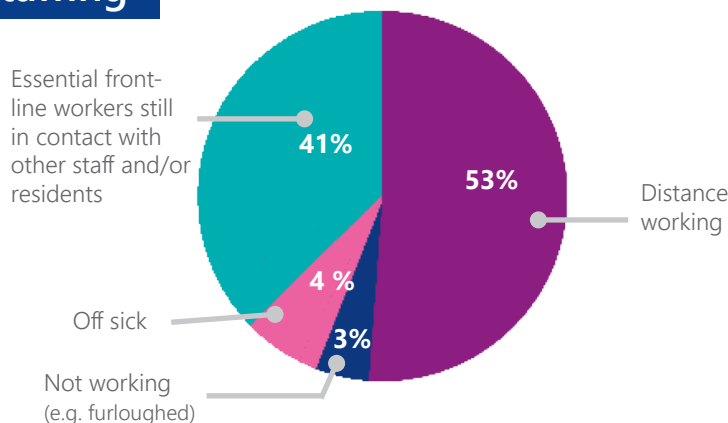


COVID-19 Impact Monitoring Executive Summary

August 2020

Accessing real time data to make evidence-based decisions has never been more crucial. As the pandemic develops into a pattern of universal anti-viral measures across the UK punctuated with local outbreaks, we are starting to see the sector modify its plans for the future as remote contact, social distancing and home working look set to stay for many months to come. Our monthly COVID-19 impact analysis is the only report to cover the UK sector-wide. This is the fifth in our series, with data up to the end of July 2020, and has our analysis of how the sector is stabilising performance and looking to transform over the coming months.

Staffing



The proportion of staff not working (e.g. due to furlough) continues to shrink – down to 3% of the workforce. We found that 96% of landlords are set to embrace homeworking in some form in the longer term.

Digitalisation

90%

More than 90% of landlords have been actively working on digitally transforming services as a result of the pandemic, with 38% of participants accelerating the development of tenant portals.

Gas Safety

81% of landlords recorded no access visits for gas safety during July, and we estimate that UK social landlords failed to gain access to over 50,000 properties to carry out essential gas safety work. Gas safety compliance is currently around 98%.



Lettings

Lettings have stabilised after large rise in June – just below 30,000 in July – around 90% of pre-pandemic levels.

Vacancies have reduced to 0.96%, this is still well above the 0.5-0.6% seen during this period in 2018-19. We estimate that the sector will forfeit as much as £32m in lost rent up to the end of December, as a result of increased vacancy rates caused by the pandemic.

Repairs

2.6m

The number of non-emergency repairs reported increased by 20% in July, with the number completed also increasing from 62% to 74%.

Only one in ten landlords completed more non-emergency repairs than were reported in the month, suggesting that the sector is not yet tackling the backlog of repairs that has built up since March.

We estimate there to be 2.6 million jobs to be completed across the sector.

Anti-social behaviour

↓ 5.9%

We recorded a 5.9% reduction (roughly 2,300) in new cases recorded in July, compared to June.

Case rates are still around 50% higher than pre-pandemic levels and 35% higher than we would expect to see at this time of year.

Arrears

For the first time since lockdown measures were introduced, we have seen a reduction in the month on month arrears rate.

Overall sector arrears have reduced by 0.05 ppts since June and now stand at 3.64%. Anecdotal evidence shows pockets of arrears increases, for example where a large local firm closes down.