

COVID-19 Impact Monitoring

October 2020

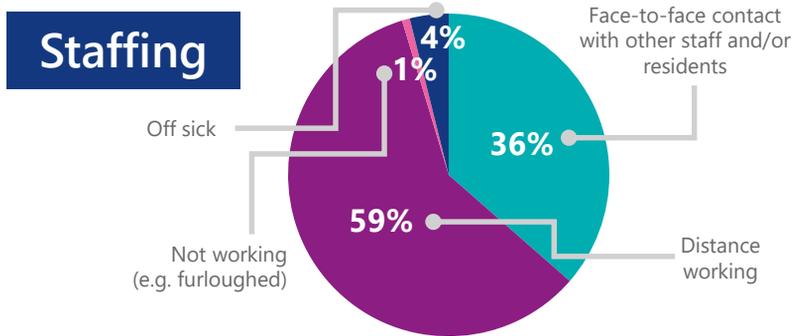
This summary highlights the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the social housing sector in Wales up to the end of September 2020.

Based on seven months of data collection, our analysis focuses on submissions made by Welsh members. With Wales experiencing different phases of lockdown to other UK nations, this analysis highlights the similarities and differences 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 data@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.



The proportion of Welsh social housing workers on furlough has reduced to negligible levels. Compared to last month the proportion of home workers has fallen, but still remains higher than other parts of the UK.



After a steep rise in August, the number of newly reported repairs slowed considerably in September.

Repairs rates are currently around 27% higher than pre-pandemic as the sector gradually works through the backlog of jobs.

Wave 2 lockdowns

50% 'no change to services'

Landlords are confident about continuing services during Wave 2 lockdowns.

None of our participating landlords were anticipating major changes to services as a result of increased restrictions.

This echoes the broad message from local lockdowns across the UK, that the work of landlords can continue, with the right precautions in place to protect staff and residents.



Arrears

↑ 2%

Arrears levels remain stable

Current tenant arrears have remained stable for the penultimate month of the furlough scheme. Average rates rose very slightly to 3.9% of rent due excluding void loss.

While there is still considerable variation at individual landlord level, most have contained earlier steep increases. We have found many participants preparing for a second wave increase as the furlough scheme ends and lockdowns affect the economy.

Gas safety

Wales continues to lead the UK in gas safety compliance

Despite improvements in gas compliance from landlords in England and Scotland, Welsh landlords continue to record the highest rates in the UK.

Alongside this result, we found that one third of landlords recorded 100% compliance at the end of September, with more than half gaining access to all properties needed to carry out gas safety inspections.



Lettings

Lettings rise 20%

Following a blip in lettings during August, the number of lettings rose again during September, with annualised turnover rates close to pre-pandemic levels.

There is still some catching up to do as the number of lettings did not match terminations. At the end of September 1.5% of the sector's stock was vacant and available compared to 1.2% last month.