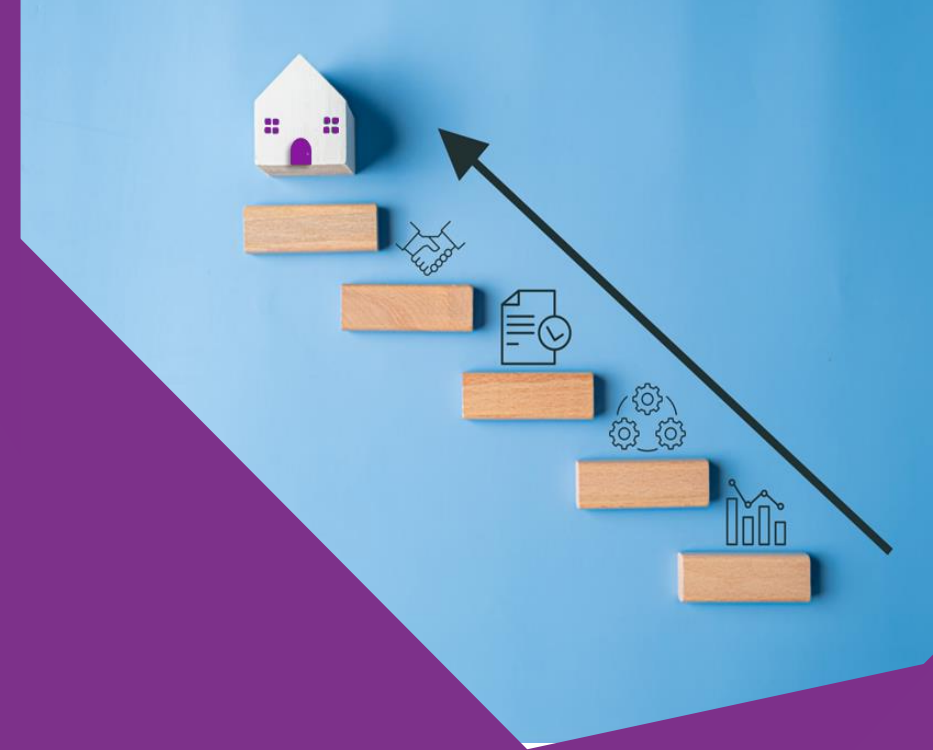


Welcome – The webinar will start shortly

No Access and preparations for Awaab's Law

Wednesday 19 November

Please ensure you mute your audio.
Questions/comments can be asked in the chat box.
This webinar will be recorded for internal purposes only



Chartered
Institute of
Housing



cwag
Councils with ALMOs Group

**Local
Government
Association**



Speakers

- 10.00 Chair's welcome and introductions**
Eamon McGoldrick, NFA Managing Director
- 10.10 Sharing the findings of HQN research into No Access best practice and preparations for Awaab's Law**
Lydia Dlaboha, Deputy CEO, HQN
- 10.45 Spotlight on Stockport Homes Group**
Joe Keating, Head of Assets, Stockport Homes Group
- 11.00 Spotlight on Dacorum Borough Council**
Ricky Lang, Head of Safe Homes, Dacorum Borough Council
- 11.15 Question and Answer/ discussion**
- 11.25 Chair's summing up**
Eamon McGoldrick
- 11.30 Close**

The headlines

Lydia Dlaboha

November 2025

The project

- The brief: to explore the experiences of “no access” and Awaab’s Law, to identify:
 - Good practice
 - Key challenges together with guidance, tools and solutions
 - Lessons learnt for the next phases of Awaab’s Law
- The activities:
 - A desktop review of relevant literature
 - An online survey:
 - No access – 50 plus responses
 - Awaab’s Law – 36 plus responses
 - Focus groups and meetings – over 100 attendees. Various staff and residents
 - Case studies and examples of good practice

Preparations for Awaab's law – fewer than 11% reported they would struggle to meet the deadline

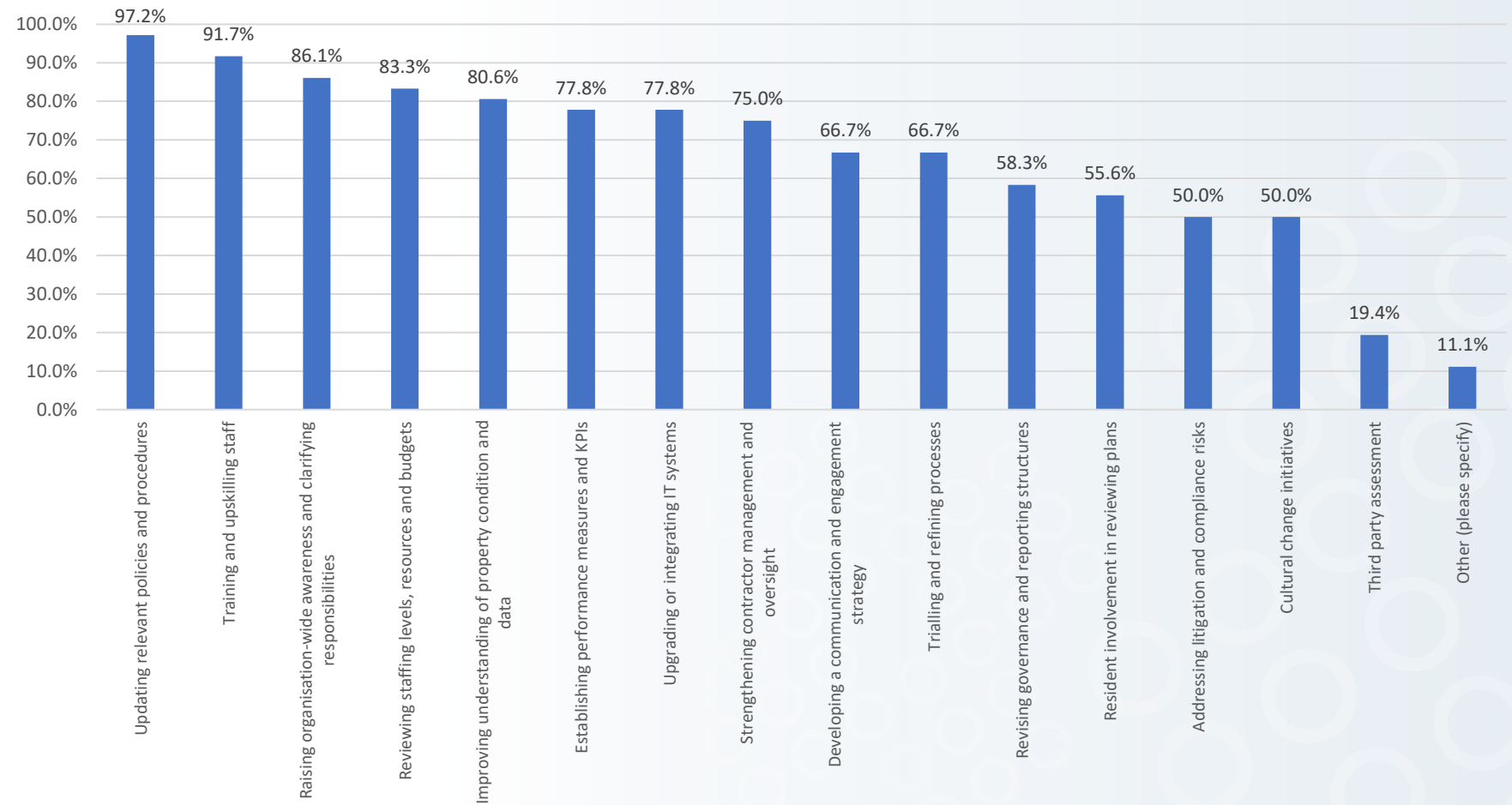
Readiness and resources

- Staffing, training and attitude change seen as crucial as is better use of data on stock condition to detect problems earlier
- A struggle:
 - Funding and recruitment of technical specialists (surveyors, contractors)
 - Coordination across the organisation

Culture, communication and tenant involvement

- Most are:
 - Striving to bring about a culture of respect and individual response
 - Using a variety of channels to inform tenants and raise awareness
- Some are:
 - Providing tenants with advice and tools to manage the home environment (including home sensors)
 - Involving tenant panels/groups to refine the service offer

Actions landlords were undertaking/planning to undertake to meet the October deadline



Preparations for Awaab's law

Policy and governance

- Specific reporting for Awaab's Law compliance including:
 - Upward reporting to governing body level
 - Metrics and KPIs
- Making links between data - Awaab's Law, risk, health and safety, satisfaction

Technology and data

- Greater use of dashboards, apps and linked systems
- Concerns over data reliability and integration remain
- Better asset management/stock condition data and analysis for the long term

Legal and access

- Concerns over ambiguity in guidance and general complexity
- Some are improving responses to disrepair cases
- 'No access' is a growing concern...

Lessons learnt and future challenges

- Preparations and building blocks put in place – will benefit future phases
- The concerns – bedding in whilst taking on additional phases:
 - Resources including specialists, contractors, admin capacity, staff knowledge
 - Legal position and access issues
 - Disrepair claims, 'no win no fee' claims firms
 - Challenges over finding suitable accommodation at short notice
- Perception of being less prepared for the “other hazards” – knowledge, data, options and solutions, eg, overheating

“No access” – some facts and figures

- 60% of respondents consider it a growing concern
- “No access” terminology, only:
 - 40% have a formal definition
 - 46% have a policy and procedure
- 44% had analysed reasons for no access (similar number tracking “persistent” cases). Key reasons cited:
 - More than four in five – tenant vulnerabilities
 - More than half – stigmatising issues, eg, hoarding
 - More than half – concerns over disruption
 - Around 40% – landlord admin issues
- Only 14% had any defined metrics... but the costs associated with it are considered to be significant
- Legal issues cited as a problem universally

Actions to support good practice

Culture and understanding

- Create a culture of support and empathy toward tenants
- Understand individual circumstances and pressured lives with competing priorities
- Adopt a (no blame) definition of 'no access' that residents, staff and contractors can understand

Policies, procedures and processes

- Create policies and procedures. Monitor their use
- Test out and refine approaches. Involve tenants at an early stage. Reflect on the reasons for failed visits, address systems and processes
- Effectively manage contractors and contracts
- Use technology - make booking, changing and cancelling appointments easy
- Streamline visits
- Focus on persistent and complex cases - start early in the process

Actions to support good practice ...(cont'd)

Communications

- Be clear with tenants about their responsibilities
- Use multi-media marketing campaigns

Data and information

- Develop good knowledge of and relationships with tenants, stakeholders
- Create a single database of all sources of information on a property and residents. Use it

Performance monitoring and reporting

- Use metrics to track cases effectively, learn from successes
- Benchmark to understand levels of no access, the business costs of no access and the reasons for it

Legal action

- Hold it in reserve. Ensure excellent record keeping

What next – HQN's 'to do list' to take forward...

- An opportunity for co creation work with residents and staff:
 - Definitions
 - Processes
 - Charter
 - Model policy and procedure
- Sharing ideas for campaigns/communications to promote importance of "access"
- Metrics – developing (and benchmarking) a suite of KPIs
- Legal issues:
 - Easy, at a glance guide to legal remedies
 - Example court pack
 - Regular updates and learning from case law
- Forum to share best practice, experience of tech etc





National Federation of ALMOs

Joe Keating – Head of Assets
Case Study – Stockport Homes, No Access



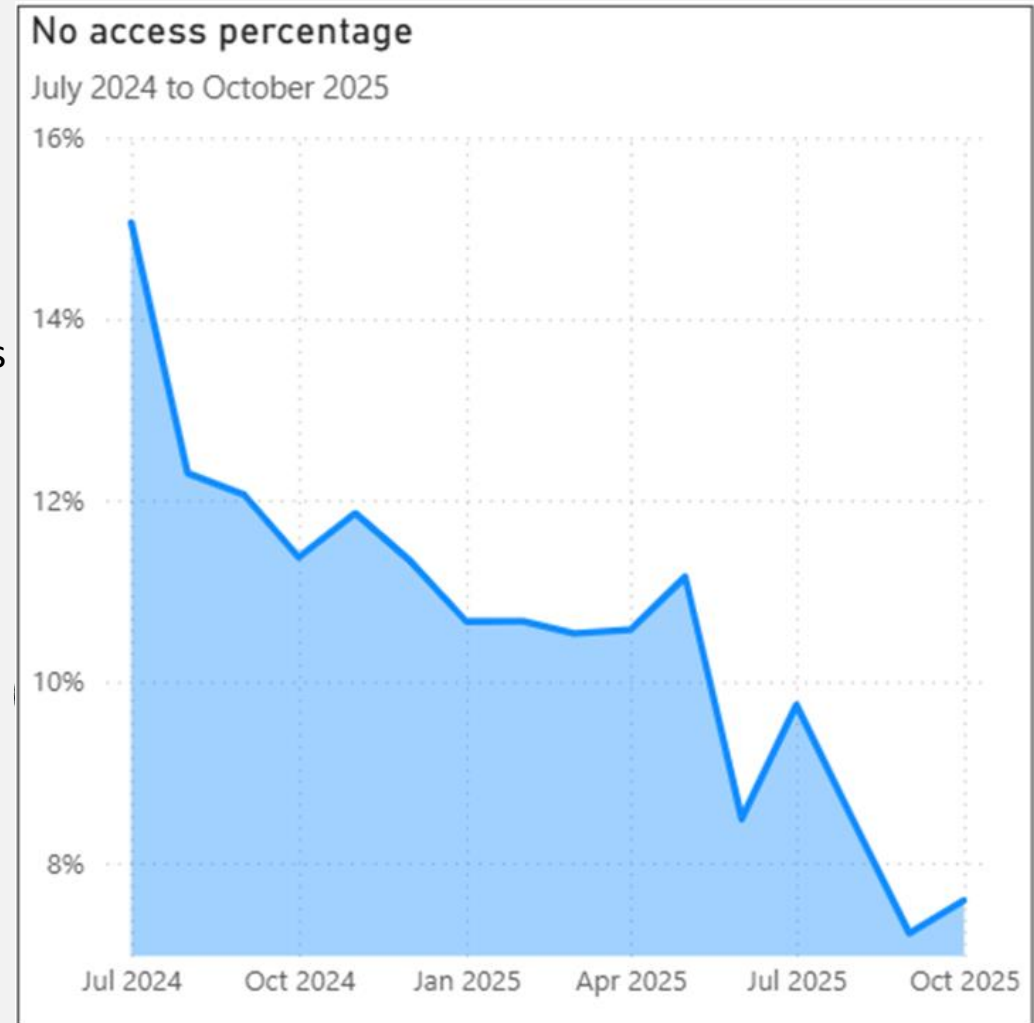
You'll like this.... but not a lot!

Stockport Homes dose not have any magic
recipe.....
.....and there is no panacea!



Background

- Stockport Homes 12,500 properties, ALMO.
- 18 months ago, circa 15% of all repairs visits resulted in no access
- £10,000 a week in lost productivity
- Customer dissatisfaction and complaints
- Poor KPI results



Understanding the problem



- Data is king! – Power BI dashboards
 - Track trends – identify hotspots
- Strengthen our record keeping
- Review our processes
- Greater insight
 - Fluctuating mental health/anxiety
- Is it even a repair?

Changing Culture

- No access – failure to deliver!
- Doorstep Guide for Operatives
 - Arriving within 30 mins/keeping customer updated
 - Knocking confidently, window, fence, neighbour “having a 5 min presence”
 - Date-stamped photo/calling card
 - Follow up phone call
 - Records ← Important!
- Accountability & Consistency



Communication



- Move away from letters over 10 years ago
- Text Messages
 - Old process not fit for purpose
 - 7pm night before
 - Limited information contained
 - Move to a 4 detailed messages approach
- Capturing details at every opportunity
- Proactive calling
 - Day before calls/repeat no access customers
 - Following up calls for appointments
- Customer Portal
- Digital isn't for everyone!

No Access Enforcement

- 3 No Access attempts
 - Supported by recording keeping
 - Client taking actions, ringing the customer (Challenge the contractor)
- Weekly no access review:
 - 7-day letter or Injunction processes
 - Risk-assessed
- Complex Case Review
 - Meeting weekly (across sections of the business)
 - A range of complex reasons, driving no access



Results



- Consistently sub-10% (Sept 7.5%)
- Improved KPI's
 - Reduced non-emergency to 0 over 12 months, 1 at 6 to 12 months
 - CSAT improved
 - 100% emergency attendance in 24 hrs (often same day)
 - 30 working days for repairs, 6 month for NRE
- Ease budget pressure
 - Ave cost of repair reduced
 - Better use of resources
 - Smoother scheduling and appointment availability

Key Takeaways

1. Record Keeping
2. Use data to drive improvements
3. Be critical of your processes (don't blame the customer)
4. Build the right culture (no access is everyone's problem to solve, No Access is a failure to deliver your services)

"We're still on a journey, but results show that a data-led, people-centred and process-driven approach can deliver real impacts".



Thank you





Safe Homes Team – Gaining Access

Safeguarding over 10,000 homes through proactive regulation and expert oversight

HQN
November 2025

Every interaction matters. Every door has a story. Every number is a name.

Safe Homes Team

Who We Are

- We are specialist team within Dacorum Borough Council, responsible for statutory compliance and building safety
- We deliver a successful service through collaboration with internal departments, contractors, and external partners
- We are passionate about keeping our residents safe, and delivering the best service
- We assess potential risks and establish effective controls to remove or reduce their impact

Team Focus

- **Positive reporting culture** – Creating an environment where reporting is constructive, encouraged, and contributes to service improvement
- **Knowing who lives behind the front door** – Understanding the real people in the properties and communities we serve; not just data, but lived realities
- **Turning numbers into names** – Humanizing data; seeing people, not just metrics

Every interaction matters. Every door has a story. Every number is a name.

Safe Homes Team

TENANTS AT THE CENTRE OF COMPLIANCE



Every interaction matters. Every door has a story. Every number is a name.

Safe Homes Team

Hard to Access Properties – the Dacorum Approach

The Approach

We created a position for a dedicated Lead Officer focusing on hard to access properties. Initially this was a secondment from the Housing Management Team as we desired an individual with a strong housing background. In consultation with our Legal Team we developed a robust access procedure – successfully resulting in 100% of injunctions being granted. We embraced a cross-departmental working approach, whilst also positively engaging with external agencies and contractors

The Outputs

- **100% compliance** across all areas of statutory compliance
- **A Single Point of Contact** that has developed trust with residents and provides transparency
- **Better informed residents** that understand their role in keeping them and their neighbours safe
- **Access to all properties** through collaboration and robust access processes
- **Improved KPI's** delivered via robust contract management with increased first-time fixes and access
- **Complaint reduction** due to proactive engagement and effective procedures
- **Regulator ready** at all times
- **Focus shift** from numbers to names

Every interaction matters. Every door has a story. Every number is a name.

Safe Homes Team

Hard to Access Properties

Access into hoarded and cluttered properties is challenging.

The Safe Homes Lead Officer (Access) attends and supports the engineer and tenant at every fire alarm install in hoarded properties. We install to an LD1 (highest) standard to provide extra protection and allow for environmental sensors.

Actions:

- Safeguarding referrals
- Assist the tenant in clearing and removing items
- Multi team working with internal and external partners
- Enforcement action: service of Notice Seeking Possession and/or application for an injunction



Every interaction matters. Every door has a story. Every number is a name.

Safe Homes Team

Smart Homes

We have successfully connected **5,923 homes** to our AICO Smart Dashboard, providing us with live data on Fire and Carbon Monoxide (CO) alerts. We also incorporate environmental sensors at targeted properties, which will help us tackle damp and mould and satisfy Awaab's Law.

The dashboard also gives us valuable insights into:

- Alarm removals by tenants
- CO or Fire alarm activation
- Last test dates for each alarm
- Mains Absent or signal lost
- Moisture or humidity concerns

This real time information allows us to identify and target tenants who may need reminders or support as part of our "Press to Test" safety campaign, helping to ensure that all alarms are working properly and that residents stay safe



SMOKE ALARMS | PRESS TO TEST
SAVE LIVES

Test your smoke alarm(s) once a month to ensure they are working correctly.

- 1: Check that the solid green light on the alarm is on (this shows that it is receiving mains power).
- 2: Press and hold the test button for 10 seconds.
- 3: The alarm will sound loudly. If you have any other alarms in the property that are interlinked to this alarm, those will also sound.
- 4: A multi-sensor CO alarm will alternate between the two different alarm sounds each time you test the alarm.

Clean your smoke alarm(s) frequently with a vacuum cleaner to ensure they are free of dust and dirt.

Check there is at least one working smoke alarm on every level of the property i.e. hallway and landing.

Check there is a working Carbon Monoxide alarm in all rooms with a fuel burning appliance.

Plan an escape route to help you evacuate your home in the event of a fire.

DON'T PUT YOUR LIFE AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS AT RISK

Did you know? Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service offer a free fire safety visit if you or someone you know is elderly, vulnerable or has a disability. They can check if your smoke alarm is working or fit a new one for free if required. For more information, home fire safety advice or to book your free fire safety visit, go to: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/fire-and-rescue

If you think there is a fault with your alarm, please contact Sureserve by calling 0800 018 6050 and pressing Option 1.
IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL 999

www.dacorum.gov.uk | Phone: 01442 228 000



Every interaction matters. Every door has a story. Every number is a name.

Safe Homes Team

“Working in the Safe Homes Team gives me a deep sense of purpose and pride. I enjoy being part of a team that ensures housing standards are met, protecting vulnerable residents and promoting safe and healthy living environments. Every day brings meaningful challenges - whether it's inspecting properties or supporting tenants - and I love knowing that our work directly improves people's lives”

Heidi

Every interaction matters. Every door has a story. Every number is a name.

Thank you for joining us.
We hope you have found the event useful.

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Championing better homes and communities

