

2021 Market Review Housing

Building the smart software that
helps improve public services



Across the UK, Civica works with 400 social housing organisations, serving more than 5.3 million residents. And whilst our ANZ customer base is relatively new, we now support over 10,000 residents across Australia and New Zealand. By making housing management easier and more cost-efficient, housing providers can do even more for the communities they serve. With better data, they're able to deliver smarter, more responsive services that keep costs down and improve residents' social housing experience.

The way we see it



As consumers do with every service they interact with, social housing residents expect more than ever before. Faster service, easier rent management, always-on assistance and improved communication from social housing providers. The pandemic has increased the need to support and protect people and communities like never before and housing providers are looking to emerging technology to drive change in the sector.

Coupled with this, the publication in November 2020 of the UK Government's 'charter for social housing residents: social housing white paper' continues to significantly impact social housing providers. The charter sets out the actions the UK government will take to ensure that residents in social housing are safe, are listened to, live in good quality homes, and have access to redress when things go wrong.



For social housing providers this has brought a focus on improving building safety, an important issue following the UK's Grenfell Tower tragedy. In May 2021 [Paradigm Housing](#) chose Civica's Cx Housing platform, our cloud software for social housing management, to support their major change programme. With building safety and carbon reduction as key focus areas for Paradigm, Cx Asset Management along with Cx Contractor will help ensure properties are fit for purpose and sustainable for the future, with improved automated repairs workflow.

The Social Housing white paper additionally highlights the need to listen to the resident voice. The integration of Civica Involve, our community engagement platform, with Cx Housing strengthens customer engagement, making it quick and easy to analyse resident feedback in real time. This supports end to end policy review and consultation by improving collaboration and response rates – an improvement of up to +60% has been seen from Civica Involve component.

Putting residents first is a shared vision among housing providers. In the last year [Stockport Homes](#) have bought into the benefits of using Cx Housing as a single solution for all their housing needs. By consolidating systems into one platform this will enable a single view of people, property and asset data, supporting the move to more customer-centric models.





For residents, Cx Housing will simplify all customer transactions through a configurable online customer portal, where they can access help and information at any time, such as applying for housing, bidding for properties, logging repairs or making rent enquiries.

In Australia-New Zealand (ANZ) the market for social housing is very different with affordable housing being mostly managed within the private rental sector and only limited social organisations (mostly non-profit organisations) contributing to the property stock. However, housing affordability, maintenance and repair costs and rising rents are commercial market pressures similar to the UK marketplace. Applying our UK expertise globally has led to new contracts in ANZ. City West Housing, [Ōtautahi Community Housing Trust](#) and Wellington City Council chose Civica Cx Housing for its resident centric approach across both the tenancy and asset journey, which aligned with their visions of improving resident engagement and delivering a great experience for their customers. Our cloud Cx Housing platform has rapidly become a benchmark for housing management and resident service delivery, and is already capturing sizeable opportunity across ANZ with more opportunity potentially in Singapore and other regional geographies.

Many of the challenges facing social housing providers are further complicated by the lack of accurate, up to date and connected data. Sustainability and decarbonisation is one example where most housing organisations find they don't have enough data to make definitive plans. Set against the backdrop of the UK government targeting the nation to be carbon neutral by 2050, and many local authorities aiming to achieve net carbon zero by 2030, housing organisations are under pressure to advance sustainability improvements across their housing stock. Data has become a key priority. It can help facilitate resident engagement, drive better decisions regarding housing stock, change behaviours and help plan for the future.

Looking to the future

Harnessing current technologies such as Building Information Modelling (BIM), cloud analytics and enabling smart devices to improve pro-active reporting and chatbots, are growing investment areas for the housing sector driven by the need for better data and increasing efficiency. Already we've seen an uptake in chatbots within the sector. Today's residents demand instant access to everything, and AI-powered chatbots can be available 24/7. [Civica's NorthStar](#) has established a conversational AI platform and is exploring emerging assisted technologies to further help housing providers.

One use case of chatbots is in repairs diagnostics. By inputting thousands of repair descriptions and outcomes into the AI, the chatbot can accurately establish the issue, predict the type of repair needed, the urgency of the repair and therefore what action to take next.

Housing organisations have some big challenges ahead and new digital technology may provide the answer. Virtual representations of physical spaces, known as digital twins, have huge potential to deliver better outcomes for organisations and residents. Deeper data and visual insights through 3D modelling and a BIM framework could improve safety and compliance, help residents reduce their bills and provide greater transparency between organisations and residents by showing people exactly what's happening in their building in real time.



// To meet the challenges facing the housing sector, a transformation vision that starts with the cloud is key. Cloud is the foundation from which you can design and build new technology use cases, such as apps, AI chatbots or BIM. These innovations will help deliver safe, secure homes and communities for the future."

Deane Greenouff, Executive Director, Civica Housing

[West Kent Housing Association](#) agreed a seven year partnership with Civica for its cloud Cx software to manage more than 8,000 homes throughout Kent. The new partnership will also explore the latest technologies including AI, Virtual Reality, BIM and Internet of Things to connect data further and enable more efficient planning and stock management.

Digital twins present an exciting opportunity for the housing sector and beneficial application across the UK and APAC. Many of our customers see the potential to make homes safer and greener, deliver savings and improve the overall resident experience. Helping residents to understand what's happening and contribute to the discussion will be vital in the months and years ahead.

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