

# Social housing sector continues adapting to impact of coronavirus

Press release

Results of the regulator's second survey of housing associations and local authorities on how they are coping with the coronavirus pandemic.



The Regulator of Social Housing has today (9 June) published the [results](#) of its second monthly survey of housing associations and local authorities about how they are coping with the coronavirus pandemic.

The social housing sector is generally reporting that it is continuing to maintain service delivery for emergency repairs and key health and safety checks, and that some of the challenges that it is facing have begun to ease. Providers report that almost all emergency repairs are being completed, but challenges with access to properties and the reduced reporting of repairs mean that backlogs of routine repairs and some safety checks continue to rise. Almost all gas safety certificates are in date for most providers but compared to April, a higher number of providers are reporting that they are currently completing most, rather than all, gas safety checks. Many providers have said that they normally operate a 10- or 11-month gas servicing cycle to mitigate against the risk of failing to meet the 12-month statutory cycle should problems arise. In the current circumstances the effectiveness of this mitigation is diminishing and as a result, the backlogs of gas safety checks are rising and are likely to continue to rise.

Social housing landlords responsible for care and support settings are reporting that they are continuing to maintain safe staffing levels and essential services. Absence rates appear to be recovering and providers generally appear to have successfully identified stable supply lines for PPE.

Housing associations and local authorities are continuing to address the ongoing challenges with adapted approaches including remote working, continuing alternative deployments of staff and increased communication with tenants. In many cases, they are now also planning for recovery.

Fiona MacGregor, Chief Executive says:

The ongoing impact of the coronavirus outbreak continues to affect how social housing landlords provide services to tenants and keep them safe. It will take time for the recent easing of restrictions to be fully reflected on the ground and in the responses to our cross-sector operational survey.

We are pleased that housing associations and local authorities are generally able to report continued service delivery in the areas surveyed, including some plans for recovery. Providers and their staff have adapted well to the changing circumstances and we anticipate that the flexible and agile approaches they have taken will continue as restrictions ease further.

## Notes to editors

1. The short survey asked providers to answer a single multiple-choice question on each of five key areas: emergency repairs; statutory gas safety checks; statutory fire safety checks; asbestos, electrical, legionella and lift checks; and care and support staffing levels. For each area it also asked them to identify any key constraints, risks and mitigating actions and the scale of any backlog and how this has changed since the previous survey.
2. The survey and supporting guidance were made available for providers to complete on RSH's online data collection portal NROSH+ from Friday 15 to Friday 22 May. It was issued to all private registered providers with 1,000 or more properties, local authorities, and to some smaller private registered providers with over 500 properties and/or a high proportion of care and support activity. The next round of the survey will take place between 19 and 26 June.
3. We intend to run the survey monthly for as long as is necessary and will keep the frequency under review. However, where providers believe tenant safety is threatened or viability is under strain, we urge them to inform RSH immediately through their key contact at the regulator, or our [Referrals and Regulatory Enquiries team](#) or [SmallProviders@rsh.gov.uk](mailto:SmallProviders@rsh.gov.uk) or by calling 0300 124 5225.
4. Please see our [Coronavirus statements page](#) for the latest updates.
5. The Regulator of Social Housing promotes a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs. It does this by undertaking robust economic regulation focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer. It also sets consumer standards and may take action if these standards are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants.
6. For press office contact details, see the [Media enquiries page](#). For general queries, please email [enquiries@rsh.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@rsh.gov.uk) or call 0300 124 5225.

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