

Housing associations

Void management

Survey Report 2014



The survey

The introduction of welfare reforms in 2013, notably Universal Credit and the 'bedroom tax', continue to pose a real challenge to the housing sector. There has been much speculation about the impact of 'bedroom tax' on the number of void properties, with 24% of respondents saying that it has had a significant impact on the number of voids in their portfolio. Yet Government have dismissed claims that in particular, larger social homes, are now more difficult to let and have encouraged housing associations to be more creative and explore how to improve internal processes.

Organisations are coming under increasing pressure to find new, more efficient ways of managing their void properties in order to re-let them as soon as possible.

Our survey, in partnership with Oneserve, aimed to gain a snapshot of the current number of empty properties across England, Scotland and Wales, the systems and processes currently in place to manage the transition from 'empty' to 'occupied' property and the current challenges faced by housing associations in doing so.

This document contains the key findings of the report and a summary of responses received.

Profile of respondents

In total, 285 individuals accessed our survey representing a range of parties involved in void management.

Summary of key findings

25% of those surveyed said that 5 to 15% of their overall housing portfolio was classed as void. When compared to the overall social housing market (based on an estimated five million homes) this equates to up to 200,000 empty properties at any one time.

46% of those surveyed said 'bedroom tax' had increased the number of void properties. When considering the impact of bedroom tax on this particular group, team pressure was viewed as the having the biggest impact followed by turnaround time.

- Team pressure
- Quality of pressure
- Turnaround time
- Tenant satisfaction

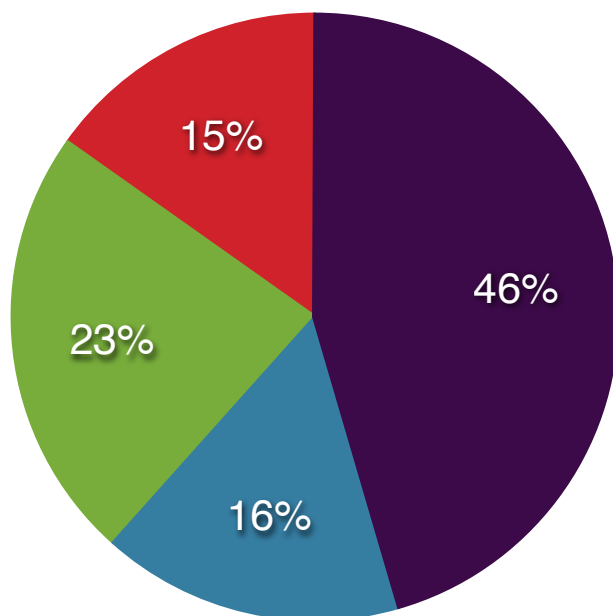


Figure 1: What impact has the introduction of bedroom tax had on your organisation? (based on those who ranked the above as 4 Medium to High impact and 5 High impact)

With 45% of respondents saying that their void turn around process takes 2-4 weeks and a further 19% taking 4-6 weeks, the cost implication due to rent loss, council tax, and increased risk of property damage through theft and vandalism are huge.

- Less than a week
- 1-2 weeks
- 2-4 weeks
- 4-6 weeks
- 6-8 weeks
- More than 8 weeks
- Don't know

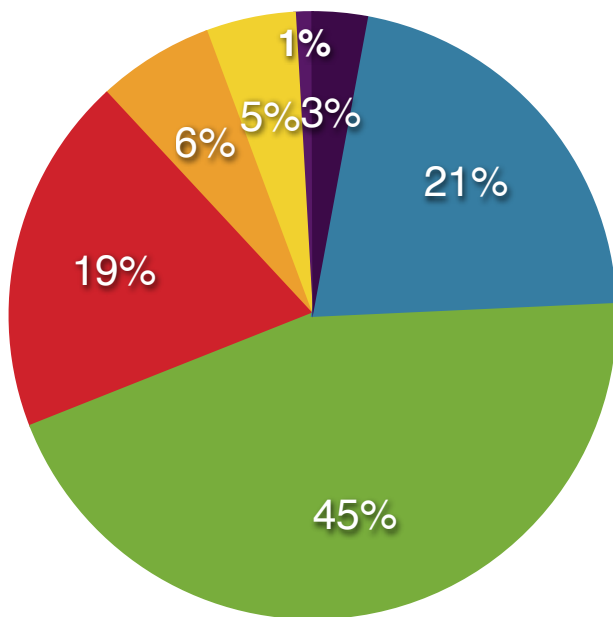


Figure 2: What is the current turnaround time from void to re-letting a property?

As you would expect, the most important consideration for social housing providers was the reduction in turnaround time of void properties, with 78% scoring this as important or very important (152 individuals) and 73% saying that better management of costs is a key issue for them (143 individuals).

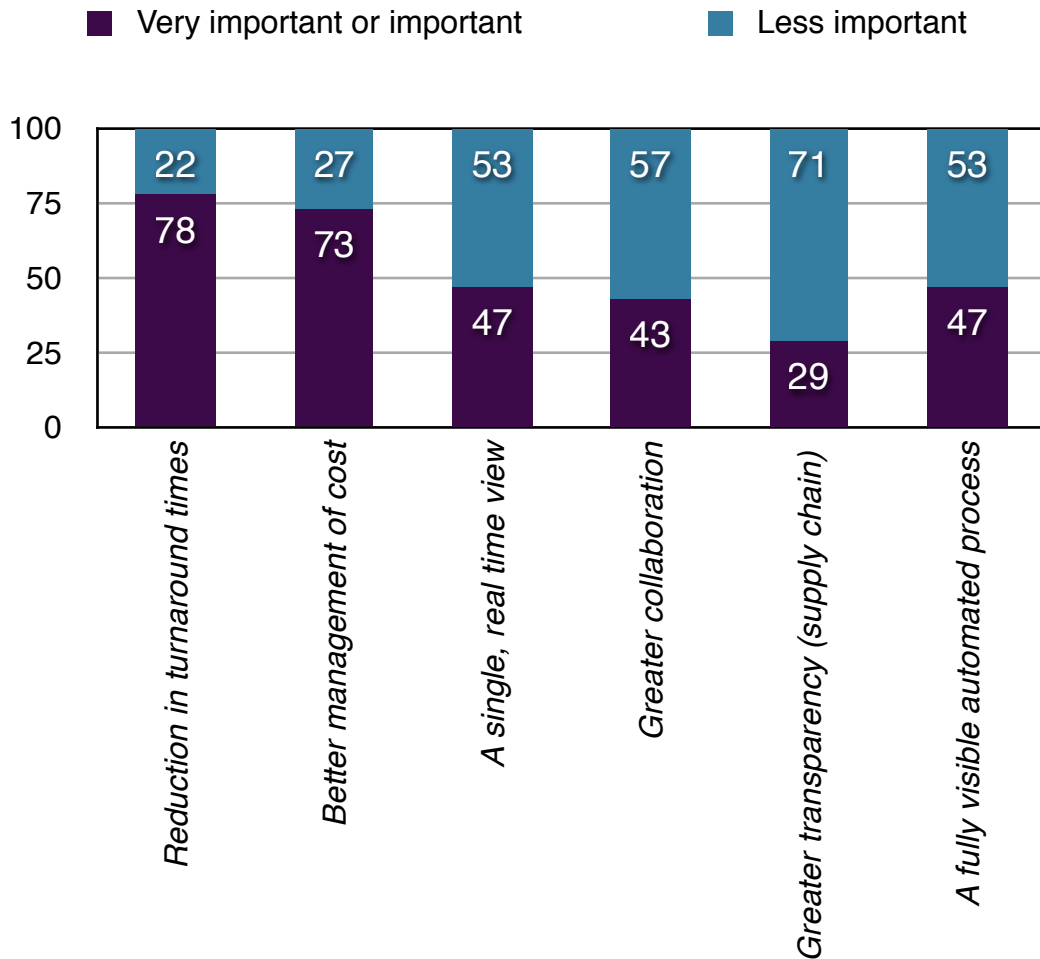


Figure 3: Which of the following would be most important to your organisation when managing the void process? (The above illustrates the split between those who viewed an option as Very important/Important and those who viewed each as of lesser importance)

75% of all those surveyed are currently using an IT system for void management, with 84% using a module within their Housing Management systems. However with up to seven departments now involved in the management of void properties, it is not surprising that 47% (111 respondents) are looking for a system that offers greater collaboration between internal departments and 43% (104 respondents) are looking for a fully automated process visible to all departments.

This therefore poses the question as to whether housing management systems are the most appropriate tool for the job, or if a more collaborative void management solution is required. The latest cloud based tools can help social landlords reduce turnaround times, better manage cost and allow for greater collaboration in the management of their void properties.

About Oneserve



Oneserve is the most exciting and cost effective field service management solution provider on the market today. We combine software, service and technology, providing you with everything you need to transform the performance of your business.

Our enterprise level field service management software provides all the tools you need to increase productivity, improve visibility and drive greater collaboration within your business and your supply chain – all from one cloud based, unified platform. Our solution can help you manage your call centre, workflow, scheduling, mobile workforce, supply chain, asset management, analytics and finance, and parts and stock.

To find out more, please give us a call on 01392 367367 or visit our website at: www.oneserve.co.uk.

Acknowledgements

The survey team at iGov Survey would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who were kind enough to take part - and especially to those who found the time to offer additional insight through their extra comments. We would also like to thank our partner, Oneserve, for their assistance in compiling the survey questions, scrutinising the responses and analysing the results.



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Void management survey 2014

Question: What would best describe your role within your organisation?

Answer	Count	Percent
Chief	28	10 %
Director	67	24 %
Head	54	19 %
Manager	103	37 %
Other	29	10 %

Question: What are your primary job responsibilities within your organisation? Please tick all that apply.

Answer	Count	Percent
Strategic management and leadership	149	24 %
Customer services	95	15 %
Tenant engagement	72	12 %
IT management	14	2 %
Finance management	28	4 %
Resource management	33	5 %
Housing management	157	25 %
Housing Advisory	35	6 %
Other	43	7 %

Question: How many properties does your organisation currently manage?

Answer	Count	Percent
Less than 500	12	4 %
500-1000	42	16 %
2001-5000	91	34 %
5001-10000	71	26 %
10001-50000	49	18 %
50000+	4	1 %

Question: What percentage of your overall housing portfolio is classed as void properties?

Answer	Count	Percent
Less than 5%	195	72 %
5-10%	48	18 %
10-15%	18	7 %
15-20%	1	0 %
More than 20%	0	0 %
Don't know	7	3 %

Question: By what percentage has the introduction of the bedroom tax increased your number of void properties?

Answer	Count	Percent
1-5%	103	46 %
6-10%	19	9 %
11-15%	7	3 %
16-20%	13	6 %
21-25%	13	6 %
Other	52	23 %
Don't know	16	7 %

Grid: What impact has the introduction of the bedroom tax had on your organisation? (1= low impact, 5 = high impact)

Question: Team pressure

Answer	Count	Percent
1	28	13 %
2	24	11 %
3	58	26 %
4	77	35 %
5	36	16 %

Question: Quality of process

Answer	Count	Percent
1	67	30 %
2	54	24 %
3	61	27 %
4	32	14 %
5	9	4 %

Question: Turnaround times

Answer	Count	Percent
1	79	35 %
2	32	14 %
3	55	25 %
4	33	15 %
5	24	11 %

Question: Tenant satisfaction

Answer	Count	Percent
1	79	35 %
2	48	22 %
3	58	26 %
4	29	13 %
5	9	4 %

Question: On average, what was the cost of repairs per void within your portfolio in 2012/2013?

Answer	Count	Percent
Less than £500	16	7 %
£501-1000	28	13 %
£1001-2500	115	52 %
£2501-5000	36	16 %
£5001-10000	2	1 %
£10000 +	1	0 %
Don't know	22	10 %

Question: Which of the following departments within your organisation are involved in void management ?

Answer	Count	Percent
Housing management	207	32 %
Direct labour organisation (DLO)	89	14 %
Customer service	83	13 %
Tenant engagement	21	3 %
IT	31	5 %
Finance	45	7 %
Housing repairs	154	24 %
Other	23	4 %

Question: Do you currently use an IT system for void management ?

Answer	Count	Percent
Yes	164	75 %
No	54	25 %
Don't know	2	1 %

Question: If you said Yes, which of the following systems are you using?

Answer	Count	Percent
Void software solution	5	3 %
A module within your housing management system	150	84 %
A module within your asset management system	12	7 %
Part of a field service management system	1	1 %
Other	10	6 %

Question: If you said No, is this something you plan to implement in the:

Answer	Count	Percent
Next six months	9	17 %
Next twelve months	13	25 %
After twelve months	1	2 %
No current plans to use	29	56 %

Question: Who carries out your void repairs in your organisation?

Answer	Count	Percent
In-house team/DLO	57	27 %
Sub-contract team	80	38 %
Combination of both	57	27 %
Other	16	8 %

Question: How satisfied are you with the current provision?

Answer	Count	Percent
Very satisfied	62	30 %
Satisfied	61	29 %
Satisfied with room for improvement	71	34 %
There is much room for improvement	16	8 %

Question: What is the current turnaround time from void to re-letting a property?

Answer	Count	Percent
Less than a week	6	3 %
1-2 weeks	45	21 %
2-4 weeks	94	45 %
4-6 weeks	40	19 %
6-8 weeks	13	6 %
More than 8 weeks	10	5 %
Don't know	2	1 %

Grid: Which of the following would be most important to your organisation when managing the void process? (1 = Not Important, 5 = Very Important)

Question: Reduction in turnaround time

Answer	Count	Percent
1	10	5 %
2	12	6 %
3	22	11 %
4	39	20 %
5	113	58 %

Question: Better management of cost

Answer	Count	Percent
1	5	3 %
2	13	7 %
3	35	18 %
4	50	26 %
5	93	47 %

Question: A single, real-time view of the process from start to finish

Answer	Count	Percent
1	23	12 %
2	24	12 %
3	55	28 %
4	48	24 %
5	46	23 %

Question: Greater collaboration between relevant internal departments

Answer	Count	Percent
1	13	7 %
2	44	22 %
3	54	28 %
4	40	20 %
5	45	23 %

Question: Greater transparency through the supply chain

Answer	Count	Percent
1	38	19 %
2	39	20 %
3	62	32 %
4	34	17 %
5	23	12 %

Question: A fully automated process, visible to all departments

Answer	Count	Percent
1	26	13 %
2	29	15 %
3	49	25 %
4	47	24 %
5	45	23 %

Question: Would you be interested in finding out more about integrated ICT solutions for void management ?

Answer	Count	Percent
Yes	41	21 %
No	154	79 %

Organisations

A1 Housing Bassetlaw Ltd
 Adullam Homes Housing Association Ltd
 Aldwyck Housing Group
 Apna Ghar Housing Association
 ARK Housing Association
 ASRA Housing Group
 Axiom Housing Association
 Beechwood and Ballantyne Community HA
 Blackpool Coastal Housing
 Bournville Village Trust
 Bridgewater Housing Association Ltd
 Bromsgrove District Housing Trust Ltd
 Cadarn Housing Group
 Caldmoreaccord
 Cassiltoun Housing Association
 CCG
 Charter Housing Association
 Chorley Community Housing
 Clwyd Alyn Housing Association Ltd
 Clydesdale Housing Association Ltd

Abbeyfield
 Advance
 Alliance Homes
 Arches Housing Ltd
 Ashton Pioneer Homes Ltd
 Aster Group
 B3Living
 Berwickshire HA
 Boston Mayflower Limited
 Bracknell Forest Homes
 Broadland Housing Association
 C&C
 Cadwyn Housing Association Ltd
 Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd
 Castle Vale Community Housing Association
 Cestria Community Housing Trust
 Cheltenham Borough Homes
 Cloch Housing Association
 Clyde Valley Housing Association Ltd
 Coast and Country Housing Ltd

Coastline Housing Ltd
Colchester Borough Homes
Community Gateway Association
Connect Housing
Cornwall Housing Ltd
Dale & Valley Homes
Derby Homes Ltd
Derwentside Homes Ltd
dunedin canmore housing
East Durham Homes
Eastend Homes
Eastlands Homes Partnership Ltd
English Rural Housing Association
Equity Housing Group Limited
Family Mosaic
First Wessex
Four Housing Group
Gedling Homes
Genesis Housing Association
Glen Oaks Housing Association Ltd
Gravesend Churches Housing Association
Guinness South
Halton Housing Trust
High Peak Community Housing
Homes for Northumberland
Homes in Sedgemoor
Housing Solutions Group
iGov
Impact Housing Association
Industrial Dwellings Society (1885) Ltd
Isos
King Street Housing
Kingdom Housing Association Ltd
Livin Housing Association
Manor Estates Housing Association Ltd
Melville Housing Association Ltd
Mid-Wales Housing Association Ltd
Mount Green Housing Association Ltd
Northwards Housing
Oak Tree Housing Association
Origin Housing Ltd
Peabody Trust
Pembrokeshire Housing Association Ltd
Pickering and Ferens Homes
Plymouth Community Homes
Poole Housing Partnership Ltd
RCT Homes
Ribble Valley Homes
Rockingham Forest Housing Association Ltd
Rural Stirling Housing Association Ltd
Salix Homes
Scottish Borders Housing Association
SHAL Housing
Shoreline Housing Partnership
Solon South West HA Ltd
South Lakes Housing
Southside Housing Association
St Vincents Housing Association Ltd
Stockport Homes Ltd
Sussex Housing and Care
Swan Housing Group
Taff Housing Association Ltd.
Teign Housing
Thenuue Housing Association
Tower Hamlets Homes
Two Castles HA Ltd
United Welsh Housing Association Ltd
Vela Group
Viewpoint Housing Association Ltd
Walterton and Elgin Community Homes Ltd
Weslo Housing Management
West of Scotland Housing Association Ltd
WHCHT
Wolverhampton Homes
Wrekin Housing Trust
Yorkshire Coast Homes
Yorkshire Housing

Cobalt Housing
Community Gateway
Community Trust Housing
Contour Housing Group Ltd
Cube Housing Association
Dale and Valley Homes
Derwent Living
Drumchapel Housing Co-operative Limited
Dunedin Canmore Housing Association Ltd
East Kent Housing
Eastlands Homes
Eildon Housing Association Ltd
EPIC Housing
Family Housing Association (Wales) Ltd
First Ark Group
Forth Housing Association Ltd
Friendship Care and Housing
Genesis HA
Glen Housing Association
Gloucester City Homes
Greenfields Community Housing
Hafod Housing Association Ltd
Hebridean Housing Partnership
Homes for Haringey
Homes In Havering
Horton Housing
I D S
Impact Housing
Incommunities Group Ltd
Inquilab HA Ltd
ISOS Housing Group
Kingdom Housing Association
Lanarkshire Houing Assocdiation
Loreburn Housing Association Ltd
Marches Housing Association
Methodist Homes Housing Association Ltd
Monmouthshire Housing Association
MTHA
NPT Homes
Ore Valley Housing Association
Partick Housing Assocation
Peaks and Plains Housing Trust
Phoenix CHA
Places for People
Poole Housing Partnership
Queens Cross Housing Association Ltd
RHP
Riverside Housing Group
Rosehill Housing Cooperative Ltd
Rykneld Homes Ltd
SBHA
Seven Locks Housing
Sheffield City Council
Solihull Community Housing Ltd
South Essex Homes
Southdown Housing Association
Spectrum Housing Group
staffoed and rural homes
Suffolk Housing Society Ltd
Swan Housing Association
Taff Housing Association
Tai Ceredigion
the barnet group
Thrive Homes
Trent and Dove Housing Ltd
Two Rivers Housing
Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust
Victory Housing Trust
Wakefield and District Housing
Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust
West Kent Housing Association
Westfield Housing Association
Wishaw and District Housing Association Ltd
Worcester Community Housing
YHG
Yorkshire Coast Homes Ltd
Your Homes Newcastle