

COVID-19 Impact Monitoring

August 2020

This summary highlights the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the social housing sector in Scotland up to the end of July 2020.

Based on five months of data collection, our analysis focuses on submissions made by Scottish members. With Scotland experiencing different phases of lockdown to other UK nations, this analysis highlights the similarities and differences experienced in Scotland compared to the rest of the UK.

To find out more about the detailed impact reports, HouseMark's new forecasting solutions and the wider ways we're supporting the sector through COVID-19, please contact scotland@housemark.co.uk.

As the UK's leading data-driven solutions provider for the sector, HouseMark remains the only UK-wide organisation monitoring and forecasting the impact of these unprecedented times on the social housing sector.

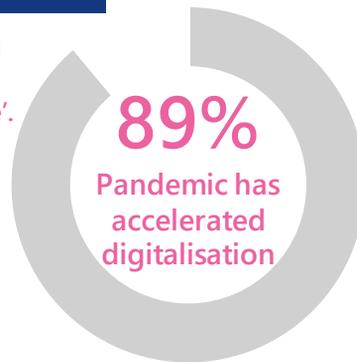
Only with HouseMark can you access this essential level of analysis.

Digital Transformation

Digitalisation is widespread among Scottish participants, with all reporting to be 'ahead of the curve'.

We found examples of tenants' apps to manage digital contact as well as real-time satisfaction reporting to help landlords respond to issues quickly.

Another landlord has developed an entire IT infrastructure to help supported housing residents manage their lives online.



Repairs

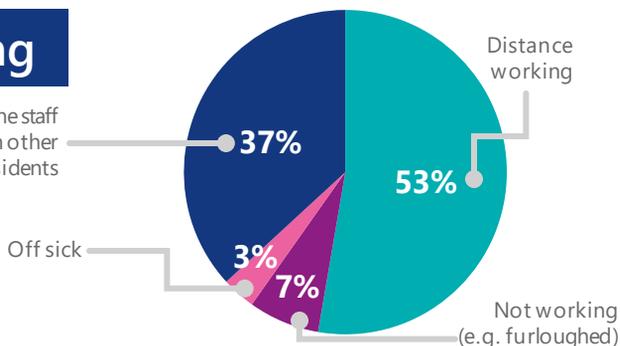


59% rise in repairs reported

Non-emergency repairs reporting increased by a dramatic 59% from June. This coincides with Scotland entering Phase 3 of the release from lockdown. Even with this rise, the rate of repairs per property is still less than half the pre-pandemic level.

Staffing

Essential front-line staff in contact with other staff and/or residents



The proportion of Scottish social housing workers returning to front-line roles has changed little since June, which reflects Phase 3 guidance that non-essential offices should remain closed throughout July.

Anti-social behaviour

20% drop in ASB

New reports of anti-social behaviour fell by 20% between June and July. Following a peak last month, July's rate of 81.6 new cases per 1,000 properties is similar to May's figures. These rates continue to be historically high and could cost the sector an additional £16m to resolve.

Office working

Fewer than half expect to change office premises

In contrast to other parts of the UK, only 45% of landlords are planning or making changes to offices as a result of the pandemic. This includes 18% who have already reduced office space as a result of embracing homeworking.

Key concerns amongst landlords include staff wellbeing and maintaining service quality.



Gas safety

86% Landlords recording no access for gas servicing

Using the standard snapshot measure for gas safety compliance, we found that 95% of homes had a valid gas safety record at the end of July. Access for gas servicing continues to be an issue as tenants are wary of letting gas engineers into their homes.

In this section of the report, we highlight Muirhouse HA's exemplary record in gas safety – which is down to regular contact, reassurance and trust.