

TURNING AI INTO A HOUSING ADVANTAGE

Housing providers in the UK, ranging from local authority housing teams to housing associations and ALMOs, often operate under intense financial and regulatory pressure while supporting some of the most vulnerable residents.

The Social Housing Act 2023, alongside Awaab's Law, means that there is greater pressure on frontline and field-based teams to attend properties and report accurately on hazards so they can deliver safe homes, responsive repairs and effective tenancy support to families in their communities.

Workforces span housing officers, repairs and maintenance teams, contact centres and back office support. For these colleagues, AI can only relieve caseload and admin pressure if it is designed around how frontline teams actually work, not just how systems are supposed to work on paper.

THE AI REALITY: FRONTLINE INTENSITY, COMPLEX CASELOADS

Housing organisations juggle responsive and planned repairs, allocations, arrears management and tenancy support across large, dispersed estates, supported by HR and payroll teams managing varied shifts and on call arrangements. Frontline housing and repairs staff handle high volumes of resident contact, including reports of damp, mould and other hazards now captured by Awaab's Law, recording every interaction to maintain accurate safety data – often across multiple, disconnected systems.

Our latest report, *The Gray Zone: The Untapped Advantage of AI Alignment*, surveyed leaders and employees across multiple sectors, including housing, to explore how AI is reshaping the relationship between organisations, their people

and the work they do. The research shines a light on the gap between AI adoption and genuine alignment – the Grey Zone where technology exists but doesn't yet deliver its full potential value.

For Zellis, and our customers, AI alignment means ensuring that AI tools are built around the way people actually work – the tasks, schedules and priorities they face day-to-day. AI tools should support sound judgement, rather than becoming just another unused system.

Building on the main research findings, this deep dive highlights the data most relevant to the public sector in the UK focuses on how AI is reshaping work and workplace culture.

THE ALIGNMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOUSING PROVIDERS

Across the public sector, 94% of leaders say their organisation currently uses or interacts with AI tools as part of its operations, yet only 58% of employees say they use AI regularly or occasionally in their role. This shows AI is already embedded at organisational level, but employee level adoption still has room to grow.

When AI is in place, 52% of employees say it improves their productivity, and 61% say it gives them time back for more meaningful or strategic work, and over a quarter (31%) say it increases their job satisfaction. Leaders echo this, with 59% agreeing that AI improves the quality of outputs and almost half (44%) saying it increases productivity.

For housing providers, this translates into clear use case opportunities:

- AI-assisted triage of repairs requests and resident enquiries, prioritising urgent issues and routing cases efficiently for rapid attendance in line with statutory time limits.
- Predictive analytics to support asset management and compliance, highlighting properties or areas at higher risk.

- AI-enabled document and case note processing, reducing time spent on manual updates and improving data quality.
- Workforce management tools that optimise scheduling for field workers and contact centres to meet strict response and completion timeframes while respecting work life balance.



CONFIDENCE AND CULTURE

Housing sector employees show strong appetite for learning with 67% saying that AI provides opportunities to learn new skills, and almost half (49%) agree that AI encourages self directed learning and development. Furthermore, over half of leaders (57%) believe that AI increases job satisfaction.

However, there are clear differences in how responsible use and involvement are perceived. 62% of leaders feel confident their organisation uses AI responsibly and ethically, 61% believe that employees are involved in decisions about how AI is used, yet only 22% of employees feel involved in those decisions.

In housing, where decisions can affect tenancy sustainability, arrears management and safety prioritisation, these perceptions really matter.

Providers can build trust by:

- Co designing AI use cases with housing officers, repairs teams and contact centre staff.
- Explaining clearly where AI is used in prioritisation and decision support, and where human judgement remains central.
- Providing accessible training and support that reflects varied digital confidence levels.

The findings highlight that when AI is aligned with frontline needs, 59% of employees say it reduces work related stress, and 71% say it improves productivity. Leaders agree, with 62% saying AI gives their people time back for more meaningful or strategic work.

Zellis helps housing organisations to:

- Simplify HR, workforce management and pay for complex, often field-based workforces, so teams can plan and track cover for time-critical compliance work.
- Reduce the administrative burden that takes people away from resident-facing work, while meeting compliance requirements or ombudsman inspections.
- Provide clear, trustworthy information to employees about their work patterns and pay, reinforcing fairness and reliability helping to meet legal deadlines without comprising wellbeing.

By aligning AI with frontline reality, housing providers can support the people who support residents – turning AI from a source of uncertainty into a catalyst for better decisions, better work and stronger communities.

CLOSING THE AI ALIGNMENT GAP

Organisations that align leadership ambition with frontline expectations and AI-enabled technology will be best placed to sustain services, retain talent and protect outcomes for citizens in an increasingly constrained public sector environment. As public bodies navigate tight budgets, evolving regulation and persistent workforce pressures, the ability to do more with existing resources has become a necessity rather than a choice.

Zellis invites public sector leaders to explore how AI-enabled HR, workforce management and pay can help close the alignment gap and realise the full value of AI across their organisations – turning grey into great.



TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Learn more about the ways AI can unlimit what's next for your people and performance.

[Download the full report](#)

Our AI-enabled HR, Workforce Management and Pay platform is reshaping workplaces and our solutions pay one in seven people working in the UK and Ireland.

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