

# HOUSING™ TECHNOLOGY



**DATA MATTERS  
2025**

**16 SEPTEMBER 2025  
IET LONDON: SAVOY PLACE**

**HOUSING™  
TECHNOLOGY  
2025** CONFERENCE AND  
EXECUTIVE FORUM

**HOUSING TECHNOLOGY  
IN PICTURES**

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**WINNERS OF THE  
HOUSING TECHNOLOGY  
2025 AWARDS**

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## Tenant satisfaction measures – How can technology help?

**The complexity of TSMs**

**Genuine progress or just box-ticking?**

**Listening to tenants' voices**

**Turning intelligence into action**

**Do you need dedicated TSM software?**

### **HOUSING & ASSET MANAGEMENT**

Enterprise data platforms, systems integration, BPA, asset management, BI & analytics

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Damp & mould, digital inclusion, community wi-fi, telephony switchover & the internet of things

### **CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT**

TSM surveys, user-centred design, dynamic scheduling, environmental monitoring & robotics

### **DATA STANDARDS**

Download our Data Standards in Housing 2025 report

### Data definitely matters...

With the annual Housing Technology conference having just taken place and as we launch our fourth 'Data Matters' event in London (see **pages 04 & 15**), the importance of data to all housing providers' day-to-day operations and their longer-term strategic ambitions cannot be overstated.

The existential importance of data to housing providers was pithily summarised by Dr Guy Marshall, a social housing-specific AI and data expert, during his presentation at Housing Technology 2025. He said, "Technology companies now lead in almost every sector. These are not traditional businesses using technology as an add-on; they are built around technology and data, enabling them to understand and serve customers more effectively at scale.

"Housing providers have the same opportunity. By recognising that they are, at their core, technology and data businesses will allow housing providers to deliver better services and outcomes for customers."

We've previously said that data should rank alongside housing providers' properties, tenants, staff and finance as a core pillar of their operations. We now suggest that data and its proper management is the very foundation of their businesses.

With that in mind, do please take a look at our **Data Matters 2025** event (16 September, central London) to support your data management strategy; please visit [housing-technology.com](https://housing-technology.com).

### Are your tenants satisfied?

Our main feature article (see **page 49**) for this edition of Housing Technology looks at how technology can help (and hinder) housing providers when it comes to the government's Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

TSMs are undoubtedly an added regulatory burden for housing providers but, as one of the article's contributors said, "It really shouldn't be an annual activity to find out how customers are feeling."

Our article shows how the right technologies and business processes can make the collection of the underlying TSM data simpler and less resource-intensive as well as then making it easier for housing providers to report and act on their tenants' views. Furthermore, the article suggests that, in most instances, housing providers don't (for once) need to go and buy yet more software and systems – read more on **page 49**.

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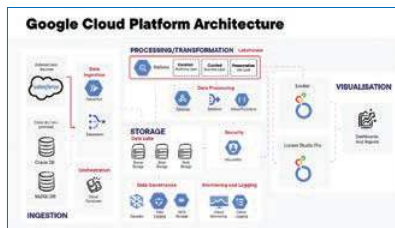


# Forthcoming events

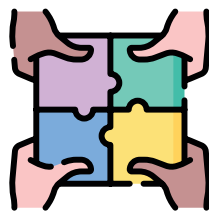


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**TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE** Please see [housing-technology.com/showcase](https://housing-technology.com/showcase) for more information





# DATA MATTERS 2025

**16 SEPTEMBER 2025**

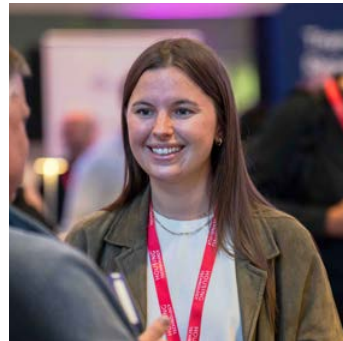
**IET LONDON: SAVOY PLACE**

**DATA STANDARDS | ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE | ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE**

Data matters. Good data and sound data management strategies must be the foundation of all housing providers' operations, spanning technology, properties, tenants, staff and finance.

Back for its fourth consecutive year, and in a **NEW London location**, Data Matters 2025 will feature:

- A brilliant selection of 100% **data- and AI-focused presentations** from leading housing providers
- Insights on **real-world data experiences**, key recommendations, and pitfalls to avoid
- Exclusive updates on ongoing results and **best practices in the industry**
- A cutting-edge **data- and AI-led technology showcase** featuring top IT suppliers
- Unrivalled opportunities for **informal networking with industry peers**



**Tickets are limited so don't miss out!**

For partnership enquiries please contact [commercial@housing-technology.com](mailto:commercial@housing-technology.com)

**SAVE THE DATE: 16 September 2025**



# Putting tenants first

Tazmin Ahlfors, Business Development Manager, FireAngel

For social landlords, ensuring tenant safety has always been a core responsibility but the way it is measured and enforced is changing. With the introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and stricter regulations under the Social Housing Act 2023, housing providers must do more than meet minimum compliance standards; they must demonstrate real improvements in their tenants' living conditions.



## From reactive to proactive housing management

Historically, safety has been assessed through routine property inspections, residents' complaints and periodic compliance checks. However, these traditional approaches often miss hidden risks, such as the early signs of damp and mould, fluctuating indoor temperatures that contribute to fuel poverty or poor air quality affecting tenants' health. Addressing these challenges reactively can be expensive and inefficient, leading to missed opportunities for early interventions.

Technology is offering a new way forward. Environmental monitoring, powered by connected sensors and smart data analytics, is changing the way housing providers

manage their properties. These systems provide real-time insights into conditions inside homes, allowing housing providers to identify risks before they escalate into serious problems. By continuously tracking temperature, humidity and air quality, housing teams can proactively address problems such as damp and mould before tenants even need to raise their concerns.

## The growing role of environmental monitoring

The importance of this shift cannot be overstated. Awaab's Law, introduced following the tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak due to prolonged exposure to mould in his home, has reinforced the urgency of tackling poor housing conditions. Under the new legislation, housing providers must act on damp and mould complaints within strict timeframes.

But waiting for tenants' reports isn't enough; once a problem is visible, the damage may already be done. Environmental sensors provide a solution, continuously monitoring conditions and flagging problems the moment they arise, helping housing providers comply with new legal requirements while improving tenants' safety.

## Tackling damp & mould before the crisis point

For a housing officer managing 100s or even 1000s of properties, knowing where to focus their attention can be overwhelming. Without real-time data, resources are often deployed inefficiently, with teams perhaps responding to the loudest complaints rather than the most urgent problems.



Environmental monitoring creates a clearer picture, allowing housing providers to prioritise their interventions based on actual need rather than assumptions. If a sensor persistently detects high humidity in a property, the housing team can investigate ventilation or insulation problems before mould develops rather than relying on annual inspections or resident reports.

Beyond damp and mould, these sensors also help address another major concern in social housing: fuel poverty. With millions of UK households struggling to afford heating, many tenants reduce their energy usage to dangerous levels, leading to cold, damp homes that negatively impact health.

Smart sensors can alert housing providers when indoor temperatures drop to unsafe levels, enabling them to intervene, whether through improved insulation, advice on heating usage or directing tenants to financial support. By taking a proactive approach, housing providers can ensure their most vulnerable tenants remain safe and warm.

**Data-driven compliance – Meeting regulatory expectations efficiently**

Crucially, environmental monitoring solutions integrate with existing housing management systems, streamlining compliance tracking and reducing administrative burdens. Instead of relying on manual data collection, housing providers can access real-time dashboards that show which properties are at risk, when interventions are needed and whether previous maintenance efforts have been effective. This not only improves efficiency but also ensures housing providers have the evidence needed to meet their TSM reporting obligations.

Technology also plays a role in fostering better communications and trust between housing providers and their tenants. Many residents, especially those from vulnerable groups, are reluctant to report problems due to concerns about being ignored or facing disruption. When housing providers use data-driven monitoring to identify risks early, it shifts the dynamic because housing teams can proactively engage with their tenants, demonstrating that their well-being is a priority. Some smart systems

even offer tenant-facing apps, allowing residents to check their home's environmental data and receive tailored advice, giving them a greater sense of control.

**The future of housing management – Smarter, safer & more sustainable**

The benefits of environmental monitoring extend beyond individual homes. When deployed at scale, this data can reveal patterns across entire portfolios, helping housing providers make strategic decisions about long-term maintenance and investment.

For example, if multiple properties in a block have similar humidity problems, it may indicate a broader problem with insulation or ventilation that needs to be addressed at a structural level. This kind of insight enables housing providers to move away from reactive, case-by-case fixes and towards more sustainable, portfolio-wide improvements.

Several housing providers are already adopting these technologies with impressive results. FireAngel's Home Environment Gateway, for example, integrates environmental sensors with fire and CO safety networks, providing housing providers with a comprehensive view of residents' safety. Through Zigbee-enabled connectivity, multiple sensors can be installed within a home, offering granular insights into indoor conditions without requiring manual checks. Housing teams using this technology have reported faster response times to risks, improved tenant satisfaction and reduced long-term maintenance costs.

As the social housing sector continues to evolve, the need for smarter, more proactive safety solutions will grow. Environmental monitoring represents a fundamental shift in the way housing providers manage compliance, moving beyond box-ticking exercises to truly tenant-centred approaches. With increasing regulatory scrutiny and rising tenant expectations, the most forward-thinking housing providers are already integrating these technologies to enhance safety, efficiency and trust.

The challenge for housing providers is no longer whether they should adopt these solutions but how quickly they can do so. At a time when data is transforming every aspect of housing management, real-time environmental monitoring isn't just a tool for compliance, it's a lifeline for residents and a critical step towards healthier, safer homes.

For more information on FireAngel's solutions for housing providers, please contact our team of specialists at [fireangel.co.uk/trade/contact-us-connected](https://fireangel.co.uk/trade/contact-us-connected).

*Tazmin Ahlfors is the business development manager at FireAngel.*

**FireAngel.**





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# Unlocking the benefits of systems integration & automation

Alan Swift, Managing Director, Manifest Software Solutions

*Social landlords have a massive opportunity to integrate with the new and amazing housing technologies now available to them, saving the huge expense and time required to change housing management systems.*



With emerging technologies such as AI, housing providers are gaining the confidence to reach out and maximise the benefits of systems integration and automation, reducing costs while delivering better services.

Here at Manifest Software Solutions, we are continuing to find new applications for AI from the global technology landscape and we are developing our understanding of how these can most effectively support the UK housing sector.

We are already integrating AI into our powerful integration platform, Universal Adapter, so that AI is available to use in all of our integration solutions. This enables us to scan emails in real-time, translate to and from a customer's native language, identify satisfaction scores from tenants' comments and search for important references to problems such as damp and mould. This has opened up a new world of what we can do, but we are just scratching the surface.

We approach successful integrations like any other business project, by defining the problem, identifying solutions, managing risk and implementing a thoroughly tested solution. Our experienced team of housing integration experts adds flexibility and huge value with the lowest possible costs compared with HMS-supplied integration or in-house offerings.

## Effective data management

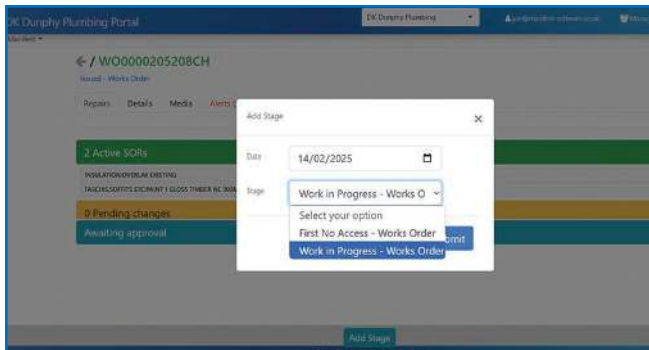
Managing data effectively is a massive challenge for housing providers. Data is often held across multiple platforms, resulting in inefficient data flows impeding the way housing providers work, ultimately impacting customers.

Data can be seamlessly integrated using our Universal Adapter tool which automatically replicates it across all systems. This is compatible with any data source, including forms, flat files, web services and bespoke spreadsheets. At Manifest, we don't see any limitations and offer to integrate with every housing management system, any database, system or IoT device.

An effective, fully-supported integration layer enables the seamless exchange of data with any other system, simply and easily. Effective systems integration and business process automation are key to delivering 24/7 services, freeing up housing teams to focus on frontline, core business areas.

The integration of IT systems is truly the cornerstone of all housing business activities. Manifest is leading the way in integrating, unifying and simplifying multiple disparate IT systems, providing smarter, more sustainable housing solutions which enhance customer experience, connecting residents more effectively to the range of services offered by their landlords.

Date	Ref	Address	Type	Status	Priority	Date	Description
16/11/2024	WO0000205882M	Test Street 32	Plumbing	Issued - Works Order	Urgent	21/10/2024	MR3 - Urgent No response that hot push stopper on hot bathroom
16/11/2024	WO0000205883M	Test Street 32	Building repairs	Issued - Works Order	Routine	16/10/2024	MR2 Please install hot fire cover & valve box in each block.
16/11/2024	WO0000205884M	Test Street 32	Building repairs	Issued - Works Order	Routine	16/10/2024	MR2 MR3 MR4 MR5 MR6 MR7 MR8 MR9 MR10 MR11 MR12 MR13 MR14 MR15 MR16 MR17 MR18 MR19 MR20 MR21 MR22 MR23 MR24 MR25 MR26 MR27 MR28 MR29 MR30 MR31 MR32 MR33 MR34 MR35 MR36 MR37 MR38 MR39 MR40 MR41 MR42 MR43 MR44 MR45 MR46 MR47 MR48 MR49 MR50 MR51 MR52 MR53 MR54 MR55 MR56 MR57 MR58 MR59 MR60 MR61 MR62 MR63 MR64 MR65 MR66 MR67 MR68 MR69 MR70 MR71 MR72 MR73 MR74 MR75 MR76 MR77 MR78 MR79 MR80 MR81 MR82 MR83 MR84 MR85 MR86 MR87 MR88 MR89 MR90 MR91 MR92 MR93 MR94 MR95 MR96 MR97 MR98 MR99 MR100
16/11/2024	WO0000205885M	Test Street 31	Water/gas/plumbing	Issued - Works Order	Routine	16/10/2024	MR2 - please install hot water stopper on other side of front door - see
16/11/2024	WO0000205886M	Test Street 30	Water/gas/plumbing	Issued - Works Order	Routine	16/10/2024	MR2 - please install hot water stopper on other side of front door - see
16/11/2024	WO0000205887M	Test Street 29	Water/gas/plumbing	Issued - Works Order	Routine	16/10/2024	MR2 - please install hot water stopper on other side of front door - see
16/11/2024	WO0000205888M	Test Street 28	Water/gas/plumbing	Issued - Works Order	Routine	16/10/2024	MR2 - please install hot water stopper on other side of front door - see
16/11/2024	WO0000205889M	Test Street 27	Water/gas/plumbing	Issued - Works Order	Routine	16/10/2024	MR2 - please install hot water stopper on other side of front door - see
16/11/2024	WO0000205890M	Test Street 26	Water/gas/plumbing	Issued - Works Order	Routine	16/10/2024	MR2 - please install hot water stopper on other side of front door - see
16/11/2024	WO0000205891M	Test Street 25	Water/gas/plumbing	Issued - Works Order	Routine	16/10/2024	MR2 - please install hot water stopper on other side of front door - see
16/11/2024	WO0000205892M	Test Street 24	Water/gas/plumbing	Issued - Works Order	Routine	16/10/2024	MR2 - please install hot water stopper on other side of front door - see
16/11/2024	WO0000205893M	Test Street 23	Water/gas/plumbing	Issued - Works Order	Urgent	19/09/2024	MR2 - check gate of the building next door - this is a fire exit route from



Manifest has grown sustainably and now provides integration to more than 100 social landlords and housing businesses across the UK. All of our team know and speak the language of housing; this vast experience enables us to share the cost of integration and speed up delivery, never having to start a project from scratch. It's this vast experience combined with our wealth of standard connectors (integrating with all the main systems used in housing) that make Manifest the most cost-effective integration solution available.

### Mitigating risk

Over the past year, working alongside Home Group, Manifest has developed its Contractor Interface Project, replacing all BizTalk servers for Home Group's 11 tier-one contractor systems, providing appointment booking for repairs and maintenance using our Universal Adapter, and offering a fully supported solution.

Working in partnership with Home Group, this integration has achieved more for less cost; integration has simplified and unified the scheduling of appointment slots across Home Group's operations, enhancing the service for residents and improving gas and electrical compliance.

Manifest's integration expertise used our Universal Adapter, which will integrate with any housing management system and any contractor system, enabling job updates to be received in real-time. The reassurance offered by our no-quibble support guarantee provides additional peace of mind that someone is always on hand to help.

### Aligning technology and organisational goals

Manifest supports social landlords, helping them to master project delivery by aligning technology with organisational goals, managing risk effectively, boosting security, agility and scalability while enhancing tenant

services for customers. Manifest provides a team of experienced housing IT professionals that you can call on whenever you need them.

Early last year, Clanmil Housing in Northern Ireland wanted to engage responsive repairs contractors to cover its seven geographical areas. It decided to commission a bespoke contractor portal, enabling access from multiple contractors and future-proofing Clanmil's digital services.

The portal was developed to enhance mobile working capabilities, building on our proven integration of Clanmil's Civica Cx system with Totalmobile's field service management solution used by Clanmil's primary contractor CTS. The contractor portal enabled contractors to self-update the progress of repairs and is now providing residents and staff with information in real-time via mobile phones and tablets.

Manifest supported Clanmil's IT project team, comprising infrastructure, applications support and project management staff, to develop an agile and flexible contractor portal, making significant savings in development time and cost compared to more complex solutions. The new contractor portal, which is securely hosted by Manifest in the cloud, ensured a smoother digital journey, with wider capabilities to track job variations via the portal, including automation of approvals of jobs within thresholds.

The first iteration of this bespoke contractor portal was developed from scratch to meet Clanmil's exact requirements and delivered in record time. Clanmil is achieving wider visibility across a unified portal for contractors, de-risking the business and providing a platform from which Clanmil's customer portal 'Connect' can now be developed, supplying useful repairs information to registered customers.

**I don't know of any other housing provider that has built a contractor portal like this and at such speed. A larger, more complex solution would have priced us out of the market but Manifest found a way, with a quick solution requiring less effort from our IT team. More accurate data is now available to us and we can lift our heads up from spreadsheets and have valuable conversations with customers, suppliers and contractors about repairs.**

**Lynsey Grant, Programme & Projects Manager, Clanmil Housing**

We were able to successfully deliver this project within the tight timescales by building the portal on top of our existing integration framework and because all of our technical implementation staff have extensive housing-sector experience.

**The best systems integration solutions**

Our roots are firmly in social housing, with both owners having worked in-house for housing providers and councils before developing systems integration technology designed to address the problems they encountered.

Coming from social housing makes Manifest different; we understand the pain points which housing providers are going through and are flexible to support the best way to resolve any problems. Our expert team has gained a unique perspective and ultimately is driven to do what is right for our customers. We have a huge respect for social housing, providing housing associations and local authorities with a partner who is on their side.

We are driven to offer the best systems integration solutions, recognising that housing providers are striving to achieve more for less. Transparent pricing on G-Cloud enables housing customers to tap into our huge amount of experience of delivering projects within a strict contract framework, guaranteeing customer satisfaction.

Once projects are completed, customers only pay for support within a simple annual plan. We are so assured of our experience that we offer to support all integrations, regardless of the size of the housing provider, for less than the cost of one member of staff.

Are you ready to take the next step to maximise the benefits of systems integration and automation?

**This was a real team effort, and Manifest was very proactive, always involved and seeking resolutions. We agreed a scope and Manifest adapted as each contractor went live with the new system. Integrating with Manifest has had a really positive impact. We have standardised processes, reducing the risks to our housing business.**

**Rob Walker, Integration Developer, Home Group**

We find one of the best arrangements is for internal IT teams, who understand their organisation's needs, to partner with us to gain the most from Manifest's experience. This enables housing providers' IT teams to do amazing things, quickly and cheaply, while still maintaining complete control of their IT strategies.

Manifest always has the best interests of our customers at heart. We believe that solutions don't need to be expensive and that anything is possible in terms of integration and automation.

*Alan Swift is the managing director of Manifest Software Solutions.*

## Flagship's three-year deal for Asprey's AspireBI

Following its successful 'go live' with Asprey Assets in December 2024, Flagship Group has now added Asprey AspireBI for its strategic asset management and option appraisals.

Jessica Squires, project manager for property strategy, Flagship Group, said, "Integrating AspireBI into our operations will let us make data-driven decisions so that our assets are managed strategically to support our goal of creating long-term, sustainable communities."



# { Better, faster, always-on...

User-focused housing  
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Cx is the only housing management solution created to meet the challenges of the modern social housing provider.

- Supporting 5.3M social housing customers across the UK
- Simplified data insights
- Paper-free automation
- Service cloud platform.

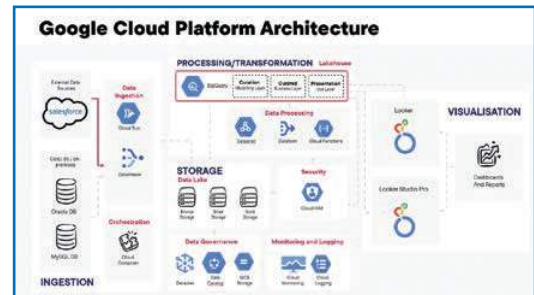
**Software that supports  
the evolving landscape  
of social housing.**

Read more:



# Places for People's new data platform with The Dot Collective

Places for People and The Dot Collective have developed a cloud-native data platform which brings together data from diverse sources, including housing management systems, financial data and tenant information, into a single source of the truth for analytics, reporting and operations.



Places for People's data platform is built on Google Cloud Platform. For data ingestion, Cloud Run and Datastream enable the flow of data into the data lake on Google Cloud Storage, structured according to a 'medallion' architecture. This setup, combined with Iceberg, allows BigQuery to directly query the data lake, creating a powerful data 'lakehouse' environment.

A structured architecture design within BigQuery, including modelling, business and presentation layers, supports complex data analytics. Looker Core serves as a semantic layer for business users to create custom dashboards and Looker Studio Pro enables the development of comprehensive dashboards that integrate both data from within and outside the platform. Tools such as Cloud Monitoring, Dataplex and IAM are used for data processing, governance, security, monitoring and logging capabilities.

Within six months, Places for People has reduced its IT costs by £1.5 million, cut its FTE data-processing time by 30 per cent and carried out thousands of extra maintenance jobs.

Rob Gallagher, CDO, Places for People, said, "The Dot Collective has been a valuable partner in our data transformation. Its technical expertise and agile approach have accelerated our progress and enabled us to make significant strides."

Svetlana Tarnagurskaja, CEO, The Dot Collective, said, "It's been an incredibly satisfying journey with Places for People. Not only have we enabled its data strategy to have a huge business impact, but I feel we've played a pivotal role in helping it to become a more data-driven organisation."

## Uswitch's mouldy nation

*In its new Mouldy Nation 2025 report, Uswitch Energy tracked damp and mould complaints made to the Housing Ombudsman between 2020 and 2024 for social housing properties.*



The Housing Ombudsman received just over 16,000 complaints relating to damp and mould over the four-year period, with local authorities the subject of 5,100 complaints and housing associations the subject of 11,000 complaints.

Despite housing associations being the cause of twice as many complaints as local authorities, the two groups of social housing providers had the same rate of complaints, at around 35 complaints per 10,000 properties, and the same four-year increase in complaints of around 16 per cent.

Uswitch Energy's report found that one-third of complainants were blamed by their housing provider when reporting problems with damp and mould. Furthermore, no remedial actions were taken by local authorities and housing associations in two-thirds of the complaints relating to them.

# Smart solutions for safer homes

**FireAngel** CONNECTED



## FireAngel Connected

Remotely monitor interlinked alarms, environmental sensors, compliance updates and access real-time status updates with our Connected cloud-based platform.

## Remote monitoring made simple

The Gateway is easy to install and can be added as the base plate of an SM-SN-1 or HM-SN-1 device, reducing installation cost and time.

## Futureproof properties

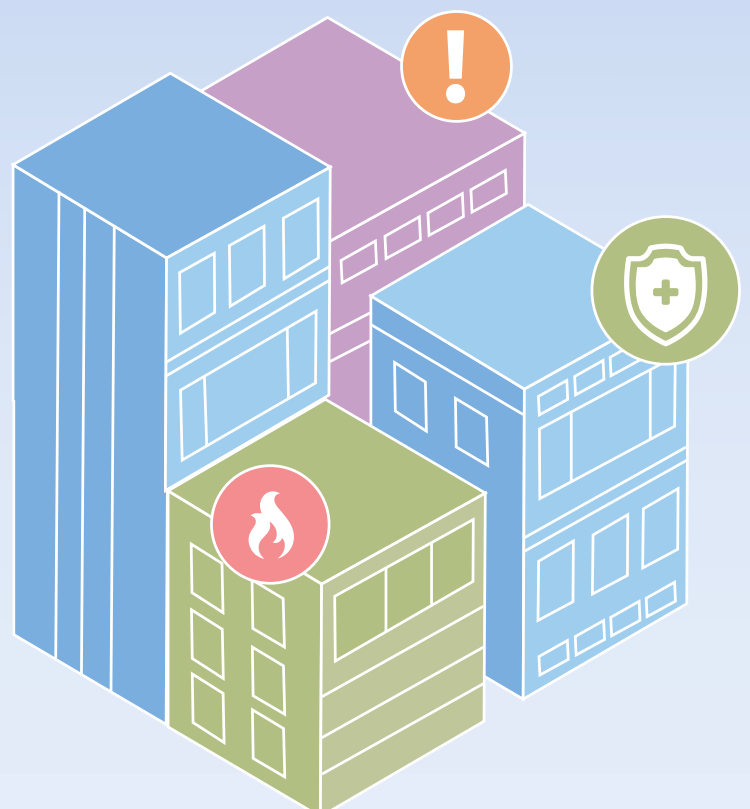
FireAngel Connected has the adaptability to support social landlords in navigating evolving legislation and tenants needs.

## Fire, damp & mould risk insight

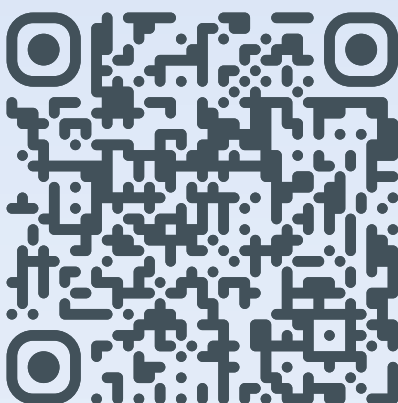
Predict® uses unrivalled insight to support busy housing teams in protecting residents, properties and communities.

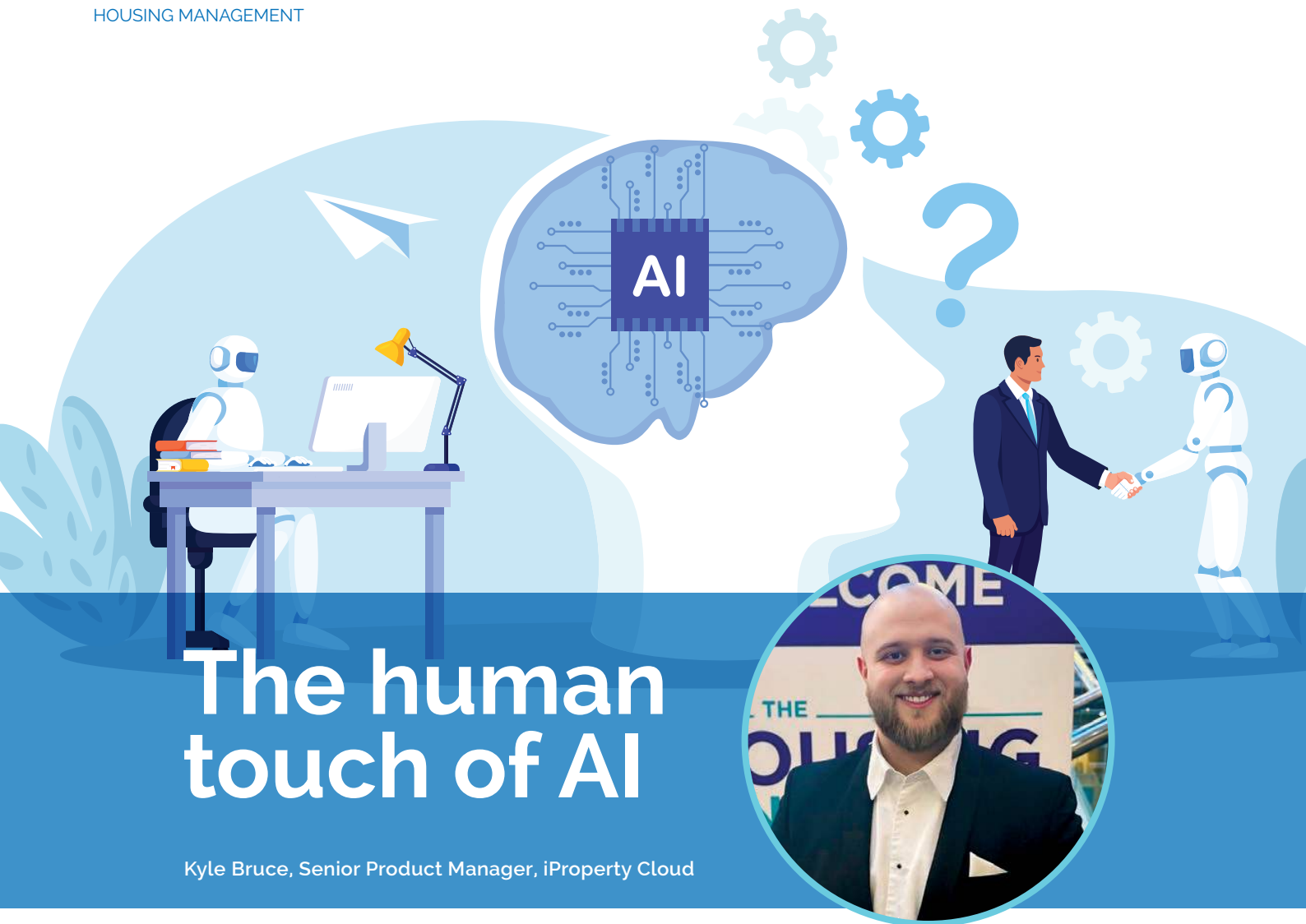
## Environmental monitoring

The Home Environment Gateway, with in-built temperature & humidity sensors, helps pinpoint properties at risk of damp & mould.



## Discover More





# The human touch of AI

Kyle Bruce, Senior Product Manager, iProperty Cloud



AI. Those two little letters seem to be on everyone's lips these days. Following news that the CEOs of technology giants, such as Meta and Microsoft, predict that AI will soon replace roles within their organisations, it's understandable for the social housing sector to feel a hint of concern.

Are we losing the human touch? The very essence of our work? Will AI eventually be calling the shots, dictating every aspect of residents' lives, making decisions based on soulless algorithms therefore leaving no room for empathy or understanding?

In reality, AI has been working behind the scenes for some time; we might not have always referred to it as 'AI', but the principles have been present. Many people have had Google Maps route them down a narrow country road for miles upon miles, just to save two minutes' travel time. As frustrating as it might be, this is a rudimentary form of traditional AI, using facts and figures to present a clear outcome.

AI has now evolved into a more 'generative' world. We ask Copilot to help us draft responses to emails, freeing our time to focus on more complex problems that require human nuance. There are tools such as AI Builder which automatically read large amounts of data from certificates and seamlessly integrate it into our IT systems; a task that

previously consumed hours of manual work, mindlessly entering data into Excel sheets or IT systems with a significant risk of user error occurring.

### The irreplaceable human element

These types of AI use-cases are convenient to us, but what makes this powerful technology work as well as it does is the irreplaceable human element. AI isn't a magic wand that can solve all our problems; it requires careful oversight, constant monitoring, correct data to feed algorithms and, perhaps most importantly, the ability for a human to intervene when things go awry. We should be leveraging AI's strengths while acknowledging its limitations.

Imagine a future where AI truly enhances the social housing experience. We're already seeing technologies such as IoT analysing data from within properties to predict potential maintenance problems before they happen or chatbots that can provide around-the-clock support for residents.

We're on the cusp of something ground-breaking and these enhancements will only get bigger and better as technology giants continue to invest billions in their bids to come out on top.

### The limitations of AI

However, we mustn't lose sight of the importance of the humans that perform the day-to-day tasks. For example, while Meta earlier this year said that 'AI engineers' could conduct professional coding roles within the company, I don't think that this eventuality applies to those of us working in forward-facing roles.

Yes, AI is fantastic and it can really enhance processes, mitigate errors and provide a much better service to residents but it is nothing without the people who power it. People who have empathy for the resident in rent arrears and who are working through a repayment plan that is right for them rather than burdening them with a NOSP. Conducting a phone call to walk a resident in digital poverty through the process of applying for universal credit or calling an elderly resident living alone to check if they are okay. All of the above examples and many more would be a challenge and, arguably, unethical for AI to do independently.

AI does have the potential to revolutionise social housing and is already making waves in doing so by improving efficiency, enhancing residents' experiences and freeing valuable resources for more complex interventions.

However, it's vital to remember that AI is an enabler, not a replacement for human compassion and understanding. AI does not and will not fully replace the need for humans within these roles; it simply helps us shift the focus to other areas of higher importance by automating simple tasks and acting as an assistant for others.

By embracing AI responsibly and emphasising the human element, we can create a future where technology and humans work seamlessly and not in silos. This will empower us to build stronger, more inclusive communities, all while enhancing the experiences for both residents and staff; this eventuality, at the end of the day, is a win for all.

*Kyle Bruce is the senior product manager at iProperty Cloud.*

With a very timely emphasis on data standards alongside artificial intelligence, the key themes for Data Matters 2025 will be:



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2025**

**16 SEPTEMBER 2025**

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- ▶ **DATA STANDARDS**
- ▶ **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**
- ▶ **ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE**

- **Why sector-wide data standards benefit housing providers & tenants**
- **Using data standards to make data interoperable between application silos**
- **Demonstrating how data standards & AI can democratise data across an organisation**
- **'Rubbish in, rubbish out' – the importance of good data for successful AI programmes**
- **Data lakes, data warehouses & middleware**
- **How AI can transform routine data management tasks**
- **Using AI to mine your structured & unstructured TSM data**
- **Why good governance & regulatory compliance both need data standards & AI**
- **Pitfalls & tips for using AI within data management**

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# Five ways to become data-driven in 2025

Sharon Jackson, Head of Pre-Sales & Product Delivery for Housing, NEC Software Solutions

Housing providers sit on a goldmine of data but too often, it's fragmented, outdated or underused. The recent Housing Ombudsman's report highlighted that when housing providers properly connect and use their data, they don't just meet regulations, they work more efficiently and provide a better service for residents.

With budgets squeezed and tough demands for regulatory reporting, housing providers know data is important. But just having the data isn't enough; how can they make their data work harder to help deal with their challenges?

## 1. Improve data quality to protect against risk

Not only does poor record-keeping inconvenience residents and deliver sub-standard service, it also poses a serious risk to their health and safety.

The sector has long been trying to fight this battle as a recent report on 'Knowledge & Information Management' by the Housing Ombudsman showed. The report said, "Poor data and record-keeping is ubiquitous in the sector and causing daily detriment to residents."

When providers don't have complete records on the fabric of a building, repair histories and comprehensive logs of tenants' complaints, then problems such as damp and mould can simply go undetected. By contrast, good data highlights which problems need their urgent attention, and if a problem is flagged early, it's not only easier and cheaper to fix but tenants aren't exposed to any long-term harm.

Staff across the organisation should know the importance of inputting the correct data at all times, even when they are busy. Implementing an agreed set of standards around how and when data should be entered then training staff is a good way to get everyone on the same page, as well as using technology to support this.

## 2. Bring data sources together for hidden insights

You don't know what you don't know. The policy changes around damp and mould made housing providers realise more than ever that one of the biggest barriers they are grappling with is disjointed data spread across multiple systems. They can't get the answers they need quickly.

But this problem doesn't just affect their efforts in dealing with damp and mould. What about building safety and missed rental payments?

If housing officers have a complete, real-time picture of residents' wider situations, they can prioritise whom to help first. Without this, decisions may be based on a simple view or assumptions from incomplete information, with the risk that those people who need help the most might get left at the bottom of the pile.

By consolidating data, housing providers can make earlier interventions by identifying who is at risk due to factors such as additional vulnerabilities, health problems or poverty, and offer more personalised support to keep them in their homes.

## 3. Boost property management with better planning

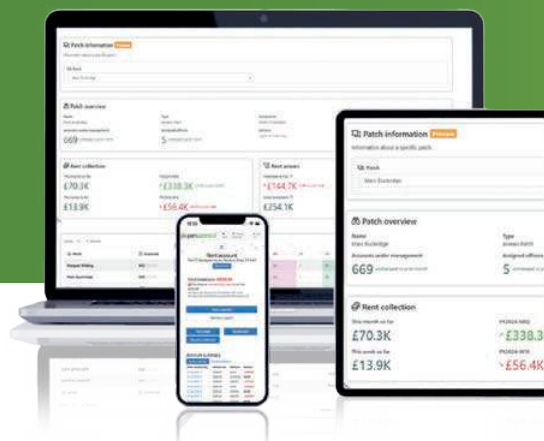
Whenever a tradesperson comes to a tenant's home, you want them to arrive with the correct tools to get on with the job. They can only do this if they've been given the right information about the work that needs doing.



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 1.088 -2.045  
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If a tenant reports a leaking pipe, if the contractor knows the details of what pipe is leaking and where, they are more likely to fix it first time. Without this, they could arrive at the property only to discover they need a specific fitting, leading to further delays.

Staff need correct data to plan the work efficiently and with minimal disruption to the tenants. Water damage might require a plumber, plasterer and painter, all lined up in the right order and with enough time between each job for drying to complete the repair. To get the schedule right, it's essential to be able to see at a glance real-time data on what jobs are in progress, which are at risk of running over and where follow-on repairs are needed.

Getting this wrong could lead to miscommunication with contractors and unnecessary delays. Not only is this expensive and inefficient for the housing provider but it very quickly leads to unhappy residents.

#### 4. Transform residents' experience with personalisation

One of the key challenges to improving customer service in housing is how to meet the diverse needs of a broad mix of residents. The answer often lies in the data that housing providers are already sitting on.

Combining information about the household and the property into the repairs systems, for example, can offer rich insights on how to personalise customer service. This could be instructing contractors to wait longer at the door if someone is elderly or sending translated letters in a resident's native language if they don't speak English.

Data about communication preferences and a history of customer service interactions all add to the picture. If housing or maintenance staff have this information before they make contact then they have a much greater chance of being able to offer the right solutions.

#### 5. Do more with less

Everyone is feeling the economic pinch and housing budgets are under pressure. The good news is that the intelligent use of data can help housing providers make the most of what they already have.

For years, housing providers have gathered data on every aspect of property management, from structural details to repair frequency and rental payment patterns.

The latest developments in housing technology mean this data can be cross-referenced and analysed to spot trends and patterns to improve tenants' services and predict problems before they arise.

What if you could predict that in four weeks' time a tenant risks falling into arrears for a period of several months? Tools like AI and analytics can use data to give these insights right now. Armed with this information, you could arrange proactive interventions to sustain tenancies, avoiding court actions, evictions and potential homelessness.

This is the perfect win-win situation because it's better for residents' overall wellbeing and maintains a steady income stream for housing providers.

There is power in data – it's the solid foundation that housing providers need in order to embrace the latest technologies, helping them to remove inefficiencies, cut costs and allocate resources better.

Smart use of data goes beyond process and efficiency, though. It's about providing tenants with safer, more comfortable homes, faster responses to their needs and creating communities that thrive.

*Sharon Jackson is head of pre-sales and product delivery for housing at NEC Software Solutions.*

**NEC**

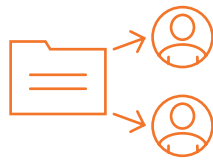
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# Happy 35th birthday to Aico

Aico is celebrating 35 years of innovative home-safety alarms and sensors after being founded in 1990.



Over the past 35 years, the technology behind Aico's products has advanced significantly, with innovations such as RF connectivity, originally launched by Aico in the mid-2000s, now commonplace. More recently, the company's IoT-based HomeLink Connected Home solution has grown to connect over 450,000 devices and 75,000 live gateway systems across the UK.

Following the introduction of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme in 2018, Aico has done almost 250 educational visits to schools and colleges and supported over 16,400 students (3,260 in 2024). Its CSR team also organise the company's volunteering programme which has now accumulated 7,500 employee-hours for 250 causes.

Neal Hooper, managing director, Aico, said, "It's been an incredible 35 years. We've doubled our turnover every five years while providing life-safety solutions to millions of homes. We have colleagues who have been with Aico for the whole of its history, as well as a senior team wholly promoted from within, demonstrating the quality and loyalty that we are blessed with.

"We would like to thank all our clients for their support since 1990; it is massively appreciated. And to the millions of households protected by Aico, thank you for choosing the very best solutions, it makes us very proud."





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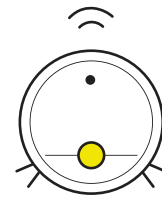
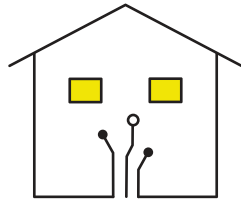
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## The connected home revolution

Why you can no longer ignore the internet of things

George Grant, CEO, Broadcaster & Publisher,  
Housing Technology

*At the Housing Technology 2025 conference, one theme stood out above all others: the growing convergence of housing, infrastructure and technology. This isn't just about upgrading legacy systems or adding a few more smart sensors; it's about a fundamental shift in how homes are managed, maintained and experienced.*

The challenge is no longer about if the internet of things (IoT) will transform housing; it's about how the sector integrates and manages the explosion of data these devices generate. And, critically, whether housing providers will seize the opportunity to build smarter, more responsive homes or struggle under the weight of disconnected technologies.

### The new infrastructure of housing

Historically, infrastructure was built in silos. Telephony and IT were separate worlds, each managed by its own department, until someone realised that plugging a telephone into the IP network changed everything. Suddenly, communications and IT were no longer separate functions; they were part of the same infrastructure.

The same convergence is happening in housing. Today, homes are no longer just physical spaces; they are endpoints on a network – a complex web of data points generating real-time insights into environmental conditions, energy efficiency, security and even resident well-being. Every sensor, every device and every smart meter is feeding into an interconnected ecosystem.

This shift brings a crucial question: who manages this infrastructure? Just as IT departments were forced to take ownership of voice-data networks, housing providers must now step up and integrate IoT across their operations. If they don't, they risk being overwhelmed by fragmented systems, reactive maintenance and regulatory headaches.

### Why IoT matters now more than ever

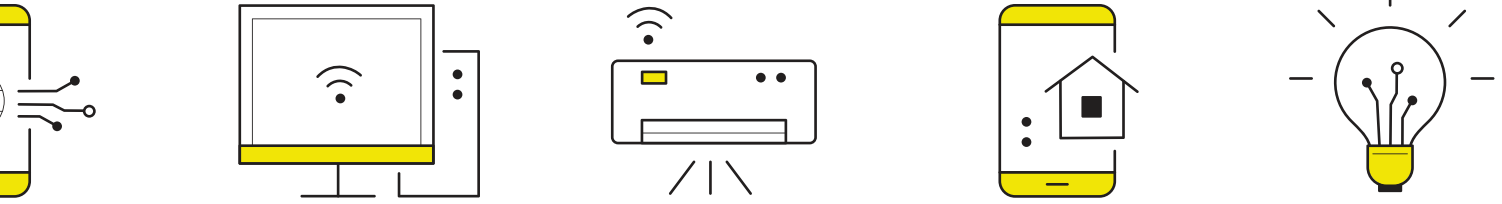
The UK housing sector is entering an era of rapid regulatory and technological change. The introduction of Awaab's Law means that housing providers now have strict timelines to address damp and mould issues. The PSTN switch-off by 2027 forces a transition to digital communications. The push for net-zero housing makes smart energy management essential. At the centre of all these changes? Data.

IoT isn't just about installing more sensors. It's about using data intelligently, turning real-time insights into action, predicting problems before they escalate and moving from a reactive to a proactive model of housing management.

Imagine a world where:

- A housing provider is alerted to a damp and mould risk before a tenant complains.
- Smart heating adjusts itself in response to occupancy patterns, cutting energy waste.
- Cyber-security systems detect and prevent attempted breaches in real time.
- EV charging stations dynamically balance grid demand based on live usage.

This isn't theoretical; it's already happening in forward-thinking housing providers. The challenge is scaling this across the sector.



### The challenge – From fragmentation to integration

The real hurdle in housing IoT isn't the technology itself, it's integration.

Most housing providers already have a mix of legacy systems, standalone IoT solutions and overlapping software platforms. The result? Data silos that prevent housing teams from getting a clear, unified picture of what's happening inside their properties.

The key to solving this problem lies in standards and interoperability. Emerging frameworks such as Matter (a universal IoT connectivity standard backed by Apple, Google & Amazon) aim to make smart devices more compatible. But housing providers can't afford to wait for technology giants to solve their problems. They must:

1. **Mandate interoperability** – New procurements should require smart devices and software to integrate seamlessly.
2. **Centralise data management** – Invest in platforms that bring together environmental, energy and security data in one place.
3. **Think beyond hardware** – The value of IoT isn't in the sensors but in the insights they generate. Housing providers need AI-powered analytics that turn raw data into actionable intelligence.

### The business case – Efficiency, compliance & resident experience

Many housing providers see IoT as an expense rather than an investment. That mindset is outdated. Done right, IoT drives efficiency, enhances compliance and improves the resident experience, all while reducing long-term costs.

#### Cost-savings & operational efficiency

- Predictive maintenance using IoT sensors can cut repair costs by up to 30 per cent, reducing emergency call-outs and unplanned interventions.
- Automated systems can optimise energy use, saving thousands of pounds per year in unnecessary heating, lighting and water costs.
- Streamlined workflows free up staff time, reducing administrative overheads.

#### Compliance & risk management

- With the rise of Awaab's Law, housing providers must fix damp and mould problems quickly or face regulatory action.
- Real-time monitoring ensures compliance with safety regulations, from fire alarms to CO2 detection.
- IoT helps manage cyber risks as smart devices become attack vectors so housing providers must prioritise security-first deployment strategies.

### Resident experience & wellbeing

- Smart-home technologies empower residents to control their environment, reducing complaints and boosting satisfaction.
- AI-driven insights allow housing teams to proactively support vulnerable tenants, from monitoring fuel poverty to improving indoor air quality.
- Faster response times and proactive issue resolution build trust between housing providers and residents.

### Overcoming barriers to adoption

Despite the clear advantages, many housing providers struggle to implement IoT at scale. The reasons?

- **Legacy systems & lack of integration** – Many housing IT systems weren't designed for real-time data. Providers must transition from legacy software to platforms designed for connected housing.
- **Skills & knowledge gaps** – Housing teams need training to manage IoT infrastructure, understand data analytics and implement cyber security best practices.
- **Upfront investment concerns** – While IoT requires initial investment, the long-term cost savings and compliance benefits outweigh those costs. Grants, subsidies and partnerships with technology providers can help mitigate this challenge.

### The future of housing – Intelligent, integrated and invisible

The next five years will define the future of technology in housing. We are moving towards a model where:

- Homes self-regulate, adjusting heating, security and maintenance needs automatically.
- IoT devices communicate with each other, ensuring a seamless resident experience.
- Data moves from reactive to predictive, helping providers prevent problems before they occur.

However, technology alone isn't enough. The real transformation happens when housing providers think like digital businesses by embracing data-driven decision-making, investing in smart infrastructure and making IoT an integral part of housing strategy.

The connected home revolution isn't coming. It's already here. The question is: will you lead it or will you be left behind?

*George Grant is the CEO, publisher and co-founder of Housing Technology.*



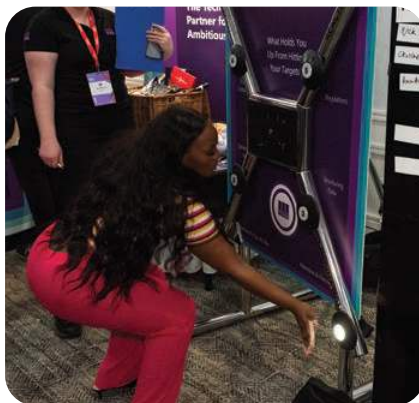
# HOUSING TECHNOLOGY 2025 – BRINGING OUR COMMUNITY TOGETHER



The 16th annual Housing Technology conference and executive forum returned to the East Midlands Conference Centre in Nottingham during 11-13 March 2025, with over 100 speakers, 500+ guests and almost 40 technology partners.

The three days of the UK social housing sector's longest-running technology conference were packed with interactive workshops, panel discussions, keynote talks, IT/business presentations and our annual awards ceremony, alongside evening events and networking opportunities, including our first 'Women in

Housing – Conversations & Connections' gathering. As ever, the overwhelming theme of the Housing Technology conference was collaboration, with everyone using the event as an unparalleled opportunity to share their expertise and experience with their peers in a relaxed, informal atmosphere.





Housing Technology's community is unique, bringing together senior decision-makers to tackle our sector's biggest challenges.

Aico



I made so many useful connections with great people, saw some fantastic technologies & learned so much.

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Once again, the Housing Technology conference delivered a focused, enjoyable & smoothly-running experience for everyone.

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The Housing Technology conference is the 'must attend' event that I try to go to every year.

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A great opportunity – valuable insights from housing providers & informative conversations with prospective clients.

Glue Reply



There's no other event like it for anyone in technology & business transformation roles.

Guinness Partnership



A great event to meet housing's technology leaders.

Mobysoft



Unmissable & inspiring – the Housing Technology conference always gives me so many ideas.

Newark & Sherwood District Council



The Housing Technology conference was excellent throughout.

**Notting Hill Genesis**



It was fast, furious, highly enjoyable & very beneficial.

**Poplar HARCA**



Another fantastic Housing Technology conference – as always, the whole event was slick & polished while still maintaining the personal touch.

**Red Kite Community Housing**



A fantastic show – with top-notch production, it serves as a beacon for new thinkers & industry leaders.

**Social Telecoms**



The Housing Technology conference goes from strength to strength every year – it always has its finger on the pulse of social housing.

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Housing Technology is our favourite event – lots of positive conversations with clients & prospects.

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Thanks for a great event – we've had really good feedback.

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Looking ahead, the Housing Technology 2026 conference will take place next March; further details will be confirmed at [housing-technology.com](http://housing-technology.com) from June 2025.



# Backbone to the future

Leveraging community wi-fi for infrastructure, integration & IoT

**Rob Mottram, Senior Account Manager, Social Telecoms**

*It seems unthinkable that wi-fi could become any more relevant in our lives – we rely on it every day, personally and professionally, to access the internet across a host of devices. However, major events on the horizon will usher in a new golden age of wi-fi – providing a backbone for digital infrastructure and unifying the past, present and future of communications.*

In previous years, we have championed digital inclusion and emphasised how wi-fi connectivity enriches and improves the lives of residents. Of course, this still remains the case and we will continue working to bridge the digital divide. However, there is a second conversation to be had; how can housing providers fully harness the connectivity of wi-fi to enrich and improve their own organisations?

## **Why wi-fi? Upgrading networks for next-level infrastructure**

At Social Telecoms, we have supplied, installed and now maintain over 1,300 wi-fi networks for housing providers across the UK. Our emphasis has always been on community wi-fi, giving residents access to the services they need for modern living.

But what if these networks had even more to offer? Wi-fi is a secure, low-cost solution for connectivity. It's highly-scalable, allowing organisations to add new devices to a network wirelessly without the need for disruptive installation works. Most importantly, it's a solution that most housing providers have already installed in their properties, yet aren't using to its full potential.

Wi-fi may not sound like a major technological advance for housing providers but it's actually something even better. It's a solution that most organisations already have, that could be leveraged further to achieve seriously impressive results. This is easily achieved through the introduction

of smart sensors and IoT devices, which empower organisations to provide a new standard of service.

With so much to gain from IoT devices, housing providers face one question: how easy is it to integrate IoT devices into an existing network?

## **The Matter of integration – New protocols for easy IoT**

There are around 16 billion IoT devices connected globally with 32 billion connected devices forecast by 2030. Smart devices are likely to become an integral part of our daily lives in the same way as wi-fi, but only if organisations can integrate them into their current systems.

This is where Matter enters the conversation. Matter is an open source, royalty-free IoT connectivity protocol, providing a cohesive communications network for IoT devices. Introduced as a new standard for IoT devices, Matter was developed by the Connectivity Standards Agency (CSA, formerly the Zigbee Alliance) whose founding members include Amazon, Apple, Google, Samsung and Silicon Labs.

Over 180 organisations are working behind the scenes to perfect Matter, building a unified, reliable and secure standard for smart devices. This enables manufacturers to produce devices with universal compatibility, and organisations to easily deploy IoT networks. It also benefits end-users with more devices that work alongside existing platforms such as Amazon's Alexa, Apple's HomeKit and Google's Assistant.

Easy integration is a clear priority in the development of the Matter protocol. This removes significant barriers for organisations wanting to adopt IoT solutions by making the process as simple as connecting new devices to a wi-fi network.

## **Work smarter, not harder**

Mould sensors are one example of an IoT device that helps housing providers, monitoring humidity and air quality in properties. Their benefits include preventing hazardous conditions, ensuring residents' safety, demonstrating resident care, identifying widespread

# BACKBONE TO THE FUTURE

problems, enabling faster responses, reducing repair costs and removing the need for resident reporting.

These are the effects of just one device, supported over low-cost wi-fi. It doesn't take much to imagine the benefits of an IoT network when you consider other applications for smart devices: lift lines, door-entry systems, personal care alarms, environmental sensors, leak detectors, smart boilers and more. Taken together, these devices offer an exciting new vision – an 'internet of things-to-come', supported by existing wi-fi infrastructures.

Housing providers have faced increased regulations and requirements in recent years – Tenant Satisfaction Measures, the Social Housing Regulation Act and Awaab's Law all highlight the importance of resident care and proactive property maintenance. IoT devices empower organisations to meet and exceed these standards.

Additionally, smart devices provide valuable data, helping housing providers to build insights, develop new strategies and demonstrate compliance.

## Out with the old – The PSTN switch-off & wi-fi switch-over

Due for disconnection by 2027, outdated PSTN lines currently support telephony, telecare services and IoT devices. These include critical devices such as lift lines, personal care alarms and CCTV – all of which require a modern, digital replacement to maintain connectivity.

Once again, the obvious choice is wi-fi – a highly-accessible, low-cost digital solution. Not only will wi-fi support IoT devices, but with UCaaS and VoIP options available for fixed communications, wi-fi provides solutions to seamlessly replace existing landline phones.

Telecare connections will also need new, digital solutions. For example, Carebuilder uses an IP-based system to provide round-the-clock safeguarding and a huge range of functions, including video calling, daily living reminders, how-to videos, access to services (such as pharmacies, GPs and taxis), calendar, entertainment apps and more. By comparison, traditional warden call systems provide limited care options, and lack the reliability of modern telecare services.

This highlights the extent to which wi-fi provides a universal solution for connectivity by serving as the backbone of modern communications. Not only does it enable the development of new IoT solutions but it will also absorb existing connections, replacing telephony as many currently know it.

## Have you made wi-fi your backbone to the future?

The new golden age of wi-fi is inevitable. An explosive increase in IoT devices, adoption of the Matter protocol and the deactivation of analogue phone lines provide the perfect conditions for wi-fi to expand in every direction. These developments make it easier than ever to integrate new, future-facing devices into existing networks.

In turn, housing providers have access to advanced solutions for proactive property maintenance and resident care, perfectly timed to address recent demands on the housing sector.

With this in mind, why wait until 2027 when you could explore new digital solutions right now? Why rely on yesterday's solutions to meet today's regulations?

Housing providers that embrace wi-fi as their backbone can adopt these new systems and reap the benefits sooner. By providing secure, scalable connectivity, lower costs, improved operational efficiency and better tools for property management, the potential for digital infrastructure goes far beyond community wi-fi.

By embracing a bold, new future, carried by wi-fi infrastructure, housing providers can stay ahead, gaining maximum benefit with minimal disruption to existing systems.

*Rob Mottram is the senior account manager at Social Telecoms.*





# Are you ready for the end of ADSL?

Adam Newman, Head of Technical, Insite Energy

More data is now transmitted globally every 10 minutes than ever existed until 2003, and the volume doubles every two years. Meanwhile, the UK's copper communications network has been around since 1876. Few would deny that the time is ripe for a comprehensive upgrade, but what does the demise of ADSL mean for housing providers?

January 2025 marks two years until the UK's copper-based ADSL network is switched off for good and the nation's landlines and internet connections all run on fibre-optic broadband. However, for some properties, the transition may not be straightforward and time is running out to prepare. It's essential to review the connectivity of your housing stock now to avoid outages in 2027.

The national stop-sell date for the public switched telephone network (PSTN) passed in September 2023. Since then, Openreach (the BT-owned company which manages the country's main fixed-line network infrastructure) has no longer been accepting new orders for broadband or landline services using the old copper network. Until the end of January 2027, you can still use existing PSTN services but you can't modify them. After that, apart from a few pre-arranged exceptions, they will no longer work at all.

## Who's affected?

Developments that are over 10 years old are much more likely to have a legacy copper-based connection than new-builds. In those cases, any building services that rely on the internet or copper telephone lines will fail. That could include resident internet access, media and entertainment services, BMS technology, utilities monitoring and metering, security and access control systems or help buttons for lifts.

It's not hard to see why any downtime to these services would be very undesirable. As well as reducing residents' satisfaction and increasing complaints, it could cause billing inaccuracies and/or financial losses, potentially

leading to penalties from Ofgem. Or, at worst, it could be dangerous.

Properties that are already served by full-fibre broadband (as indicated on their contracts and bills) won't be affected by the big ADSL shut-down. However, that doesn't necessarily mean they will have the consistent and reliable connections they need for essential services across their site, particularly if they're reliant on wifi.

## Seamless and secure

The only way to ensure robust, uninterrupted, real-time data communications is to install a dedicated, hard-wired fixed internet connection (FIC) which will remain unaffected by the changes in signal strength that affect wireless solutions. This is essential for systems such as heat networks that require continuous data monitoring for performance and billing purposes.

For maximum security, connectivity and stability, the FIC should also have a static IP address that won't change each time a device connects to the network. And the whole thing should be backed up with a failover 4G multi-net roaming SIM for complete 24/7/365 resilience.

The most robust, reliable and cost-effective FIC connection is full-fibre to the premises (FTTP), where a fibre-based router connects to the building's optical network termination (ONT) device. FTTP is much faster than copper as well as being less prone to interference.

There are other approaches too, including using existing on-site internet solutions, such as Hyperoptic or a local area network (LAN). This involves leveraging free ports at



the local exchange provided by an ISP and bridging them to a router. ADSL is now only an option when no other solutions are viable.

### Set-up and management

If your property doesn't already have an FTTP connection, now is the right time to be getting one installed. 70 per cent of UK premises now have access to full-fibre broadband, rising to an expected 96 per cent by the end of 2026 (visit [openreach.com/fibre-broadband](https://openreach.com/fibre-broadband) to check your properties' status).

If FTTP is already available, you can request a connection from your ISP; it should take around 10-14 days to be fulfilled, including installation of an ONT if one isn't already present.

However, in older properties it's possible there will be wiring upgrades needed within the site. This can be difficult and expensive because it's likely to involve removing and replacing fire-stopping materials. However, if ADSL is currently being used, there is no option but to do it before 2027.

Start looking into it now. It's far better to find out what's needed and plan accordingly than wait until the last minute to carry out complex works on site or wait until disaster strikes. The more work that's likely to be involved, the more important it is not to wait until you lose communications completely before you start! It's also worth noting that situating equipment such as data-collection devices as close as possible to the ONT (i.e. possibly in a plant room) will minimise any rewiring requirements.

In the case of newer properties, it's likely that the developer already organised for an FTTP link to be set up during the construction phase. If so, it's important to transfer ownership of the FTTP account away from the developer so that it can continue to be managed appropriately.

### Outsource the headache

If you have a metering and billing provider, it makes sense for them to take over managing your FIC account so that they can ensure it's paid correctly, with the costs recovered via an adjustment to the tariff charged to residents. They will automatically react to any tariff changes without you needing to notify them, and there is no risk of over- or undercharging occurring. You're also likely to get things fixed much faster in the event of a fault, rather than having to wait for your ISP to send out engineers.

Furthermore, if you're commissioning a new FTTP connection, your metering and billing provider may be able to do this for you at a lower cost via an ISP broker, meaning the total outlay is the same as commissioning and managing the service yourself.

Like most large tasks involving housing, the process of fitting compliant FICs is far smoother, quicker and more efficient when done in a considered way. It therefore pays to review the connectivity of your housing stock sooner rather than later to see what upgrades need to happen in the next two years.

*Adam Newman is the head of technical at Insite Energy.*

# Archangel launches national IoT network

Archangel has launched Angelnet, a UK-wide communications network for IoT connectivity. The company network is primarily aimed at housing, health, social care and facilities management providers using IoT technologies in their mission-critical applications.

Built on an ecosystem of trusted partners, including LPWAN (low power wide area network) and broadband network service providers, Angelnet removes the need for expensive and complex networks and ensures the seamless integration of IoT devices by connecting them to existing infrastructure.

Tom Morton, founder and CEO, Archangel, said, "Angelnet is the next evolution in IoT connectivity. It addresses the need for secure, reliable communications in housing, healthcare, social care and facilities management. By offering scalable, secure and resilient infrastructure, Angelnet overcomes challenges such as poor connectivity or limited coverage."

## Bield Housing tests IoT with Archangel

Archangel has recently gained part of a £600,000 Smart & Connected Social Places (SCSP) 5G innovation fund with support from the Digital Health & Care Innovation Centre (DHI) for an integrated housing and care technology project at Bield Housing & Care in South Lanarkshire.

Covering 25 properties in one of Bield Housing's developments, the six-month pilot project involves the installation of IoT sensors around the development and inside residents' homes in order to monitor property and wellbeing conditions such as temperature, humidity and motion.

Gavin Wright, head of property management, Bield Housing & Care, said, "This project enables us to explore IoT expansion as part of our digital strategy and it aligns closely with the 'Smart Social Housing' initiative which aims to tackle the fragmentation of data across disconnected systems."

The IoT sensors' data is then relayed to Archangel's technology platform and automatically monitored 24/7 for any problems relating to the residents or their living conditions. The sensors are connected via Angelnet (see above), with the data made available to all stakeholders via the Archangel platform.

Tom Morton, CEO and founder, Archangel, said, "Data related to social housing, health, care and wellbeing is typically spread across multiple vendors' systems and siloed datasets. This disjointed approach creates inefficiencies and hinders the large-scale adoption of IoT due to the costs associated with numerous single purpose systems and the specialised skills needed to manage them.

"This project showcases a smarter and more cost-efficient approach to solve these problems using data collection and presentation from multiple IoT devices via a unified communication infrastructure. It offers a single, holistic view of residents and their home environments, allowing for collective decision-making and timely interventions."

# Vericon Systems launches HomeHub

Vericon Systems has launched its HomeHub system to help housing providers monitor and manage their tenants' living environments.

HomeHub provides real-time visibility into the environmental conditions within properties, such as humidity, temperature, damp and mould, by assessing the risk in each room every five minutes rather than providing a general view over a 24-hour period.

HomeHub 'learns' each property's unique heating characteristics, enabling it to accurately calculate the time needed to achieve the desired temperature. This data can also help housing providers better identify properties with inefficient heating systems or inadequate insulation.

HomeHub enables direct communication between housing providers and their tenants. If maintenance or repairs are needed, the device's Track My Repair feature enables tenants to follow their case with a simple flow chart that automatically updates when each milestone is reached, along with detailed notes and information.





# Melville Housing's proactive approach to damp & mould with Aico

Housing providers are committed to providing safe, sustainable homes for residents, but the current landscape continuously presents challenges. These include regulatory compliance, residents' safety, decarbonisation and disrepairs, such as damp and mould.

Simultaneously, they must do more with less; balancing challenges against resources and exploring new ways of doing things. Many proactive housing providers are embracing digital transformation, using data-driven insights to shift from reactive to proactive management of their disrepairs.

## A proactive approach

One housing provider embracing this challenge is Melville Housing in Midlothian, with over 2,000 properties and an ongoing development programme. For over a decade, Melville Housing has relied on Aico for 95 per cent of its alarm systems.

Tackling damp and mould is a key focus for Melville Housing because the Scottish Housing Regulator is consulting on proposed changes to its 'Annual Return on Charter' indicators, including damp and mould.

Melville Housing uses Aico's Ei1000G gateway and environmental sensors to gather data on damp and mould, with the aim of creating safer homes. Building on a 2021 trial with 15 Aico gateways, the housing provider has extended its deployment of Aico's Connected Home solution to 50 properties, significantly increasing the data available to inform targeted interventions and improve residents' well-being. The proposed changes in the Scottish Housing Regulator's consultation validate the proactive steps Melville Housing has already taken.

## Creating safer homes

Aico supported Melville Housing throughout the project, from initial discussions through to its broader rollout. The housing provider chose to work with Aico based on their

long-standing relationship, built on their experience with the reliability of Aico products and the support Aico has provided over the years. This sector-leading reliability was validated in July 2024 when Aico smoke alarms saved lives during a house fire in one of Melville Housing's properties. To tackle damp and mould problems, Melville Housing has adopted Aico's Ei1000G gateway, which is also linked to the fire and carbon monoxide 3000 Series alarms already installed.

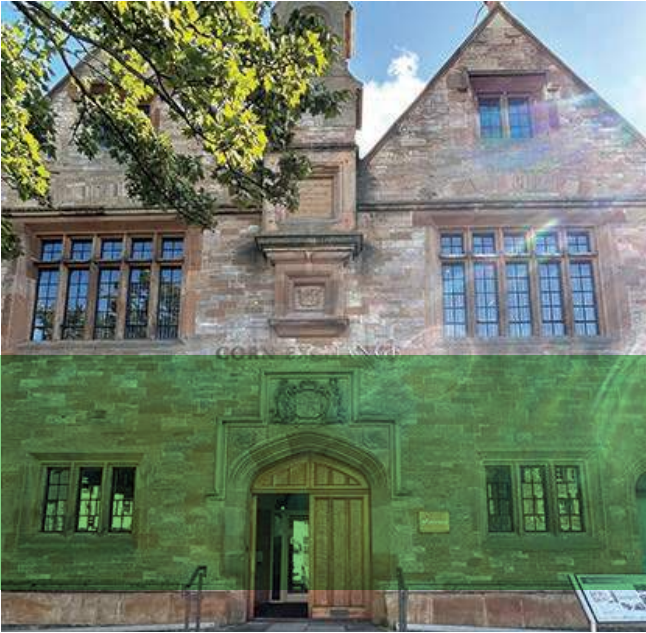
It has also installed the Ei1020 and Ei1025 environmental sensors to monitor temperature, humidity and carbon dioxide. In doing so, Melville Housing can now proactively monitor damp and mould risk while also ensuring that the fire and CO alarms across its housing stock are safe and compliant.

## Collecting and analysing data

Aico's environmental sensors collect data which the Ei1000G gateway then transmits to Aico's HomeLink portal. The portal provides valuable insights into key challenges such as:

- Damp and mould;
- Energy efficiency;
- Fuel poverty;
- Indoor air quality;
- Compliance.

This allows Melville Housing to use the portal to proactively address potential problems before they escalate. This minimises the need for expensive callouts, improves communication with residents and enables better allocation of resources. This is particularly important



with the introduction of Awaab's Law to the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, requiring housing providers to investigate and fix reported health hazards within specified timeframes.

Additionally, the connected fire alarm system provides notifications for alarm head removals, activations, faults and tests, helping housing providers to maintain property protection and comply with legislation.

### Building expertise

Aico's relationship manager, Rory Fraser, delivered a variety of Aico's award-winning, free CPD training courses to Melville Housing's property team to further their knowledge of Aico's products, standards and legislation, and best practices in the form of the Healthy Homes and Smart Social Homes modules.

Melville Housing chose Saltire Facilities Management (SFM) as its approved contractor for the project. To prepare for the installations, Aico delivered its CPD-accredited Expert Installer training to SFM. Aico's Fraser also accompanied SFM's electricians during their first installations to provide onsite support and ensure they were confident fitting the new equipment.

Ben Murphy, electrician, Saltire Facilities Management, said, "This is our first project installing the Aico gateway and environmental sensors. The support from Aico has been fantastic – before the first installation, we received Aico's CPD training at our offices from our local Aico relationship manager, Russell Virtue. We've since been joined on our initial installations by Rory Fraser, Aico's relationship manager for Eastern Scotland, who has helped us with onsite training and support.

"I've found it very interesting to use Aico's SmartLink installer app – the installation process has been simple and easy to pick up. We look forward to installing more Aico gateways and environmental sensors in future!"

### Post-installation updates

Via regular data review meetings, Aico has helped Melville Housing to understand the data collected by the environmental sensors via the HomeLink portal and how to use that data to get ahead of potential problems before they even become problems.

The data review meetings are held with Aico's dedicated Customer Success Team who are available to train Melville Housing's staff on the new technology. Aico's Fraser provided in-person training at the housing provider's Dalkeith office, ensuring its new team members could fully use the dashboard.

Colin Byers, property officer, Melville Housing, said, "Working with Aico throughout this project has been really positive. Aico has helped us choose the right product and shown support in rolling out the installation process. By installing this latest technology, we aim to give our residents a safe living environment."

Aico has also supported the rollout of its HomeLink Resident App, an easy-to-use tool that enables residents to view the insights captured by the Aico gateway and environmental sensors, empowering them to take control of the environmental conditions in their homes through reminders, personalised insights and tips.

Rory Fraser, relationship manager, Aico, said, "I am delighted to have worked in partnership with Melville Housing, building on the relationship it has had with Aico for several years. The team at Melville Housing has embraced the technology as they strive to have a proactive approach to maintenance, with resident safety at the forefront of their strategy."





Mark Holdsworth, Sales Director,  
Civica

# Rebuilding social housing

Meeting modern challenges with smart solutions

*As the government commits to the most extensive council-house building programme in a generation, Mark Holdsworth, Civica's sales director, examines the challenges in delivering this ambitious vision.*

As the government commits to the most extensive council-house building programme in a generation, Mark Holdsworth, Civica's sales director, examines the challenges in delivering this ambitious vision.

With £500 million committed to the Affordable Homes Programme in Rachel Reeves' first budget and then an additional £350 million announced this February, social housing is very much on the government's agenda.

While this provides cause for optimism, councils must still balance multiple competing demands on their resources. Many already need help with the costs of maintaining and upgrading their existing stock, particularly regarding building safety and energy efficiency improvements.

However, the challenge extends far beyond simply securing construction finance. Creating sustainable communities requires sophisticated financial modelling and asset-management capabilities. The days of merely building homes and collecting rent are long gone; modern social housing demands active management of both assets and tenant relationships.

Technology sits at the heart of this challenge. During recent visits to forward-thinking housing providers, I've witnessed at first-hand how digital transformation can revolutionise service delivery.

## Technology to transform asset management

Modern housing management requires sophisticated asset management systems that predict maintenance needs before they become problems. It needs integrated tenant communication platforms that can handle everything from repair requests to community engagement. Compliance monitoring tools must track multiple regulatory requirements simultaneously.

The environmental challenge adds another layer of complexity. New council homes must meet ambitious sustainability targets, requiring environmental performance tracking from day one. Yet many councils still operate with legacy systems designed for a different era. The gap between current capabilities and future needs often seems daunting. But this gulf can be bridged with the proper support and expertise. Ultimately, collaboration is paramount.

Housing providers have spent years developing the infrastructure and expertise needed to manage modern social housing effectively. Their experience offers valuable lessons for councils returning to development. The most crucial learning? Everything must work together.

Property management, tenant communication, maintenance scheduling and financial management can't operate in silos. Integration isn't just desirable; it's essential for efficient service delivery and regulatory compliance.

Any discussion of council housing must address the right to buy (RTB). The policy has been a central driver of social mobility, helping many families build inter-generational wealth. One could argue that it has fulfilled its purpose of creating opportunities for social housing tenants to step onto the property ladder and generate wealth they can pass on to the next generation.

It also presents significant challenges for councils planning new developments. While the current government reviews RTB discounts, the policy remains in place. This uncertainty affects both financial planning and system requirements. Councils need technology to handle the complexity of mixed tenure management and potential tenure changes while tracking the complex financial implications of sales and reinvestment.



### Smart from the start

Modern council housing isn't just about providing affordable homes; it's about creating sustainable communities that meet environmental standards while remaining viable to maintain. Achieving this requires a fundamental rethink of how we approach social housing development.

Smart technology can no longer be an afterthought. Internet of things (IoT) sensors for monitoring building performance, integrated communications systems for tenant engagement and sophisticated maintenance tracking must be built in from the start. These aren't optional extras; they are essential components of modern social housing which help control costs and improve services over the long term.

Arguably, the biggest challenge isn't technological or financial, it's human. Many councils have lost the in-house expertise needed to manage large-scale housing development and operations. Rebuilding this capability while simultaneously delivering new homes requires careful consideration.

The solution is likely to be in partnerships with technology providers supplying the necessary systems and expertise and housing providers with maintained development capabilities. Success will require councils to be honest about their capabilities and open to learning from others.

The push for new council housing comes as the sector faces unprecedented sustainability challenges. New homes have to be built to high environmental standards but they must also be sustainable in terms of ongoing maintenance and management costs.

It's not an easy task but to make it happen, one has to think beyond traditional approaches. Modern construction methods can help deliver more energy-efficient homes faster. Smart-building technologies can reduce maintenance costs and improve environmental performance. Implementing these solutions, though, requires significant upfront investment in both technologies and skills.

### Meeting great expectations

Today's tenants expect responsive, accessible services delivered through multiple channels. Meeting these expectations while managing costs requires sophisticated CRM systems and automated processes. Many councils already have such systems but aren't using them to their full potential, mainly because they are in the dark about all of the functions and haven't been adequately educated to use them. The key is ensuring technology is integrated correctly into service delivery processes and that staff are trained to use it effectively.

The return of large-scale council housing development represents both an opportunity and a challenge. Success requires more than funding and political will; it demands a complete rethinking of how councils approach housing delivery and management. A leadership-led mindset change is vital to improve digital skills and enable human-centric design and delivery.

Clearly, technology will be crucial but it must be implemented thoughtfully and strategically. Councils need partners who understand both the technical requirements and the unique challenges of social housing delivery. They need systems that can grow and adapt as their housing operations expand.

Most importantly, they must approach this challenge with a clear vision of modern council housing – affordable homes and sustainable communities supported by efficient services and engaging modern technology.

The opportunity is there. With the proper preparation, support and partnerships, councils can once again become major providers of high-quality social housing. The key is to learn from the past while building for the future.

*Mark Holdsworth is the sales director at Civica.*

**CIVICA**



## Calico Homes' success with OptusApp

Calico Homes' new self-service app from OptusApp has achieved 50 per cent adoption within the first week of its launch. This follows a pilot project with a group of around 100 residents in November 2024.

The rapid adoption of the Calico Connect app was helped by a thorough pre-launch marketing campaign to Calico's residents followed by regular updates and opportunities for residents to take part in the design and testing of the app.

Built on the OptusApp software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform, Calico Connect is designed to streamline resident-landlord communications and enhance customer experience. The app's features include repair reporting, appointment scheduling, job tracking, two-way messaging, rent account management and direct payments.

Additional features are scheduled to be added to the Calico app over the next few weeks, including reporting anti-social behaviour, booking appointments for a wider range of repairs, making complaints and completing TSMs and other surveys. The app also includes language support for English, Urdu, Polish, Kurdish, Farsi and Arabic.

Helen Thompson, deputy chief executive, Calico Homes, said, "It's such a positive start to see so many customers are already onboard. And while we know an app isn't for everyone, it can provide a better experience for those customers who choose to contact us online; they can be reassured that we're getting the basics right."

Gerry Kelly, CEO, OptusApp, said, "Many housing providers struggle to achieve a 20 per cent adoption rate for their legacy tenant portals. In contrast, Calico Homes has been strategic in selecting a native smartphone app with accompanying portal option.

"Consumers know what they want, and with smartphones as the device of choice, they really appreciate an intuitive, powerful and resident-centric solution such as Calico Connect."

### OptusApp launches AI Voice for TSMs

OptusApp has just released its AI Voice solution for outsourcing TSM surveys. This new service is designed to streamline the collection and reporting of TSM data while maintaining compliance with the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH).



According to the RSH, 65 per cent of housing providers rely on voice calls for survey collection, with 86 per cent outsourcing these tasks to external providers. Optus's AI Voice solution offers a new approach to address this growing demand.

Optus's service uses state-of-the-art voice AI technology with large language model (LLM) capabilities, enabling highly interactive and human-like conversations with tenants. Importantly, the AI Voice agent doesn't pretend to be a human yet offers a transparent and engaging experience for tenants.

Optus's AI Voice gives housing providers the option to carry out tenant surveys in a variety of languages and can be trained to speak with a local or regional accent. Dial-out times can also be automatically scheduled to match tenants' availability.

Awaab's Law comes into effect this October, requiring housing providers to address damp and mould problems within strict timeframes. Optus expects that from 2026

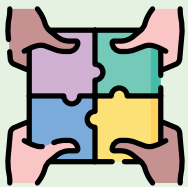
and 2027, the law will be expanded to cover further hazards including excess cold or heat, plus fire and electrical safety and possibly ASB, increasing the pressure on housing providers to monitor and act on tenants' complaints.

Gerry Kelly, CEO, OptusApp, said, "We aim to be disruptive both on process and on cost. Our new AI Voice service covers multiple digital channels, with the largest take-up expected to be via voice calls. Our analytics and report-generating options include not only tenant perception feedback but also TSMs generated internally by housing providers such as complaints, ASB and safety checks."



## TSMs & the case for user-centred design

Oliver Florence (L), Product Director, and Dave Skinner, Service Designer, Broadleaf Professional



*With the backdrop of TSMs in mind, we'd like to make the case for good user-centred design as the underpinning methodology for building services that actually deliver what tenants need.*

Having worked as chief product owner for the Scottish Courts & Tribunal Service and as product lead on Child Disability Payment, I'm familiar with the challenge of aligning service design and delivery with users' needs in the real world. The ever-present reality of delivering to budget in a complex operating environment almost always requires some deviation from the intended service model and resulting user experience. However, the extent to which you deviate can be mitigated if users' needs are properly understood and documented.

According to the Department for Education, user-centred design (UCD) is a design philosophy and process that places the needs, behaviours and experiences of users at the forefront of product and service development.

This description highlights a welcome departure from systems-focused service design, wherein a service is largely structured on restrictive or inflexible tooling and software (i.e. putting systems before people).

User-centred design is contributed to by a range of skillsets but we want to focus on four that we think

are particularly relevant to delivering services in social housing. We've chosen these four because they have a direct impact on the usability and suitability of a service and, crucially, don't appear to be widely used in the social housing sector.

### User researchers

User researchers (UR) work with service users to agree a validated set of 'user needs' that describe what people expect and need from the service.

UR practitioners are trained to look for and understand behaviours and motivations that get to the root of what someone needs from a service. The role is investigative in nature and can serve to augment more traditional user (or tenant) engagement methodologies by improving accessibility and producing a deeper understanding of the real-world context in which users access services.

The user needs produced by UR serve to provide service designers, interaction designers and content writers with an accurate and context-driven understanding of what users actually need (more on this later...).

### Content designers

Best described by Content Design London as, "Content design is the discipline of finding what your audience wants and giving it to them where and when they want it, in a way they can digest it."

Content designers won't publish whatever the organisation wants; it's about having the research to make sure that everything published is entirely user-centred."

### Service designers

Service designers focus on the complete journey that a person goes through to accomplish a task. This role considers the overall structure of services and their surrounding ecosystem.

Service blueprints and stakeholder maps are two common tools used by service designers. However, these are just outcomes of their main objective which is to help teams collaboratively visualise, understand and create effective services.

### Interaction designers

An interaction designer produces designs for individual and service-wide user touchpoints.

They focus on creating easy to use, simple to navigate and consistent user experiences by employing a design language that accounts for what the service users need at each stage. Naturally, a key component of their work is considering and accounting for accessibility needs.

### How they work together

These roles collaborate with each other and the wider delivery team to inform what the service will provide and how it will provide it. This is an example of what the iterations for a new service can look like:

1. User researchers will perform the initial task of identifying what people expect and need within a given service domain, such as housing repairs.
2. Service designers will facilitate the prototyping of the service in collaboration with the design team.
3. Content and interaction designers collaborate to produce testable iterations.
4. User researchers test the designs with users of the proposed service.
5. Repeat steps 2-4 until a functional and user-validated service design is produced (this can either be for a component part of the service or the whole service).
6. Work with the wider delivery team to build and deliver the service design (iteratively testing with users to improve service design and user experience at each step).

There is more complexity involved in the real-world but the example is intended to give you a view into the way UCD practices put the user at the centre of defining and guiding what and how the service will deliver for them.

Proceeding this way also reduces the risk that your organisation will misunderstand what people need or your organisation will understand what people need but design something that doesn't deliver it for them.

### More on user research

Establishing a validated set of user needs (i.e. what people who use your service will need from it) isn't as simple as sitting around a table and discussing what you all think would work well. This can give you a good approximation but it does leave you vulnerable to a range of pitfalls.

The items on the list below can significantly impact the accuracy of the user needs you establish if you aren't trained to be aware of and account for them:

- Language barriers;
- Digital literacy;
- Researcher bias (e.g. thinking you already know what users will want);
- Power dynamics (particularly important for housing providers hosting sessions with their tenants);
- Accessibility needs.

To further underline the difficulty faced by organisations of understanding what people need from a service, research in 2021 found that from a sample of 111 failed start-ups, 42 per cent of them failed because they misread market demand and hadn't properly understood what their customers actually needed.

It's an exercise in humility to be open to the idea that getting to the root of what people need isn't easy. If you get it wrong, the best delivery teams in the world will still deliver the wrong thing.

Tenant satisfaction measures (TSM) reflect people's experiences with your service; to enhance your TSM performance, it's essential to understand users and their problems before devising solutions.

### Parting thoughts

We'd like to acknowledge that technology providers play a significant role (disproportionally so, we would suggest) in determining how your services are structured and delivered. This phenomenon appears to be more acute in the housing sector than many others. We talk more about this and other housing- and technology-related topics on our Substack ([substack.com/@broadleafprofessional](https://substack.com/@broadleafprofessional)).

If you are interested in the applied practice of service design, please check out the Service and Design Patterns for Social Housing page ([www.designpatternsforsocialhousing.co.uk](http://www.designpatternsforsocialhousing.co.uk)). This was set up by Dave Skinner and is a fantastic resource for understanding more about service design as well as being an open-source design pattern library for social housing.

*Oliver Florence is the product director and Dave Skinner is the service designer at Broadleaf Professional.*

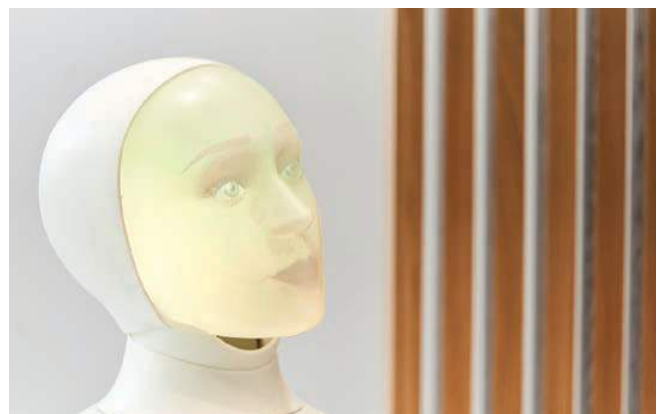


# Brewing innovation

How North Star Housing and The National Robotarium are bringing robotics into social housing

Lily Dobing (L), Media & Communications Lead, and Sean Lawless, Director of Insight & Transformation, North Star Housing Group

North Star Housing Group has partnered with The National Robotarium to explore the role of robotics in social housing. This ground-breaking project places a Furhat conversational robot at the heart of a social housing scheme, offering residents not only a cup of tea or coffee but also a warm and engaging conversation.



### The robo-barista project

Over the past year, North Star has been working with The National Robotarium, based at Heriot-Watt University, to investigate how AI-powered robots could enhance social interactions in housing communities. The latest initiative, launched at the housing provider's Aspen Gardens scheme for older persons, has a 'Robo-Barista' serving hot drinks while engaging customers in conversation.

The robot, positioned in the bistro, uses AI to chat with residents while it makes their drinks. More than just an automated service, it has been designed to offer companionship, share local knowledge and even take repair requests. Whether discussing the day's lunch menu, upcoming activities or historical events in the local area, the Robo-Barista aims to foster meaningful interactions between residents and their community.

### Encouraging participation & social interaction

One of the key goals of this study is to understand whether conversational robotics can encourage residents to spend more time in communal areas. Social isolation is a significant problem in older people's housing and technology like this could provide an innovative way to bring people together.

Visitors have had the opportunity to share their experiences with researchers from The National Robotarium, offering insights into how AI-driven social companions can be refined and improved for future applications in housing and care settings.

### What's next?

Following the initial deployment and residents' feedback, North Star shared its insights at the Housing Technology 2025 conference just a few weeks ago in Nottingham.

As we continue to push boundaries in the housing sector, projects such as Robo-Barista demonstrate that innovation isn't just about technology, it's about people as well. By embracing new ideas and partnerships, we can redefine what modern social housing looks like, ensuring it remains connected, customer-focused and forward-thinking.

*Sean Lawless is the director of insight and transformation, and Lily Dobing is the media and communications lead at North Star Housing Group.*

## Broadacres Housing extends Salesforce usage

Broadacres Housing has implemented a range of improvements to its digital transformation programme through its Salesforce technology platform with help from Globant, a Salesforce partner.



The housing provider is now using Salesforce as its new CRM system, replacing its old enquiry management software, so that housing staff can access and update residents' information at any time, including via a dedicated Salesforce-based app.

Broadacres Housing has also used the Salesforce platform as the basis for a new damp and mould module aligned to the regulatory requirements of Awaab's Law.

Mark Birch, chief technology officer, Broadacres Housing, said, "This is a considerable increase in our use of

Salesforce. It extends the Salesforce platform beyond individual teams to our entire organisation and will be the foundation for further improvements. Furthermore, feedback from our colleagues has been overwhelmingly positive, with a groundswell of enthusiasm and new ideas.

"Following our launch of a Salesforce-based ASB tool in May, our ultimate goal is to manage all of our customer-facing processes from end-to-end on Salesforce."



## Getting TSMs right first time – A quality-led approach

Tony Simms, Head of Quality, Quality Led Projects

### Shifting the focus: from 'how' to 'what'

With modern housing management systems, collecting data has never been easier. Features such as surveys, feedback forms, mobile reports and contact portals streamline the data-gathering process. As a result, when it comes to Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), the real challenge is no longer how to collect the data but rather what data should be collected and, more importantly, how to use it effectively.

When designed and executed well, TSMs can drive meaningful improvements in tenant well-being, service quality and long-term organisational performance. However, to unlock these benefits, housing providers must ensure that TSMs collect relevant information that enables staff to allocate time, effort and budget towards the areas that matter most to tenants.

### The challenge of getting it right

Many housing providers struggle to implement effective TSMs due to three primary challenges:

- 1. Misalignment of priorities:** management priorities can sometimes overshadow tenants' real concerns. Without a robust feedback mechanism, TSMs risk measuring what the organisation thinks matters rather than what actually matters to tenants.
- 2. Lack of effective stakeholder engagement:** if frontline staff, operational teams and tenants aren't consulted during the design of TSMs, critical insights and practical considerations may be overlooked.
- 3. Ineffective requirements gathering:** poorly-defined requirements often lead to the collection of large volumes of data without delivering clear benefits to the organisation or tenants. For example, if the requirements are too broad, data might be collected in a way that provides no actionable insights, leaving both staff and tenants frustrated.

### Developing a quality-led approach

A quality-led approach ensures that every TSM objective, question and data-point is clearly linked to priorities that tenants and staff genuinely care about. The key elements of this approach include:

- 1. Define clear objectives:** start by defining why tenant satisfaction is being measured in the first place. Is the goal to improve repair times, enhance community

engagement or increase digital accessibility? Clearly-articulated objectives create a framework that guides every subsequent decision.

- 2. Develop a standardised yet flexible framework:** while different departments may have specific needs, it's essential to establish a standardised framework of questions and measures that is accessible across all departments. Without such a framework, housing providers risk duplicating their efforts or alienating tenants with inconsistent or repetitive questions. A well-structured framework maintains consistency in data collection while allowing flexibility to address department-specific requirements.
- 3. Pilot and validate:** once the measures are designed, test them with a small tenant group. Gather feedback on clarity, relevance and comprehensiveness. The pilot phase allows for necessary adjustments and ensures that TSMs genuinely align with tenants' priorities before a full rollout.
- 4. Consistent review and continuous improvement:** a quality-led approach isn't static, it's iterative. As tenants' needs evolve so should your TSMs. Establish a schedule for periodic reviews (quarterly or annually) to refine questions, scoring mechanisms and feedback channels.
- 5. Ongoing feedback loops:** keep tenants informed about changes. If data highlights a common dissatisfaction (e.g. poor repair communications), let tenants know their feedback has been heard and corrective actions are underway.

### Why a quality-led approach matters

Getting TSMs right from the start creates a virtuous cycle of feedback and improvement, ensuring that services genuinely align with tenants' needs. This not only strengthens regulatory compliance but, more importantly, also delivers tangible benefits: improved tenant trust; enhanced service quality; and a stronger, more responsive community.

By embedding quality principles into the design, execution and review of TSMs, housing providers can turn tenants' feedback into meaningful actions, not just data-points in a report.

*Tony Simms is the head of quality at Quality Led Projects.*



# HOUSING TECHNOLOGY'S 2025 AWARD WINNERS

Our second Housing Technology Awards took place during our annual conference and executive forum in Nottingham, celebrating an amazing variety of projects across artificial intelligence, customer services, cyber security, digital transformation, innovation and IT team of the year.

As with our inaugural 2024 awards, the standard of entries was uniformly high; all of the award entries were a testament to the entrants' imagination, innovation and hard work. We will be covering some of the winners and finalists' projects in detail in the next few editions of Housing Technology.

All of the 2025 award entries were first assessed by Housing Technology's editorial team to create a

shortlist of finalists whose entries were then assessed by our external panel of judges (below). To make the awards as fair and as transparent as possible, our marking framework was openly published online so that all entrants would know what we're looking for, with our external judges as well as our own editorial team marking everyone using exactly the same framework.

## THANK YOU TO OUR JUDGES

Marking our awards isn't a trivial undertaking so we'd like to sincerely thank our judging panel for their considerable time and expertise: Steve Allcock (Riverside Group), Tim Brighton (Choice Housing), Sequoia Chapman (Cobalt Housing), Amy Cheswick (mhs homes), Eileen Cotterill (Livin Housing), Paul Croston (Halton Housing), Claire England (Orbit Group), Dean Harris (whg), Gavin Hitchcock (Futures

Housing Group), Audrey Lloyd (Sovereign Network Group), Franklyn Manoharan (LHP), Kristin McIntosh (Newark & Sherwood District Council), Nick Murphy (Trident Housing & Tuntum Housing), Ian Pritchard (Sovini Group), Rick Smith (Fairhive Homes), Mark Woosey (Two Saints) and Daniel Yeates (West Kent Housing).

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WINNER: NOTTING HILL GENESIS



### Transforming its repairs and maintenance with cutting-edge AI

Adnan Khan and Muhammed Asiliskender from Notting Hill Genesis with Housing Technology's George Grant

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED

- **Hyde Group:** Driving efficiencies in income management through AI-powered predictive analytics
- **Newark & Sherwood District Council:** Getting a Copilot-driven efficiency boost during an HMS replacement
- **Platform Housing:** AI, RPA and data observability at the heart of its focus on sustaining tenancies
- **Swindon Borough Council:** Accelerating its migration to a new housing management system with AI

## CUSTOMER SERVICES WINNER: VIVID



Putting its customers in control of their tenancies via omni-channel customer experiences

Fiona Harris and Hannah Bailey from VIVID with Housing Technology's George Grant

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

- **Cross Keys Homes:** A multi-channel residents' voices programme
- **Housing Solutions:** Connectivity and digital inclusion through a 2,000 home wi-fi network
- **Mid Devon Housing:** Safe & healthy housing compliance for damp & mould and environmental monitoring
- **Riverside Group:** Better TSMs and customer experience through advanced analytics and business intelligence

### COMMENDED

Clanmil Housing, Guinness Partnership, Platform Housing and Southern Housing.

## CYBER SECURITY WINNER: CONNEXUS HOUSING



The nightmare before Christmas – surviving and recovering from a cyber incident

Dan Patch and Nick Chamberlain from Connexus Housing with Housing Technology's George Grant

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

- **Clanmil Housing:** Cyber-risk management cuts security vulnerabilities & saves almost £250k per year
- **Riverside Group:** Using a DevOps model for cyber-security and resilience
- **Southern Housing:** Demonstrating resilience through the Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation
- **Torus:** On the front-foot for cyber security with advanced, proactive monitoring

## DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION WINNER: WYTHENSHAW COMMUNITY HOUSING



A Salesforce-powered data hub and enterprise-wide customer programme

Charlotte Horrocks and Kenny Kristiansen from Wythenshawe Community Housing with Housing Technology's George Grant

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

- **Anchor:** Real-time, AI-powered housing operations
- **Home Group:** Enterprise-wide systems integration for its contractor interface programme
- **Notting Hill Genesis:** A data-driven transformation with Agile working
- **Torus:** Streamlining Universal Credit claims with robotic process automation

### COMMENDED

GreenSquareAccord, Housing Solutions, Karbon Homes, Legal & General Affordable Homes, North Star Housing, Poplar HARCA and Spear London.

## INNOVATION WINNER: ANCHOR



### Real-time, AI-powered housing operations

Kerry Edmondson and Tracy Keighley from Anchor with Housing Technology's George Grant

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED

- **Chelmer Housing Partnership:** Automated invoice processing & digital work queues
- **Guinness Partnership:** Omni-channel communications for exceptional customer experiences
- **North Star Housing:** Using apps, portals and bots in order to automate Universal Credit claims
- **Places for People:** Organisation-wide 'cloudification' and instilling best practice at every level

#### COMMENDED

Housing Solutions, Legal & General Affordable Homes, Poplar HARCA and Progress Housing.

## IT TEAM OF THE YEAR WINNER: SOVINI GROUP



### A year of completely transformational IT-driven projects

Ian Pritchard and Dave Cater from Sovini Group with Housing Technology's George Grant

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED

- **North Star Housing:** Microsoft Dynamics and the team spirit behind its 'HMS Endeavour' programme
- **Raven Housing Trust:** Its 'Modern Workplace' programme for a digitally-enabled business of the future
- **Selwood Housing:** Rebuilding and rebranding its entire technology infrastructure & operations
- **Southern Housing:** Post-merger success across all areas of its IT estate

#### COMMENDED

Flagship Group, Freebridge Community Housing, Langstane Housing, Link Group, Riverside Group, Torus and Wythenshawe Community Housing.

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: BILLY CHIP



### The safe & secure currency, bridging the gap between the homeless and the public

Megan Abernethy-Hope from Billy Chip with Housing Technology's George Grant

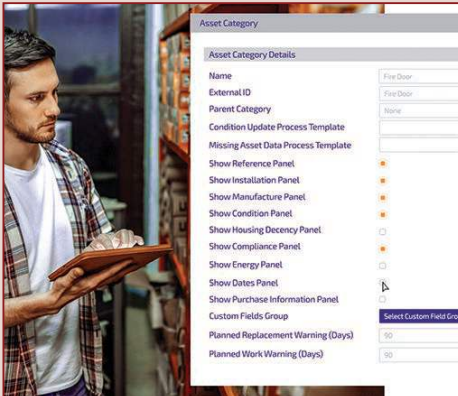
Details of the Housing Technology 2026 awards, including how to enter, will be announced in July 2025.

# Plus Dane connects with Totalmobile

*Plus Dane is set to implement Totalmobile's Connect workforce management software to revamp its repairs service, replacing a number of separate outdated systems.*

At the moment, dealing with a single repair request can involve up to five different systems, resulting in delays and inefficiencies. Totalmobile's Connect software will consolidate these processes into a single system. Over the next 18 months, Plus Dane plans to extend these improvements beyond repairs into other areas such as compliance, planned works and environmental services.

Ian Kelly, director of digital and innovation, Plus Dane, said, "By integrating Totalmobile's solutions, we're addressing inefficiencies and building a platform that supports our vision for the future."



## Suffolk councils' asset management with Totalmobile

Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils are now using Totalmobile's new Asset Lifecycle

Management (ALM) software, alongside their current lone-worker protection and job management software from Totalmobile.

The ALM software offers predictive analytics for better maintenance and investment planning, proactive asset management to cut down on reactive repairs and extend the lifespan of the councils' assets, regulatory assurance, faster response times and higher tenant satisfaction.

Deborah Fenton, director of housing, Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils, said, "Totalmobile's ALM software will enable us to manage our assets better, reduce the amount of reactive maintenance and improve the overall experience for our tenants."

## Totalmobile at Norwich City Services for repairs

Norwich City Services has gone live with new workforce management software from Totalmobile for its housing repairs and maintenance operations.

The Totalmobile software, including the company's Connect, Mobilise and Protect solutions, will be used

by 170 people in NCS's housing repairs team to cover everything from responsive repairs and voids to damp and mould problems.

Paul Young, operations director, Norwich City Services, said, "This is a significant moment for us and Norwich's residents. With these new tools at our disposal, we can work more efficiently, respond faster and transform our operations."

## Nottingham City Council takes on Totalmobile

Nottingham City Council is modernising its housing service with Totalmobile, with a focus on voids and job scheduling.

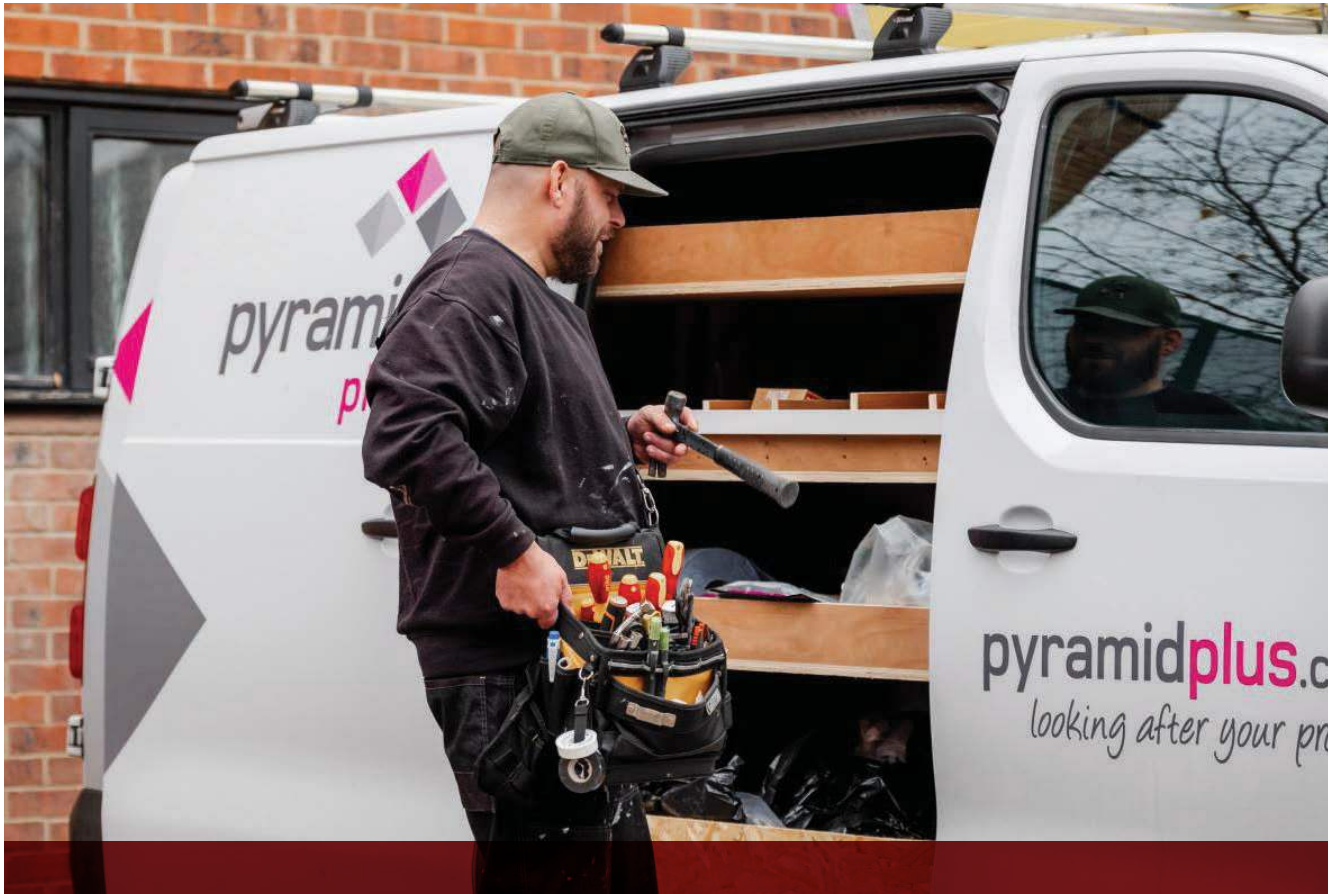
Having used Totalmobile's Protect lone-worker software for the past three years, the council is now deploying Totalmobile's workforce management systems, Connect and Mobilise, to reduce operatives' travel times, optimise resource allocation and increase tenant satisfaction by streamlining repairs and offering real-time updates to residents.

Jon Peel, business transformation project manager in Nottingham City Council's housing team, said, "Our partnership with Totalmobile marks a pivotal moment in delivering housing services. This is a vital step forward in providing faster, more effective solutions for residents across Nottingham."

The adoption of dynamic scheduling through Connect and Mobilise will improve the allocation of repairs, thereby minimising delays and costs. Enhanced tenant communication, including video diagnostics and live updates, is expected to build trust and streamline the resolution of problems.

Digitisation is also set to transform void management, replacing manual processes with automated workflows to accelerate 'key to key' turnaround times for properties. Improved communication and tracking will improve the coordination of subcontractors so that repairs are completed efficiently and cost-effectively.





## A2Dominion transforms repairs with Manifest Software Solutions & Totalmobile

*A2Dominion has teamed up with Manifest Software Solutions and Totalmobile to transform its repairs service through the introduction of a single central system to handle its customers' 150,000 repair requests each year, instead of being spread across multiple systems.*

Due to launch this summer, the new system from Manifest and Totalmobile will intelligently allocate tasks based on operatives' skills and real-time availability, improve scheduling and route-planning and provide instant access to job details via handheld devices.

Once the new repairs system is live, the housing provider's 18,000 My Account users (approx. one third of A2Dominion's residents) will be able to book appointments on their preferred date (and cancel/reschedule if needed), get updates on the expected arrival time of operatives, track the progress of their repair and rate the quality of the repair service they received.

Jo Evans, director of repairs and maintenance, A2Dominion, said, "One of our key challenges is that we hold data across multiple platforms at the moment – this creates inefficiencies and affects our customer service.

"The introduction of this new technology from Manifest Software Solutions and Totalmobile is critical because everything will be in one place. The new system will speed up our repairs process and give our customers reassurance that we're dealing with their repair requests effectively."

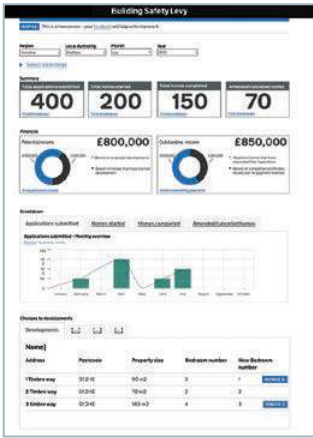


## Stirling Council cuts arrears with Mobysoft

*Mobysoft's RentSense software. The council chose the RentSense software in response to its growing arrears and limited staff resources for income collection.*

RentSense's predictive analytics and prioritisation capabilities have also been used for early interventions, alongside a reduction in the council's court actions and evictions, with only four evictions in 2023/24, the fourth lowest in Scotland. The council's tenancy sustainment rates have also remained strong.

Rose Ann Robertson, team leader, Stirling Council, said, "RentSense has been a game changer for us. It allows our staff to identify and address arrears early, thereby preventing them from escalating and creating financial stress for our tenants."



## Made Tech launches BSL reporting & payment software

Made Tech has just launched a payment and reporting system for the forthcoming Building Safety Levy (BSL), in partnership with the London Borough of Barnet, Transport for London, GeoPlace and the Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government as well as building control firms and housing developers.

The Made Tech software integrates directly with the government's planning portal and registered controlled-building approvers and supports the automated reporting of housing delivery data.

The levy will also enable real-time reporting of completed, in progress and cancelled homes so that the government can track progress against its target of 1.5 million new homes over the next five years.

The Building Safety Levy seeks to raise £3bn over the next 10 years to remediate building safety problems following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, with local authorities needing to start processing the levy later this year.

# Dealing with TSMs

## – How can technology help?

Housing Technology interviewed housing experts from FLS – Fast Lean Smart, Mobyssoft, NEC Software Solutions, Nolijwork, RoomApp and Wordnerds about the effect of the government's Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) on housing providers' operations and how technology can help.

### The difficulties of TSMs

Chris Fleck, chief technology and product officer at Mobyssoft, said, "The introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) has added a new layer of complexity for housing providers. One of the main challenges is the sheer volume and variety of data that has to be collected and reported. TSMs cover broad themes, such as repairs, safety, complaint handling, tenant engagement and neighbourhood management, requiring data from multiple sources, often stored across disparate systems. Furthermore, ensuring the data's accuracy and consistency while meeting tight reporting deadlines can be resource-intensive."

Kay Aston, head of product for housing at NEC Software Solutions, said, "There are two big pain points with the TSM reports. The first is to do with the data. If you don't have the right processes to ensure your teams are recording relevant data into the system correctly to begin with, there's a risk that your TSMs will be inaccurate. Added to this is the problem of multiple systems for, say, gas safety checks, repairs and complaints, resulting in duplicate data which then involves significant manual reconciliation."

"The other challenge is knowing how to get hold of residents for the tenant perception surveys. It's vital to work out how residents want to be contacted before any surveys are done otherwise you risk only hearing from one group of people when what you really need are voices from across your community."

Sarah Wilson, account manager at Wordnerds, said, "As soon as TSM results are put into a league table, it



**"Specialist tools should be used for specialist jobs."**

Sarah Wilson, Account Manager,  
Wordnerds

becomes less about the actual experience of making tenants' lives better and more about comparing scores and positions. Therefore, the most important thing is to ignore your position in the tables and focus on how your customers feel about what you're doing and how to improve that."

### Improvements or just a 'tick box' exercise?

Jeremy Squire, managing director of FLS – Fast Lean Smart, said, "TSMs can leverage meaningful resident feedback to drive real change, with technology playing an important part in transforming service improvements, but only if housing providers can act on the insights."

"Engaging with tenants improves the two-way flow of communications between housing providers and their tenants, providing an opportunity for them to raise their concerns. TSMs also provide a benchmark for tenants' associations to quiz housing providers, hold them to account and help them to make comparisons."

Paul O'Neill, co-founder of NolijWork, said, "This is ultimately down to housing providers themselves, in terms of what they need and might choose to do about their results and performance. From NolijWork's own analysis of TSM data, the key areas for improvement are repairs



**“Collecting feedback is only the first step; acting on it is where the real change happens.”**

Chris Fleck, Chief Technology & Product Officer, Mobyssoft

and complaint handling, which align with other feedback mechanisms from both the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing.”

Mobyssoft's Fleck said, “While it's easy to view TSMs as 'window dressing' by a government under pressure to improve social housing, their potential to drive meaningful improvements shouldn't be underestimated. TSMs create an opportunity for housing providers to rethink their tenant engagement strategies, improve service delivery and foster greater accountability.

“However, that depends on how housing providers approach TSMs. If treated as a mere compliance exercise, the impact will be minimal. Conversely, leveraging TSM data to inform proactive service improvements can lead to more responsive communications, better repairs management and, ultimately, higher tenant satisfaction.”

Wordnerds' Wilson said, “Our experience is that TSMs have already resulted in improvements. Two years ago, we frequently heard, “We're data-rich, insight-poor.” That's no longer the case; housing providers are becoming more data literate and more likely to base their decisions on insights rather than instinct, with TSMs massively accelerating this process.

“Regarding TSMs being a tick-box exercise, it's easy to be cynical about things imposed by regulators but it's clear that something had to change in social housing in the wake of various PR disasters we all know about. Things are much more likely to improve now as a result of TSMs.”

## Getting better at gathering tenants' opinions

Camarlo Richards, chief executive of RoomApp, said, “While TSMs aim to enhance transparency and accountability, housing providers often face challenges in gathering consistent and actionable tenant feedback. Traditional feedback methods, such as paper surveys or phone interviews, can be slow and yield low responses. Digital platforms, such as RoomApp, offer a more efficient alternative by enabling tenants to share their experiences in real-time through apps and portals. This immediacy not only increases response rates but also provides housing providers with timely insights into tenants' concerns.”

NEC's Aston said, “It really shouldn't be an annual activity to find out how customers are feeling. Technology enables housing providers to use dedicated mobile apps for convenient two-way communication so that there can be continuous feedback, keeping customers involved and informed.

“The easier you make it for a resident to contact you, the more information you will have to see if they're happy. And if they receive a quick reply and fast action is taken then it's very likely that satisfaction rates will improve.”

FLS's Squire said, “Digitising tenants' opinions and feedback to capture the tenants' voice helps with transparency and speeds up processes by removing manual activities. For example, tenant self-service apps



**“As we become more connected, data collection becomes more nuanced.”**

Jeremy Squire, UK Managing Director, FLS – Fast Lean Smart

for repairs and maintenance can support better analysis of tenants' sentiments by extending the use of automation and the potential of AI.”

Nolijwork's O'Neill said, “Housing providers are already sitting on a wealth of untapped data with respect to the services they provide. It is perfectly possible to identify ways to improve services from that data alone – this is exactly what NolijWork does.”

## How to act on tenants' voices

Mobyssoft's Fleck said, “Collecting feedback is only the first step; acting on it is where the real change happens. Housing providers must establish clear processes to translate feedback into action – this involves integrating tenants' insights into strategic planning, service design and daily operations.

“Data analytics tools enable housing providers to identify recurrent issues, such as persistent repair requests, and address the underlying causes rather than just the symptoms. Furthermore, closing the feedback loop by telling tenants about how their input has influenced changes builds trust and encourages ongoing engagement.”



**“It really shouldn't be an annual activity to find out how customers are feeling.”**

Kay Aston, Head of Product for Housing, NEC Software Solutions

NEC's Aston said, “Listening and acting on feedback is everything; when residents speak up, they need to see real changes happening. Even if you can't fix something immediately, let them know what steps you're taking and keep them in the loop.

“If you ask people's opinions but never do anything to address the concerns they raise, they'll simply stop bothering to share them. Real engagement means proper

two-way communication where residents can see their voice actually matters. However, beware of survey fatigue – constantly asking for surveys to be completed can get irritating."

## Can technology help with TSM reporting?

Nolijwork's O'Neill said, "Technology can really help to build a richer picture of what tenants actually value. Although many housing providers have outsourced their TSM surveys, we think that the real work only begins after the tenants' data has been collected. Data analysis at both individual provider and sector levels is where insights are revealed and subsequent actions can be initiated."



**"Housing providers must demonstrate that they are listening and acting on tenants' input."**

Camarło Richards, Chief Executive, RoomApp

RoomApp's Richards said, "Collecting feedback is only part of the solution. Housing providers must demonstrate that they are listening and acting on tenants' input. By integrating digital sharing platforms such as RoomApp with their existing housing management systems or CRM tools, housing providers can create a seamless feedback loop. This integration ensures that tenants' voices directly influence service improvements, from expediting maintenance requests to refining communication strategies."

Mobysoft's Fleck said, "Technology simplifies the complexities of TSM reporting through automation, data integration and real-time analytics. Platforms that consolidate data from various sources ensure accuracy and reduce manual workload. These tools offer dashboards and reporting features that track key metrics, flag performance issues early and provide actionable insights."

## New IT tools for TSMs

FLS's Squire said, "As we become more connected, data collection becomes more nuanced. There are more integration opportunities for housing providers as alternatives to the expense of new IT tools. Connected CRM and housing management systems provide trends that can flag problems and KPI pressures to housing operators. Dynamic scheduling receives instruction in real-time from the HMS or CRM and calculates an optimised appointment offer. Schedulers and dispatchers improve their first-time fix rate, reduce no-access fail rates and optimise efficiency for planned and reactive maintenance appointments."

NEC's Aston said, "You shouldn't need new tools to deal with TSMs. For the TSMs measured by landlord

data, a housing management platform that enables the recording of data in a single system will provide a single source of the truth about properties and customers. This makes it a lot easier to collate the data needed for TSM reporting without the need to manually manipulate data from multiple systems. Furthermore, if you have a strong digital customer collaboration system, this can be used to support the capture of tenant perception surveys."



**"The real work only begins after the tenants' data has been collected."**

Paul O'Neill, Co-Founder, NolijWork

Nolijwork's O'Neill said, "According to the Regulator of Social Housing, over 60 per cent of surveys were done by telephone. Furthermore, while many providers outsource the core TSM survey exercise and subsequent data analysis, there is definitely an opportunity to increase customer feedback mechanisms at the point of service delivery."

Wordnerds' Wilson said, "Specialist tools should be used for specialist jobs. For example, Wordnerds would be ineffective at triggering surveys – housing providers would want to use Qualtrics or SurveyMonkey for that. Conversely, Qualtrics and SurveyMonkey aren't the tools you'd want to use for text and sentiment analysis of surveys and other feedback data."

"For example, by using AI-powered sentiment analysis, Raven Housing Trust gained unbiased insights into customer experience, identified unexpected problems and targeted its improvements more effectively. By finding meaning in 'customer silence' and connecting sentiments with demographics, Raven Housing can now spot and address problems that might previously have gone unnoticed."

**Housing Technology would like to thank Jeremy Squire (FLS – Fast Lean Smart), Chris Fleck (Mobysoft), Kay Aston (NEC Software Solutions), Paul O'Neill (NolijWork), Camarło Richards (RoomApp) and Sarah Wilson (Wordnerds) for their comments and editorial contributions to this article.**

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