Issue 108 | November 2025

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# Editor's Notes

November 2025

## Data quality and data literacy...

Amid housing providers' plans to implement AI, undertake digital transformations, improve their TSMs or comply with Awaab's Law (to cite just a few examples), high quality data is the vital fuel that enables those things to happen successfully.


We're therefore delighted to have published our new Data Quality in Social Housing 2025 report (no charge for Housing Technology readers) in association with Experian Data Quality. After surveying the Housing Technology community over the past few months, we've analysed and compiled your views into our timely and topical new report, available now from **housing-technology.com/research**.

A few of the highlights from our Data Quality in Social Housing report:

- The ***data literacy of housing providers' staff*** is the single most significant barrier to successfully embedding data management into housing providers' operations.
- All housing providers must have a ***dedicated data-quality strategy*** to improve and maintain their data.
- Data isn't only an IT responsibility; ***poor data governance*** negatively affects every part of housing providers' operations.
- Adhering to ***regulatory obligations*** is the main goal behind housing providers' data quality strategies.
- Data quality, security and integration are the most important ***AI-driven developments*** for housing providers' data management strategies.
- Housing providers must have ***clearly-defined roles and responsibilities*** for data across all areas of their operations.

Get your free copy of our Data Quality in Social Housing report now from **housing-technology.com/research**.

## Companies in this issue




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# Beyond the buzz

## Data is the real revolution; AI is just the tool

**Akhlaq Choudhury, Founder, GGM360**

The social housing sector is grappling with rising operating costs, ageing housing portfolios, strained contractor relationships and longer repair times for residents, all under a spotlight of greater regulatory and political scrutiny. In this climate, the promise of a quick technology fix is compelling, with AI being the most frequently-cited solution.

However, before we're drawn in by the allure of intelligent technology, we must address a more fundamental truth. The underlying problem connecting these pressures isn't a technology deficit, it's a data deficit. While AI is a powerful tool, its effectiveness in certain AI toolkits is entirely dependent on the quality of the information we provide it.

### Understanding the toolkit

To leverage any technology, we must first understand its nature. AI is a vast domain concerning the creation of systems which can perform tasks requiring human-like intellect.

This field is broadly classified by its capabilities, from the 'narrow AI' we use today for specific tasks, to the theoretical, human-level 'general AI' of the future, and by its functionality, which defines how it perceives and interacts with its environment.

Within this field, the most practical application for our sector is machine learning (ML), a subset of AI where systems learn from data to identify patterns and make predictions. Consider the potential for proactive asset management or defect identification. An ML system could analyse years of maintenance records to accurately predict when a component within a property is likely to fail. This capability allows us to shift from an expensive, reactive repair cycle to a planned, preventative strategy.

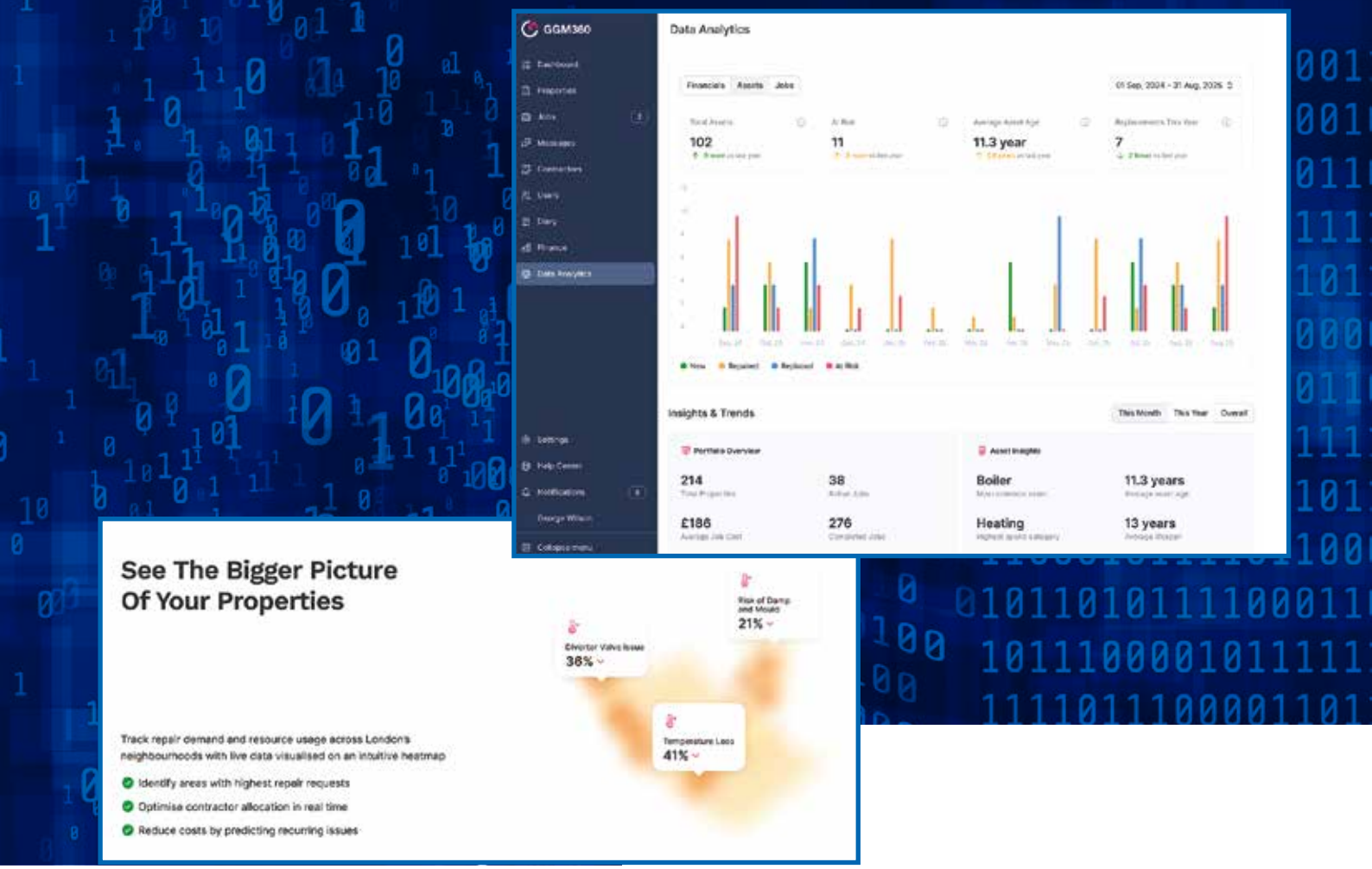
### Rubbish in, rubbish out...

Using ML as a use-case, we arrive at the heart of the matter; sophisticated ML models are rendered entirely useless if the data they learn from is flawed. The potential for predictive maintenance evaporates if historical repair information is captured erratically, stored in disparate silos or is missing entirely. When the machine has no reliable pattern to recognise, it can't make a reliable prediction.

Too many organisations are captivated by the potential of AI without appreciating this prerequisite. An investment in intelligent systems without a parallel investment in a robust data pipeline is fundamentally unsound. The unglamorous, behind-the-scenes work of establishing strong data governance, ensuring consistent capture methods and cleansing existing information is the essential groundwork that must be done first.

### The 'why' before the 'how'

The second major pitfall is adopting a new technology without a clear purpose. The objective should never be to simply 'implement AI'. The objective must be to solve a specific problem. Do we want early insights into properties at risk of damp and mould? Is the goal to optimise our repairs scheduling to improve tenant satisfaction? Or are we trying to better understand tenants' vulnerability?




We must identify the 'why' to tackle the problem we are looking to solve.

Only by defining the problem can we determine the data required and the technology best suited to solve it. This needs-led approach ensures that technology serves the organisation and its residents, not the other way around. It's the only way to transform the abstract hype of AI into concrete, measurable value for our operations and our residents.

## The power of the collective

No housing provider is an island. We are all navigating the same operational problems. We are also all sitting on invaluable, yet siloed, data.

Imagine the exponential power we could unleash by creating a secure, anonymised data-sharing community. By pooling our collective data on asset performance, repairs and tenant needs, we could build datasets of unparalleled scale and depth.

This shared intelligence would dramatically accelerate innovation. It would allow the development of far more accurate and insightful predictive models, benefiting every organisation involved. We could move forward together, preventing countless hours of duplicated effort and establishing best practices that elevate the entire sector and improve the lives of many.

The road ahead for social housing will undoubtedly be paved with technological advances. But the organisations that will truly lead the way are those that understand that the journey doesn't begin with an AI procurement process. It begins with a deep, strategic commitment to the quality and accessibility of their data.

In order to build a sustainable future for everyone in the sector, we must ensure we build this foundation with diligence, focus on solving the right problems and collaborate to forge a smarter and more resilient future for social housing.

Akhlaq Choudhury is the founder of GGM360.

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# Five easy pieces...

## Simple and achievable ways to strengthen your cyber resilience

**Renata Vincoletto, CISO, Civica**

Tenants may begin to notice that something is up when they try to access their housing provider's website to check on their housing application, look for a new property, contact their landlord or access any of the other social housing services, only to discover the message, 'This site is currently unavailable'.

Meanwhile, housing provider's staff begin their working day but can't log in to their emails, open their caseloads, update maintenance schedules or respond to enquiries.

A cyber-attack on a housing provider has the potential to cause mass disruption to essential services. It also carries the risk of financial losses or the loss of residents' extremely sensitive data.

Forthcoming legislation in the shape of the Cyber Security and Resilience Bill has been designed to strengthen and modernise UK cyber defences to protect essential services, critical infrastructure and digital services. It focuses on improving incident response and reporting, expanding resilience standards to include the supply chain, cloud services and managed service providers, and give regulators clear powers of enforcement.

While housing providers may not be directly included in the scope, the regulations will prompt stricter requirements from regulators, insurers and funders and tighter controls on the supply chain that social housing depends on. And, in any case, strengthening cyber resilience shouldn't be dependent on legislation.

Here I've picked five easy wins that will make an immediate difference to improving your security posture and protecting your organisation from attacks.

### 1. Employ a third-party continuous monitoring tool

We are all co-dependent in the cyber world. If there's a breach in one place, the chances are that many parties elsewhere in the chain will be affected.

In social housing, this encompasses outsourced services ranging from IT and HR platforms to building maintenance and community engagements. It's a complex ecosystem of suppliers, contractors and cloud providers that landlords need to be able to trust.

In the past, having visibility over the security posture of the entire supplier network has been challenging, often relying only on an annual questionnaire. However, technology now enables the move to continuous monitoring and far greater visibility.

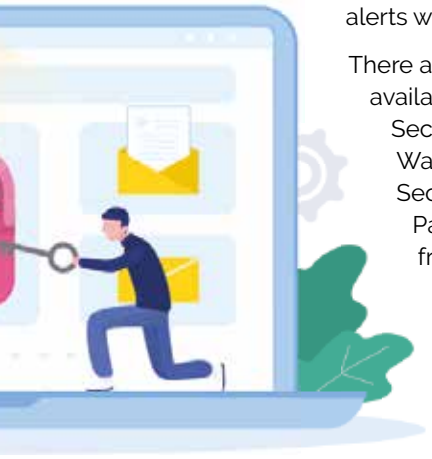
Through continuous monitoring tools, organisations in the supply chain can share up-to-date security compliance details and credentials in one place. Continuous monitoring should complement (but not replace) due diligence, helping users focus their assurance efforts where the risk is greatest.

Automated risk ratings, attack-surface scanning and vendor-risk dashboards help map the landscape while real-time updates on emerging threats, expired certificates, exposed services and data breaches provide full risk oversight. This even extends to 'fourth' parties (the suppliers to your suppliers) so that any weak links, risks or breaches further down the chain can be identified early.

## 2. Subscribe to threat intelligence feeds

Knowledge sharing is one of the greatest tools in cyber security. There is a community of experts who monitor the dark web and look out for any movements that could spell danger for particular sectors, including housing and local authorities.

Subscribing to threat intelligence feeds is a way to keep abreast of their findings and gain early warnings of emerging tactics, ransomware campaigns, credential leaks or sector-specific malware that could pose a threat. Even without a dedicated cyber team, nominating someone to review these alerts weekly can make a real difference.



There are many feeds and newsletters available, such as the National Cyber Security Centre's (NCSC) Early Warning Service or via the Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership. Some of them are free but the most comprehensive feeds are usually paid-for services.

Of course, the real value comes from acting on the intelligence. Indicators of compromise should be fed into intrusion detection systems, while intelligence should shape patching priorities and risk assessments. For resource-constrained housing providers, sharing analysis with partners can help stretch scarce expertise.

## 3. Engage with your regional 'cyber cluster'

Throughout the UK, there are regional cyber clusters supported by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the UK Cyber Cluster Collaboration, known as UKC3.

They provide spaces where organisations can share incident indicators, collaborate on training and even coordinate mutual aid during crises. There are lots of free events and services available, so get involved. They can also open access to local university talent pipelines and cyber start-ups.

Engaging in these communities can directly help address the skills and resource gaps that are otherwise a major barrier to resilience. Collaboration like this is one of the strongest force-multipliers available, so it's important to remember that you are never facing cyber resilience alone.

## 4. Establish best practice for incident reporting

Reporting can be complicated, especially when there are several different bodies to contact depending on the type of breach, from the NCSC to the Information Commissioner's Office. Creating a more streamlined approach with a single reporting channel would be beneficial to smaller organisations and those with limited budgets, but that is perhaps something for the future.

Still, the new resilience bill is likely to impose stricter rules on incident reporting, with tighter timeframes and clearer requirements for follow-up actions. Right now, many housing providers have patchy or manual incident reporting processes that make it hard to see patterns or demonstrate compliance.

It's time to try to standardise and automate reporting, such as defining what counts as an incident, setting SLAs for escalation and embedding reporting templates into service desk workflows. Aligning with the NCSC's Cyber Incident Response framework is a great starting point because it has lots of free tools that can help you manage your incident reporting successfully.

## 5. Assume breach

Finally, it's important to remember that cyber security is a continuous learning process. We will never be perfect or achieve an end-target. As such, the best mindset is to always assume that you have either been breached already or that it will happen imminently.

This will help you to focus on being vigilant in continually testing all possible entry points. It will also mean that you won't be surprised or unprepared when something does happen.

Even well-defended organisations are compromised. It can come in the form of a seemingly-innocuous email attachment that catches someone off-guard and leads to malicious software entering your network and shutting down essential systems.

Unfortunately, anywhere holding lots of citizen data will be a prime target for ransomware and fraud, so it's inevitable that there will be attempts to break through. Set up the above practices and work with your staff to embed the behaviours that will improve your cyber resilience.

In social housing, where services underpin community wellbeing, a rapid recovery mindset is just as important as prevention.

Cyber resilience isn't a single project or policy, it's a culture of preparedness. Every small step taken today reduces the impact of tomorrow's inevitable attack.

For further details, please see: **civica.com/en-gb/sector-pages/housing.**

Renata Vincoletto is the CISO at Civica.

CIVICA

# Concept Housing's compliance partnership with Plentific & TCW

Plentific and TCW have launched a 'best-in-class' compliance partnership with Concept Housing.

By combining Plentific's housing operations platform with TCW's intelligent compliance engine, the housing provider is benefitting from the smart validation of certificates, enabling immediate action on flagged risks within a single, connected platform.

Cem Savas, CEO, Plentific, said, "Compliance is about more than ticking boxes; it's about protecting residents, proving accountability and making sure supply chains work smoothly. This connected workflow with TCW drastically reduces the chance of oversights, saves valuable time and ensures that recommendations turn into actions, fast."

Traditional compliance processes rely heavily on manual document checks, making it easy to miss expired certificates, incorrect formats or incomplete data. TCW's validation system automatically scans, verifies and analyses documents the moment they are uploaded, flagging problems, highlighting what is urgent and extracting key data.

Ryan Dempsey, CEO, TCW, said, "TCW and Plentific are delivering a seamless, intelligent compliance service tailored for Concept Housing's needs. TCW's powerful compliance platform works in harmony with Plentific's contractor management platform, streamlining the validation of compliance certificates while enhancing the data in a single, automated process."

Andrew Frankum, director of compliance, health and safety, Concept Housing, said, "The new partnership with Plentific and TCW is central to Concept's vision of delivering and driving exemplary services for our residents."

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# The great cover-up

## Why housing & public-sector IT projects keep failing

**Tony Simms, Director, Quality Led Projects**

It's a story we've heard a hundred times, and one we'll likely hear a hundred more. A local authority announces a bold new digital transformation programme with a housing management system at its core. There's a press release, newsletters to the tenants and a general flurry of optimism.

After that? Months pass, deadlines slip and costs balloon. The system doesn't do half of what was promised. Fingers are pointed…

And through it all, the same question lurks behind every closed-door review: why do these public-sector IT projects keep falling apart?

I've spent more years than I'd like to admit working in and around public-sector transformation projects, including in housing. I've seen the same patterns play out across councils, housing providers and government agencies. And while it's easy to lay the blame at the feet of suppliers, software platforms or overwhelmed project teams, the real rot starts at the top.

More often than not, it's not team incompetence or system complexity that sink these projects. It's senior management's self-preservation.

Let's walk through what's really going on behind those locked boardroom doors.

### Deadlines set by politics, not possibility

Project milestones in the public sector are often set not because they're achievable but because someone senior needs to be able to say, "We're going live in Q4."

The problem isn't ambition; it's that these dates aren't tied to any realistic assessment of scope, resource or risk. They're set because someone in a leadership role wants to stand up at a council meeting and make a bold claim.

Deadlines in the public sector aren't project milestones, they're political statements. And when reality inevitably bites, such as when legacy data proves harder to migrate or integrations take longer than expected, the reaction isn't calm analysis, it's panic.

The typical response of senior management is:

- **Pile the pressure on already overstretched teams;**
- **Make arbitrary demands of suppliers to imply they have failed in some way;**
- **Shift accountability down the ladder;**
- **Shoot the messenger.**

This isn't about solving problems; it's about being able to say, "We did everything we could, they let us down and it's not our fault."

### Governance that deflects, not directs

Governance should be a guiding hand to ensure direction, clarity and responsible use of public funds. But in too many housing departments, governance has become a convenient shield.


The playbook is familiar. Pick a 'trusted' supplier, sign a hefty, jargon-laden contract, create a RAG report template, tick all the right boxes and then stand back and hope it all just works.

Of course, when it doesn't, there's a frantic scramble to distance the leadership team from blame. Out come the excuses:

- **"The supplier misunderstood our requirements."**
- **"The contract didn't explicitly include that."**
- **"We assumed that part was a supplier's responsibility."**

I've seen it time and again – governance reinterpreted not as a safety net but as a stage for 'blame theatre'. The goal isn't to learn or adapt, it's to create a paper trail that points in every direction but up.

## The sudden panic – Handover hysteria

You can almost mark your calendar by it – the moment when the 'handover demands' arrive.

Late in the project, often after months of silence, senior leadership suddenly wants every line of code, every project note, every version of history… by Friday.

This flurry of panic usually coincides with the dawning realisation that the project is 'going south' and someone is going to ask why.

But instead of stepping in to help and taking the necessary actions that the project has been demanding for months, the senior leadership reaches for the nearest available lever to prove, on paper, that someone else dropped the ball.

It's not about salvaging the project; it's about covering their own backs.

As a consequence, contracts get reinterpreted on the fly, conditions are invented and payments are withheld. And the delivery partner, whether in-house or external, is buried under a mountain of invented obligations, all in the name of plausible deniability.

## The vanishing act – Silence from the top

Here's how it typically goes.

Everyone's present at the kick-off meeting, the executive sponsor delivers a rousing opening speech, the senior stakeholder chairs the first two steering meetings, there are handshakes, smiles, maybe even pastries. Then… nothing.

Weeks go by and steering group attendance drops, emails go unanswered, decisions stall and project teams are left to make it up as they go.

Until something goes wrong. Suddenly, the senior leadership reappear, all stern-faced and armed with excuses. The same suppliers they praised in Month Two are now branded 'non-performers' in Month Ten. Reports


are rewritten, committees are convened and heads are demanded.

By then, it's too late. The project is wounded, morale is in the bin and the budget's long gone.

## When ego costs millions

All of this might be grimly entertaining if it wasn't so expensive.

Projects that should have delivered lasting transformation get stuck in endless recovery loops. Good suppliers walk away or get burnt. New suppliers charge a premium because they know they're entering a political minefield.

And the real losers? Frontline staff and tenants. The people who need housing systems that actually work and for whom 'digital transformation' is supposed to deliver better, fairer and faster services.

Instead, they get clunky work-arounds, paper forms and a system that takes ten clicks to do what should take two.

All because the people at the top couldn't bear to say, "We got it wrong."

## What it really takes to fix this

Let me be blunt – this isn't a process problem, it's a people problem.

You can have the best framework in the world, the slickest project plan and the most competent delivery team but if the leadership culture is one of fear, ego and self-preservation, failure is all but guaranteed.

What's the fix? Here's where we start:

- **Senior leadership must own the delivery**, not just the vision. You can't delegate accountability; you have to be present, supportive and engaged throughout.
- **Start dealing with problems early**, not when the walls are on fire. If something's drifting, fix it. Don't wait for the quarterly review to make it someone else's fault.
- **Act with integrity**. Celebrate the wins, sure, but own the losses too; that's what real leadership looks like.

Because yes, public-sector IT projects can work, but only when leaders are brave enough to stay in the room when things go wrong, not just when the cameras are rolling.

## Time to end the cover-up culture

We don't need another transformation strategy. We don't need another supplier review or governance rebrand. We need leaders who stop pretending that failure is always someone else's fault.

It doesn't have to be launch, ghost, fail, blame.

But that cycle won't break itself. And the cycle definitely won't break while the people in charge keep rewriting the ending to protect their image.

Until the cover-up culture goes, no framework in the world will save us.

Tony Simms is a director of Quality Led Projects.


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# The discipline behind a successful Migra-tion

George Grant, Publisher, Housing Technology

There is no digital transformation without data migration. It's the one process that exposes the quality of everything under your systems, the accuracy of your records, and the strength of your internal processes. For most organisations, it's also the moment of truth; when the data moves, reality shows up.

This is the world Migra Data operates in, led by Alan Sheldrick, a man who has spent much of his career fixing what others got wrong. Sheldrick said, "We're asked to come in when people realise that data migration isn't a side task, it's the foundation of everything that follows."

## Experience forged in the field

Sheldrick's perspective was forged during years of large-scale housing transformations, including Clarion Group and several other major housing providers which were moving from multiple legacy systems to modern cloud platforms.

Sheldrick said, "We saw the same patterns again and again. Each project started with good intentions but too often the data was treated like plumbing, something you deal with once the design is finished, but by then, it's too late. You end up forcing old structures into new systems and calling it 'progress'.

"The answers are in the data. Reviewing the data will usually highlight where current systems are failing because that's where the data is below standard."

Migra was created to break that cycle. The company's foundation is not theory but experience, hundreds of practical lessons turned into a structured methodology that removes ambiguity and risk.

Sheldrick said, "We built the model from real programmes. It's about making every step explicit – who owns it, what success looks like and what happens next. It might sound rigid but it's the only way to maintain control."

## A framework that works

Migra's 200-step migration framework defines the entire process from the first data discovery through to final archiving. It covers scoping, extraction, transformation, validation, trial cut-overs and final deployment. Each stage has clear accountability, documentation and testing.

At Clarion, this approach helped transform what had been a fragmented legacy environment into a single structured dataset ready for use in its new housing management platform.

Sheldrick said, "Clarion was a turning point. We demonstrated that a migration could be done systematically and still adapt to the quirks of each organisation. It was the proof that discipline doesn't kill agility, it enables it."

This structure means that Migra can handle complex, multi-system migrations involving asset management, finance, tenancy, CRM and document systems, often each with different owners and data standards across departments.

The result is not only clean data but operational confidence. Sheldrick said, "When the lights go on in the new system, everyone knows what's there, where it came from and why it's there."

## Precision over guesswork

What sets Migra apart is the company's obsession with precision. Take the concept of the 'golden record', the single, definitive version of each entity across multiple systems, which is where migration projects fall apart for many housing providers.

Sheldrick said, "Every organisation says it wants a single version of the truth. But unless you define it properly and enforce it through rules, you'll carry every old inconsistency forward. We build those golden records as part of the migration itself, not as an afterthought."

> Moving data is easy. Moving data that actually works is the challenge.
>
> **Alan Sheldrick, Principal Migration Consultant, Migra Data**

Migra's process involves early data profiling and quality analysis. It runs automated checks, validates constraints and designs rules that ensure the new system receives only data that fits the business processes it will run.

Sheldrick said, "Moving data is easy. Moving data that actually works is the challenge."

## Learning from the real world

Bromford's transformation project is another example of Migra's principles in action.

Sheldrick said, "We ran 18 full trial cut-overs before the final go-live. That meant we could simulate every interaction and every integration and remove any surprises before they cost anyone sleep."

That level of preparation requires patience, coordination and leadership. David Bamford, Migra's commercial director, said, "People often want to rush, but when you've rehearsed that many times, the actual cut-over is almost calm. Predictability becomes your greatest advantage."

Bamford is the commercial counterbalance to Sheldrick's technical drive. His focus is on the relationships and clarity that keep programmes stable under pressure.

Bamford said, "Clients come to us because they've seen what happens when you treat data as an IT problem. We tell them at the very start of each project: this is about people, ownership and decision-making because the technology is the easiest part."

## The human factor

For all its structure, Migra's work is deeply human. The company embeds business users early, not just IT teams.

Sheldrick said, "When people see their data cleaned and functioning in the new environment, they feel genuine pride. They start to understand what 'good' looks like. That's when adoption becomes effortless."

Migra runs workshops to show staff what data quality means in practice, linking it directly to customer service, compliance and reporting. Sheldrick said, "We're not lecturing them on governance. We're showing how clean data helps them do their jobs better."

> Our reputation comes from keeping promises. We tell clients exactly what we'll do and then we do it.
>
> **David Bamford, Commercial Director, Migra Data**

## Innovation grounded in discipline

Migra is now developing new tools to enhance speed and consistency. These include machine-learning models that identify anomalies across datasets and language-based automations that validate transformation scripts.

Bamford is cautious about AI's hype. He said, "AI can accelerate parts of the process but it can't replace professional discipline. We use automation where it adds certainty, not because it sounds clever."

The company's next phase is to further codify its methods to make them transferable across delivery partners and scalable across multiple clients.


Sheldrick said, "We are building repeatability into the DNA of every project. That's what gives our clients confidence that what worked at, say, Clarion or Bromford will work for them."

## Rules that never fail

Asked to summarise the Migra philosophy, Sheldrick listed five non-negotiable rules:

1. **Know your data early** – Understand its structure, history and limitations.
2. **Define ownership** – Every dataset needs a business owner, not just an IT contact.
3. **Build your golden records** – Fix duplications and conflicts before you migrate.
4. **Rehearse until confident** – No one ever regrets extra dry-runs.
5. **Leave baggage behind** – Archive with intention, not panic.

Sheldrick said, "Those rules might sound simple but if every project did those five things properly, half of our sector's pain would disappear."

## The business of reliability

For Bamford, the real product Migra delivers is trust. He said, "Our reputation comes from keeping promises. We tell clients exactly what we'll do and then we do it. Housing providers have been through enough transformation fatigue – they want predictability, honesty and quality that lasts."

It's this mix of engineering rigour and business transparency that makes Migra stand out. Its success stories are quiet ones - programmes that go live without drama, data that works from day one and teams that sleep at night.

## Getting the job done properly

Data migration might not sound glamorous but it remains the most critical ingredient in digital transformations. It demands structure, honesty and an understanding of both technology and people.

Migra has built its name by treating that process with the seriousness it deserves. In a sector where failed data migrations can define careers, Sheldrick and Bamford have built something rare, a company that treats reliability as an art form.

For further information, please see: **migra.co.uk**

George Grant is the publisher of Housing Technology. Alan Sheldrick is the principal migration consultant and David Bamford is the commercial director at Migra Data.

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## Give your staff the insight they need to provide real support and engagement.

Use data to sustain tenancies and support residents.

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Prioritise and effectively collect arrears


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# Beyond the rent statement

## From reactive firefighting to proactive support

**Katrina Heyworth, Head of Sales, Housing Insight**

For housing officers, each day is often a whirlwind of reactive tasks. A missed rent payment triggers a letter. A complaint call launches an investigation. An anti-social behaviour report starts a formal process. It's all a constant cycle of firefighting, addressing problems only after they've taken root.

But what if you could see the warning signs before the fire started? What if you could offer a lifebuoy before a resident felt like they were drowning in debt?

This isn't wishful thinking. It's the reality of a proactive, data-driven approach to resident engagement. By shifting from reacting to problems to anticipating needs, housing teams can build trust, sustain tenancies and make a more meaningful impact on residents' lives.

### The power of spotting the signs

A proactive approach is about using the information you already have to understand a resident's story beyond their payment history. It's about connecting the dots to identify early indicators of potential vulnerability or struggle. A single data point might be a blip but a pattern tells a story.

Consider these warning signs that might fly under the radar in a traditional, reactive model:

- **Shifting payment patterns –** A resident who always pays on the first day of the month suddenly starts paying on the 20th. They're still paying, so a standard arrears system wouldn't flag it, but this change is a classic indicator of financial strain.
- **Digital disengagement –** A resident who regularly used the self-service portal to check their balance or report a repair suddenly stops logging in. This could signal anything from a lost password to a bigger problem where they are feeling overwhelmed and disengaging from responsibilities.
- **A spike in minor repairs –** An increase in calls for small, unrelated repairs could indicate a resident is struggling to cope with the upkeep of their home, which can often be linked to wider wellbeing issues.

In a reactive world, these signals are missed but in a proactive world, they're an opportunity to reach out and help, yet many housing providers don't always have the necessary insight to take a proactive approach.

### A tale of two approaches – The story of Mrs Evans

Let's imagine a resident, Mrs. Evans. She's had her hours cut at work and is worried about making ends meet.

With a reactive approach, when Mrs Evans misses her first full rent payment, a standard, automated letter is sent. The formal language worries her but she's too embarrassed to call. She misses a second payment, the arrears process escalates, the letters become more severe and the relationship with her housing officer becomes strained and stressful. The debt grows and so does the risk to her tenancy.

In contrast, by taking a proactive approach, a modern system, such as Housing Insight's PanConnect, doesn't just look for non-payment. It flags the change in Mrs. Evans's payment pattern from the first to the 20th of the month and her housing officer, Sarah, gets an alert.

Instead of a formal letter, Sarah gives her a call. "Hi Mrs. Evans, it's Sarah from the housing association. I'm just checking in because I noticed your payment date has recently shifted. I wanted to make sure everything is all right and to remind you that our money advice team is here to help if things are ever a bit tight."

This simple, human-to-human check-in opens the door. Mrs. Evans shares her situation. Sarah can immediately connect her with the in-house support team who help her with a benefits check and a successful application for a discretionary housing payment.

The outcome? A potential arrears case is prevented, Mrs. Evans gets the support she needs to stay in her home and the relationship between her and her landlord is strengthened. That's the power of proactive engagement.

## Making proactive engagement a reality

Manually tracking these subtle changes across hundreds or thousands of tenancies is impossible. This is where technology becomes a crucial partner. The goal isn't to replace the housing officer but to empower them with the right information at the right time.

Solutions such as PanConnect are designed to do the heavy lifting. They connect the dots behind the scenes, providing a single, clear view of a resident's situation.

The PanConnect staff app gives housing officers in the field instant access to key information. This allows them to provide focused, needs-based support, helping to avoid awkward interactions and build better relationships with residents.

The PanConnect self-service solution, where residents can raise requests and repairs with their housing provider can also act as a tool for proactive engagement. For example, by linking repair data to rent payments, we can identify residents who stopped paying their rent after reporting significant problems, such as persistent damp and mould. This provides housing teams with crucial context before they contact the resident.

By embracing a data-driven, proactive model, housing providers can:

- Reduce arrears and prevent debt from escalating.
- Increase tenancy sustainment and build more stable communities.
- Improve residents' wellbeing by offering timely, targeted support.
- Boost job satisfaction for housing officers, allowing them to focus on more rewarding work.

The future of resident engagement lies in moving beyond firefighting. It's about using insight to act with foresight, building stronger, more supportive relationships one proactive conversation at a time.

Do you want to learn more about empowering your team with the tools for proactive resident engagement? Visit **housing-insight.co.uk** or contact **sales@housing-insight.co.uk**.

Katrina Heyworth is the head of sales at Housing Insight.

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# AI for rent

## Smarter and kinder arrears management

**Jamie Symons, Head of Product & Engineering, Access PaySuite**

The UK's social housing sector is at a tipping point. Arrears are rising, residents' trust is fraying and housing providers themselves are under immense pressure to deliver financial stability and social support.

The rising complexity of tenants' circumstances, ranging from fluctuating incomes to cost-of-living pressures, means that income teams face challenges far beyond simple rent collections.

As such, traditional enforcement-led strategies, which rely heavily on chasing arrears and applying penalties, are becoming increasingly ineffective.

Rather than resolving the underlying problems, these approaches often exacerbate financial hardship, strain tenant relationships and place unsustainable demands on already-overstretched income teams. This creates a cycle where arrears persist, residents' dissatisfaction grows and the potential for proactive, supportive engagement is missed.

In this context, AI-powered income management is emerging as a transformative solution, offering social housing a smarter and fairer way forward.

### Rising arrears & declining satisfaction

According to the English Housing Survey 2023-2024, 15 per cent of social renters reported being in arrears at some point within those 12 months. This trend was particularly concerning for younger tenants, with 25 per cent of those aged 25-34 reporting arrears, compared with just three per cent of those aged 75 or above.

These trends were further reflected in our own Access PaySuite Rental Arrears Index 2024, which showed that the average proportion of social housing units in arrears per local authority had risen from 35 per cent in 2019 to 41 per cent in 2024. Meanwhile, over the same five-year period, the average value of outstanding rent per local authority rose from £1.8 million to over £3.1 million.

This data highlights not only the scale of financial risk but also the human cost, with tenants increasingly struggling to balance their housing payments with everyday expenses, intensifying pressure on both residents and income teams.

Furthermore, the Local Government Association's poll on residents' satisfaction highlighted a significant decline. According to the poll, only 57 per cent of residents were satisfied with their local council, a decrease from 62 per cent in the LGA's previous poll. Among other things, this decline reflects broader concerns about the quality and responsiveness of LGA councils' services, including housing.

Combined, these statistics paint a concerning picture for social housing. Rising arrears and declining satisfaction aren't isolated problems but interconnected challenges that demand a comprehensive and empathetic response.

### AI-powered, proactive and resident-centric

In response to these challenges, AI-powered income management offers a paradigm shift.

access PaySuite

# Income management just got interesting. No, really.

## Meet the UK's first AI-powered income management solution.

## Trusted by 70+ housing associations.

Access PaySuite allows all staff to get the information they need, easily. No reports - just ask the question you need answering.

Evo Income Management handles the complexity while your team focus on what matters: Supporting your tenants.

- **AI-driven easy access to data**
- **Real-time payment visibility**
- **Flexible payment systems**
- **Capacity unlocked for tenant support**

**See how it works in practice**

Trustpilot **Rated Excellent**

Leveraging real-time data and advanced analytics, housing providers can identify early warning signs of financial distress before delivering timely and tailored interventions. This data-led, proactive approach moves beyond traditional enforcement, instead focusing on understanding and addressing the underlying causes of arrears.

For example, AI has the rapid processing power to identify and highlight the subtle changes in payment behaviour, such as missed partial payments or late patterns, long before arrears become critical. This foresight enables income teams to intervene early, offering a tailored support that meets tenants where they are.

This proactive, personalised engagement benefits everyone. Tenants receive timely support that respects and reduces the stress of their situation, fostering trust and ultimately strengthening landlord-resident relationships. Whether it's a flexible payment plan, targeted financial guidance or signposting tenants to external support services, interventions can be designed around individual circumstances, not a one-size-fits-all enforcement script.

On the other hand, income teams are freed from the repetitive task of chasing late payments, allowing them to focus more on complex cases where human empathy and nuanced judgement matter most.

The result is a more resilient, responsive system that balances financial performance with social purpose.

Access PaySuite's Income Management Evo software exemplifies this approach. Combining AI-driven insights with digital engagement tools, Income Management Evo helps housing providers to prioritise their cases based on risk, automate routine communications and track outcomes in real time.

AI can't predict the future but it can provide income teams with actionable intelligence, highlighting where early interventions might have the greatest impact. This allows housing providers to act decisively and support tenants before their financial difficulties escalate.

The impact of AI-driven insights goes beyond individual interventions. Over time, these tools enable housing providers to understand broader trends across their resident population, such as identifying patterns in arrears linked to seasonal income fluctuations, benefit delays or wider economic pressures.

This aggregated understanding allows housing providers to refine their policies, design more effective support programmes and allocate resources to where they will have the greatest impact.

Crucially, AI has the potential to foster more collaborative dialogue between tenants and housing teams. By providing clear, accessible insights into payment plans and options, residents can engage proactively with their finances rather than feeling ambushed by enforcement actions.

This transparency and clarity helps shift the relationship from one of compliance to partnership.

## Balancing financial performance with social purpose

AI-driven income management doesn't just improve arrears performance, it reshapes the purpose of income teams. By shifting the focus from punitive enforcement to proactive support, housing providers can work towards stronger financial outcomes while maintaining their social mission.

AI enables housing providers to respond to the growing diversity of tenants' circumstances. Whether supporting tenants facing fluctuating incomes, families affected by benefit delays or elderly residents on fixed incomes, technology allows interventions to be tailored, timely and fair.

The result isn't just more effective arrears management, but also stronger trust, better engagement and a sense of shared responsibility between a housing provider and its tenants.

Ultimately, AI for rent is not just about technology adoption for the sake of keeping up-to-date; it's about relationships, empowering tenants and equipping housing teams to deliver more effective, compassionate outcomes for communities across the UK.

For further details, please see: **accesspaysuite.com.**

Jamie Symons is the head of product and engineering at Access PaySuite, part of the Access Group.

access PaySuite

# Mobysoft's independent validation of arrears performance


Mobysoft has received independent verification that users of its AI-powered RentSense income collection software have collectively outperformed non-users by 23 per cent over a five-year period.

Mobysoft originally analysed five years of arrears data (2019/20–2023/24) from the Regulator of Social Housing's global accounts and local authority housing statistics (LAHS). The analysis showed that housing providers using RentSense recorded stronger arrears performance than non-users.

The software provider's analysis was then verified by Housemark, with RentSense customers' average arrears falling from four per cent to 3.7 cent against non-users' arrears increasing from four per cent to 4.5 per cent.

Nick Beasley, income maximisation director, Mobysoft, said, "This validation of our customers' arrears performance gives other housing providers complete confidence that AI-driven solutions such as RentSense deliver measurable financial resilience.

"Our customers are not only reducing their arrears, they're also reducing former-tenant arrears (FTAs) and bad debt while sustaining their tenancies. That's because RentSense, combined with Mobysoft's income maximisation support, helps housing providers' income teams intervene earlier, support tenants faster and prevent debts from snowballing."

## Together Housing's arrears boost with Mobysoft

**Together Housing has increased the credit across its tenants' accounts by almost £2 million following its implementation of Mobysoft's RentSense and Automated Arrears Prevention (AAP) software.**

In 2024, Together Housing had the challenge of collecting an additional £20 million in rent as well as dealing with the 53-week rent year and the migration of 3,300 tenants from housing benefit to universal credit.

Jackie Tagg, income manager, Together Housing, said, "AAP has been brilliant. Once implemented, you can almost forget it exists because it works in the background for you.

"The number of people now in credit on universal credit outweighs those in debt, whereas last year it was the other way around."

Historically, many of Together Housing's tenants had been allowed to pay retrospectively, which made it harder to keep arrears under control and created difficult conversations for frontline staff. Mobysoft's AAP platform predicts which tenants in long-term credit may fall into debt and automates a text to them, either signposting or sharing a link to a portal to make payment, preventing arrears from escalating.


## Newham Council increases TA collections by £1.9m with Mobysoft

**Newham Council has increased its collections from temporary accommodation (TA) arrears by £1.9 million over the past year through its use of Mobysoft's RentSense software.**

With over 7,100 TA households, the council was spending around £1.8 million per week just on TA. The consequent scale and complexity of managing its TA arrears required smarter, faster decision-making across its income services.

With RentSense, Newham Council has been able to identify its priority cases, reduce wasted effort and enable earlier and better-targeted contact with tenants via automated SMS messaging. The platform's ability to produce actionable case lists for officers each week has allowed the council's team to maximise its capacity.

Simon Barton, head of housing income collection, Newham Council, said, "Last year we ended with £1.9 million more in collections for temporary accommodation, despite rising case numbers. That wouldn't have been possible without the early interventions and efficiencies that RentSense provides.

"RentSense has been a core part of how we manage arrears, particularly in a high-pressure environment like TA, where delays in processing or missed claims can quickly escalate into significant debt."

## Melville Housing reaches 100 per cent arrears completions

**Following its use of Mobysoft's RentSense software, Melville Housing has reported net arrears of only 1.7 per cent for 2024/25, making it one of Scotland's top-performing housing providers for rent collection.**

The housing provider has achieved 100 per cent weekly case completions across its income team, with RentSense providing the visibility and structure needed to prioritise its arrears cases effectively.

Jane Burnett, head of housing services, Melville Housing, said, "Our exceptional performance is in part due to RentSense. Our staff log in and see manageable caseloads, helping them to focus on quality over quantity and reach tenants who really need support."


## Mobysoft appoints new CEO

**Mobysoft has appointed Gary Young as its new chief executive officer.**

With over 35 years' experience in the global technology sector, Young has held senior leadership roles across software, communications and data-driven innovation. Most recently, he served as CEO of Peppermint Technology, where he oversaw a period of highly positive customer and employee satisfaction, significant growth and expanded the company's SaaS legal platform and global reach.

Young said, "Mobysoft is a business with a strong reputation for delivering measurable outcomes for its customers. What excites me most is the opportunity to work with our customers and exceptional team to innovate and deliver value for the housing sector."

Martin McDonnell, Managing Director, PIMSS Data Systems

# The evolution & future of asset management software

When I set up my business 30 years ago, I couldn't have imagined how much asset management and technology would change.

Back then, most housing providers were juggling clipboards, filing cabinets and a growing number of spreadsheets. Data was patchy, systems were fragmented and decisions often relied on instinct as much as evidence. The idea that we could build software to help housing providers manage their homes more systematically felt ambitious, even a little risky.

Three decades on, I've had a front-row seat to watch the evolution of asset management in housing, from spreadsheets to AI and from desktop PCs to the cloud. Looking back, it's been a journey shaped as much by the pressures on the housing sector as by the pace of technological change.

## The early days – Spreadsheets and bespoke systems

In the early 1990s, the housing sector was only just beginning to digitise. Stock-condition surveys were carried out on paper, typed up later and analysed, if at all, through basic Excel spreadsheets.

In the early days, our first task was often to convince housing providers that dedicated software could do more than Excel but it wasn't easy. Spreadsheets were familiar, cheap and 'good enough' for many people, but they couldn't handle the growing complexity of asset data.

Our early systems were clunky by today's standards, installed on single desktops, with interfaces that now look prehistoric. But for many housing providers, they represented the first step toward a centralised, reliable way of managing their housing stock. I remember the feeling when a client first told us, "At last, I know exactly how many properties have a gas certificate." It sounds simple now but it was revolutionary then.

## The 2000s – Growth, compliance & integration

As the 2000s progressed, the sector's focus shifted. Regulatory expectations increased and compliance became a central driver. Suddenly, being able to prove that every property had up-to-date safety checks wasn't just best practice, it was a requirement.

This was the decade where asset management systems really found their footing. Our company grew as housing providers and local councils recognised that spreadsheets weren't enough. They needed proper audit trails, reliable reports and structured data.

Integration was also becoming important. Finance teams wanted to see the same numbers as asset managers. Repairs teams wanted planned maintenance aligned with responsive works. We began developing ways to connect our software to housing management and finance systems. At the time, this was complicated but it was the start of a larger shift towards joined-up data.
Looking back, I can see how sector pressures shaped the technology; compliance and regulation drove adoption far more than efficiency arguments ever did.

## The 2010s – Mobile and the cloud

The 2010s were transformative. Broadband, mobile devices and cloud computing changed the game completely.

Surveyors were suddenly able to capture data on tablets instead of paper forms, so no more double entry and no more weeks lost typing up survey results. For many of our clients, this was the first taste of real-time data and it was a game-changer.

At the same time, moving systems into the cloud removed the need for servers in basements and local IT teams spending their weekends on updates. Suddenly, asset management data was available anywhere, anytime to anyone with the right permissions.

But it wasn't all smooth sailing. We learned a lot about change management during this period. Too often, systems were bought as 'silver bullets' but failed to deliver because staff weren't properly trained or because data quality was poor. We came to realise that success depended as much on people and processes as on software design.

## The 2020s – From data to insights

Fast forward to today and asset management software has matured into something far more powerful. It's no longer just about storing data, it's about turning data into insights.

Our clients now expect systems that:

- **Model investment scenarios years into the future.**
- **Track and evidence compliance at board level.**
- **Support retrofit planning for net zero.**
- **Integrate with IoT devices to enable predictive maintenance.**

These are things we could only have dreamed of when I set up PIMSS. Yet here we are, with the sector asking not just, "What do we know about our stock?" but "What should we do next?"

I often think about how the focus has shifted over the years, from efficiency to compliance and onwards to sustainability. Each decade has brought its own priorities, and the technology has had to evolve to meet them.

## Lessons learned along the way

30 years in this field has taught us a few lessons:

- **Data quality is everything – A shiny system with poor data is worse than useless.**

- People matter more than features – Adoption succeeds when the staff understand why they're using the system, not just how.
- Technology follows pressure – Regulation, funding constraints and tenants' expectations have always driven innovation more than the technology itself.
- Keep it simple – The best systems aren't those with the most features but those that people actually use.

## Looking ahead – Smarter, simpler & more connected

Where next? If the past 30 years are anything to go by, the next ten will be even faster paced. I see a few clear trends:

- Artificial intelligence helping housing providers to identify risks, such as predicting where damp and mould might emerge before it becomes a problem.
- User-friendly design becoming a baseline expectation, with staff expecting systems to be as intuitive as the apps on their phones.
- Seamless data flow across housing, finance and compliance functions, breaking down silos once and for all.
- Tenant visibility, with residents increasingly being able to access relevant property data directly, supporting transparency and trust.

## Final reflections

When I started my company 30 years ago, asset management software was a niche idea. Today, it's an essential part of the responsible running of any housing provider.

Looking back, we can be proud of what we've achieved. Looking forward, there are exciting times ahead because, if there's one thing that the last 30 years has proved, the evolution of asset management software is far from finished.

I've seen the journey from clipboards to cloud dashboards, from reactive record-keeping to predictive insights. What hasn't changed is the purpose – helping housing providers make better decisions and, ultimately, improving the lives of their tenants.

For more information, please visit **pimss.com**.

Martin McDonnell is the managing director of PIMSS Data Systems.

# AI in (a)ssets & (i)nfrastructure

**John McEwan, Technical Director, FireAngel**

With AI already transforming how home safety is managed, monitored and safeguarded, FireAngel's technical director, John McEwan, looks at the benefits of using AI to protect homes and enable emergency interventions.

AI has ushered in an era of rapid digital transformations in the way that assets and infrastructure are monitored, protected and maintained. By analysing swathes of data from real-time monitoring systems and using predictive technologies, it is redefining asset protection and management. These innovations are quickly becoming a necessity for organisations that need comprehensive safeguarding procedures for properties and critical infrastructure.

Through the intelligent application of connected systems, real-time data flows and predictive analytics, local authorities, housing providers and emergency services are in a better position to proactively protect their communities while optimising operational efficiency.

## From reactive to proactive

Legacy property management systems and processes often rely on the reactive approach of intervention or remediation once an alarm triggers or a tenant reports a major maintenance problem, respectively. This style of property management, with scheduled servicing and after-the-fact interventions, often leads to costlier fixes that are more disruptive to operations and tenants' lives than they should have been.

Predictive technologies are now challenging this model by analysing huge amounts of live data from networks of smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms alongside environmental monitors and using AI analytics to anticipate device degradation, identify anomalies and flag environmental risks before failure. Instead of replacing equipment when it malfunctions or bearing the burden of expensive emergency repairs, housing providers can target their interventions more effectively, reducing downtime and saving on costs.

For housing providers with large portfolios, the implications of a 'smart' management style can be significant. Fewer missed and false alarms, lower overall costs and stronger compliance through the generation of reports that can automatically register standards updates and legislative changes.

# 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

## Real-time data

Previously, scaling safeguarding systems has always been a necessary headache for housing providers where growth means more complicated safety assurance.

A local authority with 10,000 properties may miss the occasional defunct alarm and may struggle to prioritise its risk assessments across such dispersed stock. However, these blind spots create real threats that can't be ignored – real-time monitoring delivers the necessary visibility to mitigate risk.

IoT-enabled devices integrated into connected platforms allow housing providers to access live status data across their entire estates. AI-based filtering can then create a picture of the status of devices and individuals, then learning from pattern recognition and identifying potential false flags to only return critical faults and actionable insights.

For example, FireAngel Connected aggregates home safety data across housing portfolios through interconnected alarms and environmental sensors to predict how the status of each property might degrade. With individual sensors, the predictive algorithm can calculate the likelihood of mould developing in a home, before it does.

By aggregating data across portfolios, systemic risks that were previously invisible suddenly become visible. If multiple flats in the same development show recurring mould problems, there might be an underlying ventilation issue or poor insulation. If similar household appliances repeatedly fail across a borough, property managers can determine the root cause of those failures and implement strategic, data-led interventions.

This allows property managers to move from systems reliant on hardware to more fluid systems that surround and support safety procedures and interventions to improve them as time goes on.

## Emergency responses

Predicting risks and maintenance requirements before they occur is one thing but the response time and method for an emergency can be the difference between life and death.

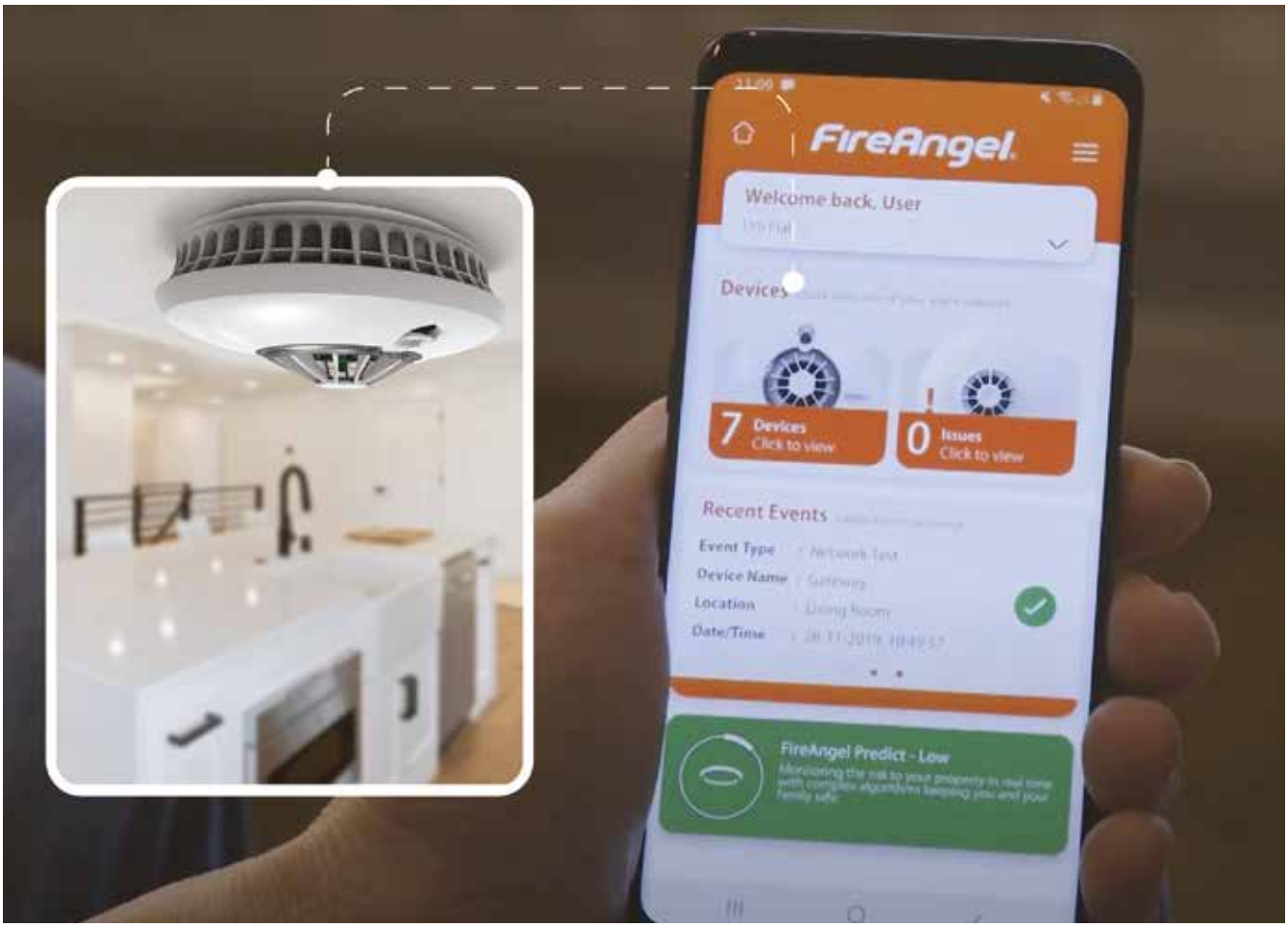
AI is reshaping how emergency services respond to crises as they unfold. Prior to emergency call-outs, predictive technologies, such as FireAngel Predict, can analyse trends such as repeated alarms or delayed silencing to provide an early warning framework to intervene proactively. This technology also registers potential false alarms, prompting interventions before requesting the fire and rescue services (FRS), saving resources and potential distractions from real emergencies.

During an emergency, the FRS are beginning to integrate AI into their response methodologies. Real-time data analysis from contemporary systems can streamline decision-making in high-stake situations, allowing for clear and informed interventions. Imaging and sensing technologies can provide situational awareness by accurately spotting trapped residents or by identifying hazards and factors such as wind direction that could alter a fire's behaviour.

Whether hazard detection, communication support or planning, connected technologies will continue to synergise, creating a network of data that will improve emergency response times and effectiveness. The FRS will have an increasingly comprehensive picture of the at-risk situation as more smart technologies are deployed.

## Challenges & barriers

As with all new technologies, the widescale adoption of integrated AI systems isn't without barriers. Caution with data-based technologies always calls for concerns around privacy which must be carefully considered, especially where personal and health-related data is collected.




The National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC) released its AI and digital ethics framework last year in an effort to guide the responsible use of AI in fire safety. With connected technologies, ethical governance is imperative for its successful adoption and although this can be a difficult challenge to achieve without compromising its predictive value, it is nonetheless necessary.

Besides privacy, there is the concern of disproportionate adoption, resulting in less-connected estates excluded from digital ecosystems. For universal predictive safety and data that is ubiquitous for fire and rescue services, this digital divide must be closed. The benefits for housing providers to invest in the technology early should be a driver for this, although the initial capital investment is still a considerable barrier for many housing providers.

Additionally, integrating these new systems with legacy systems is difficult (at times, impossible), creating another barrier that's often simply not worth the headache in the short term. However, the benefit of investing in adaptable platforms offers long-term cost benefits and a more flexible compliance approach, some of which are compatible with legacy systems.

## Conclusion

The application and integration of AI into assets and infrastructure management should be considered as a necessary next step in the evolution of smarter and more accurate safety monitoring. These new technologies can process and analyse data in volumes simply impossible for legacy systems and can anticipate risks rather than react, resulting in fewer incidents and lower maintenance costs.

Real-time data will continue to enhance housing providers' oversight of their housing stock and the effectiveness of emergency responders, better protecting assets and, most importantly, the residents. Predictive technologies are already identifying behavioural patterns in tenants and facilitating interventions to improve wellbeing; as they become further enhanced, both residents and housing providers can expect to benefit from intelligent management.

For more information, please visit **fireangel.co.uk/trade/contact-us-connected**.

John McEwan is the technical director at FireAngel.

FireAngel

# Data, devices and automation

## The three pillars of modern housing

**Ross Hayward, IoT Product Manager, Social Telecoms**

Housing Technology's Data Matters 2025 event in September was a galvanising moment for attendees and speakers alike. With all eyes on Awaab's Law, housing professionals were unified in their questions around regulation, automation and implementation.

Awaab's Law marks a major collective step for our sector. Data will be the defining resource in a new age of social housing, and while many of us have long since acknowledged its importance, clean data and automated systems were once regarded as aspirational 'nice to haves'.

These new regulations herald a fundamental shift in how properties are managed. The transition from reactive to proactive maintenance might sound intimidating but the benefits represent a modern age of housing and a universal raising of standards unlike anything we've seen before.

Awaab's Law reframes aspirational ideas about what housing can be. Rather than half-entertaining automation as a vision of the future, it's becoming realised, tangible and, most importantly, achievable.

### The new standard

With so much discussion centred around damp and mould, you'd be forgiven for thinking these new regulations address a single issue. However, while damp and mould hazards are the most immediate aspect of Awaab's Law, it's important to take a wider view.

Throughout 2026 and 2027, Awaab's Law will expand, encompassing 28 of the 29 hazards covered in the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Excess heat and cold, fall risks, water leaks, domestic hygiene, electrical hazards, biocides, noise, food safety and entry by intruder – all of these concerns and more must be considered and addressed.

This will require a comprehensive approach, including better data standards, more efficient processes and insightful reporting on a sector-wide scale. The extent of these changes are far-reaching but this transformation will deliver massive organisational benefits in addition to providing a new standard of care for residents.

The benefits include enabling predictive maintenance, remote monitoring of devices, automated reporting, improved asset management and benchmarking, better energy efficiency and reduced maintenance costs.

### Better living through IoT

When we launched Social Telecoms' 'Backbone to the Future' campaign, we were motivated by the idea that wireless networks in residents' properties could do more than provide internet access – that through the implementation of IoT devices, housing providers could improve residents' lives in new ways.

By introducing smart sensors and IoT devices into residents' homes, housing providers ensure a constant feed of fresh data. This could be from environmental sensors that detect conditions allowing mould to develop or a smart boiler giving pressure readings to indicate water leaks.

The scope of smart devices goes a long way towards addressing the 28-of-29 HHSRS hazards to be included in Awaab's Law by 2027. This not only allows for proactive monitoring and faster responses but also builds a wealth of information. Analysing this data allows housing providers to recognise patterns and detect impending hazards before they happen.

This is where the three pillars – data, devices and automation – come together, working as one IoT ecosystem. With devices regularly providing new data, housing providers are always up-to-date and informed on the condition of their properties.

## Happy to help

As the culmination of our 'Backbone to the Future' campaign, we began work on HappyIoT – a brand-neutral IoT solution supporting easy integrations and displaying devices and data on a single-screen dashboard.

This solution includes surveys, product recommendations and maintenance, giving housing associations the tools they need to implement a comprehensive IoT infrastructure.

Devices are controllable through the HappyIoT dashboard, allowing users to go beyond monitoring conditions and update the settings accordingly. If a property appears to be excessively cold, HappyIoT enables agents to check the boiler pressure and radiator status to identify any problems or adjust thermostat settings to increase the heat.

In some instances, housing providers have begun to integrate smart devices into their properties only to hit a snag down the line, with one leading cause being devices struggling to communicate with one another over different protocols.

With this in mind, HappyIoT is set up for retrospective integrations as well as being fully brand-neutral, allowing a housing provider's existing IoT devices to mesh seamlessly with our platform. By making IoT more accessible and easier to integrate, we hope to ease the transition onto new digital infrastructure.

## Guided by voices

While smart devices and IoT do much of the heavy lifting in capturing data and automating processes, modern contact centre solutions, such as from 8x8 and Zoom, provide tools to bolster your efforts and better understand property conditions and residents' experience.

With AI transcriptions, summaries and sentiment analysis for received calls, these solutions integrate with your CRM, keeping valuable information accessible and preventing data silos. Not only this, but with image- and video-sharing capabilities, 8x8 and Zoom both enable residents to share visual records of problems in their homes.

These solutions paint a fuller picture of property conditions and ensure important information from customer contacts is retained. Additionally, they do so without the need for engineers to make multiple property visits, saving time, costs and carbon output for a more efficient service. In some cases, engineers can advise on simple fixes remotely, educating and empowering residents to solve future problems.

Finally, AI agents are available to answer routine questions and book engineers' visits for residents, providing useful automations and enabling customer self-service. While many of these features are best-suited to reactive repairs rather than predictive maintenance, they enable greater efficiencies for housing providers and faster outcomes for residents.

## Tools for tomorrow

Equipped with the right devices, good data and appropriate automations, housing providers can achieve new levels of resident care and property maintenance, not only to meet regulations but also to excel in their own right.

While this sector-wide transformation has presented challenges, it feels like a timely and necessary step, and a process which ultimately benefits housing providers in achieving previously-unthinkable efficiencies to improve residents' lives.

For further information, please see:
**socialtelecoms.org.uk**

Ross Hayward is the IoT product manager at Social Telecoms.

# Adra's deployment of Asprey Assets

Adra has recently implemented Asprey Assets as its new asset management solution within its ongoing digital strategy to stay agile and reduce maintenance by moving to cloud-based software with better tools for tracking, managing and maintaining its assets.

The implementation of Asprey Assets at Adra was completed over four months, with the combined Adra-Asprey project team undertaking thorough data analysis, user-acceptance testing, weekly meetings and comprehensive training sessions.

Sarah Louise Griffith, ICT solutions manager, Adra, said, "One of the challenges we encountered was migrating and integrating data from our legacy system. This process demanded planning and coordination to guarantee data integrity and accuracy while also providing an opportunity to assess our data and implement measures for its enhancement.

"A key advantage of Asprey Assets is its customisable dashboards. These dashboards offer a dynamic, visual interface which allows the different teams within Adra to access and share real-time information on our housing assets."

## RHP's signs with Asprey for asset management

**RHP has signed a three-year contract with Asprey Management Solutions for its asset management software.**

The housing provider will use Asprey Assets to manage the data for its housing portfolio, support investment planning, streamline internal operations and improve reporting capabilities. Asprey's cloud-based software also includes ready-to-use BI tools for company-wide performance transparency and comprehensive self-service tools for asset rationalisation and option appraisals.

The reported advantages for RHP encompass cost-effective data collection, simplified decision-making processes, efficiency gains and enhanced visibility of organisational performance.

John Thompson, asset investment manager, RHP, said, "We're really looking forward to using the features of Asprey to support our data-driven approach to investing in our customers' homes."

## Settle opts for Asprey's AspireBI

**Settle Group has recently implemented AspireBI, the strategic asset management and option appraisal platform from Asprey Management Solutions.**

Chris Furlong, director of assets and compliance, Settle Group, said, "This implementation of Aspire BI has given us an excellent overview of our performance. The ability to appraise our assets within this model gives us the insight needed to make intelligent and forward-thinking decisions about how we will continue to invest in our homes."

# CHP's Salesforce solution for Awaab's Law

Jenny Wilks, Head of Digital Delivery, CHP

For CHP, our journey toward compliance with Awaab's Law began with a stark realisation. As the requirements became clear, it was evident that our existing systems and processes were simply not up to the task.

Our case management tools couldn't link repairs to case details, didn't allow for comprehensive tracking or reporting and made it nearly impossible to meet the strict timescales and communication standards now demanded by law. Our teams found themselves working across multiple disconnected systems, struggling to share information and keep up with the volume and complexity of cases.

The risks were mounting – regulatory intervention, legal claims, dissatisfied customers and reputational damage all potentially loomed large.

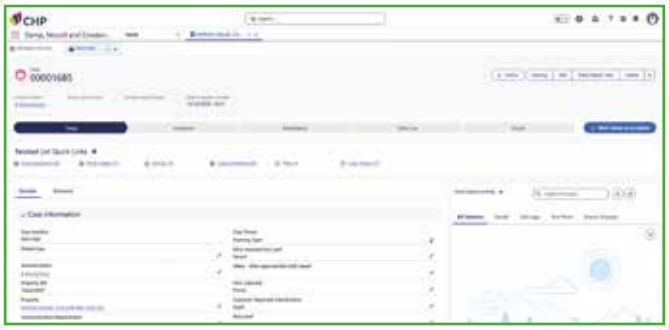
## No incremental fixes

It was obvious that incremental fixes wouldn't be enough. We needed a fundamental rethink and a complete overhaul of how we managed hazards, responded to customers and ensured the safety and wellbeing of our communities.

The challenge wasn't only technical but also cultural and operational: to move quickly, decisively and collaboratively to put in place the systems, processes and resources that would allow us to meet and exceed the new standards set by Awaab's Law.

To address the shortcomings of our existing case management processes and comply with Awaab's Law, we planned to invest in a fully-functional case management system built on Salesforce, with integrated video remote assistant (VRA) technology. The approach included:

- **Implementing Salesforce as a core platform –** We selected Salesforce, in partnership with consultancy Alscient, to provide a robust, extendable platform for damp, mould and condensation (DMC) case management. Salesforce would enable the creation and progression of tasks across multiple teams and processes, integrating with our existing housing and contractor management systems.
- **Integration and data sharing –** The new system would allow seamless integration between customer, property and repair data, overcoming our previous inability to link repairs to case details and ensuring all relevant information was accessible in one place.
- **Video remote assistant (VRA) technology –** VRA would enable the remote triaging of cases, allowing for faster and more flexible investigations. This would help us meet the strict timescales for hazard investigations and repair commencements required by Awaab's Law.
- **Performance monitoring and reporting –** Salesforce would provide enhanced performance monitoring tools and richer reporting for better decision-making and compliance tracking.
- **Customer and employee experience –** The new system was expected to deliver a more consistent and responsive service for residents, with clear and timely communications while also improving workflows and data access for our staff.
- **Scalability for future needs –** The platform would be designed to be reusable and extendable, ready to support other case and task management needs in the future.



By leveraging Salesforce and VRA, we aimed to deliver faster, more effective responses to DMC problems, improve compliance and enhance both customer and employee satisfaction.

## Rapid implementation

The journey from contract signature to a live case management system was intense. Once the agreement with Salesforce and Alscient was signed, the clock began ticking and within just four months, the new system was up and running.

We embraced an Agile delivery approach, which proved invaluable. Rather than sticking rigidly to a pre-set plan, the team worked in focused sprints, allowing them to adapt quickly to new insights and challenges as they arose. This flexibility meant that design tweaks and problem-solving happened in real time.

Key to the project's success was the culture of quick and decisive decision-making. We had a set of design principles that we adhered to and had weekly 'show and tell' sessions with Alscient. These were supported by regular project calls, which kept everyone aligned and ensured that progress was not only visible but also celebrated. These touchpoints also created space for honest conversations about what was working and what needed to change, helping to maintain momentum and morale.

## Integrating change management

The delivery phase was comprehensive, incorporating not just technical development but also user-acceptance testing (UAT) and a robust training programme. We knew that getting change management right was pivotal so we worked with consultants from Altair who played a crucial role in supporting change management across the business. Their expertise helped us to not only roll out Salesforce effectively but also deepen our understanding of Awaab's Law at every level of the organisation.

Change champions were appointed to act as internal advocates and guides, ensuring that our colleagues felt supported and informed throughout the transition. This network of champions, combined with our regular communications and collaborative spirit, helped to embed our new ways of working and fostered a shared sense of ownership across our teams.

Looking back, the delivery of the new case management system was more than just a technical implementation. It was a whole-organisation effort, marked by agility, teamwork and a shared commitment to making a real difference for customers and employees.

## Widespread adoption

The system itself is proving intuitive and easy to use, which has helped drive rapid adoption across the business. Importantly, CHP employees now have access to richer and more reliable data and better reporting tools, making their work more efficient and informed.

Our teams can also access Salesforce on their handheld devices while they are working in the field. This is a real step forward because it allows our remote workers to access all case information and update it in real time.

The project team at CHP is excited about the results of using modern technology and the overall success of the project. It has been genuinely refreshing for everyone involved to work with a system that simply works – that's to say, actually delivering exactly what it promises, without the frustrations that have sometimes come with housing-sector technology in the past.

Team members have already shared stories of their surprise at the system. One colleague said, "I couldn't believe that we gave requirements for an inspection form on a Friday and it was being demoed the following Tuesday." Others are impressed by how Alscient can make tweaks and fixes during 'show and tell' sessions, bringing a new level of responsiveness and collaboration to the process.

The new platform has enabled us to meet the strict requirements of Awaab's Law, ensuring compliance with regulatory standards and reducing risks associated with health and safety, reputation and legal claims.

There is a real sense of optimism and excitement about what is possible. The team can already see a wealth of cases where this technology could help us innovate further to drive even greater efficiencies.

This project marks the beginning of a new era for how we deliver services for our customers and employees, and the organisation is proud to have met and exceeded its original project goals.

Jenny Wilks is the head of digital delivery at CHP.

# Staying ahead of Awaab's Law

**Trevor Hampton, Director of Housing Solutions, NEC Housing**

New rules on addressing damp and mould have come into force. How can housing providers use technology to meet their responsibilities to residents?

Before October 2025, if a family noticed a small patch of damp along a living room wall, they would likely report it to their housing provider and then wait for the repair to be scheduled. Housing staff would then schedule the job alongside other maintenance tasks, which meant the repair could take weeks or even months to start.

This has completely changed with the introduction of Awaab's Law. The new legislation has strict rules for managing problems such as damp and mould, including a 24-hour deadline for responding to emergencies, inspections to be completed within 10 days and repair work to start no more than three days after that. These ambitious standards are designed to protect residents and keep their homes safe.

What can housing providers do to stay one step ahead and meet the requirements of Awaab's Law?

## Take early action

The best way to meet a 24-hour emergency repair deadline is to know exactly what constitutes a damp and mould risk and which cases need to be dealt with most urgently. Staff need to quickly distinguish between a household that requires some routine maintenance and

an emergency, where damp and mould could potentially compromise a resident's health or safety.

A slow leak behind a cupboard or under a kitchen sink may seem minor for most households, but for elderly or vulnerable residents, it can quickly become a more serious problem. Housing teams can only respond effectively when they have access to accurate, up-to-date information about residents and their homes. Systems that make it easy to spot urgent cases give staff the confidence to prioritise repairs for those most at risk and ensure emergency work is completed within the 24-hour window.

## Be ready to respond

Since Awaab's Law was first announced, residents have become far more aware of the risks of issues such as damp and mould and will rightly report any concerns. Housing providers want to reassure residents that problems will be dealt with promptly. One way they can do this is to give residents the ability to report issues, arrange repairs and track the status of works online.

Online channels give people clarity on what's happening with their complaint and reduce the volume of inbound calls. This gives housing staff more time to update vulnerable residents or those who may not have regular access to the internet, by phone, email or a visit from their housing officer.

Online reporting tools also capture and timestamp all the critical information housing providers need to fix damp and mould problems, which is essential when deadlines on responding are tight. Behind the scenes, housing staff can see exactly what stage repairs are at, when inspection reports are due and which teams are responsible for carrying out the repairs on time so they can put residents' minds at ease.

## Focus budgets on keeping homes safe

Missed deadlines under Awaab's Law can lead to compensation payments to residents, while failing to meet the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) standards can affect a housing provider's borrowing potential and overall financial health. Fortunately, there are practical ways housing providers can manage these risks to protect both residents and budgets.

Systems such as NEC Housing give staff a clear view of repairs and highlight cases that might fall behind. These help to prevent costs from escalating and reduces the need to bring in extra teams at short notice, which can be expensive.

By keeping repair schedules under control, housing teams can stay ahead of potential problems, ensure emergencies are handled efficiently and prevent small problems from turning into bigger, more expensive ones.

## Working together to protect residents

Many housing providers rely on external contractors for maintenance and repairs; this can make meeting 24-hour deadlines more difficult, so clear and timely communications are essential in these situations.

Important details, such as whether there are young children in the household or if a particular case counts as an emergency, can be shared with contractors early. This gives them the chance to reschedule less urgent jobs or source materials from a different supplier to avoid delays.

It also helps to review how updates and new information are communicated, both internally and with external contractors. This, combined with some targeted training on the new legislation and the strategies to address it, will give everyone involved the knowledge they need to keep homes safe and residents protected.

## A framework for the future

Awaab's Law represents a positive step forward for social housing residents and families.

The new legislation gives housing providers a framework against which they can map their systems and processes so they can respond quickly to damp and mould and protect their most vulnerable residents from harm.

For more information, please visit **necsws.com/housing**.

Trevor Hampton is the director of housing solutions at NEC Housing.

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# IoT and 'boots on the ground'

## Communication every step of the way

**Brian Brown, Director of Business Development, Archangel**

Communication is key, so goes the well-worn phrase, and rarely is this truer than when it comes to the health and wellbeing of older adults and vulnerable tenants within individual homes or group living environments.

The onward march of digital and sensor-based technologies in social housing settings may well be delivering improved outcomes and cost efficiencies but communicating the benefits to residents will always be the vital first step in any installation.

### Jargon-free messages

The tenants are the ones who need to be fully in the picture from day one, and getting the message across in a way that is free of technical jargon and consistent over time is essential.

The approach also needs to be flexible depending on the nature of the dwellings, as we've seen in recent schemes for individual homes in Fife and a retirement complex in the Scottish Borders - no one-size fits all and a bespoke approach often needs to be adopted.

In Fife, we arranged a number of meetings for tenants in community halls and council venues, supported by easy-to-read printed literature. Everyone had to know what the project involved and that included family members, health and care workers as well as housing and facility management staff.

At the Bield retirement complex in South Lanarkshire, we organised multiple coffee mornings, again supported by accessible printed materials. The ultimate outcome at the end of this project was that all of the initially reticent residents wanted to be involved; everyone could see the advantages with the downsides almost non-existent.

### Personal dignity

The importance of personal dignity should be the central concern as we move rapidly from the disparate, reactive and bulky impositions of the past on people's lives to unobtrusive and proactive digital technologies that operate virtually unnoticed.

Tenants have to know what they need to do and, in the vast majority of cases, this is absolutely nothing.

## Hassle-free installation

The next step, the actual installation of IoT sensors around each home, also needs to be simple and hassle-free. The tiny sensors can each have numerous functions, depending on the room, and quietly do 'their thing' in the background.

Our own ambient assisted-living platform is being constantly adapted to ensure it operates in lock step with the latest advances, especially important in a world increasingly reliant on AI, as well as adhering to whatever changes take place within the regulatory environment.

There needs to be close co-ordination with the installation team, whether in-house in the case of our Bield project or sub-contracted to partner organisations. It takes just a few minutes to install and connect each sensor in a 'plug and play' manner, having already been configured with the platform.

When it comes to the connection of devices to the platform, we use Angelnet. Designed to support mission-critical applications across health, social care, facility management and incident response, Angelnet uses LoRoWAN, a low-power, wide-area (LPWAN) network protocol designed for connecting battery-powered IoT devices over long distances.

## Evaluation & monitoring

Communication obviously forms the pivotal part of the third stage, namely evaluation. Any concerns and problems flagged by the sensors are identified by the constantly-monitored platform and relayed immediately to tenants, family members, health and care providers and FM professionals using a full range of media such as SMS, email, smart speakers and integrated TV messaging.

Changes detected in humidity and temperature, for example, can be instantly communicated to tenants with advice such as 'open the bathroom window'.

The result? Better health and care outcomes, less imposition on external agencies and cost efficiencies that just get greater and greater over time. An independent assessment of the Bield scheme, for example, concluded that an annual saving of £18.5 million could be made across Scotland just for group-living retirement complexes as well as an impressive year-one return on investment.

Bield is now in the process of rolling out these technologies at a number of other venues across their estate.

This is about us all living longer, happier and safer lives in our own homes and who doesn't want that?

Brian Brown is the director of business development at Archangel.

# 90 per cent of tenants unaware of TSMs

The latest Resident Voice Index (RVI) survey from MRI Software has found that 90 per cent of residents are unfamiliar with Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and two-thirds of residents don't know their housing provider measures satisfaction.

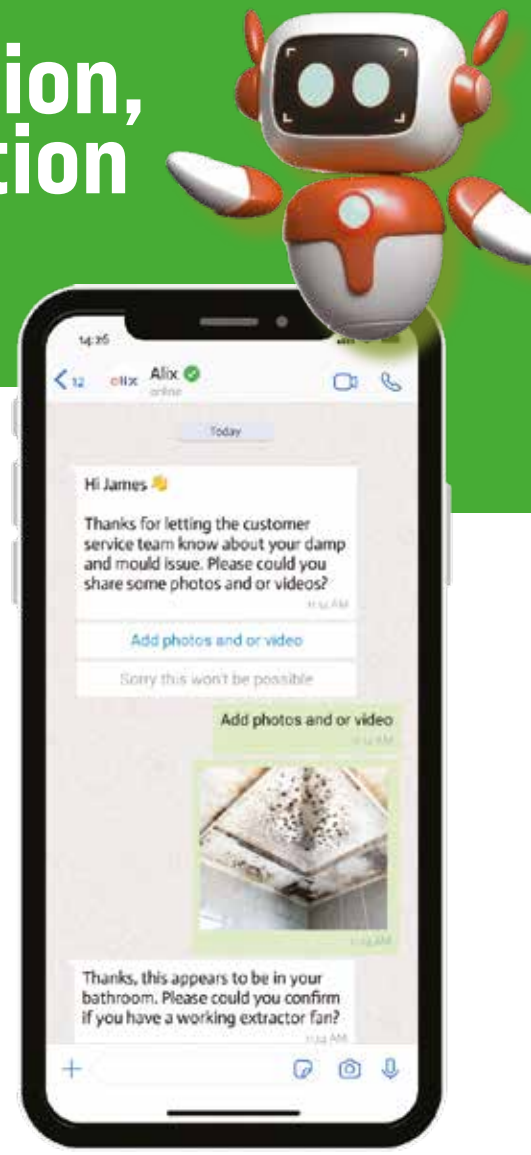
The survey showed that only 10 per cent of tenants had noticed positive changes from their housing provider in the past year, while almost 45 per cent reported a decline in levels of satisfaction.

The respondents to MRI Software's survey indicated a strong preference for digital communications, with 70 per cent wanting updates via email (45 per cent at present) as well as 31 per cent preferring text notifications (17 per cent at present).

Deborah Matthews, managing director for social housing, MRI Software, said, "Our latest RVI findings show that many tenants feel a disconnect with their landlord, with most unaware of how their satisfaction is being measured and few seeing positive changes over the past year."

# Documentation, communication & Awaab's Law

**Bee Small, CEO & Co-Founder, Project Alix**




With Awaab's Law now in force, housing providers across, housing providers across the UK are reassessing how they respond to reports of damp and mould. The new legislation sets strict timelines for investigation and repair, but the deeper challenge lies in how housing providers communicate with their residents and how they document every step taken.

For housing providers, this is more than a compliance problem; it's an opportunity to strengthen trust, improve efficiency and ensure that no resident is left unheard.

## Communication as the foundation of trust

The Housing Ombudsman's 2021 report on damp and mould exposed a recurring theme: failures in communication often cause as much harm as the housing problems themselves.

Residents described feeling dismissed or blamed, while housing providers struggled to maintain visibility over complex caseloads. Generic advice such as "open your windows" or "dry clothes outdoors" reflected systemic gaps in communications and a lack of empathy.

Awaab's Law seeks to change that by setting a higher bar for responsiveness and clarity. Housing providers must not only act quickly but also demonstrate clear, documented communications throughout the process.

We believe empathy and documentation are now the cornerstones of effective housing management. Technology can help but the real transformation happens when good communications are at the heart of the process and not only for compliance.

## Documentation – Turning action into accountability

The new requirements make record-keeping as important as response times. Housing providers must be able to show what was done, when and by whom, not only for compliance but to build resilience and trust.

Comprehensive documentation ensures:

- **Transparency, by keeping residents informed and confident in the process.**
- **Efficiency, by reducing duplication and missed follow-ups.**
- **Legal protection, by providing a verifiable record of reasonable action.**

Without good documentation, even diligent housing teams can appear unresponsive. It's not just about fixing a property; it's about demonstrating accountability to the people who live there.

## Fewer backlogs

The benefits of clear communications extend far beyond compliance. When residents understand what's happening and can easily share information, repair


**Rachel Credidio**
**Chief Innovation Officer, Aster Group**

requests become more accurate, follow-ups fewer and backlogs shorter.

Some housing providers are now using digital communication tools and AI-driven messaging to personalise updates and capture a complete audit trail of residents' interactions, including on WhatsApp. These tools can translate messages, store evidence and keep both parties aligned on the next steps.

Rachel Credidio, chief innovation officer at Aster Group, said, "Project Alix really helped us imagine personalisation at scale using its AI and WhatsApp capabilities. We're already implementing the approach and are really excited about delivering meaningful innovation more widely across the organisation."

The result isn't just smoother workflows, but more inclusive communications, especially for residents who face barriers with traditional contact channels.

## Learning and improving

The shift towards better communications and documentation also creates opportunities for continuous learning. By analysing records across repairs and residents' interactions, housing providers can identify recurring problems, measure progress and inform smarter operational decisions.

This data-driven approach supports both frontline improvement and strategic insight, helping housing providers understand where any inefficiencies occur and how residents' needs are evolving.

## From compliance to care

Awaab's Law challenges housing providers to view compliance as the starting point, not the goal. The emphasis on communications and documentation represents a cultural shift: from reactive maintenance to effective engagement, and from transactions to trust.

This isn't just about responding faster; it's about listening better, recording carefully and showing we care through effective action.

When every conversation is recorded, every action visible and every resident informed, housing providers not only protect themselves legally but build stronger, more responsive services.

Some housing providers are now using digital communication tools and AI-driven messaging to personalise updates and capture a complete audit trail of residents' interactions, including on WhatsApp. These tools can translate messages, store evidence and keep both parties aligned on the next steps.

*Bee Small is the CEO and co-founder of Project Alix.*

# Fighting disrepairs with data

## The importance of data in protecting housing providers in disrepair cases

**Faye Craggs, Senior Associate, Trowers & Hamlins LLP**

The housing sector is facing a sharper focus on property conditions and landlord accountability than ever before. Awaab's Law, which was prompted by the tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak due to prolonged mould exposure and introduced in the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, is the clearest example of this.

The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 require landlords to investigate and remedy hazards within statutory timescales, focusing on emergency hazards and damp and mould from 27 October 2025.

It should also be remembered that tenants can take action for disrepair within their properties pursuant to section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, which implies into most tenancies an obligation on landlords to keep in repair the structure, exterior and key installations of the dwelling. These claims can be pursued in the county court, generally within six years.

Alongside this, the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 allows tenants to take legal action against landlords who fail to maintain safe living conditions and the upcoming Renters' Rights Bill is expected to impose further landlord obligations. The combination of these legal frameworks enforce the fact that tenants have a right to live in safe, healthy homes and landlords are expected to act swiftly and be able to evidence compliance at every stage.

### Housing condition claims

Traditionally, landlords' responses to housing conditions claims have often been reactive: tenants raise complaints, repairs are logged and, if problems persist, legal action may follow.

Solicitors acting for tenants will typically request disclosure of repair logs, inspection records and correspondence. Many cases hinge not only on whether disrepair existed, but also whether landlords can evidence what was done, when and that the works were satisfactory. A missing repair log, an unrecorded inspection or an ambiguous note can undermine a landlord's defence, even when remedial works have been carried out.

### Awaab's Law

Awaab's Law is set to change the landscape. Under Awaab's Law, if a landlord has reason to believe a home is affected by a significant hazard, they must investigate within 10 working days, produce a written summary of their findings within three working days thereafter and complete the necessary repairs within a reasonable period. Landlords must complete any emergency repairs within 24 hours. Failure to do so risks regulatory scrutiny, reputational damage and increased exposure to tenants' claims for damages.

This creates two immediate challenges:

- **Operational –** Housing providers must quickly pull together resources to meet the legally-binding timescales;
- **Evidential –** Housing providers must accurately show that they met the timescales.

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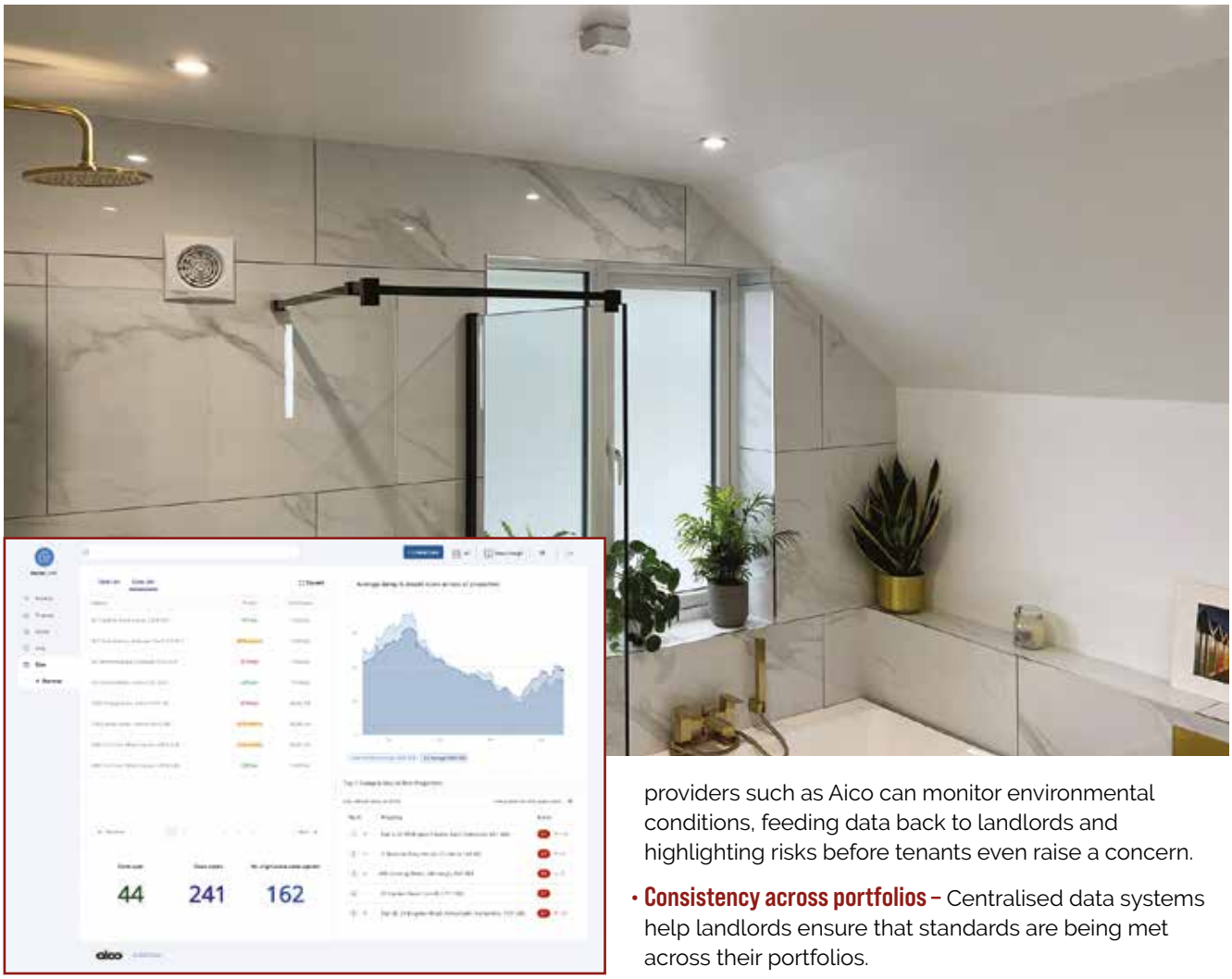



Solicitors who act for tenants are likely to seize on these statutory deadlines where landlords cannot produce clear records of their actions.

For landlords, the risk is increasing because now, not only do repairs have to be undertaken, but evidence of compliance must be robust, transparent and readily accessible.

## The importance of data and technology

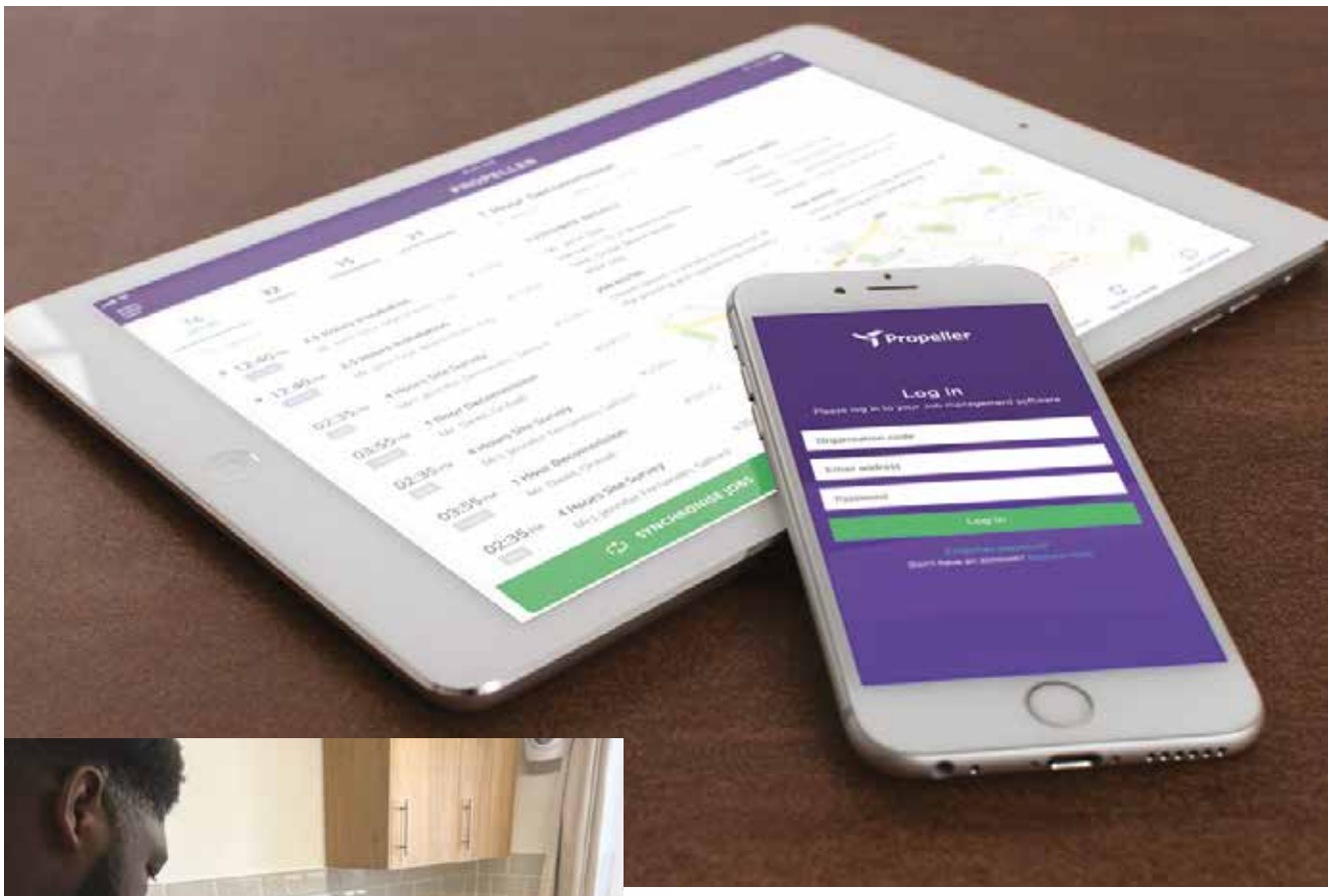
This is where data can become the strongest tool in landlords' strategies. Accurate, structured and accessible data offers multiple protections:

- **Proof of compliance –** A robust digital audit trail of reports, repairs, inspections and communications demonstrates that landlords have acted in line with requirements.
- **Early identification of risk –** Sensors, remote monitoring and integrated asset management systems can detect problems such as damp before they escalate, allowing proactive intervention. Moisture, temperature and air quality sensors, for example, can detect damp or mould risks long before they become visible. This enables landlords to intervene proactively, resolving disputes earlier and preventing legal disputes. Solutions from providers such as Aico can monitor environmental conditions, feeding data back to landlords and highlighting risks before tenants even raise a concern.
- **Consistency across portfolios –** Centralised data systems help landlords ensure that standards are being met across their portfolios.
- **Reducing legal vulnerability –** With comprehensive records, landlords can successfully defend allegations of delays in investigating or remedying hazards, narrowing the scope of disputes and sometimes even deterring litigation altogether.
- **Supporting investment decisions –** Data does not merely protect against claims, it guides long-term asset strategies, ensuring investment is channelled where disrepair risks are highest.

As the housing sector is entering a period of heightened scrutiny, technology is no longer a bonus, but increasingly becoming a necessity. By embracing technology, landlords are not only better equipped to defend themselves in housing conditions claims but also in a better position to deliver safer, healthier homes.

For further details, please see: **aico.co.uk.**

Faye Craggs is a senior associate at Trowers & Hamlins LLP.




# APS selects Propeller for workforce management

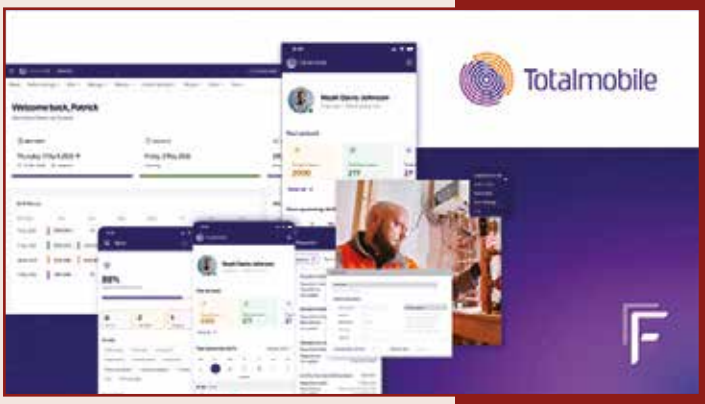
Propeller has implemented a cloud-based workforce management system for Arthington Property Services (APS), the in-house contractor for Leeds Federated Housing and responsible for planned maintenance on 1,000 properties in Leeds, Wakefield and North Yorkshire.

Propeller's software enables operatives to be managed remotely, with jobs assigned in real time. Through a mobile app, APS operatives can access all property details, complete gas and electrical certifications and update documentation digitally.

Propeller is also developing additional functionality for APS to integrate external suppliers' data (such as material costs) into the system. This will allow costs to be automatically recorded against each job and instantly checked against agreed prices.

Steve Preston, operations manager, APS, said, "As soon as we saw how Propeller works, we knew it would be a good fit. The software has a more intuitive look and feel than our previous system and includes additional functionality such as on-site certification tools and cost-tracking features.

"It only took three months for the Propeller software to go live and our workforce has quickly taken to the new software, helping us to eliminate numerous manual processes. Importantly, it also records accurate work times and other job-related costs, helping us to demonstrate value for money."




# Broxtowe Borough Council accelerates repairs with Totalmobile

Broxtowe Borough Council has partnered with Totalmobile to modernise how it manages housing repairs, voids and compliance jobs.

Launched in September, the new digital platform will replace manual scheduling and spreadsheet-based voids management with dynamic job allocation, real-time reporting and mobile access for the council's frontline teams.

The decision to move to Totalmobile's FSM platform was driven by the need to cut downtime, reduce missed appointments and improve tenant communications.

Andy Culshaw, change delivery manager, Broxtowe Borough Council, said, "We'd reached the point where too much time was being spent manually scheduling work and reacting to planning issues.

"Our lack of a dynamic scheduling system was generating administrative backlogs which then required manual interventions, all of which was eating into the time we should be spending communicating with and helping our tenants. This new platform is going to change that."

## Luton Borough Council signs with Totalmobile for repairs

Luton Borough Council is partnering with Totalmobile to update its repairs and maintenance services.

The council's new repairs platform from Totalmobile will provide advanced field-working, real-time workforce management, asset management and performance monitoring, with the aim of improving its response time for repairs, streamlining internal processes and cutting costs.

Ifti Awan, project manager, Luton Borough Council, said, "We wanted to transform how we manage our assets and deliver repairs. Totalmobile's public-sector experience and technology gave us confidence that we can modernise quickly and improve our service quality."

# Aareon launches Aidenn for AI-powered repairs

Aareon has launched Aidenn Repairs, an AI-based repair diagnostic and video triage platform.

The launch of Aidenn Repairs follows Aareon's acquisition in September 2025 of Help Me Fix, the original developer of Aidenn.

Aidenn Repairs leverages agentic AI and real-time video diagnostics to triage repair requests, reduce unnecessary engineer dispatches and improve first-time fix rates. Trained on over 75,000 triage sessions, Aidenn enables residents to self-solve problems and supports internal teams with intelligent diagnostics and compliance guidance.

Aareon reported that use of Aidenn Repairs has resulted in 30 per cent of repairs being resolved remotely and 70 per cent of emergencies being de-escalated to routine repairs.

Lee Burke, chief revenue officer, Aareon, said, "Aidenn Repairs is a leap forward in how the social housing sector can approach maintenance. By embedding AI diagnostics and video triage into our product ecosystem, we're helping housing providers optimise resources, reduce carbon impact and place tenants at the heart of every interaction."

# IT strategies for housing assets & infrastructure

- Healthier homes, reduced back-logs & better housing portfolios
- Avoiding IT distractions, quick wins & best practice

Housing Technology interviewed housing, repairs and maintenance, asset and technology experts from FLS – Fast Lean Smart, HousingAI, Mobysoft, NEC Software Solutions, The Riverside Group and Voicescape on how housing providers can use technology to achieve healthier homes, reduced back-logs of repairs and better housing portfolios, including some quick wins and best-practice examples.

## What should be the priorities?

Gary Haynes, managing director of Voicescape, said, "The first priority is for housing providers to tackle the persistent problem of no-access for essential safety checks and repairs. Missed appointments remain one of the most expensive challenges, wasting valuable time and delaying critical work, with each failed visit costing around £75.

"The second priority must be for housing providers to clear their backlogs of repairs. These build up when missed appointments, poor property access and fragmented communications cause delays in progressing cases."

**"Housing providers need a clear and accurate picture of every home."**

Trevor Hampton, Director of Housing Solutions, NEC Software Solutions

Trevor Hampton, director of housing solutions at NEC Software Solutions, said, "Housing providers need a clear and accurate picture of every home. This includes information such as property types, how they're built, what heating systems are installed and when windows were last replaced. Without up-to-date information on total housing stock and the condition of each home, it's difficult to plan maintenance, prioritise investment or meet regulatory standards.

"Map out the lifecycle of each asset, including when kitchens or roofs might need replacing, how upgrades to older homes could improve energy efficiency and how this would fit with the organisation's budget. Plan capital maintenance, major works and regeneration projects at the same time because this is more efficient, less disruptive for tenants and makes better use of the workforce than scheduling jobs separately.

"Finally, the work needs to be completed efficiently. This means using the right mix of in-house teams and external contractors and scheduling jobs to avoid delays from weather or seasonal factors."

Chris Fleck, chief technology and product officer at Mobysoft, said, "The first step is gaining a clear, evidence-based understanding of the condition of homes across the portfolio, not just from surveys or inspections but through the day-to-day data generated by repairs and maintenance activity.

"The second is using that insight to prioritise investments that improve safety, compliance and tenants' experience. Finally, housing providers must foster a proactive culture of prevention rather than reaction, particularly with new regulations such as Awaab's Law demanding faster, more transparent responses to property condition issues."

Tessa Barraclough, assistant director for asset strategy and sustainability at The Riverside Group and lead for the National Housing Maintenance Forum's working group on healthy homes, said, "With the first phase of Awaab's Law now in force, housing providers should be considering the second phase in 2026, with the inclusion of additional hazard categories.

"This should include comprehensive stock-condition surveys specifically focused on phase-two hazards. Most housing providers have damp and mould data but far fewer have systematic assessments of excess cold/heat risks, fall hazards, structural integrity concerns, electrical safety beyond the required inspections or hygiene hazard prevalence. Added to that, housing providers should ensure that they have up-to-date data on the vulnerabilities of their tenants."

## How can technology help?

Jeremy Squire, managing director of FLS – Fast Lean Smart, said, "Technology is well placed to help housing providers shift to planned, proactive approaches for repairs and maintenance, scheduling inspections and upgrades to ensure the effective management of homes and asset infrastructure.

"The best approach harnesses data to enhance the accuracy of predictive analytics and supports the monitoring of compliance standards. Investing in transparent asset monitoring via data-led stock-condition surveys helps to identify emerging risks early, enabling housing providers to prioritise their repairs based on urgency and impact.

**"The best approach harnesses data for more accurate predictive analytics and stronger compliance monitoring."**

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

"Digital systems can monitor asset performance, automate compliance reporting and give residents greater visibility into maintenance and the progress of repairs, while 'smart' technology, from IoT sensors to data analytics platforms, supports proactive maintenance and reduces emergency interventions."

Lee Reevell, CTO of HousingAI, said, "Technology doesn't help in isolation. It only helps when it's deployed as part of a strategic digital transformation that addresses how the organisation actually works.

> **"Don't wait for some mythical future state where everything runs on one perfect system."**
>
> Lee Reevell, CTO, HousingAI

"Integration platforms and middleware solutions can connect disparate systems without needing to 'rip and replace', with these platforms acting as a translation layer, enabling your housing management system to talk to your asset management platform, which can then share data with your repairs system and your compliance tools.

"This means that you can start creating your single source of the truth without waiting for some mythical future state where everything runs on one perfect system. And for establishing data-driven asset intelligence, we're now at the point where the right technologies are mature, proven and affordable, even for smaller housing providers."

NEC's Hampton said, "Surveyors often use smart mobile devices to capture detailed information on homes while they're on site. They're taken through a step-by-step process to gather information from room layouts and windows, to heating systems and the overall condition of the property so nothing is missed and there's less chance of a follow-up visit being needed.

"Using asset planning software, housing staff can quickly compare upgrade options, such as the cost, lifespan and durability of materials from kitchens to insulation. This is particularly useful for modelling outcomes, such as the cost and planning implications of putting in a more expensive kitchen lasting 15 years versus a cheaper one with a 10-year guarantee. These tools help staff to make better decisions, allocate budgets and plan long-term changes to improve residents' living conditions.

"Furthermore, technology can handle most of time-consuming tasks involved in managing building and maintenance works, such as coordinating the arrival of in-house teams and contractors on-site, with automatic scheduling cutting administration time and ensuring that tasks are completed at the right time."

Voicescape's Haynes said, "Technology offers powerful solutions to the critical challenges of no-access visits and backlogs of repairs, with automation and data integration playing crucial roles.

"To tackle no-access issues, automated communication platforms can minimise missed appointments by managing the full communications journey around appointments. From initial booking through to rebooking, reminders, updates and follow-ups, technologies such as Voicescape's Compliance platform can leverage multiple communication channels to keep tenants informed and engaged every step of the way.

"In order to reduce and clear backlogs of repairs, automated reminders, updates and rescheduling options help to reduce no-shows and cancellations, meaning more appointments are kept and completed as planned. Just as importantly, by checking in with tenants, housing teams can identify repairs that are no longer needed, clearing out unnecessary jobs and reducing the overall backlog."

## The distractions of new technologies

HousingAI's Reevell said, "Far from new technologies being a distraction from getting the basics right (although they do distract if implemented badly), they make it possible to get the basics right at the scale and speed that modern social housing requires.

"For example, AI can analyse repairs data to identify patterns and predict failures but only if your repairs data is accurate and structured consistently in the first place. If your data quality is poor, if repairs are coded inconsistently or if the same problem gets described in 15 different ways depending on who logged it, then AI can't help."

FLS's Squire said, "Technology is now central to how housing providers meet safety standards, manage assets and deliver better services to residents. Field service management solutions such as FLS Visitour have transformed how repairs, inspections and retrofits are planned and executed, helping organisations comply with Awaab's Law and new regulatory expectations.

> **"The priorities should be tackling no-access visits and clearing backlogs of repairs."**
>
> Gary Haynes, Managing Director, Voicescape

"The first step is improving intake and diagnosis. By using consistent job labelling, standardised workflows and automated validation tools, housing providers can ensure their repair requests are correctly categorised and dispatched. This eliminates duplication, minimises subcontractor risk and ensures the right operatives are assigned the first time.

"Hazard prioritisation tools can then use built-in logic to automatically escalate category-one hazards, such as mould, leaks or electrical faults, to ensure they're dealt with immediately, with dynamic scheduling allocating the nearest qualified operative, optimising routes based on real-world traffic conditions.

"Finally, new technologies can deliver the visibility and accountability needed for new consumer standards. Platforms such as FLS Visitour offer live dashboards that

track every repair from request to completion, generating audit trails for inspection-readiness and performance reporting. Integration with CRM, IoT and housing management systems consolidates data across departments, uncovering patterns in recurrent faults or delays."

> **"The fundamentals of accurate data capture, effective communications and good quality workmanship are essential."**
>
> Chris Fleck, Chief Technology & Product Officer, Mobysoft

Mobysoft's Fleck said, "The fundamentals of accurate data capture, effective communication between teams and good quality workmanship remain essential, but technology can actually make those basics easier to achieve.

"By automating data analysis, highlighting risks and supporting evidence-based decision-making, tools like AI and IoT enhance operational discipline rather than distract from it."

Riverside's Barraclough said, "AI should be seen as a positive development but within a human-focused ecosystem. For example, while AI can triage simple procedures needed to improve homes, especially in reactive response situations, human engineers should always be deployed for more complicated repairs to prevent escalation."

## Are there 'quick wins' for asset management?

NEC's Hampton said, "In housing and building construction, 'quick' is a relative term – a quick win might take 12-18 months rather than weeks but there are still high-impact improvements that can deliver real value within that timeframe.

"Repairs are one of the highest cost areas in housing maintenance, so getting them right first time can make a big difference. Tools that help staff to identify the exact cause of a problem before a specialist electrician or plumber visits a property means the right materials and skills can be sourced straight away, leading to fewer return visits, lower costs and less disruption for residents.

"Upgrading an inefficient works management system is also a worthwhile step – this will quickly pay off by helping teams plan maintenance works more efficiently, keep progress on track and prevent costs from escalating."

Riverside's Barraclough said, "Build your investigative capacity across all hazard types now because waiting until 2026 to hire and train investigators to match the scale of the requirement almost guarantees that you'll insufficient capacity.

"Housing providers need competent investigators who can assess thermal comfort, identify fall risks, evaluate structural concerns, assess fire and electrical safety and recognise sanitation hazards. At the same time, all frontline staff should be trained to recognise and flag these phase-two hazards and communicate them accurately."

HousingAI's Reevell said, "The most important quick win is to conduct a rapid minimum viable enterprise architecture assessment (MVEA). This is a focused, time-boxed exercise that typically takes four to six weeks.

"You're mapping your current systems, understanding how data flows between them, identifying where integration points exist (or at least should exist) and documenting where you have duplications, gaps and risks.

"This isn't about creating perfect documentation of every process in your organisation. It's about getting clear visibility of your technology landscape and how it supports, or fails to support, your core asset management functions, preventing expensive mistakes. A rapid assessment then gives you the information you need to make informed decisions about where to invest next."

> **"Build your investigative capacity across all hazard types – waiting until 2026 guarantees that you'll insufficient capacity."**
>
> Tessa Barraclough, Assistant Director for Asset Strategy & Sustainability, The Riverside Group, and Lead for the National Housing Maintenance Forum's Working Group on Healthy Homes

Mobysoft's Fleck said, "One of the quickest wins is to make better use of existing data. Many housing providers already hold valuable information in their maintenance and repairs systems – it just needs to be surfaced and connected to deliver insights.

"It's all very well having the data but that data needs to have a purpose, be real-time, predictive and actionable. Using that intelligence to target recurrent issues or underperforming contractors can deliver immediate savings and service improvements without significant capital cost."

## Examples of best practice

FLS's Squire said, "When HomeServe allocates the installation of a new boiler, it can schedule a field engineer to do the installation, an electrician to do the wiring and another to remove the old boiler. FLS Visitour links the jobs, even if they are on different days; if appointments change, Visitour will move further steps simultaneously, protecting productivity."

NEC's Hampton said, "Housing providers who understand both how a home is built and how it's lived in tend to get the best results for residents. A property occupied by a young family will experience different wear and tear than one lived in by an older couple. This can influence how repairs are prioritised and what materials or fixtures are chosen to withstand daily use.

"Many housing providers use technology to survey properties, plan spending and maintain homes, but best practice comes from connecting these systems. Joined-up data can reveal patterns, such as kitchens or bathrooms wearing out faster in larger households, allowing housing providers to schedule repairs or upgrades at the right time."

Voicescape's Haynes said, "Thirteen Housing Group is a great example. With 60 per cent of its stock over 50 years old and serving some of the most deprived areas in the country, it has significant infrastructural challenges.

"For damp and mould management, Thirteen has implemented automated systems that call tenants at different points in the process. The housing provider has made over 2,000 calls about damp and mould, with 780 residents requiring call-backs and 255 responding that they didn't need further help. Crucially, almost half of those who responded wanted to speak to Thirteen about their support needs.

"This approach ensures compliance with Awaab's Law while efficiently targeting those who genuinely need help, and provides a clear digital record of when and how they've contacted tenants to meet regulatory standards and keep them safe.

"For essential safety appointments, Thirteen uses multi-channel engagement spanning voice, SMS and email to maximise its reach for gas and electrical safety checks. By automating reminders and offering flexible rescheduling options, they've improved attendance rates while reducing the estimated £75 cost per failed visit."

Mobysoft's Fleck said, "A strong example is Gloucester City Homes, which recently adopted Mobysoft's RepairSense and Damp & Mould module to improve the quality and efficiency of its repairs service.

"By using data-driven insights to identify repeat repairs and underlying problems, GCH reduced its repeat-repair visits by 25 per cent, saved over £41,000 in the first six months and significantly improved tenants' satisfaction. This kind of data-led transformation shows what's possible when housing providers use technology to not just manage their repairs but to also understand the stories behind them."

Housing Technology would like to thank Jeremy Squire (FLS – Fast Lean Smart), Lee Reevell (HousingAI), Chris Fleck (Mobysoft), Trevor Hampton (NEC Software Solutions), Tessa Barraclough (The Riverside Group and National Housing Maintenance Forum) and Gary Haynes (Voicescape) for their contributions to this article.

# Infrastructure beyond bricks and mortar

Ayomide Ogunbayo, User Experience Designer, WHG

When housing infrastructure is discussed, the spotlight usually falls on the homes themselves, the repairs backlog and the investment needed to maintain property portfolios. However, another layer of infrastructure that is less visible yet just as critical is the digital products through which people interact with housing services.

These systems, either its reporting tools or application portals, are where housing needs are first expressed. They capture the signals that housing providers depend on to prioritise repairs, allocate resources and plan their future investments.

If these products are poorly designed, they distort those signals. If they are designed well, they ensure providers receive the clear, accurate information they need to deliver healthier homes, reduce backlogs and manage assets strategically. One can argue that design is infrastructure.

## Healthier homes through clearer feedback loops

The quality of a home is inseparable from the quality of the feedback about it. If tenants can't easily report damp, broken heating or leaks, those problems linger and worsen. Good design lowers barriers to reporting, guiding tenants to provide the right level of detail while validating key fields such as location, photos or urgency.

That clarity transforms maintenance requests into actionable insights. Asset teams can act earlier, addressing risks before they become health hazards. In this way, design functions as an upstream intervention for protecting residents' wellbeing not by adding more resources, but by ensuring the information pipeline is trustworthy from the start.

## Cutting backlogs with smarter workflows

While funding and workforce capacity are obvious factors for dealing with backlogs, backlogs can also grow because of inefficiencies in how information enters the system. A poorly structured portal may allow duplicate reports, vague descriptions or missing contact details. Poor collation of requests creates further friction in service delivery that staff must clarify or reprocess. Over time, this adds to delays and frustrates residents.

On the other hand, a well-designed system captures structured, validated information that flows directly into work orders. Clear status updates reassure tenants that their issue is being progressed, reducing repeat submissions. Every friction point that design removes is one fewer burden for stretched repair teams.

## Stronger portfolios built on better signals

Managing a property portfolio mostly entails making strategic decisions such as which homes to upgrade, where to invest and how to align supply with community needs. Here too, design plays a role.

When housing search platforms and application forms are intuitive, they reveal genuine patterns of demand. Housing providers can see which types of homes attract the most interest, where applicants are dropping off and which listings consistently underperform. These signals, if captured reliably, are invaluable for portfolio management. They help leaders decide what to build, what to sell and how to allocate scarce resources for maximum impact.

## Design as core housing infrastructure

Treating digital products as afterthoughts is no longer viable. Just as cracked pipes or faulty wiring undermine physical infrastructure, clunky portals and inaccessible forms undermine housing outcomes. They waste effort, hide need and slow progress.

Good design, by contrast, strengthens the system at every level. For residents, it means being heard clearly and acted on quickly. For housing providers, it means fewer backlogs and more efficient workflows. And lastly, for policymakers, it means cleaner, more reliable evidence to guide housing strategy.

The sector can't achieve healthier homes, reduced backlogs or better portfolios without addressing this digital layer. Design is the connective tissue between people, assets and policy. If we want stronger housing systems, we must design those interfaces with the same seriousness we apply to physical infrastructure.

Because when design is done well, it makes systems easier to use and ensures homes are healthier, repairs are timelier and portfolios are managed with insight rather than guesswork.

Design is infrastructure and it is time we treated it that way.

Ayomide Ogunbayo is a user experience designer at WHG.

# Connecting systems & strengthening compliance

**John Owens, Director of Product Strategy & Sales, Manifest Software Solutions**

In social housing, the push for 360-degree operational views, spanning tenants, repairs, compliance, complaints and more, is growing rapidly. Yet, for many organisations, the reality is far from streamlined; what's intended to be a unified data ecosystem often results in a complex, disjointed tangle of systems, platforms and temporary fixes.

Housing providers are under growing pressure to deliver healthier, safer and more accountable homes. The new Consumer Standards, Awaab's Law and greater scrutiny from the Regulator of Social Housing all point to one central challenge: demonstrating compliance through reliable, connected data.

The Building Safety Act introduced the 'golden thread', a single, digital record of safety information that remains accurate and accessible throughout a building's life. Although the legal duty applies only to higher-risk buildings, many housing providers are already extending its principles across their wider property portfolios to strengthen assurance and build confidence. Doing so avoids a two-tier system of data quality, where only part of the stock benefits from connected information, and creates a stronger foundation for compliance, insight and trust across every home.

Integration underpins this approach, turning scattered records into a continuous line of evidence that proves, not just claims, that homes are safe.

## The hidden cost of disconnected data

For most housing providers, the problem isn't a lack of commitment or care. It's that vital information is scattered across multiple systems; each department sees only part of the picture and when things go wrong, those gaps become visible in the worst possible way.

Whether it's damp and mould, overdue safety checks or repair backlogs, the story is often the same. Cases are logged in one system, inspection results recorded in another and completion evidence stored in a shared drive or email.

Each team works hard, but without integration, no one sees the full journey of a problem from report to resolution, and that lack of visibility is exactly what today's regulators are exposing.

When compliance data lives in silos, even the best housing providers find it difficult to answer fundamental questions:

- **Was the issue raised within statutory timescales?**
- **Was the investigation completed on time?**
- **Has the resident been kept informed?**
- **Can we evidence this to the regulator?**

Without connected data, those answers rely on manual updates, rekeying and retrospective reporting. This creates risk, duplication and unnecessary pressure on staff.

## Laying the foundations for connected compliance

Integration is fast becoming one of the cornerstones of compliance, not just a technical project but an operational necessity.

Connected systems automate the evidence, actions and oversight that housing providers need to meet the Consumer Standards. For example, when a resident reports a concern, integration can automatically:

- **Create or update the case in the CRM and asset system.**
- **Cross-check the property's compliance status and previous history.**
- **Book an investigation or repair appointment directly into the contractor's diary.**
- **Notify compliance leads and update dashboards instantly.**
- **Update a central data-warehouse record.**

In practice, this means that when a regulator or board asks for proof, the evidence is already there – complete, consistent and with a full audit trail.

For instance, using Manifest Software Solutions' Universal Adapter, one housing provider connected its compliance and contractor systems, ensuring that compliance actions, repair updates and tenant communications are joined up. When

a high-priority repair or inspection is raised, the integration automatically updates scheduling systems, flags potential breaches before deadlines are missed and keeps residents informed with accurate progress updates.

This approach reflects a wider shift in the sector, whereby housing providers don't need to replace their existing tools to meet the new Consumer Standards but they do need them to work together. Integration bridges the gap between policy and practice, making compliance visible, auditable and reliable.

By connecting these systems, we help housing providers to move from fragmented evidence to proactive assurance, turning compliance activity into genuine confidence for regulators, clarity for staff and trust for tenants.

## Building complete visibility across compliance

The same principles apply well beyond damp and mould, now a central test under Awaab's Law.

Damp and mould has been a powerful catalyst for much of this change but the same integration challenges exist across every area of compliance. Gas servicing, electrical inspections, smoke and carbon-monoxide alarms, fire risk assessments, asbestos management and responsive repairs all depend on data being accurate, current and connected.

Integrated systems make this visible. Compliance dashboards can highlight missed visits automatically, while workflows ensure that overdue actions are escalated without relying on manual checks or spreadsheets. The result is not just efficiency but assurance, giving housing providers confidence that they are meeting regulatory expectations.

## Better data & better homes

Integration also helps address the wider aims of the Consumer Standards. When housing, asset and customer data are connected, housing providers can spot patterns earlier and act before problems escalate.

Repeated reports from the same address might indicate a structural problem. Frequent repairs in similar properties might signal the need for investment. By simply connecting information that already exists, housing organisations can make more informed decisions about asset health and resident wellbeing, and even use AI to spot patterns, provide staff with guidance and trigger workflows.

For residents, that means faster responses and clearer communications. For housing providers, it means stronger compliance evidence, more efficient service delivery and better use of resources.

## From reactive to proactive

Real compliance isn't achieved by adding more forms or manual checks. It comes from creating reliable, automated data flows that make the right thing happen at the right time. Integration enables that shift from reactive management to proactive assurance. When every stage of a compliance process is connected, housing providers can track performance, see risks emerging before they become failures and prove that residents are living in safe, well-maintained homes.

That proactive visibility also reduces stress for compliance teams, who can focus on prevention rather than paper trails.

## Making existing systems work harder together

As the sector adapts to the new Consumer Standards, integration should be seen as part of housing infrastructure rather than optional technology. It connects core systems instead of replacing them and works alongside in-house IT teams to extend their capabilities. This reduces blind spots, speeds up actions and makes compliance part of day-to-day service delivery, giving housing providers the evidence and assurance to prove that they are doing the right thing.

Most housing providers already have capable IT teams but when it comes to integrating multiple housing, finance and contractor systems, few have the time or specialist tools to connect them all.

Manifest brings deep sector experience, having integrated virtually every major housing system in use today. We build on what's already there, linking data and workflows seamlessly so that existing investments deliver more.

As the first Awaab's Law cases begin to test the new standards, the housing providers that thrive will be those who can prove outcomes with connected data, not just report on them afterwards.

Integration underpins this approach, turning scattered records into a continuous line of evidence that proves, not just claims, that homes are safe.

John Owens is the director of product strategy and sales at Manifest Software Solutions.

# Smarter assets & healthier homes

## Why asset technology is the key to getting ahead

**Gursh Lail, CEO, i4Housing**

In social housing, the future won't be defined by how much we build but by how smartly we manage what we already have. Across the UK, housing providers face a complex web of pressures such as ageing stock, rising repair costs, damp and mould scandals and the need for energy efficiency. But beneath these challenges lies a huge opportunity to embed technology across the asset lifecycle and transform how we manage, maintain and modernise homes.

> *"For too long, social housing has been seen as a subsidy and a cost, rather than an asset and critical national infrastructure for the country."*
>
> **Ian McDermott, Chair of Peabody, May 2025**

That shift in thinking, from cost centre to core infrastructure, demands a smarter approach to how we treat our housing stock. With Awaab's Law now in force, setting strict repair deadlines and reinforcing tenants' rights, housing providers are under pressure to act faster and smarter.

### The smart asset strategy

Rather than reactive maintenance, forward-thinking housing providers are now investing in proper data infrastructures and predictive asset management. This includes:

- **Installing humidity sensors and temperature monitors in high-risk properties for early warnings of damp and mould.**
- **Capturing satellite and drone imagery to spot roof and gutter problems before they escalate.**
- **Using AI-driven diagnostics to predict boiler faults from pressure or temperature fluctuations.**

These approaches not only reduce emergency callouts but also align with new ESG reporting standards and improve tenant wellbeing, all while managing budgets more effectively.

### From diagnosis to delivery and the role of AI

At i4Housing, we're developing a retrieval augmented generation (RAG) model trained on thousands of tenant repair submissions and historical images. This technology enables an AI agent to diagnose repairs from tenant-submitted photos, match them to relevant skills and schedule appointments autonomously, forming a complete end-to-end loop powered by machine learning.

This isn't about replacing people; it's about improving service at scale. In a sector facing acute shortages of skilled labour, efficiency matters. A single point of failure, a missing part or a no-show contractor can each cause multiple downstream problems but a well-trained agentic system can mitigate these risks before they happen.

### Modern methods meet modern mindsets

Intelligent asset management also means smart specifications. New builds should be designed with embedded IoT infrastructure, from smart meters to air-source heat pumps. Yet this is still rarely seen outside pilot schemes. Our data analysis shows that A-rated windows and energy-saving insulation alone can reduce winter damp by up to 40 per cent simply by making homes easier and cheaper to heat. These aren't speculative benefits; they're measurable outcomes with long-term impacts.

More than compliance or cost-cutting, this is about creating resilient, future-proof housing stock, where data guides every decision from build to renewal. The question isn't whether this transformation is coming, it's whether we're prepared to lead it.

Gursh Lail is the CEO of i4Housing.

# Stand and deliver

## Why housing projects need a mindset shift

**Stephen Repton, Founder & CEO, Flowlio**

In the housing sector, project delivery is rarely straightforward. Tight budgets, siloed knowledge and legacy systems are just the beginning. But one of the most persistent and often overlooked barriers to success is mindset.

Too often, housing providers fall into a cycle of managing projects rather than delivering them. This is rarely due to a lack of effort or expertise; it's a culture problem, stemming from a structural issue of how projects are tracked, communicated and supported across teams.

### The problem of fragmentation

Most housing providers operate with a suite of tools but they're sort of patched together like an odd quilt. Spreadsheets here, project trackers there and department-specific systems that don't talk to each other. This fragmentation creates siloes, bottlenecks and blind spots. It also creates a culture of software 'babysitting', administrative repetition and general firefighting. Here, team energy is spent chasing updates, reconciling data and managing risk, rather than moving projects forward. Sound familiar? This approach is neither good for staff nor the organisation itself.

In this environment, even the best projects will stall. A project might be progressing well in one department but without visibility across the organisation, that progress is isolated. The result? Missed opportunities, duplicated effort and a growing sense of frustration among staff. Managing, yet without any hope of delivery in sight.

### The cost of 'good enough'

Some housing providers attempt to solve this problem by unifying their systems, often by adopting solutions that seem to meet most (but never all) of their needs. But these solutions frequently come with caveats:

- They require constant manual oversight to stay on track.
- They don't scale well as project complexity increases.
- They need additional tools bolted on over time, creating new layers of complexity and replaying the original problem.
- Bespoke development and integration can impact valuable resources and introduce multiple points of failure.

For some people, these aren't deal-breakers but they can increase risk, waste time, impact morale and drain budgets. And in a sector where every resource counts, that drain is unsustainable.

### Shifting the mindset

To move from managing to delivering, housing providers need more than better tools; they need a cultural shift. That shift starts with recognising that project management is more than a technical process and should be viewed as a strategic delivery function. It requires:

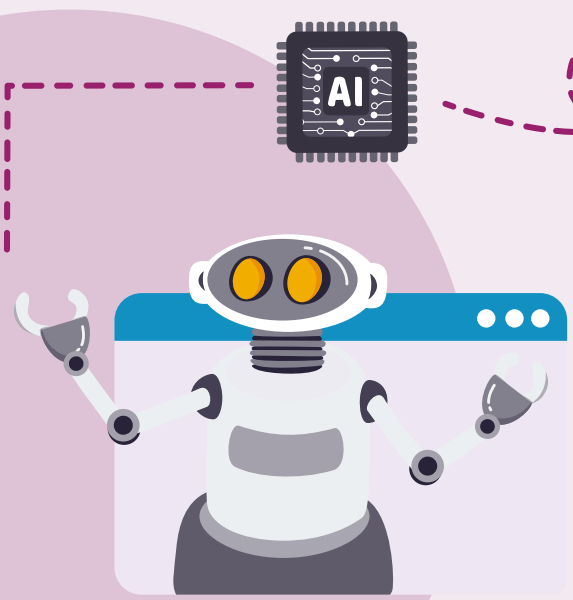
- **Alignment – Projects must be connected to organisational goals, with clear visibility for all stakeholders.**
- **Clarity – Teams need shared systems, a shared language and shared knowledge to collaborate effectively.**
- **Confidence – Staff must be able to trust that the tools they use will support them, not slow them down.**
- **Skill – People need to feel motivated, invested in and valued, each of which are crucial elements in maintaining a culture that thrives on success.**

When these conditions are met, delivery becomes the default, not the exception.

### Building for the future

We've all seen how inefficiencies can compound over time. By rethinking how we approach projects through a lens of prioritising delivery over management and by investing in platforms that support alignment, automation, accessibility and skills development, housing providers can unlock the full potential of their initiatives.

Stephen Repton is the founder and CEO of Flowlio.




# The 'Why?' in AI

Jonathan Sharp, CEO, Britannic Technologies

It's a truism that AI has the potential to radically reshape how we work. Many housing providers have consequently rushed to invest in an AI solution for fear of missing out, yet are unsure why they need it and how, when and where they plan to use it.

## Back to basics

AI's powers are undoubtedly mind-blowing but without an understanding of your objectives, the technology won't be used fully and the benefits will go undiscovered. As with investing in any technology, if you don't know what problems you want to solve and what your objectives are, it is unlikely to be a success.

## The 'Why?'

Any housing provider wanting to implement AI, or indeed any another transformative technology, needs to consider why it wants it. While AI is the latest disruptive technology that everyone is talking about, too many organisations are deploying it merely because they don't want to miss out.

It's not a race; if you don't know why you want it or how you will use it, then it's a waste of money. And without a coherent strategy, it could in fact have a reverse effect and be detrimental to your operations.

For any AI project to be a success, it's vital to spend time to work out why you need it and to explore:

- What do you want to improve?
- Why do you want to improve it?
- How are you planning to improve?
- Where do you want to be?

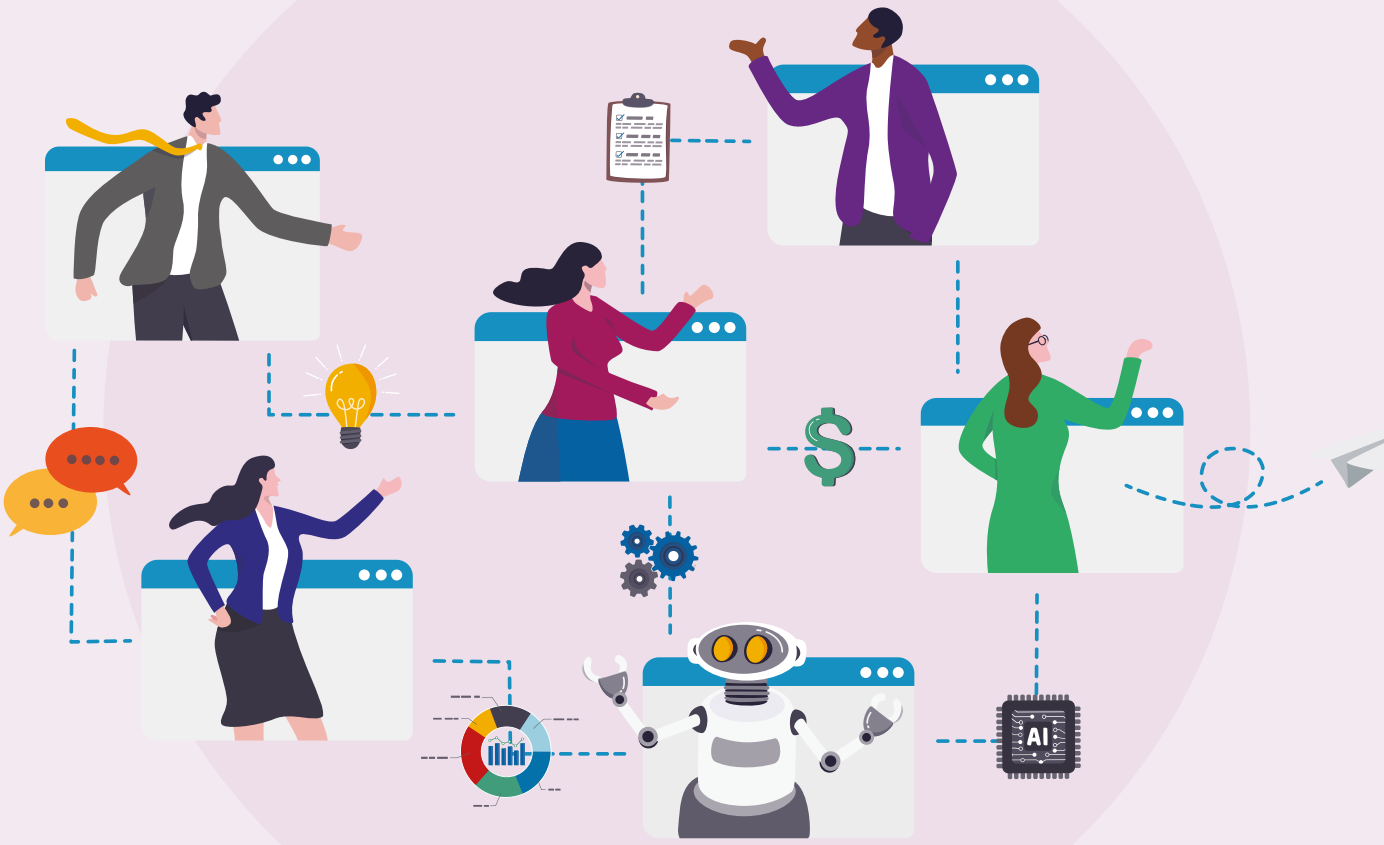
You can then devise an AI strategy, setting measurable objectives and success criteria so you can evaluate as you go. Incorporating AI or any other transformative technology into your organisation is an evolutionary journey; it takes time to learn what works and what doesn't, and time for your staff to get used to the technology.

## Levelling up the 'Why?'

Getting the best out of AI is about taking a creative approach, applying critical thinking and getting beyond the surface, all of which are areas where humans excel and machines don't! This level of thinking is like an investigator drumming up theories before searching for clues; you can't find the clues if you don't know why and what you are looking for.

Take the time to go to the next level of thinking. An AI solution can analyse your customer database in seconds, unearthing trends and patterns that reveal problems you didn't know existed or providing detailed information on the ones you did. By diving into the details, you can understand your problems better and devise relevant solutions.

Consider AI as a treasure chest – it's all in there but you have to find it, and what you then do with it is up to you. The same applies with AI prompts. The more detail and better you craft the prompts, the more you will get out of it.




## Deconstructing AI

Digital transformation can be overwhelming but it can be broken down into manageable areas, so you don't need to do everything at once. By breaking it down into steps, you can delve into the details and test the solution with a proof of concept to explore what to keep and what to disregard.

Your employees should be involved from the start of AI's introduction. Encourage them to share their daily challenges and suggestions for improvements because they are then more likely to understand why the AI solution will benefit them, reducing the fear that AI will replace them.

A complete AI training programme should also be implemented so everyone understands how AI fits into their organisation's operations, especially because new skills, such as AI prompting, will be needed.

Generative AI enables people to produce content in seconds, but caution must be applied so that employees don't have free rein to churn out generic content. Implement suitable processes to ensure any AI-generated content is checked for tone, messaging, veracity, bias and transparency as well as adding a human touch.

Don't forget about employees' own AI apps. 'Shadow IT' used to be concerned with 'bring your own device' but now it's 'bring your own AI assistant'. Clear rules for which AI apps can and can't be used will reduce your risk of cybercrime and protect your network.

## Reducing the fear

AI makes employees worried because they think it will replace their jobs. CEOs and senior management are anxious because they know they need AI but aren't sure why. And IT directors and CIOs are nervous because they are scared it may fail and put their jobs on the line.

But by embracing the 'Why?' and devising a strategy, everyone should feel more confident because the risks have been considered and mitigated. No one likes change, even if it's for the better. Learning how to use technology and new ways of working takes time, but the benefits and RoI are worth it.

## Why not?

Now is the time to invest in AI but remember that it's not a race; take the time to devise a strategy, set objectives and define the success criteria.

The only question you will be asking is – why didn't we do this sooner?

Jonathan Sharp is the CEO of Britannic Technologies.

# Aspirations for AI in housing

## Use-cases, value and priorities

**Mark Rotheram, CTO, BCN**

While many housing providers are experimenting with AI, we believe that few have fully unlocked its potential. Recent research reveals pockets of innovation, widespread uncertainty and a growing need for strategic clarity.

Our research, 'Aspirations & applications of AI in social housing', was based on 220 survey respondents and 50 in-depth interviews from 10 housing providers across England. This article explores those findings, reviewing the current state of AI in social housing, highlighting real-world use-cases, such as tenant complaint tracking and predictive maintenance, and introducing a practical framework for prioritising AI projects based on their difficulty and value.

The study found that although 31 per cent of respondents use AI tools, only 22 per cent were aware of AI being available for specific roles. However, trust remains low, with just 20 per cent believing AI consistently delivers accurate information and only 42 per cent feeling it aligns with their organisation's values. The study also flagged a major problem, that of poor data quality across the sector.

### What's working?

The informal adoption of AI in housing is good, with around 31 per cent of employees reporting using AI in their roles, although often without formal organisational awareness. Among these users, 94 per cent reported benefits such as time savings and improved communication.

Two-thirds of respondents believe AI will improve service quality (65 per cent), boost personal productivity (67 per cent) and deliver cost efficiencies (68 per cent). And AI is being used to streamline repetitive tasks, such as grammar-checking communications and analysing complex datasets.

### What's lagging?

The majority of staff aren't aware of how AI is being used in their organisations, with a striking 64 per cent of staff unsure what AI tools their organisation had.

When it comes to having the right AI strategy and policies, only 14 per cent were aware of an AI policy and fewer than four per cent knew of a formal strategy. Training is also lagging, with just six per cent reporting access to AI training, indicating a reliance on informal learning and experimentation.

Unsurprisingly, given the other findings, only 44 per cent of employees believed AI supports good decision-making and just 20 per cent trusted AI to provide consistently accurate information. And confidence in AI's ability to support equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) was low. Fewer than half believed AI could help identify tenant vulnerabilities or deliver personalised services to marginalised groups.

This fragmented landscape suggests that although AI is being used, its deployment is often ad-hoc, lacking strategic oversight and alignment with core social housing values. However, despite the challenges, AI is already proving its worth in specific operational areas. Two standout use-cases are automating the tracking of tenants' complaints and enabling predictive maintenance.

### Tracking tenants' complaints

Tenant complaints are a critical touchpoint in housing services. Traditionally, these are handled manually, often leading to delays, misrouting and inconsistent

follow-up. AI can now streamline this process through natural language processing (NLP), by analysing emails, messages and voice inputs to automatically categorise complaints. Through using sentiment analysis, AI can understand emotional tones within different communication formats to help prioritise urgent or sensitive problems.

The use of smart routing means AI can assign complaints to the most suitable team based on type, severity and historical resolution data. This not only improves operational efficiency but also enhances tenants' satisfaction by ensuring timely and appropriate responses.

## Predictive maintenance

For housing providers, reactive maintenance is expensive and disruptive. AI is enabling a shift towards predictive maintenance by analysing sensor data, historical repairs and environmental conditions.

For example, by using anomaly detection, AI can flag unusual patterns in equipment performance and predict failures before they happen. AI is also being used to optimise scheduling so that maintenance can be planned to minimise downtime and extend asset life. Meanwhile, budget forecasting is improved with predictive AI models that help to allocate resources better, reducing emergency costs.

## Unlocking AI's potential

While there are many strong use-cases for AI in housing, there remain problems around gaps in strategy, data readiness and staff training. To see effective use of AI in housing, guardrails must be used to ensure the responsible use of AI.

Success with AI starts with clean, accessible data. If systems contain outdated or duplicated data, or if your infrastructure prevents AI access, any AI efforts will stall – many organisations falter at this stage. Reviewing your data alongside your AI goals helps to identify what needs fixing before value can be extracted.

But how do you prioritise which AI projects to start with?

## Choosing the right projects

With limited resources and myriad potential applications, housing providers need a strategic approach to AI adoption. A 'difficulty vs. value' framework offers a practical way to evaluate and prioritise projects.

## Step 1 – Define value

Value should be assessed across multiple dimensions:

- **Operational efficiency – Time and cost savings.**
- **Tenant experience – Improved satisfaction and engagement.**
- **Compliance and risk reduction – Better adherence to regulations.**
- **Social impact – Alignment with EDI and sustainability goals.**

## Step 2 – Assess difficulty

Potential difficulties include:

- **Technical complexity – Data requirements, integration challenges and model sophistication.**
- **Organisational readiness – Skills, training and cultural acceptance.**
- **Data quality – Availability and reliability of data inputs.**

To give some simple examples, managing shared inboxes and automating email responses are low-effort, high-impact use-cases. Tenant complaints, which are often complex and time-consuming, can be streamlined with AI. By analysing complaints' data, AI can triage problems and send automated updates, freeing staff to handle more nuanced cases.

AI can also detect patterns, such as identifying recurrent problems in a housing block. Temperature data from buildings can be matched with tenants' feedback to optimise heating or cooling, improving comfort and reducing costs.

## Proving value and RoI

Starting with manageable, high-value projects to build confidence and demonstrate AI's benefits is key to success. As teams gain experience and savings grow, more complex initiatives can follow, with proving value and RoI being top priorities.

Working with an experienced AI services provider will help housing providers create an AI roadmap that will guide them through identifying opportunities, estimating RoI and creating actionable plans. Any AI strategy should include short- and long-term goals, cross-departmental collaboration and change management to build trust and ensure successful adoption.

AI adoption is at a pivotal moment in housing. Technology can improve tenant services and optimise operations, but its adoption is uneven and often unstructured. Setting a strong AI strategy is key to successful implementation of AI and to ensure return on investment.

Mark Rotheram is the chief technology officer at BCN.


# Digital transformation & Awaab's Law compliance

**Alan Linter, Group Consulting Director, FourNet**

The first phase of Awaab's Law is now in force, transforming the obligations of housing providers, empowering tenants with new rights and demanding more accountability across the sector. It will also challenge housing providers to fundamentally rethink how they manage tenant relationships, how they handle data and how they deliver safe, healthy homes.

Enforcement will be strict, but keeping tenants safe and ensuring full compliance can be achieved with the right expertise, tools and technology.

## A new era of responsibility

Awaab's Law is clear in its requirements. Emergency hazards must be dealt with within 24 hours. Significant hazards, including damp and mould, must be investigated within 10 working days. Written updates are mandatory, and remedial work must be delivered in good time or tenants offered alternative safe accommodation.

This is not an advisory code; it is a statutory duty, written directly into tenancy agreements. Tenants will be able to escalate unresolved complaints to the Housing Ombudsman or the courts. Local authorities will have greater enforcement powers. Fines, compensation and even criminal prosecutions are possible for those who fail to comply.

The government has signalled that these consequences are deliberately robust. As ministers have put it, "Safety is non-negotiable. We have a moral duty to act." For housing providers, the message is clear: this is no longer about discretionary good practice, it is about legal compliance and moral responsibility.

## The compliance challenge

Meeting these requirements isn't just a matter of sending more maintenance teams out on call. It's about creating an integrated, auditable system that can prove compliance at every stage.

Housing providers will need to:

- **Track tenants' complaints with total traceability.**
- **Monitor progress against strict deadlines.**
- **Ensure every interaction is logged and summarised.**
- **Identify repeat problems and vulnerabilities across the tenant base.**

The scale of the challenge shouldn't be underestimated. Housing providers manage millions of homes across the UK and deal with thousands of daily interactions across phone, email, web and face-to-face channels. Without joined-up systems and proactive analytics, the risk of

missed deadlines, missed hazards and overlooked opportunities to protect tenants is high.

## Why digital transformation is essential

This is where digital transformation becomes mission critical. Compliance with Awaab's Law isn't just a housing problem; it's a data, customer experience (CX) and accountability problem.

Interaction analytics, workflow automation and unified communications are no longer optional. They are the infrastructure that will enable housing providers to respond within hours rather than weeks, to see patterns before they become crises and to prove compliance when the Ombudsman or regulator comes calling.

Models such as HACT's Housing Data Standards will be vital to underpin this work. These standards will enable housing providers to consistently track repairs, hazards and tenants' vulnerabilities. But standards only go so far; they need to be brought to life by technology platforms capable of capturing, processing and analysing vast volumes of data in real time.

At FourNet, we see this transformation happening in other parts of the public sector, from local government to health. The lesson is clear: digital tools not only reduce risk, they also empower staff, improve communication and restore trust. The same shift must now take place in social housing.

For housing providers preparing for Awaab's Law, that will mean:

- **Interaction analytics that flag repeat complaints of damp or mould, ensuring nothing slips through the cracks.**
- **Auto-summary and auto-wrap tools that generate the written updates now required under the law.**
- **Workflow automations to make sure repair requests are prioritised and resolved within statutory deadlines.**
- **Integrated case management that gives housing staff a single, auditable view of each tenant's journey.**

This isn't about technology for its own sake. It is about enabling housing providers to meet their legal obligations, protect their reputations and safeguard the health and dignity of their tenants.

## A cultural shift

But the law also asks for more than systems and processes. It demands a cultural shift. Awaab's Law isn't just about fixing homes. It is about listening to tenants, protecting their health and safety, acting transparently and building trust where it has been eroded.

Technology can support that transformation by making interactions clearer, faster and more accountable.

Digital transformation partners like FourNet can provide the tools and expertise to make compliance practical and sustainable. But the true measure of success will be through customer experience and whether tenants feel the difference in their daily lives – that when they raise a concern, they are heard, respected and protected.

Alan Linter is the group consulting director at FourNet.

**Kirsty Marsden**
**Head of Enterprise Sales, Mizorix**

# Kirsty Marsden joins Mizorix

Mizorix has appointed Kirsty Marsden as its head of enterprise sales to lead the growth of Filer, the company's electronic document and records management (EDRM) system for UK housing providers and local authorities.

Mizorix's principal products comprise Filer for IDP for large-scale, automated document processing through advanced AI and integrated LLMs, Filer for Dynamics for integration between Microsoft SharePoint and Dynamics 365 to enable enterprise-grade document management capabilities within Dynamics, and Filer for SharePoint to upgrade SharePoint environments into robust, user-friendly and scalable EDRM systems.

Previously with TSG, Marsden joins to accelerate the success Mizorix has had delivering modern document and records management systems across housing and local government through strategic partnerships.

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