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Staffing is Biggest Challenge Facing Housing Sector

New report reveals industry looking to digital technologies to alleviate shortages

BIRMINGHAM, UNITED KINGDOM, January 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Almost half (41%) of housing sector organisations say that attracting and retaining staff is the single biggest challenge they face in 2024 according to Advanced's Housing Trends Report 2023/4. The report highlighted that 44% of social housing respondents feel that workplace shortages are the main issue facing their organisation today and 47% are worried that attracting and retaining employees will be the number one priority for the coming 12 months.

> "Using technology to drive greater DE&I is a great way to encourage the best talent"
>
> *Mark Dewell, Senior Vice President at Advanced*

The findings also reveal that many organisations feel digital technologies can go some way to alleviate the

problem of staff retention and attraction, with nearly one in ten (9%) respondents in the social housing sector and 4% of housing professionals saying the current digital skills gap needs to be addressed as a priority.

The report highlights an industry over-reliance on legacy infrastructure and suggests that full digitisation of the management of maintenance and repairs would bring greater efficiency to fieldwork. Those working in the housing sector appear slow to adopt fully digital solutions and when asked about the management of maintenance and repairs, 57% of respondents say this is carried out mostly digitally, but with some use of paper, 8% say this is mostly done on paper, and while just 34% tell us this is carried out entirely digitally.

A number of challenges to the effective deployment of maintenance and repairs were also highlighted by the research including a siloed approach to deploying staff (47%), different systems operating within the same organisation (35%), problems with existing digital systems (20%), and insufficient digitisation of existing processes (14%).

Four in ten (42%) of the social housing respondents report using a combination of cloud-based and on-premise technologies, compared to just 29% of respondents from all industries. This indicates that the social housing industry may be lagging behind others when it comes to investment in recent digital technologies. Just under one-quarter (24%) in social housing are using cloud-based solutions only, compared to a 39% average for all industries.

Mark Dewell, Senior Vice President, Education, Government and Housing at [Advanced](#) said of the report; "The data clearly shows that more needs to be done to solve the staffing issues in the housing sector. It's great to see that there is an appetite for using new technology to remedy at least some of the problems currently being faced."

When asked about what other issues were driving the difficulties in attracting and retaining staff, many respondents cited DE&I as something that needed work. Although 45% of housing professionals tell us they have a clear DE&I strategy in place, driven by senior management, only 27% say they have programmes for developing inclusion across their organisation, and 12% don't have the either the time or feel the need for a DEI strategy within their organisation.

When it comes to DE&I and technology, 51% of respondents in the social housing sector and 61% of housing professionals tell us they have a digital solution for preventing bias in the recruitment process, while only one third tell us they have a system for pay gap reporting. A quarter of respondents in both groups say they have no such system in place.

Dewell goes on to say "Using technology to drive greater DE&I is a great way to encourage the best talent. Although currently 40% of those in social housing and 31% of housing professionals overall say their organisation works hard to remove bias in hiring processes, implementing appropriate digital solutions could drive these figures much higher. This would help them achieve more diversity for greater innovation, different approaches to problem-solving, and ultimately, to get the very best people in post."

You can download the report at https://www.oneadvanced.com/trends-report/sector-trends-reports-2024/

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