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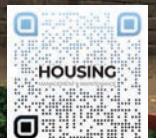
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Editor's Comment



Angela Rayner and her deputy at the Ministry of Housing, Matthew Pennycook, have written to all council leaders, setting out clear pointers on funding allocations from the 10-year Social and Affordable Homes Programme. This is of course welcome, giving councils far greater powers in managing their investment monies, including enabling them to retain all Right to Buy receipts – once the holy grail, although receipts have dropped significantly. Also, three councils (Cambridge, Eastleigh and Newcastle) have been confirmed as Homes England Strategic Partners, theoretically bringing large amounts of leverage for developing new and existing sites.

However, the £10bn initial funding confirmed for the programme only specifies 60% social rent, which is certainly a climbdown from Andy Burnham's original ambitions. Angela and Matthew also clarified Burnham's comments around it being the "biggest council housebuilding programme since the post-war period," saying that it's actually the biggest "since the post-war boom ended," i.e. since the 1980s.

In the "early years" of the programme, London will (per capita) receive the lion's share of the funding for building social and affordable homes (30%), and "up to £11.7bn overall across the lifetime of the programme." How devolution elsewhere in England will affect allocations is less clear, but the letter to councils says that "more funding will flow directly" to Mayoral authorities.

The sector has unsurprisingly given this all a warm welcome – Kate Henderson of the National Housing Federation called it a "major vote of confidence in not-for-profit housing associations." She added: "Working in partnership with government, councils and mayors, they have used the support and certainty provided by government to rebuild their development capacity, invest in skills, and be the strong and reliable partners needed to build a new generation of social and affordable homes, alongside increasing investment in their existing homes. This is no better demonstrated than in the scale and ambition of the bids submitted to this Social and Affordable Homes Programme."

Gavin Smart, chief executive at the CIH, said: "If delivered at pace, this investment has the potential to reduce homelessness, ease pressure on temporary accommodation and help more people access a safe, secure and affordable home."

The Government is rebranding its skills and capacity programme as Capacity to Build with "an extra" £46m over the next three years – bolstering the Council Housebuilding Support Fund, Council Housebuilding Support Service, and the Pathways to Planning graduate scheme to bring new planners into the sector. That money may not stretch all that far, given the task facing local authorities.

The quid pro quo is the consultation attached to the letter to councils. They must not only review their "plan for increasing the supply of new homes," "examine their financial position and make use of Right to Buy receipts," and "make full use of Section 106 opportunities." Crucially, they must also "consider how council-owned land and buildings can be used for housebuilding," and inform the Ministry on barriers that are "preventing them from building ambitiously and quickly." Very big things are afoot, many of which will land on HMM readers' doorsteps, with the associated pros and cons, in the coming months.

James Parker, Editor

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On the cover...

Encasement's experience of working with UK contractors on countless social housing projects has formed the basis of a new video, which illustrates how installation times can be reduced significantly when using pre-formed boxing compared to site made. See page 18.



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Platform launches new Environmental Sustainability Strategy to 'create lasting positive impact'

Platform Housing Group has launched its new Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2026-2028, setting out its roadmap for creating lasting positive impacts for customers, communities and the environment.

The strategy outlines how the Group will respond to some of the most significant environmental challenges facing society, including climate change, biodiversity loss and resource efficiency, while “embedding sustainability into decision making across every part of the organisation,” Platform said.

Central to the strategy is Platform’s commitment to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions across its value chain by 2050. To support this ambition, the group has set interim emission reduction targets and a commitment to continue externally validating its Scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions, “ensuring transparent reporting and accountability.” As part of the strategy, Platform will also continue to increase climate awareness across the organisation, “ensuring colleagues have the knowledge and skills needed to support its environmental ambitions.”

Creating more sustainable homes is a key priority for the Group and the strategy sets out its commitment to improving the energy efficiency of homes by 2030. It also sets out plans to reduce waste and resource consumption, enhance biodiversity



Lianne Taylor, Director of Sustainability at Platform Housing Group, says the new Environmental Sustainability Strategy will “help create greener homes, stronger communities and support the organisation’s ambition to achieve net zero by 2050”

and work closely with suppliers and partners to create positive environmental outcomes.

Platform commented: “The strategy builds on progress we have already made in improving the sustainability of homes and operations, our

investment in low carbon technologies and the expansion of our electric vehicle fleet.

“Shaped through collaboration with customers, colleagues and stakeholders, the strategy reflects the priorities of the communities Platform serves.”

Government highlights pressures on sector in Awaab’s Law Phase 1 report

The Government’s report on Phase 1 of Awaab’s Law shows a mixed picture across the social housing sector, saying landlords are beginning to embed new ways of working but are facing challenges around capacity, guidance and delivering long-term solutions.

The Phase 1 review, ‘Test and Learn’, conducted by Verian on behalf of the Ministry of Housing finds that the legal regulation of damp and mould is starting to change behaviours, particularly by increasing focus on serious hazards, strengthening oversight and encouraging improvements to landlords’ processes. However, the research also identified variation in implementation, with some organisations struggling to balance statutory deadlines with the need to properly diagnose and resolve underlying problems.

The report draws a key distinction between progress on responding quickly to hazards, and fixing problems permanently. It states: “Emergency

hazards such as gas leaks and floods were often addressed quickly, but damp and mould cases frequently extended over weeks or several months.” It continues: “While many felt existing emergency arrangements aligned relatively well with the 24-hour requirement, damp and mould cases were seen as more difficult to progress from inspection to effective remediation, particularly where works were complex, or specialist input was needed.”

The research also highlighted ongoing resource pressures across the sector. Some landlords reported that responding to Awaab’s Law requirements had affected planned maintenance programmes and longer-term investment priorities: “This transition period was seen as contributing to inconsistency in how quickly and effectively cases could be progressed, particularly for damp and mould, as teams balanced new requirements alongside existing capacity and financial pressures.”

While the report found good levels of ‘high level

understanding of the new requirements among landlords, it also identified a lack of clarity in detailed areas. It states: “High level understanding of Awaab’s Law is strong, but unclear definitions and reliance on professional judgement complicate consistent operationalisation.”

The report also raises questions about whether current approaches can be sustained if capacity pressures continue in the sector. This will become increasingly important as future phases extend the requirements to a wider range of hazards, including excess heat, excess cold, electrical hazards, fire risks and structural issues. “Landlords reported that preparation for later phases of Awaab’s Law is constrained by uncertainty around definitions, thresholds and delivery expectations.”

The Government said learning from Phase 1 has informed updates to guidance ahead of future phases, with the aim of supporting a more consistent approach across the sector. However, the report concludes that there is a “gap between the intent of Awaab’s Law and the realities of execution.”

To read the full report, visit: www.gov.uk/government/publications

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COMMENT

The Future Homes Standard: What does compliance look like?

As the Future Homes Standard reshapes homes' energy performance, Jon Ponting of AES Sustainability explores what compliance means in practice for developers and design teams.

The Future Homes Standard (FHS) represents the most significant evolution in domestic energy performance requirements since the introduction of EPCs, setting a new baseline for how homes in the UK are designed and delivered. Moving beyond incremental change, it establishes a framework for zero-carbon-ready homes that are built to operate efficiently as the electricity grid continues to decarbonise. For developers, local authorities and design teams, the challenge now is not understanding the direction of travel but defining what 'good' looks like in practice and how to achieve it within a tightening regulatory timeframe.

In many respects, compliance under the Future Homes Standard is less about wholesale reinvention and more about targeted change. One of the more notable aspects of the new standard is that building fabric performance, long considered the cornerstone of energy compliance, is not subject to dramatic revision. Backstop U-values remain unchanged but a couple of tweaks to the 'notional' values mean many developers are leaning towards higher performing windows, such as triple glazing or thicker wall cavities than before. The uncertainty of how the Home Energy Model (HEM) is going to compare to SAP means housebuilders are nervous they will just scrape a pass in this early stage.

While the notional specification has been tightened for fabric – particularly around airtightness, which improves from five to four $\text{m}^3/\text{m}^2/\text{hr}$ – these changes are evolutionary rather than transformative. Schemes that already perform well under existing Part L requirements are likely to translate successfully into the new regime with only modest refinement. In this context, good practice continues to centre on build quality, detailed design and consistent delivery onsite, rather than radical alterations to wall build-ups or overall form.

The real shift under the Future Homes Standard lies in building services, particularly heating. The new Part L standard effectively removes fossil fuel systems from the equation, prohibiting heating sources that produce higher carbon emissions than electricity. As a result, gas and oil boilers will no longer be viable for new homes, and electrification becomes the defining principle of compliance.

While the regulations stop short of mandating a specific technology, heat pumps are expected to become the dominant solution across the vast majority of schemes. When correctly specified, they can meet both space heating and hot water demands while aligning comfortably with the required performance targets. Alternative approaches, such as direct electric heating combined with hot water heat pumps, may be possible in highly efficient dwellings, but these will require more detailed modelling to demonstrate compliance. In practical terms, good design under the Future Homes Standard begins with accepting this shift and planning developments around low-carbon heating from the outset, rather than attempting to retrofit solutions into established layouts.

Alongside electrified heating, onsite renewable generation becomes a core



Under the Future Homes Standard, most new homes will be required to incorporate solar PV

expectation rather than an optional enhancement. Under the Future Homes Standard, most new homes will be required to incorporate solar PV, typically sized to cover around 40% of the building's ground floor area where feasible. This represents a fundamental change in how roofs are designed and used. Simple, south-facing roof forms can often accommodate this requirement

The upcoming deadlines introduce a level of urgency that developers cannot afford to ignore

relatively easily, but more complex layouts or less favourable orientations introduce additional challenges.

In these cases, achieving sufficient output may require panels to be distributed across multiple roof slopes, including front and rear elevations, to compensate for reduced efficiency. This increased reliance on PV places greater emphasis on early design coordination, particularly where competing considerations such as daylighting, overheating and planning constraints also influence house orientation. As a result, good performance is not simply about maximising solar gain, but about striking the right balance between energy generation and overall building quality.

Despite these technical changes, the visible character of new homes is unlikely to alter dramatically. The Future Homes Standard operates largely behind the scenes, embedded within services design and performance modelling rather than external appearance. Materials, layouts and architectural styles will continue to reflect local character and planning expectations, while energy efficiency measures become increasingly integrated and less visible. This is an important aspect of the transition, ensuring that improved environmental performance does not come at the expense of placemaking or market appeal.

While the direction of travel is clear, the transition to the Future Homes Standard is defined as much by process as by specification. The upcoming deadlines introduce a level of urgency that developers cannot afford to ignore. In England, the new regulations will apply to developments where building control applications are submitted and accepted from 24 March 2027, with a transitional window allowing projects submitted before this date to proceed under current regulations. However, this flexibility is limited: any homes not started by 24 March 2028 must be redesigned to meet the new standard. For

high-rise and other buildings, a six-month extension applies, but the overall message remains the same. These are firm deadlines, and with design, planning and procurement cycles often spanning several years, the time available to respond is shorter than it initially appears. The Wales equivalent goes live on 4 March 2027 – Scotland is still to confirm timescales.

The first step for developers is therefore to assess their pipeline and determine which projects will fall within the scope of the new regulations. This requires a clear understanding of submission dates, build programmes and phasing strategies, particularly on larger sites where some plots may straddle the transition period. Once this position is established, attention must shift to reviewing standard house types and technical specifications. Adapting designs to accommodate heat pump systems, identifying suitable roof configurations for PV and ensuring that airtightness and ventilation strategies align with the updated notional specification will be critical.

At the same time, the way in which compliance is demonstrated is evolving. The introduction of SAP 10.3, followed by the transition to the Home Energy Model, brings increased complexity and a greater reliance on detailed modelling. This shift reinforces the need for early engagement between developers, architects, engineers and energy consultants, as decisions made at concept stage will have a direct impact on whether schemes can achieve compliance without costly redesign.

Ultimately, the Future Homes Standard represents a move from anticipation to implementation. The key principles low-carbon heating, onsite renewables and improved energy efficiency have been well signposted for years. What has changed is the clarity of requirements and the immediacy of the timeline. In this new context, good practice is defined not by radical innovation, but by effective prioritisation: maintaining strong fabric performance, embracing electrification and integrating renewable energy as a core component of design. Those who act early and proactively align their processes and specifications will find the transition manageable. Those who delay risk being constrained by both time and compliance.

Jon Ponting is Future Homes Standard policy lead at AES Sustainability

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Decent Flooring for Decent Homes

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The new Decent Homes Standard emerged earlier this year, as a set of legal minimum standards for social housing, which is also being rolled out to the Private Rented Sector under the Renters' Rights Act. As well as complying with statutory minimums on Category 1 HHSRS standards such as severe damp, the Decent Homes Standard requires landlords to keep properties in a "reasonable state of repair," with "modern facilities and services" in bathrooms and kitchens, providing a minimum level of comfort.

However, there is a major element missing; any explicit focus on the importance of a decent standard of flooring and floorcovering for properties. While flooring has been ignored by the new standard, there are 1.2 million people living with no floorcovering at all in their home, and 66% of them are believed to be in social housing properties.

Despite these shocking statistics, it remains left to enlightened property teams and their suppliers to provide tenants with a decent standard of finish beneath their feet, to bridge this gap in regulation for social housing. Beauflor is a supplier of vinyl flooring products to the sector who have pinpointed this

missing link in the provision of decent new build or refurbished homes – a glaring omission when flooring clearly constitutes a fundamental part of comfort as well as safety.

ROUND TABLE ATTENDEES

- **Chair: Matt Baird**, Associate Consultant, Learning Curve Group
- **Andrew Cameron-Smith**, Communications Director, Healthy Homes Hub
- **Chinyere Onyeka-Joseph**, Property Services Manager, Peabody
- **Charlene Nevins**, Regional Property Services Manager, Peabody
- **Fayann Simpson OBE**, Chair of Resident Services Board, L&Q
- **Chris Roberts**, National Key Account Manager, Beauflor
- **Steven McAuliffe**, Regional Sales Manager, Beauflor



ROUND TABLE

Working closely with Beauflor, we brought together a round table panel including leading social housing providers, sector bodies and representatives to explore how to drive quality flooring spec, and share good practice on addressing the flooring needs of tenants, alongside those of providers.

Chaired by a man with key sector knowledge, Matt Baird (a consultant at Learning Curve Group, who has worked in social housing recruitment and on housing association boards for many years), the round table tackled this neglected issue head on.

Working in a 'standards vacuum,' is the industry establishing its own benchmarks and KPIs for what a decent standard of flooring looks like, and what goals are individual providers setting for long-term tenant benefit? Providers continue to collaborate with their suppliers to try to ensure that a good standard of provision is possible, across property portfolios. We discussed this, and issues from upfront costs to maintenance regimes and retrofit headaches, towards the shared goal of long-term durable and fit-for-purpose installations.

We heard from delegates from the sector that flooring is often not seen as a priority in projects from new builds to retrofits in social housing, and is often sidelined due to upfront costs. The central foresight to invest in flooring to help save the NHS the estimated £1.4bn that cold homes end up costing in health problems, for example, currently seems too far a leap for the government, but it's part of the financial case for better flooring.

THE DEBATE: FLOORING CHALLENGES

Before the debate got underway, Chris Roberts, national key account manager, Beauflor, gave a short introduction, capturing some of the learnings from his 25 years in the flooring industry.

As a manufacturer, Beauflor has been pursuing a reputation of integrity and quality as a manufacturer since launching in 2004 as part of the Beaulieu International Group. It produces vinyl flooring products in Belgium, including sheet vinyl designed to meet the needs of social housing; tough, water- and slip-resistant as well as low-maintenance for tenants, but also stylish, quiet and comfortable.

The company is "committed to a responsible approach to doing business and more sustainable vinyl flooring solutions, and aims to give landlords and providers "access to cost-effective, durable, attractive and easy-to-maintain floors for every room of the home." Chris told the delegates that while the firm "sells a lot of cushioned vinyl into social housing," and has a strong presence



BEAUFLORE'S INSIGHTS

Chris Roberts of event sponsor Beauflor warned that until there is robust national guidance on flooring quality, inferior providers will "take advantage"

in the market, they were "keen to listen and learn" to the providers present, in terms of their experience and angle on specifying flooring.

Led by chair Matt Baird, the delegates dived into the initial topic, which was the often underrated importance of good quality flooring for tenants, as key for delivering thermal comfort and safety, but also the critical wellbeing factor of beneficial acoustics between adjacent homes. Chinyere Onyeka-Joseph, Property Services Manager, Peabody, summed up one of the key issues in her introduction however, namely that "everyone has their own perceptions about what good flooring is"

The delegates explored why despite the importance of flooring, it was being sidelined, but also highlighted the cost of only seeing flooring as an interior design 'nice to have,' and when it is specified, ensuring that specification is adequately good quality. While the Government has produced "best practice guidance" (via the Ministry of Housing) for landlords on retaining "retain good quality floor coverings between tenancies," what were the direct incentives for doing this?

Chair of L&Q's Resident Services Board Fayann Simpson gave some insights from the provider around how it treated flooring between tenancies – "In terms of void properties, where possible if flooring is there already and it's good quality, it will be left in there." She added: "But that would be at the agreement of the residents themselves, and checking what they want." Onyeka-Joseph by contrast said that in her experience at Peabody, surveyors had only directed floorings to be retained in "less than 20 cases" she had witnessed of voids, based on "complications following the property being relet," and explained that flooring being "gifted" meant the housing association had "no responsibility for it."

Onyeka said, when it came to selecting new products, providers are "quite limited in the options to choose from," including colour ranges, but generally speaking the key qualities required were "thickness, quality, and durability." Onyeka also said that it was important to "check on contractors" to ensure they are specifying and installing the right level of quality.

Charlene Nevins, Regional Property Services Manager at Peabody, said there was a problem in the sector of being reactive when it came to areas like flooring – "you're just waiting for a problem to happen," and urged a more proactive approach, and investment in flooring. Fayann Simpson accepted that social housing providers "can look at cost at a particular point rather than over the long term, and it's really important to move to that kind of thinking." Andy Cameron-Smith endorsed this "prevention is better than cure," based on potential cost savings as well as wellness and health benefits to residents,



AN EXPERT CHAIRS

Round table chair Matt Baird advocated for smaller social housing providers during the discussion, who are facing a range of pressures

however he “understood that it takes a brave finance director to look at that in the long term.”

She asserted that at LNQ, a “major works partnership” approach “involved building relationships with contractors and residents over 15 years, and really looking at what good looks like, because work is done, but how is it experienced?” She said they had “spent a lot of time really thinking about it, including with contractors involved; I go out on visits, and it’s really instructive to gather info and see things; the physical manifestation of decisions you have made.”

THERMAL PERFORMANCE & PRESSURE ON PROVIDERS

Delegates emphasised a key reason why flooring must be considered as far beyond an aesthetic finishing touch, and fundamental to how the overall building performs – namely the increased focus on energy efficiency throughout the sector, including for tenants’ resilience. Andy Cameron-Smith, communications director, Healthy Homes Hub, posed the idea that if the flooring is good, you might not be losing the heat, so all of a sudden, the technology you put in works better.”

He admitted there was a “lot of pressure” on social housing providers, but they “needed to take a step back, and look at what flooring really means.” He said as well as “improving thermal comfort,” it can “make people feel better,” but he added that “sometimes we look at little things in isolation,” rather than the desired holistic focus on all the impacts. He also said the focus on cost needed to be broadened to a more long-term, look at whole life costs.

The discussion came around to focus on retrofit, and Chris Roberts of Beauflor cited one contractor client which was doing retrofit flooring for housing associations, and had persuaded one to go for a product with a 10-year guarantee, rather than a five year, with a 40% cost uplift. There were instantly a range of improved outcomes for tenants, as well as better sustainability scores for the housing association, and performance benefits as properties become required to upgrade to EPC C across the sector.

The chair Matt Baird asked the group whether the sector was pursuing innovative ideas with suppliers on improving properties’ flooring, in the absence of concerted Government action, bearing in mind the impacts including on sustainability. “Why do we think flooring isn’t discussed? Is it because of a knowledge gap, or is it simply a case of ‘we don’t have to’?”

Fayann came back to the “lack of long term thinking,” and also the issue of “what can you do that one time you come into the person’s home,” i.e. competing priorities, so this fed into the need for a “single home standard”



LOOKING AT THE LONG-TERM

L&Q’s Fayann Simpson (left) said that the sector had to move over to a long-term mindset in terms of cost of flooring



DON’T STRIP OUT, REUSE

Chinyere Onyeka from Peabody revealed that contractors tended to strip out flooring between tenancies as a standard practice

which would encompass all the key measures. Andy Cameron-Smith said that “there were too many arguments around retrofit, for example, should it be fabric first, or not – how do we just make the home ‘decent’? It should be one; is it cheaper to run, is comfort and air quality better, and have you cut emissions? You have to look at everything in the round.”

SOLUTIONS

Delegates discussed the need for a “baseline standard” of flooring, outside of the key provisions for kitchens and bathrooms, and the chair asked what they would propose. While Chinyere Onyeka-Joseph said that consulting tenants was the key, but that often the results were not as expected, Fayann Simpson said that it was important to have an “honest conversation.” Charlene pointed out the issue of flooring being given to tenants as a “gift,” and whether or not it could then be changed if not liked by the tenant.

Beauflor representatives asked several pertinent questions around promoting flooring in new build and retrofit scenarios, including “what matters most, being compliant or ensuring a better standard of home?” However, Andrew Cameron-Smith had to somewhat dampen the potential saying there was a “big gap” around standards that would require any compliance, but this becomes an opportunity to be able to display the difference it makes if it becomes a standard that the sector can adopt.”

Delegates from the sector such as Onyeka-Joseph said that the health impacts of homes have only been recently brought to bear as a result of real issues cropping up for tenants – “It’s taken Awaab’s Law for us to actually see the devastation.” Trust factors among tenants, and worries about being evicted, have prevented people from complaining about conditions, too.

Fayann Simpson also said that the benefits brought to tenants over time had to be fully consulted on, to offset the fact that “having major works done in your home, is a big thing.” Characteristics and benefits beyond the standard non-slip factors around flooring needed to be brought up and emphasised more strongly.

Steven McAuliffe, Regional Sales Manager at Beauflor said that the company had faced frustration in the sector, because we know we have the product, and we know we can save the industry money, but “there’s so much red tape and history and everything in the middle,” He added: “It’s how you get that point across; there are preferred suppliers, and it’s not because they are the best; it’s because it’s a box tick, and we can move on.”

Matt Baird countered, giving the example of IT systems, said that social housing teams were unlikely to make a leap for higher standards if there was perceived risk. “There are guys almost guaranteeing you an eight out of 10, but the risk appetite is really really low because we’re so scared of getting it wrong at the moment and of change.”



INVESTIGATING HEALTH IMPACTS

Charlene Nevins and Andrew Cameron-Smith of Healthy Homes Hub discuss the key impacts on health and wellbeing of flooring in homes

Social housing delegates expressed their own frustrations that they “couldn’t do more” in certain scenarios, where flooring was acutely inadequate, or even missing. Doing it “case by case” would be “unfair” if it prioritised some cases over others, said Fayann Simpson.

Steven from Beauflor said this supported the idea for a standard “being Government-led, to become the norm, otherwise it’s going to be reactive.” Delegates including Fayann Simpson said that a “one-size fits all” approach for standard flooring would be appropriate, apart from where there are accessibility and adaptability issues.

ENGAGING WITH TENANTS & GOVERNMENT

Chinyere Onyeka-Joseph of Peabody stressed the importance of “getting the tenants’ perspective on flooring,” but that “we need to find a healthy balance,” and acknowledgement that providers are required to consult tenants on wide range of factors currently around properties, including the upcoming second phase of Awaab’s Law. She said that damp and mould was “overthrowing everything else; so it’s really hard to formulate a standard for flooring when you don’t even know if you’ll have a budget for it.”

Andy Cameron-Smith nailed the problem around explicit regimes such as Awaab’s Law, versus more amorphous goals around flooring – “nobody knows what that definition [of quality] is; Awaab’s Law tells you what you need to do. Because the sector is very compliance-driven, flooring is always going to struggle to have its voice heard.”

Fayann said that with a new Government administration, there was an opportunity for the sector to “reflect the insight back to government, and I think we really need to think about how to be more effective in that sphere, including around employment and skills.” Chris Roberts warned that “until those regulations or guidelines are in place from Government, specifying quality will be “so difficult, and you will be losing money as an industry; people will be taking advantage.”

REUSE & RECYCLING

As well as attempting to shift the stigma of sheet PVC flooring from ‘poor quality’ to more of an ‘aspirational’ offer, based on proven characteristics, Beauflor is leaning into the potential for social housing providers to reuse flooring, with potentially huge sustainability savings. This “second use”

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDUSTRY & GOVERNMENT

- **Andrew Cameron-Smith, Healthy Homes Hub:** I think in comparison to how we open this, we desperately need a clear standard, developed in collaboration and partnership between sector and the suppliers.
- **Chinyere Onyeka, Peabody:** The Government has looked at funding realistically, because as much as they’re implementing new ones and implementing changes, something gets left on the back burner; forget ‘decent homes’ and and looking at what must be done right; first time fixes.
- **Fayann Simpson, L&Q Group:** It comes back to people; talking about those benefits, and how your products are experienced in the home.
- **Charlene Nevins, Peabody:** We’re missing a trick by not including flooring in retrofit programmes, and including the health value.
- **Chris Roberts, Beauflor:** Maintain consistency across housing policy, and solid guidelines on the whole life cost of a floor, so we’re all singing from the same hymn sheets.
- **Steven McAuliffe, Beauflor:** We have a product that does exactly what it needs to do to fulfil the problems we are experiencing, but it needs to be led from government as a minimum standard.

approach, said Chris Roberts, meant moving away from the default setting of “just ripping up a floor and throwing it into landfill, to a different mentality,” and this was a “big part of the company’s vision, going forward.”

Fayann Simpson said that contractors “prefer to rip it out – most of the time I’ve gone in there and it just needs a clean; nine times out of 10, it’ll be just fine. We have a very wasteful society.”

CONCLUSION

Chair Matt Baird said that the sector “had become a place which does what it has to, while there are many examples of people going over and above.” He said that providers had “for a long time been told that flooring is a nice to have, it’s optional.” He added there were related issues around funding alternative accommodation while flooring was being installed, and also “are they going to look after their homes,” alluding to the trust needed from providers into tenants looking after flooring.

Our cross-disciplinary round table, however, provided ample evidence around why flooring has to be given greater priority in future. Andrew Cameron-Smith of the Healthy Homes Hub, brought the focus firmly back to residents, and the fact that flooring was overlooked by providers for its wide-ranging impact. He said that ‘Decent’ wasn’t a high enough aspiration, but also that what it meant in practice was not clear. Conversely, he said “when you have rigorous standards, it pulls the market up.”

He said that flooring was a key part of the “jigsaw” of a healthy, comfortable and efficient environment, but a shifting context politically meant that it was difficult to complete: “We have all the pieces, we just don’t have the picture on the box, because the agenda changes and we get dragged off onto something else.” Cameron-Smith concluded that the answer, although challenging to achieve was that “the resident needs to be the codesigner of the solution.”

The big takeaway from the session was that despite the universally acknowledged importance of flooring, with a host of other compliance requirements recently imposed on social housing teams, it is going to struggle to be at the top of the list of priorities. Improving the situation for tenants is going to rely, short term at least, on the concerted efforts of enlightened providers, and manufacturers such as Beauflor, working together to improve understanding and unlock investment.

London calling

The largest free-to-attend conference and exhibition of its kind will be back on 24-25 November 2026 as part of Housing Week, London.

It will once again bring together thousands of housing professionals to learn how the sector can accelerate delivery, build more homes, and improve the quality and sustainability of existing stock.

In the face of the UK housing crisis and limited resources, it's more important than ever to learn from each other and establish the partnerships necessary to achieve more together.

Whether your focus is building safety, sustainability, development, AI and digital transformation, housing management, procurement, or resident engagement, this once-a-year event offers a unique opportunity to explore the opportunities of a new government to increase affordable housing supply and improve the quality and sustainability of existing homes.

With over 70 hours of content to choose from, you can build a personalised itinerary tailored to your priorities to make the most out of the two days.

HOMES UK brings together housing providers, government, developers, investors, contractors and industry leaders to share the insights, innovations and practical solutions shaping the future of housing. Across six dedicated theatres, attendees will gain valuable insight, forge new connections and discover actionable strategies to improve how homes are planned, built, managed and sustained across the UK.

Visitors can hear from the people driving change across the housing sector – with 300+ speakers, the HOMES UK programme brings together senior voices from housing associations and local authorities, alongside government and regulators, industry leaders, developers, asset managers, and experts in areas such as building safety, data and digital, sustainability, and procurement.

This event offers a unique opportunity to explore the opportunities of a new government to increase affordable housing supply and improve the quality and sustainability of existing homes.



With strong representation from frontline practitioners and residents' voices, the programme blends strategic insight with practical case studies and real-world delivery experience, giving you ideas and practical solutions.

HOMES UK 2026 is designed as a practical delivery forum for the housing sector. Across five specialist theatres and a central keynote programme, you'll hear from government, regulators, and sector leaders translating policy and strategy into real-world action.

Content will focus on the issues shaping housing right now, including:

- Navigating regulatory change and compliance
- Delivering new homes and regeneration at scale
- Building safety and Awaab's Law readiness
- Asset management, repairs and operational performance
- Sustainability and warm, safe homes
- Data, digital and AI in housing delivery.

Whether you're looking for strategic insight or practical solutions you can apply immediately, you can tailor your agenda to suit your role and priorities.

To register for your ticket, please scan the QR Code.



Article submitted by Homes UK

Housing Management & Maintenance

The Housing Management & Maintenance (HMM) website is an online provider of past and present news items dedicated to keep professionals within this sector updated with a wide range of topics including legislation, projects, products and more. housingmmonline.co.uk is a one-stop source for all the latest press releases providing any visitor with access to information about products and services that they may require. From the website, you can find links to digital issues that have live links to advertisers' sites, as well as email alerts to keep you as informed as possible.



www.housingmmonline.co.uk

One integrated pathway – better outcomes

Housing providers and local authorities can now access occupational therapy assessments, adaptation specifications, surveying, quotation, and materials supplied through a single coordinated visit, led by AKW in conjunction with The Occupational Therapy Service. This integrated model removes fragmentation, shortens timescales, and ensures adaptations are clinically appropriate, technically accurate, and built to last. Watch the video to learn more, or visit the website to discuss with your AKW Rep.



www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CjKGLwrjEU

HOMES UK STAND H502

www.akw-ltd.co.uk/clinical-adaptation-service

Why roof ventilation matters: How it is essential for preventing condensation, maintaining indoor air quality and extending the lifespan of a home



Without proper ventilation, warm air from inside the home can become trapped in the roof space. When it meets the colder air outside, condensation forms, leading to problems such as:

- Mould and damp issues – Excess condensation encourages mould growth, which can affect both health and the structure of the property.
- Insulation performance issues – Proper ventilation helps maintain insulation effectiveness for better energy efficiency.
- Timber protection – Regulating moisture levels prevents damage to wooden roof structures.
- Roofing material longevity – Ventilation supports the durability of roofing materials, including Cedral fibre cement slates.

Adhering to British Standard BS 5250 is essential, as it provides the minimum requirements for roof ventilation. Part C of the UK Building Regulations sets out that “roofs should be designed and constructed so that their structural and thermal performance are not adversely affected by interstitial condensation.” The key for roofers is to ensure that the ventilation in the roof space is well

considered and delivered when installing a roof. Cedral Roofs will draw attention to the BS 5250. By integrating the right combination of intake and exhaust ventilation, you can ensure consistent airflow, helping to regulate temperature, and reducing excess condensation.

BEST PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING ROOF VENTILATION

Different roof types require different ventilation solutions. Pitched roofs have the advantage of natural airflow due to their slope, which encourages moisture to escape and cool air to enter. The design of the roof, which often uses a combination of soffit, ridge and tile vents, allows for a natural exchange of air, reducing the need for mechanical ventilation in many cases. However, for homes with more complex or poorly insulated pitched roofs, additional passive or mechanical systems may be necessary. Best practices focus on the following:

- Regularly check and clear any obstructions to maintain proper ventilation. Blocked soffit vents, excessive insulation, or roofing debris can restrict airflow.
- Use a Combination of Passive & Mechanical

Ventilation. While passive ventilation relies on natural airflow, mechanical ventilation – such as roof-mounted extractor fans – can be beneficial in complex roof designs or highly insulated properties.

- Checking regularly for signs of condensation, dampness, or mould will help identify ventilation issues before they become costly problems.

There are a wide range of products designed to assist roofers with any ventilation challenge – from specially designed eaves, concealed tile options, ridge and top abutment ventilators.

Cedral provides expert guidance on roof ventilation systems and offers a range of roofing products designed to support airflow and provide long-term protection. Cedral fibre cement slates perform well on key criteria including fire safety, resilience, energy efficiency, sustainability and maintenance. Cedral's UK technical team and dedicated Professionals online hub are available for advice throughout the process.

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*Dry verge to give neat
and sharp edge to roof*



Durability & Longevity

*Our fibre cement slates are extremely
durable with a life expectancy of up to
50 years*



*Terracotta slate to echo the brick's
warmth while keeping a contemporary
plane. Let's do a mock-up.*

BEGIN WITH THE PERFECT FINISH

Cedral fibre-cement slates lock in a sharp roofline to bring alive every design from sketch to completion. Light in frame but tough and resilient against heavy weather – Cedral roofs are a stylish and sustainable option for decades to come. So that 'just finished' look stays with the building long after completion. It's a perfect finish that lasts and lasts. Right from the start.

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CEDRAL
by etex

Perfect pipe boxing with Encasement

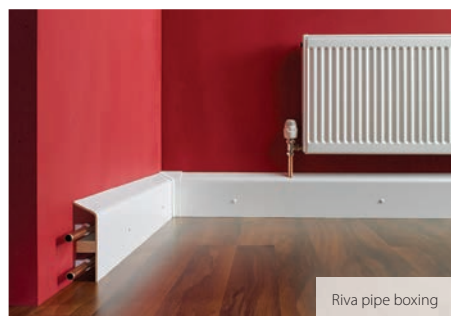
Retrofit upgrades to older housing stock, such as fuel efficient low-carbon heating improvements or fire sprinkler systems, can present several challenges to social landlords, as the associated pipework needs to be concealed quickly and cost-effectively.

Boiler upgrading to more fuel-efficient models, or the installation of low-carbon district heating systems and ground or air source heat pumps, typically utilise surface mounted pipework. In many cases, other utilities, such as electrical cabling, will also need to be concealed.

It's a similar issue for fire sprinkler systems. In new builds, pipework runs can be incorporated into at the design stage and can be hidden within risers and ceiling voids, but for retrofitted installations, this is not an option as surface mounting is usually the only practical option.

However, a key benefit of surface mounted pipework is the simplicity and comparative speed with which it can be installed by skilled contractors, helping to reduce the time on site and keep costs under control.

Encasement's pre-formed plywood boxing solutions are designed for interior use, the company's Riva and Versa pipe & fire sprinkler boxing, alongside its boiler pipe casings, are already in widespread use across UK social housing projects.



Riva pipe boxing

Manufactured from pre-formed plywood and pre-finished with a decorative resin impregnated paper, these inherent features remove the need to fabricate and paint pipe boxing on site, which helps save time and money.



Versa fire sprinkler boxing



Arma metal pipe boxing

Encasement's range also includes metal boxing to conceal exterior services. Arma metal casing provides a highly effective solution to cover and protect distributed heating and ground source system pipework, as well as electrical cabling and air source heat pump installations.

Bespoke manufactured to individual project specifications from 2 mm thick aluminium, as standard, they provide tough and durable protection.

Encasement's experience of working with UK contractors on countless social housing projects has formed the basis of a new video, which illustrates how installation times can be reduced significantly when using pre-formed boxing compared to site made.

Another advantage of pre-formed casings becomes clearer when assessing 'whole life' costs, which escalate significantly when routine maintenance visits are considered, as in most situations, site made casings are damaged or destroyed during their removal.

Also, a joiner may be required to remove the site made boxing prior to any maintenance being carried out by a service engineer and would then need to revisit the property once the work is completed to either refit the casing or construct a new one.

None of this applies with preformed pipe boxing. It is usually a simple process of removing the plastic screwcaps and screws so the boxing can be removed and replaced quickly and easily.

For boiler pipe casings, this process is even simpler, as they are often self-supporting and

require no screws to hold them together, so they can be easily removed and replaced in just a matter of seconds.



Arma concealing heat pump pipework

On site, time is money, which is why the simplicity, speed and economies that can be achieved using preformed boxing solutions can be a key advantage when planning housing upgrade programmes. Scan the QR codes to view the pre-formed vs site made comparison video or visit the Encasement website.

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Comparison video



Pipe boxing range

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Building for what's next

Fabric is the industry's Awaab's Law blind spot

Shelforce argues that building fabric, not just damp and mould, sits at the heart of Awaab's Law compliance for the social housing sector, and attention needs to pivot towards it.

Ask most people in the housing sector if they know what Awaab's Law is about and the answer will come back quickly: damp and mould. It's an association that's understandable given the tragedy that led to the legislation, but it has created a blind spot.

Awaab's Law is not a mould policy. It's a framework for how quickly landlords must respond to a much wider set of hazards, and a building's fabric sits at the centre of nearly all of them.

The legislation already requires social landlords to investigate and repair emergency hazards within strict timeframes, and this obligation is not limited to condensation or black spot mould.

Security hazards, including broken external doors and windows that leave a property unsafe, are already classed as emergencies. A resident reporting a door that will not lock or a window that has failed and left their home exposed triggers the same 24-hour response duty as a serious damp complaint.

From late 2026, the scope widens further still, bringing fire safety hazards, including fire doors, structural risks and extremes of temperature into the same strict regime.

For landlords who have built their compliance response around damp and mould alone, this phased expansion matters. A process designed to catch one type of hazard will not necessarily catch another. Windows, doors and fire doors sit across several of these hazard categories at once, which is exactly why building fabric deserves a central place in compliance planning rather than a supporting role.

The building fabric, be it roofs, walls, floors, windows and doors, determines how a property manages heat, moisture and air, and how well it protects the people living inside it. Windows and doors specifically have a direct bearing on ventilation, thermal performance and condensation risk. Where they are poorly specified or have started to underperform, they can become a contributing cause of the very moisture problems Awaab's Law was created to prevent. Fabric condition and damp risk are connected, not separate issues to be managed in isolation.

Recent survey work, gathering responses from private landlords, housing associations and local authority providers across the UK, suggests the sector is some way from feeling settled on this. Just under half of respondents, 47.9%, say they are fully prepared with processes already in place. That leaves a substantial portion of the sector still catching up: 27.4% describe themselves as only partially prepared, and a combined 24.6% say they are either still assessing what the legislation requires of them or have not yet started.



A process designed to catch one type of hazard will not necessarily catch another

Put another way, close to one in four organisations has yet to establish a clear operational response to Awaab's Law at all.

While 49.3% of respondents believe they understand the additional Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazards due to be covered under Awaab's Law in 2026 (thermal comfort, structural safety, fire and electrical, falls, hygiene and safety) and 43.8% feel they understand the full list of 29 hazards scheduled for 2027, a significant proportion remain unsure. Across both questions, roughly one in four respondents report limited or no understanding.

The picture on window and door replacement is similarly split. A third of organisations, 33.8%, already have replacement programmes underway to address fabric-related issues. An equal proportion, however, report that upgrades of this kind are not currently part of their strategy.

That even split is worth sitting with. It suggests fabric investment has become a live compliance issue for some organisations while remaining an afterthought for others, and the gap between the two groups is likely to become more visible once the fire safety provisions take effect.

None of this points to a single fix. What it does point to is the value of thinking about building fabric, rather than treating damp, security and fire safety as three separate problems requiring three separate answers.

A fabric-first assessment, looking honestly at the condition and performance of windows, doors and fire doors across a housing stock, addresses several of these risks in one exercise instead of several.

Fabric condition is not a peripheral maintenance matter but a genuine compliance issue, and one that deserves attention before the next phase of the legislation arrives rather than after.

For housing associations, local authorities and private landlords alike, the sensible course is to treat building fabric assessment as a proactive part of compliance strategy now, rather than a reactive repair job later.

Article supplied by Shelforce



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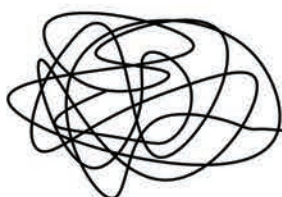
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Championing the life-saving role of fire doors

Helen Hewitt of the British Woodworking Federation explains the main goals of Fire Door Safety Week 2026 and highlights the growing risks for the industry.

The British Woodworking Federation's Fire Door Safety Week (21-25 September 2026) returns to champion and raise awareness of the vital role that fire doors play in the event of a fire by holding back the spread of fire and smoke to help save lives and protect property.

As the campaign enters its 13th year, the need for greater awareness remains urgent. From the growing risks associated with lithium-ion battery fires to reports of inspections where fire doors do not meet the required standards, recent incidents show why education, regular checks and proactive maintenance are essential.

FIRE DOOR SAFETY WEEK 2026

From our previous Fire Door Safety Week campaigns, we know that fire door maintenance issues are not always reported. In fact, our 2025 research found that only 29% of people had reported faulty fire doors.

This reporting gap matters because fire door safety depends on people recognising problems and acting on them. While those responsible for a building have clear legal duties over fire safety, everyone can play an important role by recognising and reporting obvious fire door defects – from missing door closers to gaps around doors, as well as taking proactive steps to encourage fire door safety, such as closing a fire door that has been propped open.

To help understand the existing perceptions of fire doors, this year Fire Door Safety Week will explore how aware people are of fire safety measures in the different buildings they visit and if building type influences their awareness.

As part of the campaign owned, managed and funded by the BWF, we will publish new research exploring how different generations understand fire door safety and where they obtain their information. The findings will help identify gaps in awareness and the channels and sources that people turn to for fire safety education.

A fire door can only protect lives and property if it is able to perform as intended

FIRE DOOR CHECK IN FIVE STEPS

For all awareness campaigns, the ultimate aim is to translate awareness into action. For fire doors within housing association properties, formal inspection and maintenance should always be carried out by competent people. However, building users can help by recognising obvious signs that a fire door may not be operating correctly and reporting them for further inspection.

That's why we developed the Five Step Check – to empower all individuals with the knowledge they need to check whether a fire door requires immediate attention:

1. Check for certification – look for a label, plug or marking to show that the fire door is certified and follow the instructions. Also check that all ironmongery (locks, hinges, etc) are CE and UKCA marked
2. Look for gaps – check the gap around the door frame is consistent – it should be 3-4 mm – with the gap under the door able to be up to 8 mm. If there are gaps bigger than these, smoke and fire could travel through, so it's important to report them



FIRE DOOR

SAFETY WEEK 21 - 25 SEPTEMBER 2026

A British Woodworking Federation Campaign

Fire Door Safety Week will explore how aware people are of fire safety measures in the different buildings they visit and if building type influences their awareness

3. Check the seals – look for intumescent seals around the door and frame to check they're intact with no signs of damage. These seals expand when in contact with heat to help prevent fire and smoke travelling through gaps – if these are damaged, the fire door requires maintenance
4. Are the hinges secure – check the door's hinges are firmly fixed and that there are no broken or missing screws. If the hinges are loose, the fire door may not perform as it should in the event of a fire
5. Confirm the door closes correctly – let the door shut to check that the closer shuts the door onto the latch from any position without sticking on the floor or the frame. A fire door can only perform its life-saving role if it's shut, so while this step of the check is the simplest, it's the most important.

When checking the condition of the fire door, if anything appears damaged, missing or not working correctly, report it to the person responsible for the building.

A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO FIRE DOOR SAFETY

Fire doors are used every day, and their condition can change through damage, wear, poor maintenance and in some cases, misuse. Those responsible for buildings must ensure fire doors are correctly specified, regularly inspected and maintained by competent people. But building users can also play an important supporting role by keeping fire doors closed, recognising obvious defects and reporting maintenance concerns.

A fire door can only protect lives and property if it is able to perform as intended. By improving knowledge and understanding and encouraging a proactive approach to reporting, together we can ensure these vital fire safety systems can fulfil their life-saving role.

Helen Hewitt is CEO of the British Woodworking Federation



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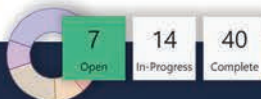
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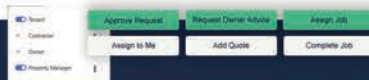
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Pump up the affordability

Trianco's Peter Beighton explains why advances in heat pump technology are making low-carbon heating an increasingly practicable solution for the affordable housing sector.

As we move further into the 21st century, it is concerning that global conflicts continue to expose the vulnerability of our dependence on fossil fuels. Rising energy costs and uncertainty around supply have reinforced the need to accelerate the transition to cleaner, more secure heating solutions for homes across the UK.

Although the National Grid is steadily decarbonising, there is widespread agreement that progress must be faster if the UK is to meet its climate ambitions. The affordable housing sector has an important role to play in that transition, by embracing proven renewable technologies.

Housing associations and local authorities have been acclaimed as early adopters of low-carbon heating systems. Over the years, many have trialled technologies including solar PV, ground and air source heat pumps, combined heat and power, biomass systems and grey water recycling. While these initiatives have provided valuable experience, not every technology has delivered the expected results. For example, some residents living with earlier model exhaust air heat pumps found themselves relying heavily on electric boost functions to maintain comfort.

Fortunately, today's heat pump technology is a very different proposition. Since the introduction of the Renewable Heat Incentive in 2011, the technology has evolved significantly. Heat pumps have become more efficient, more reliable and more cost-effective in real terms. At the same time, installer expertise has grown considerably thanks to initiatives such as the Microgeneration Certification Scheme, the work of organisations including the Heat Pump Association, and manufacturers investing heavily in installer training and commissioning support.

DESIGN & INSTALLATION REMAIN CRITICAL

Despite these advances, achieving the expected performance still depends on getting the fundamentals right. Heat pumps must be correctly sized by engineers, with systems designed to meet both the heating and hot water demands of each property.

When these elements are properly addressed, landlords benefit from more efficient systems, lower maintenance requirements and reduced operating costs, while tenants enjoy reliable heating and hot water throughout the life of the installation.

These benefits become even more significant in rural and off-grid locations, where heat pumps offer an attractive alternative to LPG or oil-fired heating. Servicing a property in a remote location can involve several hours of travel, compared with multiple visits that might be completed within a single day in an urban environment. Reducing unnecessary maintenance visits therefore delivers significant operational and environmental benefits.

WHY 4G CONNECTIVITY MATTERS

For registered social landlords, selecting the right manufacturing partner is just as important as choosing the right technology. Manufacturers that can offer short lead times, comprehensive spare parts availability and strong technical support help ensure both new installations and future repairs can be completed quickly and efficiently.

Increasingly, one of the most valuable advancements supporting heat pump installation for affordable housing is built-in 4G connectivity. Remote connectivity allows manufacturers to commission systems without the need for additional site visits once installation has been completed.

The approach also enables remote diagnostics, software updates and preventative fault identification – helping resolve many issues before they



Housing associations and local authorities have been early adopters of low-carbon heating systems

develop into more serious problems requiring on-site intervention.

The advantages extend beyond maintenance. Many social housing residents may be older, have disabilities, lack access to Wi-Fi or simply feel less confident using digital technology. Because the connection is built directly into the heat pump, manufacturers can remotely adjust heating and hot water settings where appropriate, offering additional support without relying on the resident's own internet connection.

The system can even be programmed to remind residents when their annual service is due by displaying a notification on the controller well in advance. Over time, fewer engineer visits translate into lower maintenance costs and reduced vehicle emissions, providing an additional whole-life carbon benefit.

OPENING UP NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Completed earlier this year for Argyll Community Housing Association by long-standing installation partner Procast, a project features Trianco Activair Indoor Heat Pump R32 indoor heat pumps in six flats as part of a trial installation.

Unlike conventional air source heat pumps, these units draw air through ducting rather than relying on an external condenser unit. This innovative approach allows the system to be installed entirely indoors, making it suitable for multi-storey residential buildings where there is no balcony or other external space available.

As heat pump technology continues to mature, innovations such as these are helping remove many of the practical barriers that have historically limited their adoption. Combined with better installer expertise, smarter remote connectivity and more versatile product design, heat pumps are increasingly proving themselves to be a practical, scalable and future-ready heating solution for the affordable housing sector.

Peter Beighton is managing director at Trianco

Accorto - Smart electric heating built for modern installations

The Accorto electric radiator has been designed with installers, landlords and developers in mind, delivering a combination of straightforward installation, intelligent controls and reliable performance.

Available in a range of outputs, Accorto is suitable for everything from apartments and housing developments to student accommodation and social housing projects. It's slim, contemporary design complements modern interiors while providing responsive, comfortable heating.

What sets Accorto apart are the features that help reduce unnecessary energy use and minimise customer call-backs. Integrated open window detection, adaptive start control and accurate digital temperature management all work together to improve comfort and efficiency. For landlords and property managers, the built-in landlord lock function helps prevent unwanted changes to heating settings, while the occupancy sensor automatically reduces output when rooms are unoccupied.

Installation is quick and straightforward, with no ongoing maintenance requirements, making it an ideal solution for new-build and refurbishment projects alike.

Backed by Electrorad's experienced technical support team and excellent product availability,



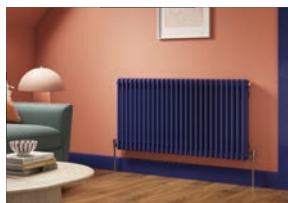
Accorto provides installers and wholesalers with a dependable electric heating solution that delivers value for both trade professionals and end users.

Contact the Electrorad team for more information.

0113 2746799
sales@electrorad.co.uk

New look Column radiators from Stelrad

Stelrad Radiators has introduced an Italian designed new look, improved range of its popular Column radiators – in both its vertical and horizontal column radiator ranges. The new range is available through all existing outlets streamlining the existing range, enhancing the performance from its Column radiator selection,



and strengthening long-term value for purchasers of the range. The most obvious changes are to the design of the radiators that will now feature a new rounded column design. The streamlined model range will feature 54 horizontal radiators and four vertical options.

marketing@stelrad.com www.stelradprofessional.com

Nuaire launches new website

Indoor air quality and ventilation manufacturing specialist Nuaire has unveiled a brand-new website at www.nuaire.co.uk designed to make it easier for customers to access product information, technical resources and expert guidance across its extensive ventilation portfolio. Launched during Nuaire's 60th anniversary year, the new website combines a fresh, modern design with improved functionality, enabling consultants, contractors, developers, housing providers and facilities managers to quickly find the products, information and support they need.



enquiries@nuaire.co.uk www.nuaire.co.uk

Videos take the guesswork out of set-up

Keraflo has released a new series of how-to videos on its YouTube channel. The videos act as practical installation aids, walking viewers step by step through key set-up and configuration tasks for Tanktronic, Keraflo's electronic system for monitoring and controlling cold water storage tanks. "With these videos, we wanted to give installers the same guidance they would get if they came directly to us," says Richard Braid, managing director at Keraflo. "They are clear, straightforward installation aids, designed to help people get Tanktronic set up right first time, helping maintain compliance and improving efficiency."



info@keraflo.co.uk www.youtube.com/@cisterniserkeraflo2990

Housing Management & Maintenance

The Housing Management & Maintenance (HMM) website is an online provider of past and present news items dedicated to keep professionals within this sector updated with a wide range of topics including legislation, projects, products and more. housingmmonline.co.uk is a one-stop source for all the latest press releases providing any visitor with access to information about products and services that they may require. From the website, you can find links to digital issues that have live links to advertisers' sites, as well as email alerts to keep you as informed as possible.



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Take the lead on LEAD



Awareness of the potential health problems caused by lead in the water supply, particularly in infants and children, is growing. In redevelopment of properties the quality of the water supply pipe should be your first priority.

Although the use of lead in plumbing has been banned in the UK for more than 50 years, there are still many properties where a risk of lead contamination of water is a risk. Houses built before 1970 would have been constructed with lead water supply pipes. In some areas of the UK a third of these older properties are still receiving their water through these original lead pipes.

In properties with lead supply pipes, the only totally secure method to reduce lead levels in the water supply is to replace the original supply with

modern plastic pipe. Particularly with older or listed properties, traditional lead replacement methods can cause huge disruption within the property and can put the integrity of a building at risk. Often deterring the replacement, but potentially putting occupants at risk.

INSUDUCT® IS AN INNOVATIVE SOLUTION. MINIMISING DISTURBANCE, TIME AND COST.

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

As the INSUduct® requires one simple core drilled hole through the wall, at an appropriate point to connect with the internal plumbing, this enables most lead replacement operations to be completed within a couple of hours. This innovative method of working allows water supply replacements to be completed without undue disruption to occupants and minimises the impact on the building infrastructure.

There is little impact on the exterior appearance of the property, as the INSUduct® system provides a neat, clean finish to the job whilst providing long lasting and effective thermal protection to water pipes and fittings outside the thermal envelope of a building.



INSUDUCT® IS A HIGH-QUALITY PRODUCT THAT EXCEEDS REGULATED STANDARDS.

INSUduct® exceeds British Standard 5422 and all relevant Water Regulations for frost protection. It is recognised as approved methods of installing new water supply pipes across the UK as part of lead supply pipe replacement programmes.

Lead Water Supply replacement is a priority for water companies across the UK. In some parts of the UK water companies offer significant discounts and grant aid may be available from local authorities.

01379 741993
groundbreaker.co.uk/INSUduct



An easy route to EPC improvements

Kevin Farrow at Recoup discusses how combining modulating electric showers with wastewater heat recovery can provide a simple, low-disruption route to improved EPC performance.



It is now possible to improve a property's EPC rating by installing a modulating Instantaneous Electric Shower (mIES) with a Waste Water Heat Recovery System (WWHRS). When retrofitted to a 'single bathroom' property, this combination can improve an EPC score by up to three points; potentially providing an existing property with what it needs to achieve the EPC C goal with a simply applied showering solution. Greater improvements are achievable when using a higher-efficiency vertical WWHRS unit installed with a pump or on the floor below the shower.

Previously, the combination of electric showering and WWHRS was not recognised within SAP or RdSAP, the methodologies used by energy assessors to calculate EPC ratings. However, the introduction of modulating instantaneous electric showers in 2024 enabled the safe and effective use of WWHRS technology with electric showers.

Mira Showers and Recoup working with the Building Research Establishment (BRE), together with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), have since assessed the modelling and performance of mIES used in conjunction with both horizontal and vertical WWHRS units for inclusion within the SAP Appendix Q database. As a result, the improvements from these technologies can now be recognised and accurately reflected in EPC calculations for properties.

THE BENEFITS FOR EXISTING SOCIAL HOUSING

For properties that already have an electric shower, upgrading to a modulating instantaneous electric shower is a straightforward like-for-like replacement. Where a mixer shower is installed, changing to an electric shower has the added benefit of removing hot water demand for showering from the property's primary water heating system, creating an electric powered, independent showering solution.

Integrating a mIES with a WWHRS is also simple. The cold water supply to the electric shower is diverted through the WWHRS unit before entering the shower. When showering, heat energy is recovered from the shower wastewater that would otherwise go down the drain. Up to 90% of heat energy generated for showering is usually lost. The WWHRS uses the recovered heat energy to preheat cold water that is sent to the shower reducing the energy needed to reach the desired showering temperature. The mIES automatically reduces the electrical power it uses, improving efficiency and saving up to 40% of the energy per shower use.

A key advantage is the ease of installation. WWHRS systems can be retrofitted beneath a bath or integrated within a shower tray, making them suitable for a wide range of existing housing stock. Installation can often be completed as part of planned bathroom refurbishment programmes, avoiding

The combination of modulating instantaneous electric showers and WWHRS offers measurable energy and water savings, minimal disruption during installation, and improved EPC performance

major building works and reducing inconvenience for residents.

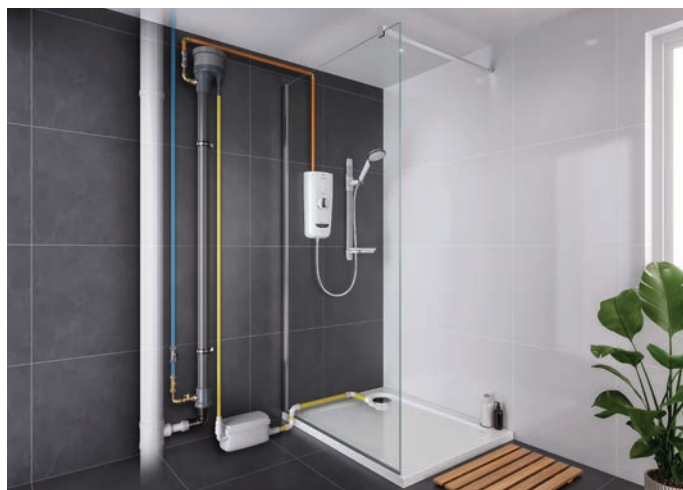
This makes the combination of WWHRS and mIES particularly attractive for social housing retrofit programmes. Saving energy, saving money, reducing emissions and unlike many low-carbon technologies, it can be installed with minimal disruption and without major alterations to the home's heating system or layout.

LOW DISRUPTION, HAPPY TENANTS, & PROPERTY DECARBONISATION

The low disruption installation is a significant benefit for both landlords and tenants. Installing under an existing bath and upgrading an existing electric shower can be completed in less than a day. Residents can remain in their homes during installation. Once fitted, the technology operates automatically in the background. There is no requirement for behavioural change to achieve the energy savings.

Long-term operation is equally straightforward. WWHRS systems require no user interaction, no apps and no complex controls, and do not change the showering experience. In fact, showering temperatures are stabilised throughout the year. They require no planned maintenance, helping housing providers minimise ongoing management and servicing costs.

The lower energy consumption translates into lower household bills, an important benefit for tenants constantly impacted by rising energy costs. Where housing providers are responsible for utility costs, the reduced energy



demand will deliver significant financial savings when introduced across an entire scheme.

Additional savings are also achieved through improved water efficiency. Replacing a traditional mains-pressure mixer shower with a modulating instantaneous electric shower can reduce shower water consumption by over 50%, significantly lowering water charges. This provides a dual benefit, reducing demand for both energy and water while supporting wider sustainability and decarbonisation objectives.

For housing providers seeking practical, scalable and resident-friendly decarbonising retrofit solutions. The combination of modulating instantaneous electric showers and WWHRS offers measurable energy and water savings, minimal disruption during installation, and improved EPC performance, all without adding any complexity for tenants or housing managers.

Kevin Farrow is head of marketing & design at Recoup Energy Solutions

Vectaire keeps wet rooms free of condensation, odours and mould

It's that time of year again – trying to keep condensation at bay. Vectaire's products ensure optimal air quality, low noise levels, and reduced running costs. They are designed to meet the needs of modern homes while prioritizing energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.

New to Vectaire's ventilation range is the MFCF100 Constant Flow fan. This dMEV provides low level, continuous ventilation to control condensation. Its integral sensor recognises changes in system pressure and ensures the chosen airflow is maintained. It has a choice of six trickle airflows (from 5 to 20 l/sec) to cater for all installation situations, and a boost speed 27.8 l/sec which will either kick in automatically or manually by the user.

Models are available with timer and/or humidistat. They are all IPX4 rated, with SELV models are available when required. These fans are easy to fit into wall, ceiling or window (with an optional window kit) and easy to maintain. They provide quiet, energy saving ventilation which will help keep homes free of condensation, odours and mould.

sales@vectaire.co.uk www.vectaire.co.uk



Kinemagic Serenity Plus returns

The Kinemagic Serenity Plus from Kinedo has been re-introduced and features all the benefits of its counterpart, with an innovative improvement for people with a weak hand grip. A magnetic handset holder 'sticks' to any part of the handle whilst an integrated horizontal safety bar provides support along the middle section of the cubicle to provide extra security and peace of mind for those who need to hold on whilst in the shower. A further grab bar is placed at the entry of the cubicle whilst the low-level shower tray has optional, adjustable feet to ensure a flat installation even if the floor is uneven.



info@kinedo.co.uk kinedo.co.uk

New taps and showers from Navigator

Leading heating and plumbing sector distributor Navigator MSL has launched its latest dedicated taps and showers brochure offering a comprehensive range of taps for bathrooms and kitchens, along with a selection of showers and shower hoses. Designed for reliability, ease of installation and long-lasting performance, the Navigator taps and showers collection brings together a versatile range of modern and traditional styles for every bathroom and kitchen. The collection includes a comprehensive selection of taps, showers, and accessories designed to meet the practical demands of everyday installations.



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Preserving heritage, strengthening fire door safety

As part of Mulalley's extensive programme across the historic Bourne Estate, Grady Doors was appointed to manufacture 500 replacement flat entrance doorsets that deliver modern fire door performance while respecting the estate's Grade II listed architecture. Highly visible from open balcony walkways, the doors required heritage accurate design and careful negotiation between conservation expectations and modern fire door performance standards.

DOOR DESIGN: PRESERVING ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Replacing fire doorsets on a listed property requires careful negotiation between mandatory performance standards and the need for sympathetic, heritage appropriate design. Success depends on close collaboration between all stakeholders, including the residents, to ensure that sustainability, social value, safety, compliance and conservation requirements are met in equal measure.

While some doors on the estate had been replaced over the years, several original examples remained. These became the benchmark for a design acceptable to the Conservation Officer.

The approved door design features a single leaf timber sash door with a rectangular glazed aperture fitted with vertical reeded glass – a period appropriate texture that maintains privacy while allowing natural light into each dwelling. Matching reeded glazing was also required for fanlights and sidelights. The lower door section incorporates eight vertical grooves, echoing traditional joinery, while all ironmongery including letterplate, lever handles, knocker, viewer and numerals, is finished in black to reflect the estate's understated utilitarian aesthetic.



BALANCING PERIOD ACCURACY WITH MODERN PERFORMANCE

Replicating the original appearance was only half the challenge. The new doorsets needed to achieve 30 minute fire resistance, provide smoke control at ambient temperature, and deliver enhanced security and thermal performance.

One of the most significant technical hurdles was the reeded fire rated glazing. Although Grady Doors operates an in-house fire glass processing line, this specific glazing type had not previously been tested within the required door configuration. To meet the brief, Grady Doors devised and undertook a primary fire test programme for the complete doorset, achieving European framework classification to BS EN 13501-2.

Security was also a priority. The doorsets incorporate tested and certificated features, including multipoint locking and Secured by Design accreditation, ensuring residents benefit from enhanced protection without compromising heritage detail.

COLLABORATION AT THE HEART OF DELIVERY

With 500 homes requiring new doorsets, resident engagement was central to the programme. Mulalley led the process, supported by Grady Doors through full size prototype doors and resident information packs.

Initial concerns centred on security and ease of operation, with some residents assuming new fire doors would be heavy or difficult to use. The prototypes demonstrated the camaction closer and adjustable opening forces, reassuring residents

that the doors would operate smoothly with minimal effort.

Residents also contributed directly to the colour palette and ironmongery preferences. The Conservation Officer provided the final heritage led steer, approving the black external finish and endorsing resident selected door colours of red, green, blue and black.

SUPPORTING DOOR INSTALLATION AND BEYOND

Grady Doors delivered Golden Thread doorset installer training to the contracting team to support the programme, helping to ensure every doorset was fitted to the tested specification. But their involvement with the Bourne Estate extends well beyond manufacture and installation.

Each doorset includes an embedded data chip, giving building owners, fire door inspectors and maintenance teams instant access to specification details and maintenance history. As manufacturers, Grady Doors continue to support these professionals to ensure every door remains compliant, traceable and safe throughout its service life.

020 3026 1135 info@gradydoors.com
www.gradydoors.com



The hidden dangers of Radon

Luke Nordcross-Evans at Aico explores the hidden risks of radon and how continuous monitoring can support housing providers with proactive hazard management and evolving regulatory responsibilities requirements.

Radon is estimated to cause around 1,100 deaths in the UK each year. With awareness increasing and regulation placing greater emphasis on housing hazards, social landlords need a clear strategy for identifying and managing radon risk. The naturally occurring radioactive gas is particularly prevalent in areas with granite or shale. Levels vary considerably across the UK, and housing providers can use the UKHSA radon map to understand the potential risk in a particular area before arranging more detailed testing.

Radon can accumulate inside homes, particularly during winter when heating creates pressure differences that draw air from the ground into a building while windows and doors remain closed. Residents will not notice elevated levels, but prolonged exposure can increase the risk of lung cancer. Cancer Research UK estimates that around 5% of lung cancer cases in the UK are linked to radon, with the risk significantly higher for people who smoke.

The average radon level in UK homes is around 20 becquerels per cubic metre. UKHSA sets an Action Level of 200 Bq/m³, above which it recommends action to reduce radon, and a Target Level of 100 Bq/m³ for remediation and preventative work. Where readings sit between these levels, remedial action should still be considered.

Because radon is invisible and odourless, testing is essential. One common method is a single-use radon detector. These are usually installed in a property for around three months before being returned to an approved laboratory for analysis, providing an average reading over the test period.

An alternative is continuous radon monitoring. These devices remain in the property and record readings over time, giving housing providers greater visibility of changes in radon levels, including seasonal variation. Continuous



monitoring can also reduce the need for repeated contractor visits and multiple single-use detectors.

However, the quality of the equipment is important. Consumer-grade devices may not always offer the accuracy, reliability or level of data required for professional housing applications, so landlords need to consider whether a sensor is suitable for the decisions being made from its readings.

Where elevated radon levels are identified, mitigation is required. A common solution is a radon sump, which uses a fan to extract radon from beneath the building before it can enter the property. Other ventilation measures may also be appropriate depending on the construction and circumstances of the home.

LOOKING TOWARDS AWAAB'S LAW

Radon sits within the Radiation hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. It is therefore expected to fall within Phase 3 of Awaab's Law in England, currently due to come into force in 2027.

Awaab's Law introduces strict requirements for social landlords to investigate and address hazards within defined timescales. Phase 1 already covers damp and mould alongside emergency hazards, increasing pressure on landlords to identify risks earlier and respond efficiently.

For some housing providers, environmental monitoring is becoming part of this more proactive approach. Technologies can help landlords use property data to identify homes that may need further investigation and prioritise maintenance before issues escalate.

Radon presents a different challenge because there may be no visible signs that a property has a problem. With publicly available risk mapping and consumer air-quality sensors becoming more common, landlords will increasingly need to demonstrate that they have a reliable process for identifying higher-risk homes and responding appropriately. There is also the question of what happens after remediation. Awaab's Law requires landlords to take steps to prevent hazards recurring. For radon, this means not only installing mitigation measures, but also checking that they are working effectively.

CONTINUOUS MONITORING

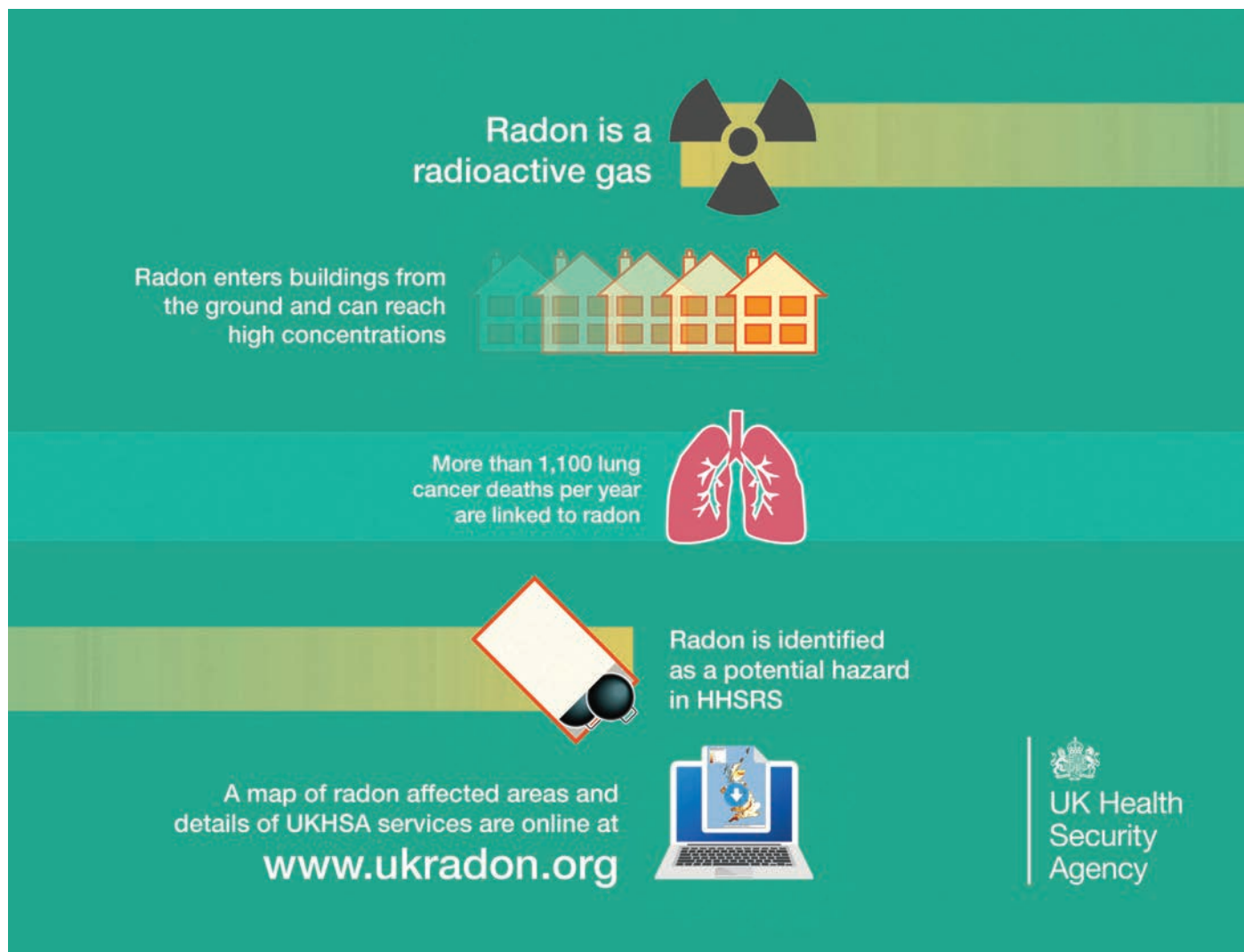
Continuous monitoring complements traditional radon testing by showing how levels change over time, rather than providing only a fixed-period average. This can help landlords identify unusual patterns, understand seasonal changes and decide where further investigation may be needed.

It can also provide useful evidence following remediation. If a radon sump or ventilation measure has been installed, ongoing readings can show whether concentrations are falling and whether the intervention continues to perform as intended. Formal retesting may still be required, but continuous data can give housing teams additional insight between inspections. Across a larger housing portfolio, this visibility may help landlords prioritise properties, target resources more effectively and move from reactive testing towards a more informed approach to hazard management.

Luke Nordcross-Evans is product development executive at Aico



Protecting tenants and employees from radon exposure



Radon is a radioactive gas

Radon enters buildings from the ground and can reach high concentrations

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

Radon is identified as a potential hazard in HHSRS

A map of radon affected areas and details of UKHSA services are online at www.ukradon.org

UK Health Security Agency

Each year, more than 1,100 lung cancer deaths in the UK are linked to radon. A colourless, odourless, radioactive gas, radon is formed by the radioactive decay of small amounts of uranium that occur naturally in all rocks and soils. Radon produces radioactive particles in the air we breathe, which become trapped in our airways and emit radiation that damages our lungs. This damage increases our risk of lung cancer, especially when linked with smoking. Radon is everywhere, both outside and indoors, in all parts of the UK. In most areas, the indoor radon levels are low and the risk to health is small. But in 'Affected Areas' it is higher and, if you are a social landlord or employer, it is your responsibility to protect your tenants or employees from radon exposure and potential harm.

Landlords have a duty of care to provide a safe home to their tenants under the Housing Act 2004. This includes protecting against radon, which is identified as a potential hazard in the government's Housing Health and Safety Rating System. Employers have a duty to protect their employees from radon, which should be considered in the risk assessment required by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 in buildings where people are at work. There is a specific requirement for radon in the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017.

UKHSA advises government and the public on radon-related issues and has over four decades of experience and expertise in delivering radon programmes for landlords and workplaces. Through our website www.ukradon.org, we provide

information about radon, the risk of harm from radon, provide an interactive map where you can check if your housing stock and workplaces are in a radon Affected Area, and what to do when action needs to be taken. Our experience includes radon research, detector calibration, policy setting and international standards, and running effective radon measurement programmes for our customers.

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

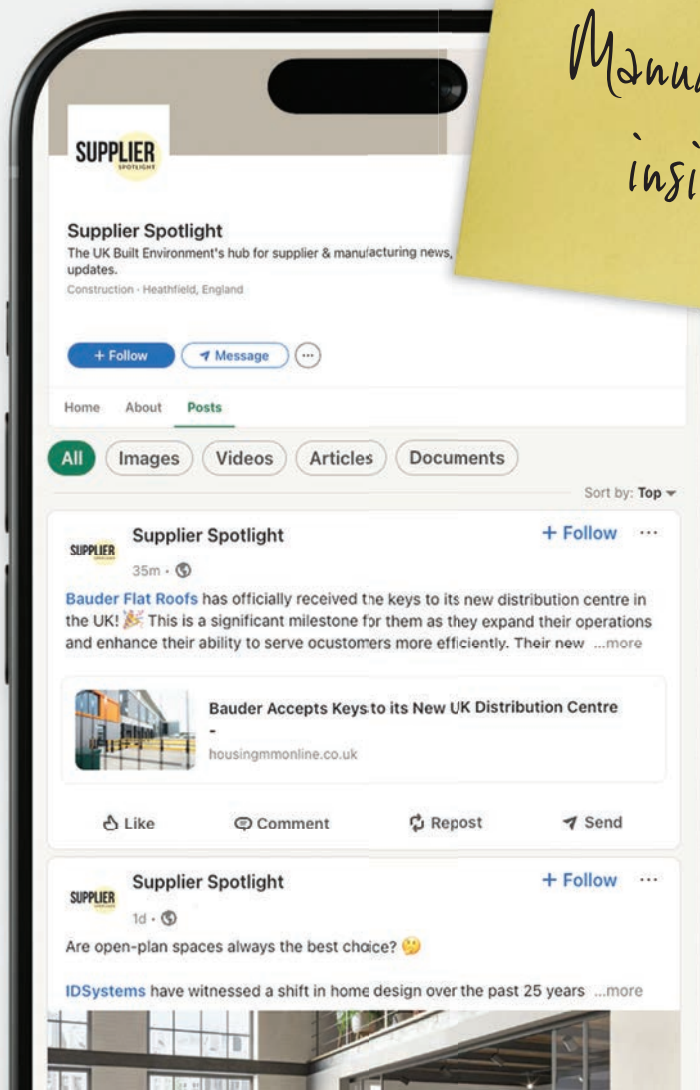
You can get in touch to discuss your requirements. Please send an email or call to speak to the team.

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