaning councils are being forced to spend over five times as much money on emergency accommodation as they were a decade ago.

Latest figures show that councils in England spent £142 million placing homeless households in bed and breakfasts in 2019/20, compared with £26.7 million in 2010/11 - a 430 per cent increase.

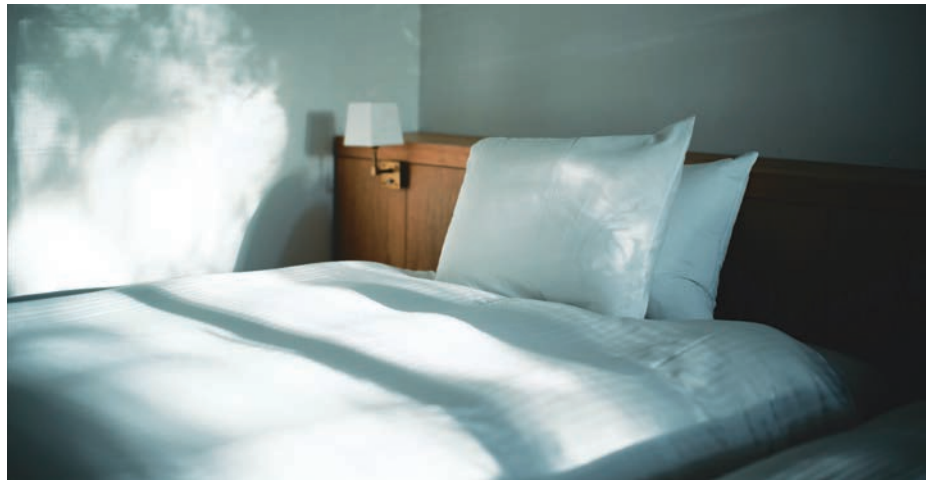
Currently, there are 10,510 households in bed and breakfasts, according to provisional data, compared with 2,310 a decade ago – more than a 350 per cent increase.

During the coronavirus crisis, central and local government have shown what can be achieved when they work together towards a shared goal with councils demonstrating their ability to lead and delivery on the most pressing issues facing residents right across the nation.

The Local Government Association now wants to work more closely with the Government to tackle the current housing shortage and is calling for councils to be given further powers and resources to build 100,000 social homes for rent each year, as part of a six point plan of action.

With previous LGA analysis showing council housing waiting lists could double as a result of the pandemic, giving councils these new powers would help the Government to meet a third of its annual housing target and reduce homelessness.

By reforming Right to Buy so that councils can retain 100 per cent of receipts, have flexibility to combine right to receipts with other Government



grants and be able to set the size of discounts locally, councils could go even further.

The LGA says these measures would enable councils to significantly boost the number of new homes built, supported by the right infrastructure. Polling by the LGA has also found that 80 per cent of MPs and 88 per cent of Peers think councils should have more financial freedoms and powers to build new homes.

Cllr David Renard, LGA housing spokesperson, said: "Sadly, these figures reflect the scale of the housing challenges that our country faces. Councils will only use bed and breakfasts as a last resort, but the severe lack of suitable housing means they now have no choice. This is hugely disruptive to families with children, and the rising demand for support

has come with soaring costs for councils.

"Throughout the pandemic government has trusted councils to get on with the job of protecting the nation, supporting people and putting infrastructures in place to help with recovery. We want to continue this momentum and work with government to tackle the shortage of housing and build the homes the country desperately needs.

"With the right funding and freedoms, councils can help government achieve its ambitions for our national recovery from the pandemic. Giving councils the powers to build council housing on the scale required, would go a significant way towards reducing homelessness and the need to place households in bed and breakfasts."

Midlands HA sets aside extra £2m to tackle damp and mould

Bromford housing association has set aside an additional £2 million to address damp and mould issues within its stock after a TV news crew reported on poor conditions within its stock.

Bromford said the money will help it deal with damp and mould cases "more proactively with customers when issues arise in their homes". The new funding is on top of the £35m it has already

spent over the past year maintaining and improving existing homes with a further £42m planned for the current year.

The association has 44,000 homes spread across central and south west England. It is one of the country's biggest developers of social housing and by 2030 it plans to have all of its homes at the EPC energy rating of C as a minimum.

In mid May an ITV News bulletin reported on the damp and mould suffered by one of Bromford's tenants, as part of a national investigation into the poor conditions experienced by many tenants in the social housing sector.

Paul Coates, executive director of transformation and compliance at Bromford, said the additional funding was just one aspect of the association's approach to addressing the issue, which it said is one of the organisation's top priorities.

He said: "We are now looking at other live cases

of damp and mould and have already started contacting these customers to understand what their issues are, what experience they've had with our service so far, before carrying out a physical inspection of the home to identify any remedial action that needs to be taken.

"Additionally, we will be looking at historical cases, to make sure any issues haven't returned, and our neighbourhood coaches are having those proactive conversations right now in our communities.

Mr Coates visited the tenant whose home was featured on ITV News, with a technical colleague before the programme aired. "While there were no leaks or structural issues, there was a high level of moisture being created inside the home and we identified a number of remedial works to help with ventilation in the kitchen and bathroom. Those works have now been completed."

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The private rented sector in figures

Nearly one in five households in England live in the private rented sector, making it the second largest tenure.

Just over 4.4 million households live in the private rented sector in England, 19 per cent of all households. By comparison, 17 per cent (4 million) live in the social rented sector and 65 per cent (15.4 million) are owner-occupiers.

The number and proportion of private rented households has declined slightly from 20 per cent and 4.7 million households in 2016/17.

Renters are more likely to live in overcrowded accommodation than owner-occupiers, and ethnic minority households in the private rented sector are more likely to be overcrowded than white households.

7 per cent of private rented and 9 per cent of social rented households are overcrowded, compared with 1 per cent of owner occupied households. Overcrowding in the private rented sector increased further during the COVID-19 pandemic. In November to December 2020, 15 per cent of households in the private rented sector were overcrowded.

In 2019/20, 13 per cent of privately rented households with an ethnic minority head were overcrowded, compared with 7 per cent of white privately rented households.

Private renters spend a higher proportion of their household income on rent than social renters. This proportion is highest for those who live in London.

On average, private renters spent 32 per cent of their household income, including Housing Benefit, on rent. The average for social renters was 27 per cent.

Private renters in London spend an average of 42 per cent of their household income on rent. The same figure for social renters in London is 30 per cent.

RENT ARREARS

Private renting households with one adult were more likely to be in arrears than households with two or more adults.

At 13 per cent, lone parents were around twice as likely as couples with dependent children (at 6 per cent) to have been in arrears at some point over the past year.

At 8 per cent, one person households were nearly three times as likely than couples without children (at 3 per cent) to have been in arrears at some point over the past year.

Despite the fact they have lower relative incomes, private rented households with HRPs from the oldest and youngest age groups are less likely to report having difficulty with rent payments.

Nearly a half of privately renting households aged 16 to 24 (49 per cent) and more than four fifths (82 per cent) of those 75 and older are in the lowest two income quintiles. The figure for those aged 35 to 44 is 37 per cent.

About 16 per cent of those aged 16 to 24 and 14 per cent of those aged 75 and over report difficulty



Private renters in London spend an average of 42 per cent of their household income on rent. The same figure for social renters in London is 30 per cent

with rent. This compares with more than a third of those aged 35-44 (31 per cent) and those aged 45 to 64 (32 per cent).

The majority of households who had moved from privately rented accommodation had ended their last tenancy because they wanted to. Social renters whose last tenancy was in the private rented sector were more likely than those who moved within the private rented sector to have been asked to leave their last tenancy by their landlord or agent.

Three quarters of private renters (76 per cent) said that their last tenancy ended because they wanted to move. 8 per cent of current private renters report being asked to leave their last tenancy by a landlord or agent.

About two thirds (69 per cent) of social renters who were last private renters moved because they wanted to. About one fifth (22 per cent) of current social renters say they were asked to leave their privately rented tenancy by a landlord or agent.

FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

Younger private renters are more likely than older private renters to expect to own a home in the future.

More than three quarters of private renters aged 16 to 24 (78 per cent) and those aged 25 to 34 (77 per cent) say they expect to buy a home in the future.

The expectation to buy tapers off in older age cohorts – just under two thirds of those aged 35 to 44 (65 per cent), two fifths of those aged 45 to 64 (41 per cent) and just over a tenth of those aged 65 to 74 (12 per cent) eventually expect to buy.

Private renters in receipt of Housing Benefit are more likely to live in a non-decent home than those not in receipt of Housing Benefit. The converse is true for social renters.

29 per cent of private renters in receipt of Housing Benefit live in a non-decent home, compared to 21 per cent of private renters not receiving Housing Benefit.

For social renters, 11 per cent of households receiving benefit live in non-decent accommodation, compared to 14 per cent of social renters not in receipt of benefit.

The average cost to bring a privately rented dwelling to EPC C is more than for a social rented dwelling, but less than the average for owner occupied homes.

The average cost to bring a privately rented dwelling up to EPC C is £7,646. This is compared to £5,979 for a social rented dwelling, or £8,579 for owner-occupiers.

The total estimated costs to bring all privately rented dwellings in England that are currently EPC D or lower up to EPC C is £21.5 billion.



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HA apologises to residents for squalid conditions at London estate after TV expose

Bosses at the country's largest social landlord have apologised to residents of an estate in south London found to be infested with vermin and plagued by damp issues, with repairs left outstanding for years.

The 500 properties on Eastfields Estate in Mitcham are home to over a thousand people. It was featured in an ITV News bulletin, similar to one which exposed appalling living conditions on a Croydon Council estate in March.

Eastfields is owned by Clarion Housing which manages over 125,000 homes nationally. Vicky Bonner, director of housing at Clarion, said the service to residents living on the Eastfields Estate in Mitcham, south London, "had not been to the standard that the association would have liked" and that the housing association is "really sorry" to residents living there.

The ITV News broadcast showed an estate infested with rats and mice, with broadcast images showing widespread disrepair, including holes in the walls and ceilings, damp issues across the block and ongoing leaks.

One long-term resident who has lived in the block for 27 years, revealed that she had been living with a hole in her wall since she moved in. TV images showed her ceiling covered in black mould and a rotting bathroom, which led to the tenant being forced to wash with a bucket of water.

She said she could hear the sound of rats moving around in her walls at night, which has given her sleepless nights.

REPAIRS LEFT UNRECTIFIED

Another resident reported living for eight months without any lights on the top floor of her house, which includes the family bathroom and her children's bedroom. Both tenants said they had made repeated calls and complaints to Clarion to fix the issues in their flats but these had still not been rectified.

Ms Bonner said Eastfields Estate was earmarked for regeneration but progress had been slower than planned. She said: "The reality is Eastfields Estate is coming to the end of its life and the kind of issues we've got can only best be tackled by demolition and wholesale regeneration.

"When you are faced with regeneration, there is always a balance to be had in terms of how much short-term and long-term investment you make. It is clear to us that on this estate we haven't got the balance right and that means some residents have had to put up with some repairs taking longer to complete.

Clarion has since put in place an action plan to address some of the issues, including writing to all residents to apologise and members of the local team knocking on every residents' door to find out

The Regulator of Social Housing criticised the council saying that some of the homes they managed were "uninhabitable and unsafe" and that some tenants were at "risk of serious harm" as a result of the conditions

what their issues are. Clarion opened an estate office on the estate for residents to discuss housing issues and set up a dedicated email address for repairs to be reported.

The earlier ITV investigation resulted in Croydon Council becoming only the second social landlord found in breach of the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. The Regulator of Social Housing criticised the council saying that some of the homes they managed were "uninhabitable and unsafe" and that some tenants were at "risk of serious harm" as a result of the conditions.

Tenants are most likely to feel at risk from fire

Social housing tenants are the group who most fear a fire breaking out at their home, although the vast majority of residents still feel safe in their homes according to the most recent English Housing Survey results.

For the first time in its history, the 2019/20 version of the survey collected data on whether people felt safe from fire in their homes. The data showed that most people feel safe in their home and do not fear that a fire will break out.

In 2019/20, 89 per cent of households said they felt safe from fire in their home and 6 per cent said that they neither agreed nor disagreed that they felt safe at home. One in 20 (5 per cent) of households said they felt unsafe in their home because they fear that a fire may break out. This varied by tenure, the

type of dwelling the household lived in and the respondent's age and ethnicity.

TENURE

Renters were more likely to (strongly or tend to) agree that they did not feel safe at home because they fear that a fire may break out. Social renters were more concerned, with 10 per cent agreeing with the statement, compared to 7 per cent of private renters. Owner-occupiers were the least likely to agree that they did not feel safe at home due to the fear of a fire breaking out, at just 3 per cent.

DWELLING TYPE

Respondents in purpose built flats (low rise and high rise) were more likely than respondents in almost all other dwelling types to feel unsafe in their homes.

In 2019/20, 21 per cent of those in high-rise flats and 11 per cent of those in low-rise flats felt unsafe in their home. Rates for those who live in other dwelling types were much lower. For example, 5 per cent of those in small terraced houses and 4 per

cent of those in bungalows (strongly or tended to) agree that they did not feel safe at home because they feared a fire breaking out.

AGE

Younger people were more likely to feel unsafe in their home, with 15 per cent of those aged 16-24 reporting they felt unsafe, higher than any other age group.

The other age groups ranged from 4 to 6 per cent. Those aged 35-44 were more likely to feel unsafe in their home (6 per cent) than 45-54 year olds (4 per cent) and those aged 65 and over (also 4 per cent).

ETHNICITY

Those from an ethnic minority background were more likely than those from a White background to report feeling unsafe at home due to fear that a fire might break out (8 per cent compared to 5 per cent).

It is likely that all these findings are related. For example, younger people and those from an ethnic minority background are more likely to be renters and renters are more likely to live in flats.

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Tenants happy to pay more rent for well-furnished properties

According to research by Manor Interiors, experts in build-to-rent furnishing solutions, a furnished rental home could not only improve a landlord’s chances of finding a tenant, but it could also increase the monthly level of rental income.

The rental market can be a competitive space and opting to furnish property before renting it can help it stand out from the crowd. In fact, Manor Interiors found that just over a quarter of UK tenants (26 per cent) would be more likely to view a rental property if it was already furnished. A further 26 per cent of tenants also stated that they would be more likely to rent a property that was furnished over one that was not.

But it isn’t just a consistent stream of tenant demand and shorter void periods that a furnished rental home could help address.

The research by Manor Interiors also found that as many as 66 per cent of UK tenants would be willing to pay more rent per month for a well-furnished rental property. The survey responses are set out in the tables.

However, well-furnished is the key term when it comes to attracting the modern-day tenant. Manor Interiors found that 84 per cent of tenants believe the quality of furniture in a rental property was either somewhat, or very important. Suggesting that a poorly furnished property might not carry the same attraction.

CEO of Manor Interiors, Farhan Malik, commented: “A furnished rental home is always

going to carry far greater appeal amongst tenants. Largely due to the money saved on buying furniture when moving into a rental home, during what is an already expensive period once deposits and initial rent payments are made.

However, it also provides a far greater level of convenience which is something that resonates with the modern-day tenant, removing the need to spend a day or more moving large furniture items from one house to the next.

Of course, the modern-day tenant also values style and quality and so furnishing a property with below-par furniture is more likely to deter them rather than attract them.

You need only look at the build-to-rent sector to see the benefit of providing well-furnished homes for long-term tenants. These residents are more than happy to pay a premium for the wider lifestyle benefits provided by the sector and bespoke, high-quality furniture is an integral part of this offering.”

2. Would you be more likely to rent a property if it was already furnished over one that wasn't?	
Answer	Respondents
Not more likely at all	73%
Somewhat more likely	15%
Much more likely	11%

3. How important is the quality of the furniture in a rental property?	
Answer	Respondents
Somewhat important	44%
Very important	40%
Not important at all	15%

1. Would you be more likely to view a rental property if it was already furnished?	
Answer	Respondents
Not more likely at all	73%
Somewhat more likely	15%
Much more likely	11%

4. How much more would you be willing to pay per month for a well-furnished property?	
Answer	Respondents
A little bit more	62%
Would not pay more	34%
Much more	4%

Residents moved from HA block after fire safety defects discovered

A national housing association has moved residents out of one of its blocks in Essex after discovering the need for “significant remedial works” to correct faults in the building’s fire safety.

Residents at Riverside Place in Braintree, owned by the Home Group, were told to leave their homes after an extensive survey uncovered fire safety defects. Many residents were moved into hotel accommodation, while others moved in with family or friends. The block is understood to be about six years old.

Details of the defects were not disclosed by Home Group but the association said customer safety is always its “paramount concern”. The association houses more than 120,000 people in 55,000 properties all across the country.

Matt Forrest, executive director of operations at Home Group, said: “During one of our routine

Home Group, said: “During one of our routine checks, and a subsequent extensive survey, it became clear that significant remedial works are needed at our Riverside Place properties.

checks, and a subsequent extensive survey, it became clear that significant remedial works are needed at our Riverside Place properties.

“We have been working very closely with Essex Fire Service and have put extensive safety measures in place while we carried out our checks. We have kept our customers informed throughout this process.

“These investigations showed that to complete the work required to bring the building to a safety standard that we are satisfied with, unfortunately, we will have to move our customers out of the building. We are aware that this will cause them significant disruption to their day-to-day lives.

“It is not a decision that we have come to lightly. However, our customers’ safety is, and always will be, our paramount concern. We will continue to engage with them every step of the way.”

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Under one in ten private renters has home contents insurance

Millions of private tenants risk losing their valuables and essential property as they fail to take out contents insurance, protecting them against damages, loss and theft.

New data from the comparison website GoCompare shows that just 7 per cent of contents insurance quotes are for customers privately renting homes.

Approximately one in five UK households currently live in the private rented sector (4.5million families), yet only 315,000 of these take out contents cover. That means that more than 4 million households are not insured should any of their belongings get damaged, lost or stolen.

In comparison, the data shows that more than half (56 per cent) of the proportion of GoCompare customers who requested a contents insurance quote were mortgaged homeowners, while 36 per cent of homeowners requiring a quote had already paid off their mortgage.

Landlords who rent their accommodation can take out landlord insurance for their properties, which offers building's insurance, and can take out additional contents insurance for white goods and fixtures and fittings, but this will not cover the tenants' belongings.

Contents insurance covers all of a policy holder's belongings, that includes anything that isn't fixed down permanently. It can also include accidental damage cover, as well as specific items such as jewellery or tech.

Ryan Fulthorpe, from GoCompare home insurance, said: "We know that the private rental market is growing quickly, and more people are choosing to rent rather than buy homes due to the current surge in house prices, but this data is concerning.



"A lot of those in private rental accommodation are leaving themselves open to being majorly out of pocket should they be burgled or have an accident with one of their high value items. Landlords take out insurance to cover the contents of a property, but not a tenant's property, that is their responsibility."

Ryan added: "It's worrying to think that so many families living in rented accommodation are leaving themselves open to losing possibly

thousands of pounds if the worst happened, as well as to cover those high value items away from home – as many contents insurance policies offer some form of cover if an item is lost away from the property.

"Premiums can be as little as £137.50 a year, meaning tenants will have the peace of mind that they have protected their worldly goods, without too much of a dent on their pockets."

Fears growing that DWP will demand repayment of benefits

The number of private tenants claiming Universal Credit more than doubled in the past year to over 1.5 million but fears are growing that many of them will be told to repay thousands of pounds each.

When the first lockdown happened in March last year the Government suspended doing full checks on claims because it could not see claimants face to face.

At that time there were 749,000 claimants who were private renters. By February this year that number had soared to 1,549,000, an increase of 800,000 or more than 100 per cent.

The Department for Work and Pensions is now revisiting many of the claims it approved without

undertaking standard verification processes at the time. It is feared that many thousands of claimants will not have access to copies of the documents required by the DWP, such as rent books, invoices or tenancy agreements.

Already there are reports of some tenants being asked to repay sums of more than £5,000 each. Money they do not have and also have no chance of getting in the months ahead. They now face the prospect of having benefit payments reduced (while the 'overpayments' are clawed back) or removed entirely. This has a potentially devastating impact on tens of thousands of private renters. Housing charity Safer Renting fears a

growing number of tenants will be told to repay benefits they received, because they live in a "shadow part" of the private renting sector.

In many cases tenants living in unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupation are not aware that they are ineligible for housing benefit – often because their landlord has not given them a tenancy agreement, nor had their legal status explained to them.

In other arrangements, where people have moved in with friends and pay rent to a housemate (often known as a 'rent-to-rent' arrangement), they are also unable to provide documentation acceptable to the DWP.

Half a million more of us are renting

The latest research by nationwide buy-to-let specialist, Sequire Property Investment, has revealed the areas which have seen the biggest swings toward renting when compared to homeownership in recent years.

Sequire analysed data on dwellings across each area of England since 2012 and found that currently, 19.5 per cent of the 24.4m dwellings across England sit within the private rental sector. While this has only increased 1 per cent since 2012, this equates to an increase of nearly 500,000 more people living within privately rented properties across the country.

At a regional level, London is home to the highest level of private renters, accounting for 28.8 per cent of total dwellings. The capital has also seen the largest lifestyle swing towards renting with a 2.2 per cent increase since 2012.

However, this increase is not confined to the capital and the West Midlands has seen the second-largest increase, with the number of those reliant on rental properties increasing by 1.9 per cent since 2012. The North East has also seen one of the largest increases at 1.5 per cent, as has the South West at 1.3 per cent. At minus 0.4 per cent, the South East was the only region recording a decrease.

At local authority level, both Greenwich and the City of London have seen the largest uplift in



private renters, with both areas seeing the percentage of dwellings sitting within the private rental sector increase by 3.4 per cent since 2012.

In fact, London accounts for eight of the top 10 increases with Newham (2.5 per cent), Tower Hamlets (2.2), Southwark (2), Hackney (1.9), Barking and Dagenham (1.5) and Lewisham (1.5) also making the top 10.

Outside of the capital, Telford and Wrekin has seen the number of private rental properties increase by 1.6 per cent since 2012, with Salford also home to one of the largest increases at 1.5 per cent.

Sales Director at Sequire Property Investment, Daniel Jackson, commented: "The ever-escalating cost of homeownership, coupled with a change

in lifestyle choices amongst younger generations, has seen the number of us opting to reside within the private rental sector continue to grow in recent years.

"In fact, it's fair to the role of the private rental sector within the wider landscape of the UK property market has never been as important. Despite this, the Government has consistently looked to deter landlords from the sector in order to boost housing stock in order to address the current housing crisis.

"However, it's clear that with so many remaining reliant on the rental sector in order to live, this lazy approach will only shift the problem from one area of the market to another."

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Aico recognised in The Parliamentary Review



Aico has been recognised as a best practice representative for the upcoming 2021 edition of The Parliamentary Review; an independent publication which looks at how key British organisations are responding to different political and economic challenges.

The publication is apolitical and reviews the latest events in parliament from a non-partisan perspective. Success for organisations of any size does not always come easily, and The Parliamentary Review is indispensable for anyone who seeks to make a difference in their sector. It highlights significant developments and concerns for leaders up and down the country.

Market leader Aico contributed a thought-leadership article to the publication, examining how

the approach to fire protection is changing; with legislative reform paving the way to a more holistic landscape that challenges the status quo, and places resident safety firmly at the fore.

Aico's National Sales Director Steve Trafford, formerly National Sales Manager at the time of publication, commented "We are delighted to contribute to The Parliamentary Review, particularly on such critical and relevant topics to our sector. As the European market leader in home life safety, we are positioned to facilitate conversation and collaboration to connect the UK housing sector, providing an article championing best practice and pulling issues to the forefront in a publication that resonates both in Westminster and nationally."

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Kwasi Kwarteng says "this year's Parliamentary Review reflects on a tumultuous and extraordinary year, globally and nationally."



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www.theparliamentaryreview.co.uk/organisations/aico



HOUSING 2021

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MANCHESTER // SEPTEMBER

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Aico | HomeLINK host virtual event, What Makes a Healthy Home?



Steve Trafford, Sales Director for Aico opening the What Makes a Healthy Home virtual event

Wednesday 9th June saw the success of the virtual event, 'What Makes a Healthy Home?' powered by Aico | HomeLINK. The event aimed to create thought-provoking discussion regarding the current standards and legislation that contribute to creating safe homes for residents and the resulting impact on the social housing sector.

In attendance were close to 300 professionals, thought-leaders and decision-makers from across the industry to hear from keynote speakers, Dr Stephen Battersby, Vice President at the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and Dorota Pawlowski, Managing Associate at Trowers and Hamlin LLP. With interactive polls, dedicated question and answer sessions with keynote speakers and networking opportunities, the conference empowered the discussion of prevalent issues within the UK housing sector.

The event began with keynote speaker, Dr Stephen Battersby, who was part of the team from Warwick University that developed the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Stephen provided a comprehensive overview of the system's background and history and gave a unique insight into its implementation. The interactive poll conducted during the session demonstrated that 96.7% of delegates thought HHSRS is applicable to social housing.

Session Two was delivered by Aico's Regional Specification Manager for the South, Andrew Sturgess, who delivered a CPD certified

presentation on the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018. The presentation examined the legislation, practical applications and what it means for the housing sector while looking to innovative solutions.

Keynote speaker, Dorota Pawlowski, conducted Session Three, discussing the legal impact of the Homes Act. As a specialist in all aspects of issues that may face a residential landlord, the session expanded into an insightful discussion surrounding the mitigation of risk and disrepair claims. Through the poll, 64% of delegates expressed they had seen an increase in disrepair claims in recent times.

Dorota Pawlowski comments: "It was a pleasure to participate in Aico's virtual conference on what makes a healthy home and to be able to share my experiences from a legal perspective on the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018. It was an honour to share the stage with Dr Stephen Battersby, giving delegates an invaluable insight into how to tackle potential health issues in homes."

Aico's Relationships Manager, Tina Mistry, concluded the event by examining the connection between The Decent Homes Standard and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. With both of the aforementioned currently under review, the session demonstrated how they are connected and what the potential updates could mean for the social housing sector. The poll results displayed that 97% of delegates recognised the connection between the importance of resident engagement and disrepair.

Tina Mistry says of the event: "This event was a great success, and we were pleased to see the vast range of professionals from the housing sector join us for the event. Through polls and question and answer sessions, we saw high levels of engagement with our attendees, and it was good to be able to facilitate thought-provoking discussion with our keynote speakers on what really makes a healthy home. We are looking forward to Part 2 that will take place in November and explore true resident engagement and how we sustain behaviour change."

The event marked Part One of a two-part conference exploring healthy homes and how technology can support this. Part Two of the conference will take place on Tuesday 2nd November and will examine how empowering and engaging residents to take pride in their home safety and wellbeing can create and sustain behaviour change. Register here: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/what-does-your-home-mean-to-you-tickets-158599388039

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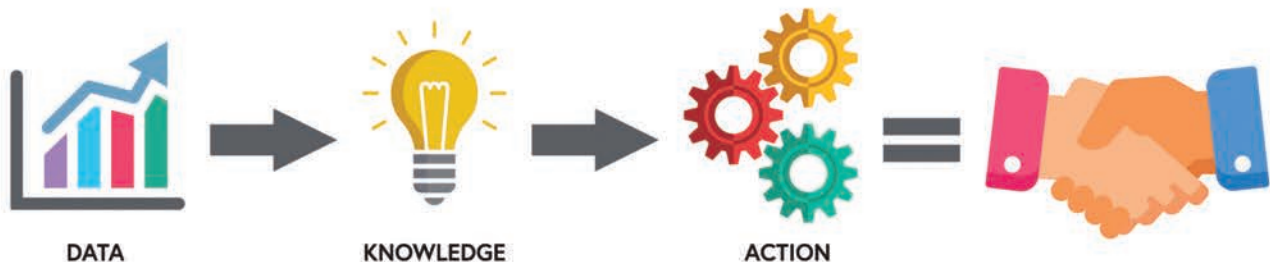
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HOUSING 2021 - MANCHESTER STAND F70

HOUSING 2021 STAND NO F70

7-9 SEPTEMBER | MANCHESTER CENTRAL


A Covid-secure Housing returns

Housing 2021, the Chartered Institute of Housing's annual conference, returns to a Covid-secure Manchester Central from 7-9th September to tackle key issues including post-pandemic housing, and the climate crisis

Housing 2021 is returning to Manchester Central in September after a year of virtual discussions, debates and dialogue. With 8500+ attendees, 10 theatres, 500+ speakers, and 400+ sponsors and exhibitors over the three days – the event's hailed by its organisers as the biggest meeting place for the whole housing sector.

The housing sector has arguably collaborated more strongly than ever to show its resilience in 2020, with strong leadership and effort to deliver for those living in our communities. Ranked as a global leader for the delegate experience, the event has been staged for 70 years in the UK. This year, more than ever, will provide a platform for key stakeholders to come together to

discuss, debate, partner, learn and improve the lives of residents.

Housing 2021 is aimed at local authorities, housing associations, key partners and suppliers, government, housebuilders, and developers, and is set to unite all these under one roof to discuss, debate, partner, and learn.

WHY ATTEND?

Covering post-Covid living, housing's role in the climate emergency, digital connectivity, the future of work, the economic landscape, building safety, homelessness, housing delivery, affordability, funding and lots more, you will not want to miss out!



Alongside roundtable sessions and Chatham House-style discussions, with delegates able to meet with peers and sector leaders at this key networking event, there will be over 150 hours of accredited CPD content available at the show.

Government speakers already confirmed include the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Minister for Housing and Planning, and the Minister for Business, Energy and Corporate Responsibility. You'll also hear the latest updates from industry leaders such as:

- Joanna Averley, chief planner, MHCLG
- Peter Baker, chief inspector of buildings, Health and Safety Executive
- Richard Blakeway, Housing Ombudsman
- Lord Deben, chair, Climate Change Committee
- Kate Dodsworth, incoming director of consumer regulation, Regulator of Social Housing
- Gavin Smart, chief executive, Chartered Institute of Housing
- Bishop Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop for Housing
- Kate Henderson, chief executive, National Housing Federation
- Lord Bob Kerslake, chair, Commission on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping
- Fiona MacGregor, chief executive, Regulator of Social Housing

Housing 2021 is aimed at local authorities, housing associations, key partners and suppliers, government, housebuilders, and developers, and is set to unite all these under one roof to discuss, debate, partner, and learn

- Polly Neate, chief executive, Shelter
- David Olusoga, historian, broadcaster and film-maker
- Jenny Osbourne, chief executive, TPAS.

Aside from these offerings, the exhibition is notable too for covering the entire housing supply chain, the show being a 'one-stop-shop' to see the latest business-critical developments and solutions from the UK's entire housing community.

A message on Covid from the organisers: Your health and safety is incredibly important to us, so we want to reassure all attendees that we'll be continuing to monitor government advice and guidelines so you can be confident in your attendance.

Book your place at cihhousing.com and read the latest updates on health and safety at Housing 2021 at: cihhousing.com/healthandsafety



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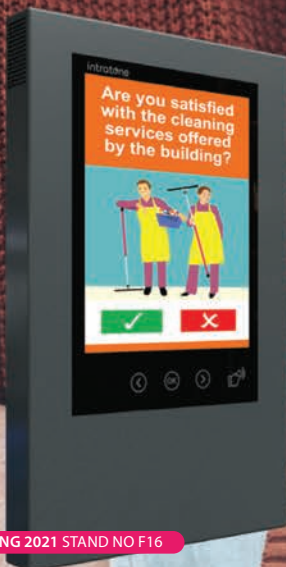


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HOUSING 2021 STAND NO F16

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5-7 OCTOBER | NEC BIRMINGHAM

The return of UKCW

Demand for face-to-face events and networking is growing across the industry as the pandemic eases. In the light of this and Government publishing guidance on how major events can be held safely, the organisers of UKCW are bringing the show back to the NEC Birmingham on 5-7 October 2021



UKCW 2021 is expected to attract more than 300 exhibitors covering over 25,000 m² of the NEC, providing launches, demos and offers on more than 6,000 products.

Major brands such as Google, HS2, Geberit, Hanson Plywood, Ford, Xero, Procore and the Construction Innovation Hub will be promoting at the event, making up for two years of new product launches, innovation and recruitment.

THEMES & FEATURES

Each day of UKCW in October will have a topical theme: Tuesday 5 October will focus on quality, social value and building safety; Wednesday 6 October will

promote diversity, equality and inclusion in construction, and Thursday 7 October will be dedicated to sustainability. The UKCW's half-day summits on Quality and Wellbeing will also be scheduled during the show.

Key features of this year's event include the UKCW main stage, sponsored by construction charity COINS, which will see keynote presentations by senior leaders from, among others, McKinsey, the Construction Products Association, CIOB, Willmott Dixon, Barratt Homes, Bioregional, Grimshaw, the Sustainable Energy Association and the Construction Leadership Council.

The COINS 'Future of Construction' series of seminars will be looking at how the last 18 months have changed the way we build and how that catalyst for



UKCW 2021 is expected to attract more than 300 exhibitors covering over 25,000 m² of the NEC, providing launches, demos and offers on more than 6,000 products

change can now be used in a positive way. These sessions will cover updates in technology, procurement, sustainability, wellbeing and more.

During the pandemic, construction has accelerated its digital transformation and the adoption of new technology. Therefore, the Digital Construction Hub, sponsored by Procore, is well placed. In a seminar programme delivered in partnership with the UK BIM Alliance, delegates will be hearing about others' BIM implementation stories, digital strategies and practical tips for overcoming challenges. The UK BIM Alliance will also be hosting a series of essential networking events.

In addition, there will be a Sustainability Hub, supported by the Renewable Energy Association, plus the Regeneration Hub, sponsored by Easy-trim, which will focus on social value and quality issues in construction.

Working with the Offsite Alliance, the Modern Methods of Construction Hub will deliver three days of MMC and offsite construction case studies. The Innovation Zone will also return this year – a collection of interesting and inventive products to have emerged in the last two years.

The UKCW Role Models initiative is also back for 2021. Following a record number of entries last year, the shortlist of 102 Role Models was chosen from all parts of the industry, and the overall winner will be announced on Wednesday 6 October.

Role Models are inspiring people who have a strong story to tell and can help to attract others into similar roles. Successful entrants from previous years have been out visiting schools and meeting young people to encourage them into construction as a rewarding career.

Free registration to UK Construction Week is now open at:
ukconstructionweek-2021-visitor.reg.buzz/pr

To get regular updates on the event, including safety protocols and new features, follow UKCW on social media using the hashtag #UKCW2021

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What is PAS 2035?

Richard Jenkins of Nuaire explains what PAS 2035 is, and how local housing authorities can improve their ventilation strategies

PAS 2035 is the latest publicly available specification for low-energy domestic retrofit from the British Standards Institution (BSI). It provides the specification for the retrofit of domestic buildings and details best practice guidance for domestic retrofit projects.

The framework came into effect from June 2019 following the recommendations of the Each Home Counts review, whose purpose was designed to determine better processes for the retrofit of both energy-efficient and renewable-energy measures. It specifies the following requirements:

- The assessment of dwellings for retrofit improvements (such as ventilation, heating, and hot water)
- The identification and evaluation of improvement options (Energy Efficiency Measures or EEMs)
- The design and specification of EEMs (whether individual measures or packages of multiple measures)
- The monitoring and evaluation of retrofit projects
- The installation, commissioning, and handover process
- The insulation of building fabric elements and airtightness
- The provision of efficient heating and cooling systems with smart controls, including systems using low or zero carbon (LZC) technologies

Sponsored by the UK Government's Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), PAS 2035 works towards achieving the Near Zero Energy Buildings (NZEBS) target in-line with new EU objectives.

HOW IS PAS 2035 DIFFERENT?

PAS 2035 delivers guidance on whole-home quality retrofit work to eliminate problems associated with defects, shallow retrofit, and poor design. By considering the entirety of the property and the environment and tenant lifestyles, no one improvement is made in isolation which can unintentionally damage the overall building performance. This PAS covers such work as:

- Retrofit programmes promoted or funded by national or local government schemes, e.g. the Energy Company Obligation (ECO)
- Retrofit programmes initiated or funded by landlords, including social housing organizations, private landlords in the domestic sector and commercial property portfolio holders
- Retrofit of individual buildings by their owners or occupants, including both domestic and commercial owner-occupiers
- A retrofit that is integrated with and forms part of broader repairs, maintenance, and improvement (RMI) activity related to individual buildings or building stocks.

Furthermore, five new retrofit roles with clear responsibilities and accountabilities have been established to ensure that individuals deliver quality throughout. PAS 2035 specifies the retrofit roles as follows:

- Retrofit Advisor
- Retrofit Assessor
- Retrofit Coordinator
- Retrofit Designer
- Retrofit Evaluator
- Multiple Roles



Each role must have a suitable qualification to be valid. Within this framework, TrustMark holders must comply with this standard when carrying out any domestic retrofit work. All other standards referred to in this PAS are also part of the retrofit standards framework.

PAS 2035 AND TRUSTMARK

TrustMark has been established as the new quality mark within the retrofit standards framework and supported by an Industry Code of Conduct, a Consumer Charter, and a framework of technical standards for retrofit.

Those who hold the TrustMark are qualified under an operating framework and can demonstrate to consumers that they have the skills and knowledge to deliver the best practice standards and trading practices in the sector.

PAS 2035 AND VENTILATION

Good ventilation is critically important to the health of the property and its inhabitants.

As air flows through a building, it dilutes the build-up of indoor air pollutants such as condensation dampness, mould, Volatile Organic



Photo by Anton Velchev on Unsplash.com

Compounds (VOC), radon, and carbon monoxide. Mechanical Extract Ventilation (MEV) further removes this polluted air from the property and brings in fresh air.

Furthermore, mechanical ventilation units can recover otherwise lost heat from the extracted air to ensure that the fresh input air is brought in at room temperature. These units are known as Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery, or MVHR.

For an alternative approach to ventilation, there is also the Positive Input Ventilation (PIV) strategy. The unit can be discreetly installed into a loft of a house or into the ceiling void of an apartment building. PIV gets its name by the way it works, which is to pressurise the home through the introduction of fresh, filtered air and pushing out the humid, stale air that has built up in the home.

Today, ventilation units can be equipped with additional filters, such as activated carbon, HEPA, and ePM (Particulate Matter), to provide extra decontamination levels to the property. They are designed with energy efficiency in mind, to run at reduced costs for the occupant while considering the impact on the environment.

To combat the threat of climate change and comply with national statutory standards, a substantial reduction of greenhouse gas emissions needs to be made. To achieve this, significant improvements must be made to the energy efficiency of the UK's building stock, specifically the vast majority of its 27 million domestic buildings.

Good ventilation is critically important to the health of the property and its inhabitants

Under PAS 2035, existing ventilation will be considered inadequate for the improved dwelling if one or more of the following is apparent:

- There is evidence of condensation and/or mould growth in the dwelling
- There is no ventilation system, or the ventilation system is incomplete or not functional
- There are no undercuts of at least 600mm² beneath all internal doors and above the floor finish to allow air to move through the dwelling
- There is no provision for purge ventilation of each habitable room (e.g. by opening windows)

To help mitigate these risks and ensure healthy living environments for years to come, it is essential to ensure that the right ventilation product has been installed into the building by a professional.

Richard Jenkins is residential NPD manager at Nuaire



A holistic approach to heat loss mitigation

Paddy Leighton of Huntsman Building Solutions-Icynene explains why minimising air leakage must go hand in hand with better insulation

Better insulation of domestic households is seen as one of the most important ways of reducing carbon emissions and slowing the effects of climate change.

A recent environmental audit select committee report says that 19 million UK homes are poorly insulated, and that unless urgent action is taken to improve energy efficiency of homes, the UK will fail to meet its climate targets.

Unfortunately, as over 60% of our current housing stock was built pre-1960 when little thought was given to heat-loss prevention, the challenge is significant.

Overall, roughly 20% of UK carbon emissions are generated through heating, hot water and cooking in domestic properties. Even more troubling was the fact that in 2017, emissions from buildings actually rose by 1% over those of the previous year.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

If we go back to basic principles, heat loss in a building occurs through a combination of four processes: conduction, convection, radiation and mass transfer. The colder the outside temperature, the warmer the inside, and the worse the thermal insulation of the building envelope, the greater the heat loss will be.

In the UK, the construction industry focuses primarily on U values – sometimes referred to as heat transfer coefficients – as a measure of conductive heat loss. These are used to measure how effective elements of a building's fabric are at insulating against heat loss. The lower the U-value of an element of a building's fabric, the more slowly heat is able to transmit through it, and so the better it performs as an insulator.

Very broadly, the lower the U-value, the less energy is required to maintain

When 40% of a building's heat loss is caused by air leakage, an insulation system that works to prevent air leakage – effectively creating a “sealed box” environment – is essential to minimise heat loss

comfortable conditions inside the building.

Unfortunately, measuring the thermal efficiency of a structure by U-value alone fails to take into account heat loss through air leakage. If you spend any time in high mountain environments you quickly realise that it is the wind that strips the heat from your body, and it is the same in buildings. It doesn't matter what your U-value is if there are draughts.

Traditional forms of insulation are relatively inefficient in preventing air leakage through draughts. They can't completely fill the complex voids in roof structures or seal the interface between the insulation and the building components. They can also struggle to cope with small structural movements, which can lead to air gaps.

When 40% of a building's heat loss is caused by air leakage, an insulation system that works to prevent air leakage – effectively creating a “sealed box” environment – is essential to minimise heat loss.

SPRAY APPLIED, OPEN CELL INSULATION

Breathable, open cell spray applied foams are highly efficient insulators against both conductive and convective heat loss as they control air movement and eliminate air leakage. Spray applied foam insulation is also extremely flexible; it moves with the structure, maintaining its insulative properties for the lifespan of the building. Spray applied foam insulations are open cell materials which have a soft, yielding texture. This not only provides outstanding insulation



Breathable, open cell spray applied foams are highly efficient insulators against both conductive and convective heat loss as they control air movement and eliminate air leakage

properties, but also allows the building to breathe naturally, resisting internal condensation – particularly important when insulating heritage-type buildings.

CONTROL OF AIR QUALITY

Heat loss through mass transfer is more complex and relates to how much moisture is held in the air (humidity). The more there is, the more energy it takes to heat it, so to feel warm, damp buildings need more energy than dryer ones.

To control humidity, you need to be able to control the air movement and you can only do this if the building is relatively airtight. Spray foam insulation does this effectively and quickly by sealing air gaps, enabling controlled ventilation and mechanical heat recovery systems to perform efficiently.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO HEAT LOSS MITIGATION

High performance insulation, effective control of air movement and air quality, in combination with low carbon heating are interconnected elements that need to be addressed as-one in the design of new-build housing to ensure heat loss mitigation. Until Building Regulations take a holistic view of this complex picture, the industry will continue to build houses that perform well in one respect but fail in others

From a wider perspective, bringing the UK's legacy of pre-1960's, poorly insulated housing stock up to a sufficiently high performance is a whole different ball-game, one that needs urgent attention at the highest level.

Paddy Leighton is director at Huntsman Building Solutions-Icynene.



Latest 6 series heating controls

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

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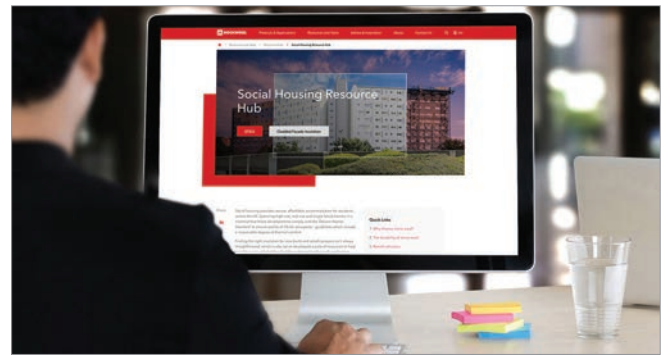
Boutique Series for replacement rads

Leading radiator manufacturer **Stelrad Radiators** offers a wide range of bathroom and kitchen radiators under its 'Boutique' branding. You'll find familiar and welcome products in the new Series - with names such as Caliente, Concord and Column - but equally you'll find new styles and names such as Como and Lecco.



The UK's no.1 brand in the radiator market is adding style and appeal to the kitchen and bathroom and adding colours and chrome finishes to add to the sparkle. To find out more about the new Boutique Series, head for the new Stelrad website.

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ROCKWOOL® launches Social Housing Resource Hub

Stone wool insulation manufacturer, **ROCKWOOL**, has bolstered its technical resources with a new Social Housing Resource Hub. The hub makes it easier for specifiers to access the latest information and advice on specialist insulation solutions for social housing, helping them create comfortable and safe properties that improve the lives of residents. The new Social Housing Resource Hub brings a wealth of technical information into one place, giving stakeholders access to product data and benefits, case studies, and direct links to further helpful resources at their fingertips such as a comprehensive retrofit solutions section. Through the new Resource Hub, stakeholders can also find an approved System Holder that is accredited to install ROCKWOOL EWI insulation and find out more about the company's OEM recycling scheme for waste material generated on site. The ROCKWOOL Social Housing Resource Hub is the latest addition to the manufacturer's suite of technical information. Additional Resource Hubs include Flat Roofs, Ventilated Facades, HVAC and passive fire protection. All hubs can be accessed from the ROCKWOOL website.

01656 862 621 www.rockwool.com/uk/resource-hubs

HOUSING MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

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The importance of fire door traceability



Fire doors play a critical role in passive fire protection, helping to save lives and protect property by buying time for firefighters to arrive in the event of a fire. But fire doors that are not properly specified, installed or maintained are at risk of catastrophic failure at the time they are needed most.

With the needs of landlords and residents in mind, Door-Stop International has launched its new Fire and Security Dual-Certificated Doorset; a timber core product with GRP facings that is dual third-party certificated using a wide and robust base of primary test evidence as the foundation for certification. Dual certification provides the assurance that the doorsets meet requirements for both security and fire safety, and that the specification has been verified by an independent third party.

KEEP AN ACCURATE RECORD OF FIRE DOOR INFORMATION

When specifying, installing and maintaining fire doors, it is essential that landlords and property managers have access to detailed information about the type of fire doorset, testing and certification and manufacturer details. It's for this reason that Door-Stop operates a robust traceability system that means that every doorset is allocated its own unique serial number via a tamperproof label.

TRACEABILITY OF DOORSET COMPONENTS

Door-Stop operates a strict, digital, factory production control (FPC) system designed to

provide consistency of specification, control and traceability. It's these factory control processes that are regularly audited by independent, UKAS accredited auditors and certification bodies.

Specifiers, building owners and residents can understand the key features of the specification and the associated certificate and data sheet via publicly available information posted on the Warringtonfire website. The certificate details the entire specification of the doorset and the associated components, the primary test evidence report numbers and certification.

DIGITAL GOLDEN THREAD

As the new Building Safety Bill comes into force, the Accountable Persons and Building Safety Managers will be required to keep a digital record of all information relating to how the building was built and maintained, also known as the golden thread.

With regard to fire doorsets, as an example, details of the specification, manufacturer details and third party certification, installation details, maintenance records and a copy of the traceability information provided on each fire door label should be kept in an easily accessible digital format.

The full manufacturing process is monitored by the Door-Stop bespoke 'Critical to Safety framework' which has been designed to make a digital record of every single fire doorset, including components and manufacturing processes. This is Door-Stop's digital golden thread of information that aids traceability for all stakeholders in the chain.



TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND ADVICE

Door-Stop International provides detailed instructions to ensure that doorsets can be installed in line with the certification. We recommend using third party certified installers to ensure a level of suitable competency and documentation is exercised throughout the installation and maintenance processes. This means that the doorset should perform as intended and assists installers and building owners in demonstrating their legal responsibilities to ensure the safety of residents.

01623 446336

www.masonite.co.uk/firedoorsets

Choosing the right fire door supplier

Choosing the right fire door supplier is important. Ensuring fire door compliance is vitally important in not only ensuring the safety of the residents but is also likely to be a major factor in what stands between a customer's decision between one contractor and another. We explore the necessities of a fire door supplier and the industry standards required.

INDUSTRY STANDARDS

TEST EVIDENCE

It is important that fire doors undergo rigorous independent testing in an approved UKAS test house, ensuring compliance to the latest industry standards is applied.

Testing methods include primary testing and 'cascaded test evidence'. Primary testing, usually conducted in a UKAS test house with qualified test engineers, reports what doors have been tested and the test's outcome. An organisation may decide to use test reports from another company, known as 'cascaded test evidence', often used when an organisation wishes not to conduct testing of its own.

Ensuring compliance to the latest industry standards is something that all fire door suppliers should be monitoring. Therefore, making continuous improvements to ensure requirements are met and that the doors they supply can be trusted to withstand a variety of circumstances is important.



CERTIFICATION

A supplier that has the appropriate and trusted certification is vital and needs to be ensured at every stage of the supply chain.

To accompany primary test evidence, a manufacturer needs to demonstrate third-party certification by a UKAS accredited body such as the widely recognised BM Trada to ensure high standards are being met and followed. As part of the certification, the manufacturer will be issued a Field of Application Assessment, allowing them to manufacture door sets to bespoke sizes and designs, with a range of ironmongery and accessories.

Various testing and certification can be conducted to offer peace of mind. Third-party accredited certification, administered by recognised bodies like BM Trada and Secured by Design, allows for the provision of certificate and the listing of door set ranges under that scheme to be certified.

Asking the right questions and requesting



evidence is vital at the procurement stage when selecting your supplier of choice. Evidence of certification can be requested by the concerned party and given in the form of complete copies of certificates, test evidence, or visiting the third party's website to see if the company in question is registered. Field of Applications, written by an accredited third party, allows companies the flexibility to offer different styles of doors, with the assurance that primary testing has been conducted.

There are ways you can check your fire door set meets the correct certification requirements following delivery. This should be easily identified by way of a label or plug usually positioned on the top of the door. This label will contain information about the type of certification administered and whether it meets the appropriate industry standards. If you feel there is a reason for concern regarding your door, you should report it immediately.

SERVICE

Clients are looking for a supplier they can trust to deliver products to a high standard and bring confidence that they can deliver the best possible service. Offering services like dedicated account managers, who can prioritise workloads and build relationships with clients is vital to maintaining longevity in an organisation's client portfolio. A supplier that conducts customer service to this standard and delivers promptly helps set them apart from competitors.

BESPOKE MANUFACTURING

A well-equipped and dependable product range is also a valid reason to choose a supplier. Bespoke manufacturing is essential when it comes to replacement fire door sets as not only does it enable the door set to be made to suit the existing structural opening but enables a vast range of designs to suit the exact project criteria.

As a bespoke manufacturer, Sentry Doors can offer a wide range of sizes, styles, and finishes to suit clients' exact requirements. We offer a Resident Design and Colour Choice sheet to assist in the selection process.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

It is wise to ask your supplier what their quality assurance process is as it should be an element of the production process that is monitored throughout the procurement of door sets. A supplier's commitment to quality management is evident in their certification schemes demonstrating a desire to ensure full compliance in their products. Independent third-party ISO 9001 certification portrays a supplier's commitment to meeting the needs of clients. High-performing products that combine quality, service, and value, alongside vast technical expertise and consistent investment portrays how committed a supplier is to its quality management.

INSTALLATION

Ensuring fire door compliance is a collaborative approach as the correct installation of a fire door is equally important to selecting the correct supplier. It is important that door sets are installed by competent personnel who are third-party accredited by BM-Trada or equivalent and that the door set is fitted in accordance, supported by your chosen manufacturers' installation guidelines.

There are a range of factors that contribute to appointing the right supplier. As a supplier of choice to local authorities, housing associations and their contractors, Sentry Doors offer a robust certification portfolio combined with quality assurance and industry-leading lead times. Download our certification portfolio and sign up to our Compliance Portal to keep up to date.

01302 337473 www.sentrydoors.co.uk

The importance of fire doors and inspections



**FIRE DOORS
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Fire doors save lives & protect property. But if they're damaged from frequent or improper use, it can render them ineffective. Regular, stringent inspection and maintenance is needed to ensure that they will perform as intended in the event of a fire.

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A fire door is an engineered safety device that is a crucial part of the passive fire protection of every commercial, public and multiple occupancy building. A fire door acts just as any other door in normal service, in a fire it takes on a critical role – to save lives and protect property. It does this by holding back the spread of fire and smoke through a building for a designated period, giving time for building occupants to escape.

A fire door is not just the door leaf. It is a complete assembly comprising: the door leaf and frame, any glazing, intumescent fire and smoke seals; along with ironmongery that is used on the door, such as hinges, overhead door closers, latches and locks. Fire doors can easily become damaged when they are in regular use; which may affect their performance in the unfortunate event of a fire. And just like other life safety devices, such as fire extinguishers and alarms, fire doors and final escape doors need regular, stringent inspection, maintenance or replacement to ensure that they will perform as intended in the event of a fire.

In 2006, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 came into force in England and Wales; transferring the responsibility for Fire Safety from the fire authorities to whoever has day-to-day control of building premises – this is known as the 'Responsible Person'. This person must take steps to reduce the risk from fire; consider how to contain a fire should one break out and ensure people can escape safely. They also need to be able to identify a Competent Person i.e. knowledgeable, qualified professional who can undertake preventative and protective measures, such as Fire Door Inspections, if they're not confident to do so. Compliance with the RRO is a legal requirement. Failure to comply with RRO is a criminal offence and can lead to prosecution, large fines and even imprisonment.

Lorient also welcomes the new Building Safety Bill, which will drastically overhaul building regulations in England and Wales. Introduced in the House of Commons on 5 July, the bill is the next step in ground-breaking reforms that will create lasting generational change and set out a clear pathway for how high-rise residential buildings

should be constructed, maintained and made safe. Considerations such as fire door safety maintenance will come to the fore as part of the new bill.

Operating across the UK, Lorient offers a professional and expert fire door inspection service. Lorient Fire Door Inspectors are fully qualified under the Fire Door Inspection Scheme (FDIS); and have been assessed by Warringtonfire, an independent third party. Certificated to carry out the inspection of a building's fire doors; Lorient Inspectors use an app to record findings throughout the survey. A detailed report is provided covering the condition and functionality of the fire doors on the premises; with necessary remedial action required. The experienced team have worked on projects from schools, hospitals to large commercial buildings.

For further information about Lorient's range of products and its Fire Door Inspection Services please contact the company.

01626 834252 lorientuk.com

Stamping out fire door neglect

Fire door specification is one of the most crucial decisions landlords and housing providers can make, with the technology forming an essential part of a building's passive fire protection system. Jack Wooler spoke to Helen Hewitt of the British Woodworking Federation (BWF) on the impact of the pandemic and the need for regulated third-party certification

One of the most pressing concerns for landlords and housing providers over fire door safety is effective inspection and maintenance. Fire doors are often situated in housing environments that are used frequently by tenants, and so are subjected to regular knocks and bumps that come with everyday use. But, a fire door can only perform in the event of a fire if it is correctly maintained. Regular inspections and maintenance, if needed, is therefore crucial to ensuring that fire doors are ready to hold back the spread of smoke and fire.

The COVID-19 pandemic however has negatively impacted on the ability of landlords, housing providers and local authorities to carry out these safety measures in the normal way, with a Fire Door Safety Week Freedom of Information (FOI) request in 2020 finding that 52% of responding UK local authorities reported delays to planned fire door maintenance and replacement in the first half of 2020. This number increased to 60% when inspection delays were also factored in.

To help tackle this burgeoning issue, Helen Hewitt, CEO of the British Woodworking Federation (BWF), argues that a regulated regime of independent third-party certification of fire doors should be enshrined in law and as an organisation.

"At the BWF Fire Door Alliance we continue to champion the role of fire door third-party certification as the only way to ensure that a fire door performs as designed to hold back the spread of smoke and fire," she says. "As such we will continue to lobby for third-party certification of fire doors to become mandated."

WHAT ARE FIRE DOORS, AND HOW DO THEY WORK?

Going back to basics, Helen explains that fire doors, or fire door assemblies, are part of a building's passive fire protection system.

"In an everyday situation they often perform the same function as any other door, but in the event of a fire they are vital to holding back the spread of smoke and fire," says Helen.

"This helps provide crucial time to allow building occupants to safely evacuate, and supports the fire services by helping to keep fire escape routes protected for them to enter the building."

Fire doors work by holding back the spread of smoke and fire. By compartmentalising the fire, fire doors help keep the fire and smoke contained to allow building occupants to exit the building and the fire services to arrive.

Fire door assemblies consist of a series of components that must work together in the event of a fire to allow it to perform effectively. For example, fire doors incorporate intumescent strips, which are installed around the inside of the door frame or on the door itself. When the strips are exposed to heat, they expand to seal the gap between the door and frame to prevent fire and smoke travelling through any gaps.

The fire rating of a door will indicate how long it can resist fire or both fire and smoke for. A fire door assembly that has been tested to British Standards (BS 476: Part 22 or BS EN 1634-1) and will resist fire for a minimum of 30 minutes is referred to as FD30, while a door that can resist for a minimum of 60 minutes is FD60. In addition, a fire doorset that can resist both fire and smoke for at least 30 minutes is referred to as FD30S and at least 60 minutes is FD60S.

"Fire doors manufactured by BWF Fire Door Alliance members are audited regularly to make certain that they meet the required performance standard," explains Helen.



Fire doors are often situated in housing environments that are used frequently by tenants, and so are subjected to regular knocks and bumps that come with everyday use. But, a fire door can only perform in the event of a fire if it is correctly maintained

"In fact, regular samples are taken from in excess of three million timber fire doors produced by BWF Fire Door Alliance members and are subjected to a furnace test to ensure they perform as stated."

Fire door third-party certification provides independent evidence that a fire door is tested appropriately and produced to a consistent standard, offering



crucial peace of mind to building owners and users that the fire door will perform as designed.

“At the BWF Fire Door Alliance,” she continues, “we believe the only way to ensure a fire door will hold back the spread of smoke and fire is through a robust third-party certification process.”

As such, for BWF Fire Door Alliance members third-party certification involves meeting strict criteria, including:

- Fire testing – Full fire door assemblies or fire doorsets manufactured by BWF Fire Door Alliance members are tested to BS 476: Part 22 or BS EN 1634-1 standards at a UKAS-accredited test facility.
- Manufacturing process audit – The fire door manufacturer or licensed processor is audited by a UKAS accredited certification organisation.
- Regular audits – The fire door is subjected to regular scrutiny to ensure that test data is not a one-off result.

WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES DO LANDLORDS AND SOCIAL HOUSING PROVIDERS HAVE?

All landlords are required to ensure that their properties are fit for human habitation for the entirety of a tenancy under the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018.

According to Helen, this means “making sure that the property is free of serious hazards, including exposure to uncontrolled fire and associated smoke through the use of fit-for-purpose fire doors.”

In addition to the Homes Act, there are a number of fire door regulations that may apply depending on whether the fire doors are installed within a new building or existing property. This includes the Building Regulations for new builds and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order: 2005 (RRO) for modifications to existing buildings. The Housing Act (2004) may also apply.

Fire doors are required in houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs) as well as in high-rise buildings such as flats. These are often categorised as high-risk buildings and are therefore subject to rigorous regulation and checks in order to safeguard tenants’ lives. Fire doors can also be required in houses in certain cases, for example, if there’s an integral garage in a two-storey property, and within new build or renovated three-storey houses.

When selecting a fire door for any of these situations, “the most important factor to consider is its proof of performance,” says Helen.

“At the BWF Fire Door Alliance, we believe that only third-party certified fire doors can provide confidence and assurance that the fire door will perform as designed to hold back smoke and fire.”

Another vital factor for landlords and housing providers is correct installation: “A fire door that has been installed incorrectly or fitted with incompatible components will not perform as it’s designed and could put lives at risk.”

“If there’s ever any confusion over whether a fire door is needed, seek expert advice to ensure compliance with regulation and the safety of the building’s occupants”

Helen Hewitt, CEO of the British Woodworking Federation (BWF)

It’s therefore vital that only a competent and trained professional installs fire doors, and that the manufacturer’s instructions are followed to help save lives and maintain the door’s certification.

“If there’s ever any confusion over whether a fire door is needed, seek expert advice to ensure compliance with regulation and the safety of the building’s occupants,” she adds.

FIRE DOOR SAFETY WEEK

In response to “a legacy of fire door neglect,” and to raise awareness of the vital role fire doors play in protecting lives and property, Fire Door Safety Week was launched in 2013.

“As a broad awareness campaign, it aims to highlight the role of fire doors and specific fire door performance-related issues such as poor installation and maintenance,” explains Helen.

It also encourages building owners and users to take an active role in fire safety by checking the operation and condition of their fire doors, so that they can be repaired or replaced if needed.

By engaging and educating the general public, construction industry professionals and building owners, the campaign aims to help people understand the correct specification, supply, installation, operation, inspection and maintenance for fire doors.

“We want to improve fire door safety standards across the country so that lives are not unnecessarily lost due to fire door neglect,” Helen says.

“As part of this, we recently launched the BWF Fire Door Alliance ‘Be Certain, Be Certified’ campaign to highlight the importance of third-party certification of fire doors in improving fire safety standards across the UK. The campaign addresses a lack of understanding over what certification is and the role it plays in protecting lives.”

Calling for the adoption of third-party certification of fire doors throughout all UK buildings, ‘Be Certain, Be Certified’ offers guidance and resources to anyone responsible for specifying fire doors in a UK building.

Helen Hewitt is CEO of the British Woodworking Federation (BWF)



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Concealed door closers assure fire safety

British designed and manufactured, Powermatic controlled, concealed door closers deliver a number of benefits over surface-mounted door closers. As a result, they are gaining increasing popularity in the social housing sector for use on fire doors in high-rise flats and apartments as well as HMOs.

The door closers carry the UKCA mark and have been independently tested and proved to meet the requirements for 60-minute and 30-minute fire doors under BS EN 1634-1. They also benefit from full third-party certification and are the only Certifire jamb-mounted door closer.

Fitting neatly between the door and frame, Powermatic is totally concealed when the door is closed, whereas overhead, surface-mounted door closers have highly visible and unsightly control arms and mechanical boxes protruding from the door's surface.

This concealment means that Powermatic door closers are less susceptible to damage from vandalism or tampering, assuring reliability of the fire door as well as minimising maintenance expenses and lifetime costs.

The lack of controls on display also assures a clean appearance to the door and interior, enhancing aesthetics and creating the more homely, less institutional environment which contributes towards the occupants' comfort and well-being.

Unlike other jamb-mounted devices, Powermatic door closers facilitate a door's



compliance with the accessibility requirements of Approved Document M and do not have to be removed from the door to be adjusted.

Adding to Powermatic's performance credentials is the fact that the door closers have been fitted to door sets which have successfully completed security tests to PAS 24.

Powermatic door closers come with a 10-year

warranty and, of course, there is the comfort of knowing that they are manufactured in the UK by Samuel Heath, which, with more than 50 years' experience, is the foremost authority when it comes to concealed door closers.

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Nationwide involved at award-winning sites

"Being involved in eight NHBC Pride in the Job Quality Awards is testament to the consistent high quality of our products and installations," says Steve Colledge, National Site Operations Manager at Nationwide Windows and Doors. After Lockdown 1.0, Nationwide Windows and Doors developed a complete onsite process to keep both its teams and other site personnel safe. Before any Nationwide teams went out on site, they were brought in for extra safety training to maintain the highest of standards to reduce the chances of contracting COVID-19. So good were the systems it put in place, that often they were adopted by other people working on the same sites.



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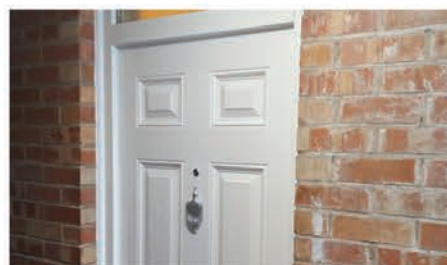
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Trusted team ensures Council tenants have efficient homes for the future



To complete an award-winning renovation scheme, the London Borough of Islington retained a tried and tested team to deliver a continued single source of accountability of estate refurbishment.

Thus, residents in Salisbury Walk on the Girdlestone Estate are benefitting from improved thermal and natural light performance, guaranteed to last for decades.

The renovation of the estate's roofs won the Reinforced Bituminous Membrane category in the 2018 NFRC Roofing Awards. The award-winning team of Mears Group plc, Langley Waterproofing Systems Ltd, and Langley Approved Contractor Opus Waterproofing Solutions Ltd was utilised to deliver this latest phase.

At Salisbury Walk, Islington Council undertook a detailed appraisal of the works required to bring the roof of the four-storey block of flats up to the same quality and standard already achieved on other apartment blocks across the estate portfolio. The Council's in-house technical team partnered with Mears Group to design, scope out and deliver the associated capital works programme, inviting Langley Waterproofing Systems to recommend the works necessary.

Much of the existing suspended standing-seam profiled metal deck over asphalt on woodwool deck was beyond its economical life, despite costly reactive repairs. Insulation - at 50mm - was well below current Building Regulations (Approved Document Part L). Condensation was also forming in the rooflights over the stairwells of each property.

Langley Waterproofing Systems Approved Contractor Opus Waterproofing Solutions won the tender to deliver the scheme, taking care to minimise disruption to residents who were still in occupancy whilst the programme of works was executed.

Opus stripped the metal profiled roof back to the original waterproofing and deck, as the existing roof



had failed to the extent much of the insulation below was saturated, then installed a Langley Reinforced Bituminous Membrane (RBM) TA-30 flat roofing system on the asphalt substrate. The warm roof application added a new vapour control layer, brought the insulation up to the 0.18W/m²K required under relevant Building Standards by using tapered Parafoam Ultra PIR insulation board, finishing with underlay and Parafor Solo GS cap sheet in dark grey.

With a single premium, independently-insured backed guarantee for materials, design and workmanship of 30 years, and BBA-certified with a life expectancy of over 40 years (the longest available in the UK), the new TA-30 system will ensure the flats below are kept watertight and thermally-protected for years to come.

In addition, all the rooflights were removed and replaced with Langley's ParaRange triple skin polycarbonate modular rooflights. The manually opening ventilation hatch and manually opening

rooflight hatch were also upgraded, with Langley's Parakerb upstands. The 300mm high parapet wall around the perimeter was encapsulated in plywood and the same TA-30. Flues were repaired with lead sleeves and detailed with the waterproofing.

Mears Group Project Manager Theo Petrou explained, "Having achieved such a positive result in the refurbishment elsewhere on the estate by utilising the services of Langley and Opus, it gave peace of mind for all stakeholders to re-apply that formula in other works. It brings us a valued perspective, enabling us to make informed decisions going forward about the condition of the estate, knowing we have consistency in approach, design, materials and application. We also have the peace of mind, going forward, that the roofs are all upgraded to a high standard and are assured for decades to come."

Added Gary Chapman, Group Leader - Capital Works (Group 3 Street Properties) for Islington Council's Capital Programme Delivery Team, "We were pleased with the quality of service and systems we received from the team of Mears Group, Langley and Opus in the first phase of the Girdlestone Estate renovation. As Langley's TA-30 system offering comes with a five year asset management support plan with annual inspections and photographic reporting, we have the peace of mind that our estate has been refurbished and improved to optimise best value in the long term."

Are you a Local Council looking to understand the condition of the flat roofs across your housing stock, contact Langley on:

enquiries@langley.co.uk
www.langley.co.uk/technical-downloads

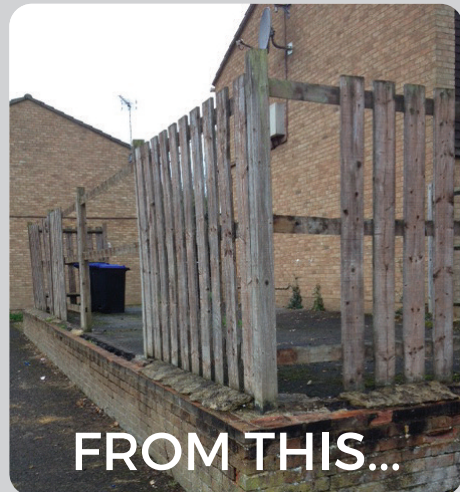




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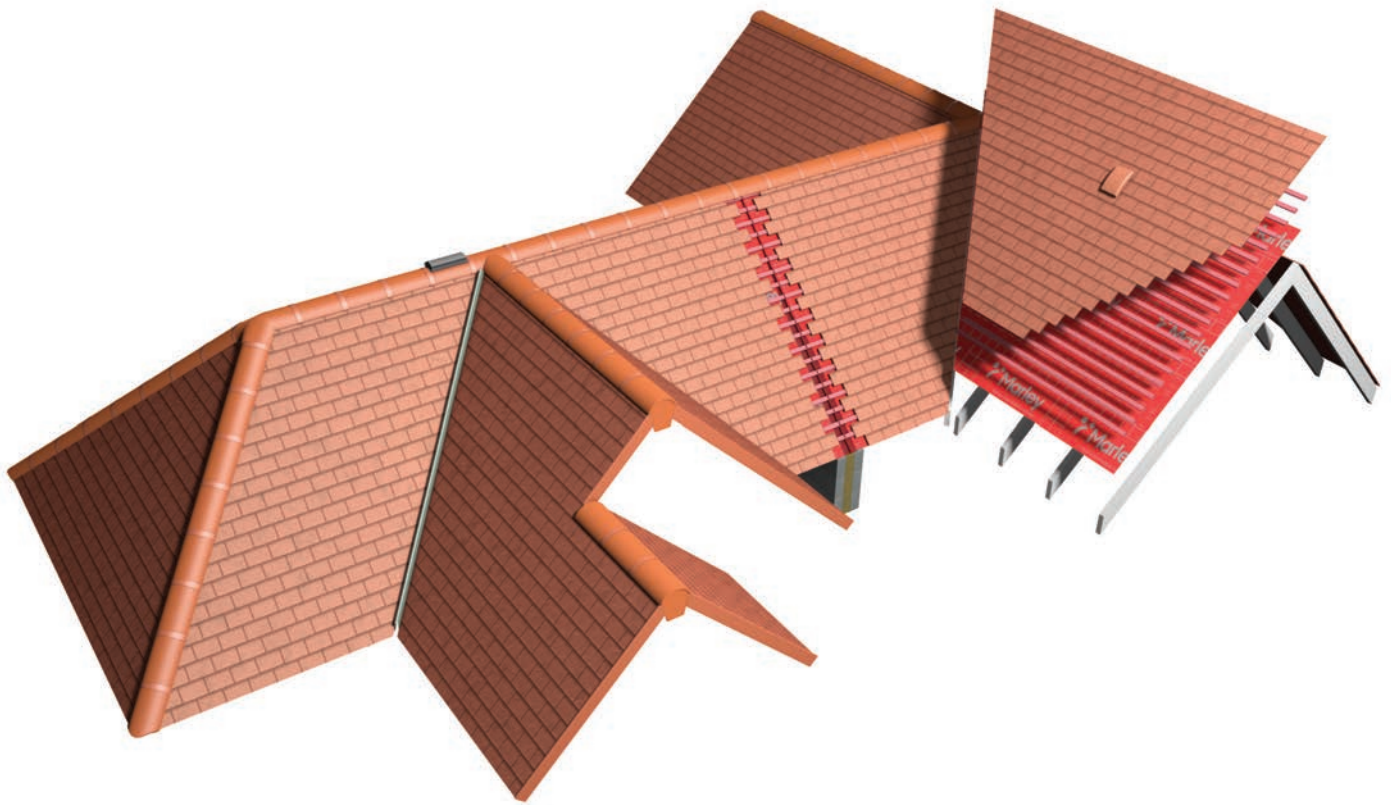


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What will tenants seek post-Covid?

Stuart Nicholson of Marley explores new research on the way Covid experiences have altered the views of social housing residents when it comes to their homes and the surrounding area

The Government has clearly pinpointed the nation's housing stock as a key enabler in helping to meet its 2035 UK emissions reduction target. Better energy performance from homes, alongside more sustainable living standards and the promotion of greener living spaces, are priorities to tackle the delivery of acceptable and sustainable housing and wider communities.

This ongoing challenge facing social housing providers is set against the backdrop of increased regulatory demands enshrined in both the Future Homes Standard and the recent publication of the Social Housing White Paper. The latter provides a charter for social housing tenants that sets out seven key commitments they can expect from their landlords. In addition, it places the onus on the providers of social housing properties to ensure they meet the expectations as laid down by governing bodies. The obligations include a social housing tenants' right to be safe in their home, as well as laying out the landlord's responsibility to ensure the home is kept in good repair.

A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

The social housing tenant experience of the past 12 months has seen many refocus on their homes and communities. Restrictions and health concerns have forced large numbers to spend long periods of time in their houses, with many reappraising attitudes and forming fresh views when it comes to what they think about their home, their surroundings and what is important to them.

Recent research from Marley looked to unearth the main priorities for tenants around issues such as home improvements, building fabric quality, local community engagement, and views on government and sustainability. Such knowledge can act as a helpful guide for social housing providers to ensure they are delivering in the key areas that matter to their tenants going forward.

THE HOME

For most social housing tenants, the quality of their property is key. More than half (55%) of those questioned wanted priority given to better standards with, for example, no expectation of having to live with or endure damp conditions. Nearly half (48%) of tenants say they are seeking high quality buildings in which to live with an emphasis on the building fabric and the roof.

Against the pandemic background of the past year, more than a third of social housing tenants have undertaken some form of home improvement, with 54% admitting they were seeking 'general' improvement to their living spaces. This has included decisions to upgrade garden spaces, as well as enhance busy kitchen and bathroom areas with some form of redecoration.

In a clear and long-term warning to social housing providers, nearly a fifth say their attitude to wanting to improve their homes and living spaces has 'strengthened' over the past 12 months, while nearly one in five tenants say the Covid experience has made them want to move out of their current dwelling. This points to a growing degree of volatility and perhaps dissatisfaction that providers should be aware of.



It is incumbent upon those overseeing the safety, security, and standard of social housing provision to ensure such expectations are met

GOVERNMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Social housing tenants – like private renters – believe sustainability objectives need to be invested in, and they are looking to landlords to deliver the answers. In fact, 28% think that sustainability and energy efficiency measures are important when it comes to their home, and one in ten said this had become ‘more important’ to them over the past year.

Recycling, turning off appliances, limiting water wastage, and limiting heating are among the top sustainable actions social housing tenants are taking, and nearly one in ten say their landlord or housing association is actively considering the installation of green energy efficiency measures such as solar PV.

HOME SAFETY EXPECTATION

One clear message from tenants is the rightful expectation that the property they inhabit is safe and secure, including effective protection from the potential threat posed by hidden roof fires. Indeed, home safety is one of the seven key commitments set out in the Social Housing White Paper.

Building regulations require that new homes be built with fire protection measures to delay the spread of fire and allow crucial time to escape. So, when a roof is compartmentalised between adjoining homes, fire barriers are seen as an integral safety feature to prevent the spread of flames and smoke in case of a fire.

Recent Reports from the BRE and BBC Watchdog have raised concerns that some modern homes could have inadequate, incorrectly installed and, in some cases, no fire barriers at all. In terraced or semi-detached properties, this increases the risk that fire could spread rapidly through roof voids from one home to the next. The findings are relevant for social housing portfolios overseen by housing associations, with specifiers commonly presuming that fire barriers are present and installed properly on completed properties.

It is important that social housing providers investigate new product solutions that can counteract the threat of hidden fires spreading in the roof space. Fire barrier installations that offer guaranteed protection against the spread of hidden roof fires are available.

With social housing tenants clearly expressing a desire to see the creation of better standards for the fabric of the homes they have been forced to spend more time in than ever before, it is incumbent upon those overseeing the safety, security, and standard of social housing provision to ensure such expectations are met.

A copy of Marley’s research contained in a new report ‘Raising the roof: Homes and communities in a post-Covid UK’ can be downloaded on its website.

Stuart Nicholson is roof systems director from Marley



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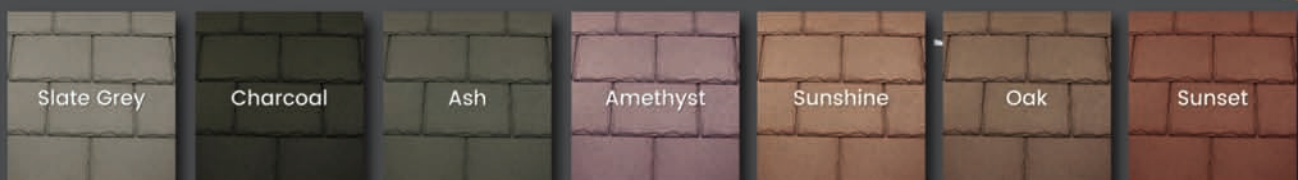
Limestone content over 30% often leads to colour fade in synthetic slate. That's why **Britmet only uses 20%** to ensure you have a roof that lasts a lifetime.



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Panic Bar suits Scottish regulations

Carl F Groupco, leading manufacturer of door and window hardware, including panic and emergency exit components, expands their range to include the CISA FAST Touch Panic Exit Push Bar. Compatible with FUHR panic exit door locks, the panic bar features fast touch operation and a special mortice panic function that works alongside the eurogroove fit FUHR multipoint panic lock range. The stainless-steel satin PVD finish provides a clean and crisp appearance. Certified in accordance with EN 1125 and CE marked the CISA panic bar has been tested beyond the expected parameters requested by regulators.

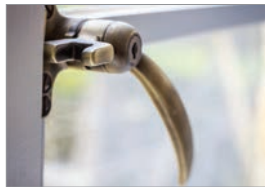
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Security and safety with SWF

Steel Window Association (SWA) member, Steel Window Fittings (SWF) specialises in providing quality, design-led fittings for steel window frames. A recent innovation to answer questions of aesthetics, security and longevity is a range of multipoint locking handles. The multipoint locking range is currently available for windows with door frames following soon. With this new system, security is greatly improved, durability is enforced and larger windows can be designed and produced. The concealed system is driven by a single key-locking or non-locking handle that is available in five different designs and six standard finishes.

www.steel-window-association.co.uk



Airtech supports landlords

Airtech, the condensation, mould and radon specialist, is encouraging landlords to put in place planned maintenance over the summer period to protect their residents from the effects of radon. Airtech are specialists in radon testing, remediation and servicing so are well placed to help landlords tackle radon in their properties in both the short and long term. Airtech offers social housing providers a complete solution to help protect residents from the risks caused by radon gas in the home with 30 years of experience in radon prevention. The company offers a full range of products and services, from radon testing to full remediation of housing stock.

01823 690 292 www.airtechsolutions.co.uk



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Apartments meet BS 8629 Code of Practice with EvacGo



Two seven-storey residential apartment buildings in the cultural and social hot-spot of Cardiff Bay are now protected by evacuation alert systems from UK manufacturer, Advanced.

The EvacGo panels have been installed to meet the criteria set out in the BS 8629 Code of Practice for the design, installation, commissioning, and maintenance of evacuation alert systems for use by fire and rescue services in England and Wales.

Situated in Cardiff Bay's Tiger Quay development, Roath House and Queen Alexandra House are a mix of 73 social and market-rented one and two-bedroom apartments managed by Trivallis, one of Wales' largest housing associations. Trivallis appointed Cardiff-based, Tremorfa Ltd, to complete the installation, requesting that Advanced's EvacGo solutions be installed to ensure both residential buildings met the BS 8629 recommendations.

With all Advanced evacuation alert systems custom-manufactured to reflect each individual building's evacuation zones, Advanced supplied two EvacGo systems to Tremorfa complete with 1-loop card, expandable from four to eight evacuation zones. The two systems were installed alongside a combined total of 63 sounders to provide audible warning to building occupants in the event of an emergency.

Graham Smart, Fire & Security Installation Manager, at Tremorfa Ltd, said: "Having installed Advanced solutions for a number of years, we knew we could depend on its evacuation alert system to meet the requirements of the BS 8629 code of practice. The systems in both apartment buildings are now performing as required and we will be completing the installation of further EvacGo systems at Trivallis' properties."

Evacuation alert control and indicating equipment (EACIE) is now strongly recommended in England and Wales for all new tall residential buildings – and is mandatory in Scotland. The EACIE must operate completely independently of fire detection systems and be designed to support any evacuation strategy chosen by the fire and rescue service.

Ken Bullock, Business Development Manager – Evacuation Alert Systems, said: "We are seeing a rapid growth in interest in evacuation alert systems from local housing authorities and private landlords eager to ensure that the safety measures installed in their tall residential buildings meet the latest regulations.

"EvacGo has been built using our industry-leading MxPro 5 fire panel technology and, in developing our solution to meet the BS 8629 Code of Practice, we have consulted with fire industry experts involved in developing the standard. Both Trivallis and the residents of Tiger Quay can now rest easy knowing that they have the latest and most sophisticated fire evacuation equipment installed in their homes."

BS 8629:2019 is the new Code of Practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of evacuation alert systems for use by fire and rescue services in England. In place since November 2019, this code of practice recommends the installation of a dedicated evacuation alert system intended for the sole use of the fire and rescue services and separate from the building's fire alarm system. New high-rise residential developments are among the buildings being prioritised for evacuation alert system installation. Although not yet a legal requirement in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, EACIE installation is



already mandatory in new buildings containing flats over 18 metres in Scotland and considered best practice by a number of fire and rescue services.

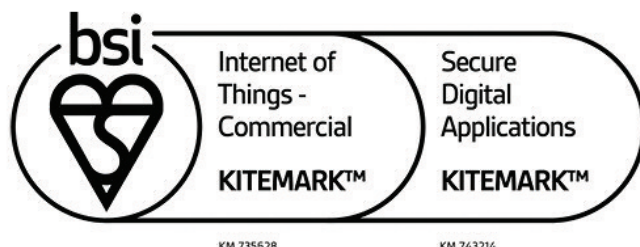
Advanced, owned by FTSE 100 company Halma PLC, protects a wide range of prestigious and high-profile sites across the globe – from London's Shard to Abu Dhabi International Airport and the Hong Kong – Zhuhai – Macau Bridge.

Advanced is a world leader in the development and manufacture of fire protection solutions. Advanced's reputation for performance, quality and ease of use sees its products specified in locations around the world, from single-panel installations to large, multi-site networks. Advanced's products include complete fire detection systems, multiprotocol fire panels, extinguishing control, fire paging, false alarm management and reduction systems as well as emergency lighting.

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

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Aico Gateway Kitemarked by British Standards Institution



Aico are pleased to announce the official Kitemark certification of their SmartLINK Gateway from the British Standards Institution (BSI).

This is a significant accolade for market leader in domestic Fire and Carbon Monoxide protection Aico, as the SmartLINK Gateway is the first product of its kind to have third party certification. Aico's innovative SmartLINK Gateway provides access to real-time data insight into the status of the Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarm systems across entire housing stock. Using its built-in GSM data connection, the Gateway utilises Aico's next generation of wireless technology to report events including Fire/CO activations and alarm head removals as they happen to the SmartLINK cloud portal, for full visibility and remote monitoring.

The SmartLINK Gateway has achieved the BSI Kitemark for Internet of Things (IoT) Commercial,

a multi-faceted Kitemark that examines the product and associated system and process in its entirety. In the case of Aico's Gateway, the BSI tested the connectivity and communications within the SmartLINK system, the associated mobile app and cloud portal, as well as the data encryption and security of the system. Findings demonstrated that the SmartLINK Gateway stores data in a secure way and does not use weak encryption algorithms for communications, safety functions are maintained in the event of system failure and the system utilised OTA (Over the Air) updates with appropriate policy in place.

Product Development Manager for Aico, Michael Wright comments "We are delighted to have received Kitemark certification for the SmartLINK Gateway. We welcome third party certification for IoT products such as the Gateway and achieving this is due recognition of the communications

performance and security of the product".

The BSI Kitemark is a renowned mark of quality, demonstrating that a product has been thoroughly and rigorously assessed and proven to meet recognised industry standards. It represents quality, safety and reliability of product.



01691 664100

www.aico.co.uk/smartlink-gateway

Aico's Mobile Training and Demonstration Units are back!



After having the breaks on for the past 16 months, Aico's bespoke, state-of-the-art Mobile Training and Demonstration Units are back out on the road.

Since acquiring their first Mobile Unit in 2017, Aico have expanded their fleet to four units, that cover the length and breadth of the country. Each of the units are fully equipped for hands-on training, providing customers with a complete overview of Aico's products and technologies and enables the delivery of their award-winning Expert Installer training.

Education is part of Aico's core ethos, and their Mobile Units are also utilised across the UK to engage, educate and inform members of the public. Fire safety sessions to promote awareness of fire and Carbon Monoxide within the home are vital to encourage active involvement from children and students, as well as residents. Aico also take their Mobile Units on tour, travelling to various locations throughout the country to raise awareness in support of key campaigns such as Gas Safety Week, highlighting the dangers of Carbon Monoxide and the importance of alarms.

To date, Aico's Expert Installer training scheme has trained over 30,000 industry employees in

domestic Fire Alarm specification and installation and is FIA approved with many of the modules CPD accredited, enabling installers to earn CPD time. 2020 saw the Expert Installer training go digital, with the unprecedented times caused by the pandemic. However, this week Aico were able to return to in-person training across different locations including City Electrical Factors Dartford, Edmundsons Electrical Torquay and Fife College.

Aico colleagues have strictly followed the Government Covid-19 guidelines in order for their customers to use the Mobile Units and facilities safely.

Daren Newcombe of Plymouth Community Homes who utilised the Mobile Unit on Tuesday 15th June said "We have specified and installed Aico alarms for the past 15 years and this is the third time we have had the Mobile Unit, this is an excellent opportunity for our engineers. We always receive first class support from Steve Bulley who is our local Regional Specification Manager (RSM), who has extensive knowledge and is always there when we need him."

RSM for the South West Steve Bulley commented "Plymouth Community Homes are a key partner of

Aico in the South West. They are a fantastic organisation to work with, who always put safety and well being at the forefront of all they do. I would like to thank Roger Hewit, Daren Newcombe and all the engineers for the attendance and support on the Mobile Unit."

Thursday 17th saw RSM for the West Midlands Julie Weaving visit City Electrical Factors in Stafford delivering an Expert Installer session. Julie was delighted with response from customers and said, "Having the Mobile Unit back out and about again this week after 16 months, delivering our CPD training face-to-face and having the interaction from electrical contractors has been fantastic." Nick Edwards from JNR Contractors Ltd who attended the Expert Installer session said "Great CPD training, very informative and interactive, in a fantastic setting – thank you to Julie Weaving and Aico."

Aico's Mobile Units will be visiting various locations across the UK on a regular basis where RSM's will deliver training to contractors and students.

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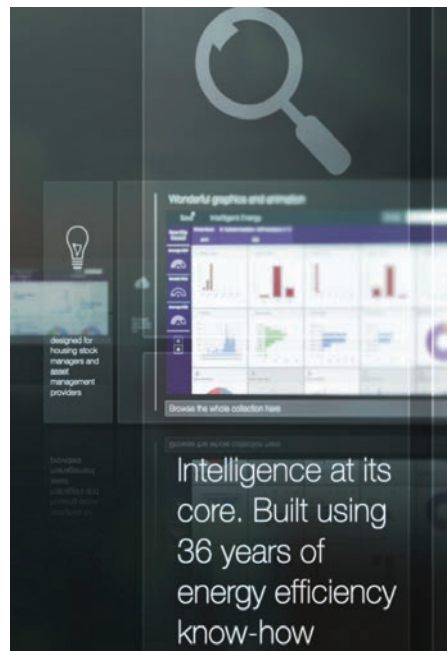
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The need for better data to get to zero carbon



There's a consensus that if the UK is to meet our overall carbon reduction target – to net zero by 2050 – we must tackle the housing stock. The UK's building stock of 29 million homes needs to be nearly completely decarbonised by 2050.

Compared to the owner occupied and private rented sectors, the UK's social housing performs significantly better. But what's the strategy for getting to net zero carbon?

Like any strategy, you need to ask 3 questions. Where are you now, where do you want to be and how will you get there. This article provides some answers to the first question - how to establish the current performance of your stock.

It's a cliché, but if you can't measure it, you can't manage it. A housing provider has a lot of data. Data that has come from all sorts of sources. Some high quality, some poor quality. If you take a housing provider with 10,000 assets, each asset could have up to 150 pieces of energy data associated with it. That's 1.5 million pieces of data. It can therefore be overwhelming to make sense of it. But understanding your data and establishing where you are at this moment, has to be the first stage of your net zero strategy.

A piece of research Sava undertook a few years ago revealed that over a third of housing providers did not have confidence in the energy data they hold. And only 14% said that they had any confidence in spotting inconsistencies in their data. Here are six pieces of advice...

1. Gain access to your EPC input data. Since 2008 you've been commissioning EPCs for every home upon change of tenancy. There are between 100 and 150 valuable pieces of data that go into

creating an EPC and yet it's surprising how many social landlords don't have access to this rich data set. If you lodge your EPCs with the Elmhurst EPC accreditation scheme it's possible to retrieve the underlying RdSAP data through an automatic routine that inputs the data straight into your asset management system.

2. Use high quality energy assessors. You need to be able to trust the data that your assessors are collecting. Ideally you would train someone internally to do your EPCs. But if you do outsource it, find a small group of assessors who you can work with as if they were part of your organisation. Educate them about your housing stock. Allow them access to information and experts so that they can feed this knowledge into their assessments. They're not just providing you with a certificate that no one reads. They are providing detailed quality information about your assets. It's worthwhile helping them to be as accurate as possible.
3. Pool all your energy data into a single version of the truth. Put all your energy data in a single place – ideally your asset management system. This means that your energy data is a subset of your full asset dataset and avoids your energy data becoming stranded and subsequently inaccurate which is often the case when energy data lives outside of the main asset management system.
4. Consider your data hierarchy. What data do you trust and what do you have less confidence in? Data sources such as gas maintenance records, condition surveys, void checks – will add to the energy story of your stock. But there will be conflicts. For instance, you are likely to have more confidence in your boiler data from your

latest CP17 gas safety certificate than you would the boiler data that was on an 8 year old EPC.

5. Create routines to continually improve your energy data. For instance, ensure that those CP17 certificates, or schedule of works are continually cross referenced against the energy data stored in your asset management system.
6. Look at your whole stock. Most social landlords only have full RdSAP data – the data that is used to produce an EPC – on no more than 50% of their housing stock. Only analysing 50% of your stock is not very helpful and will misguide your investment strategy. With energy analysis software it's possible to generate a SAP rating with just 12 to 15 pieces of essential data. This essential data is put through a series of intelligent inference engines that infer the missing data and this allows you to generate meaningful outputs such as the SAP rating, the carbon emissions and even the possible improvement options.

Sava talks more about these data improvement strategies in their regular free to access technical webinars. For more information and to book up, visit sava.co.uk/software/technical-webinars

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