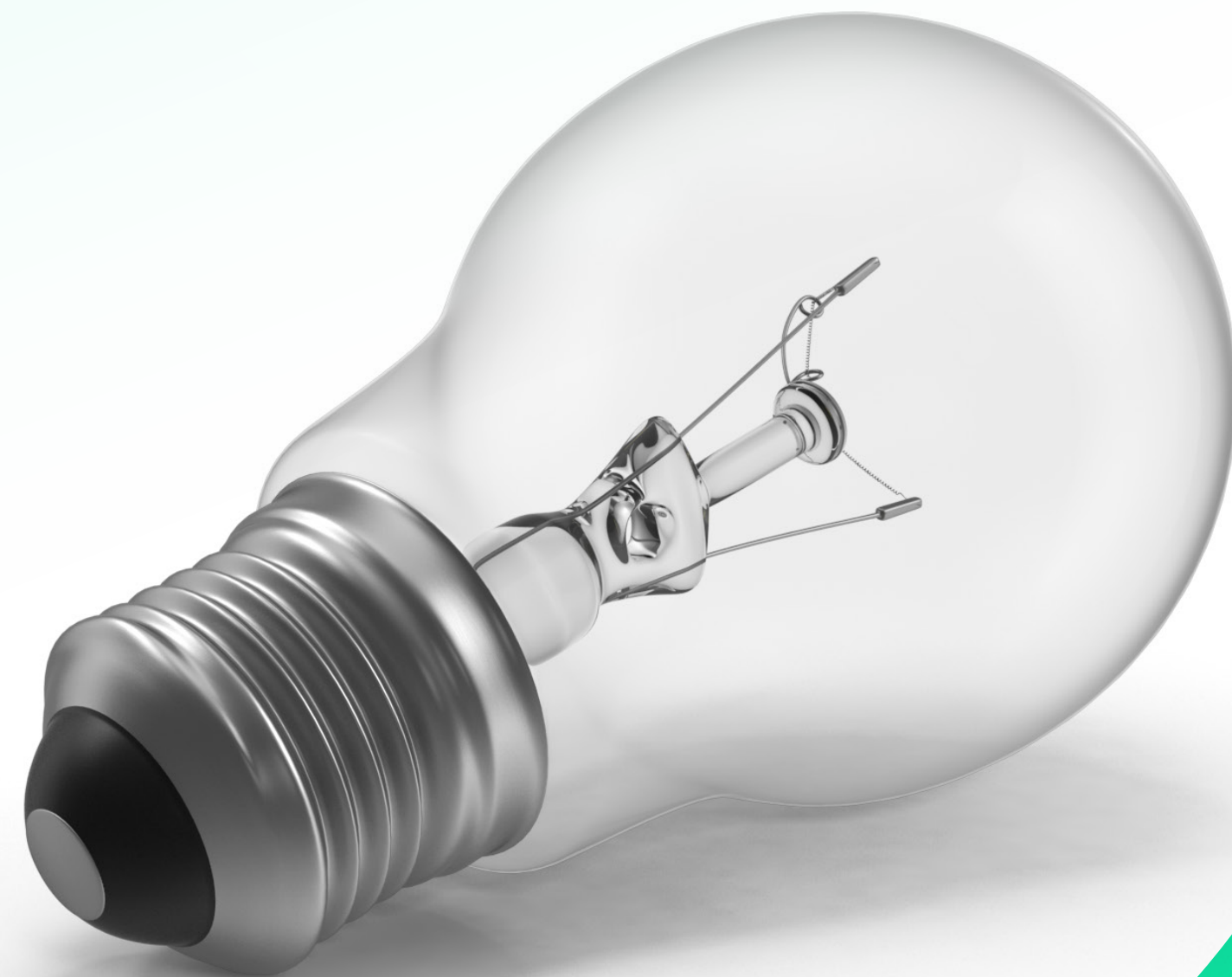
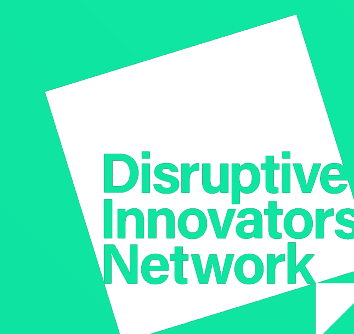


PROPERTYLAB REPORT

Results from Sprint #1: building the
future of compliance management
for the housing sector.



In partnership with



a/c proptech

A note from our CEO.



Seven years ago, my co-founder, Emre Kazan, and I established Plentific with one goal: to make property work better for everyone. In the years that followed, we built a technology platform that is revolutionising how property managers complete vital repairs and maintenance work. That means breaking down barriers for local trade businesses to access 'big business' work, and empowering local communities with new opportunities like never before.

We see PropertyLab as a new chapter in our development. We believe that the best way to develop new products and services is to work hand-in-hand with those who need them. In essence, that's what PropertyLab sets out to do: to bring together people, process and technology to tackle big issues facing the housing sector.

In our first sprint, we addressed an area of activity we believe holds huge opportunity for impact in housing operations: asset compliance.

This document outlines the results from that sprint. We'll take you through the programme methodology. Provide insights into the deep-dive research conducted with nine leading housing providers and the subsequent development of a new solution.

I want to take this opportunity to say 'thank you' to those who helped make this programme possible. Our partners - AO PropTech and The Disruptive Innovators Network - whose insight and support have helped us to shape the programme into what it is - and to our fabulous cohort - whose candid approach allowed us to create a solution that's not only innovative, but very practically valuable.

Happy reading.

Cem Savas - CEO and Co-founder of Plentific



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1. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

An introduction to PropertyLab.

PropertyLab is an incubator programme tackling some of the biggest challenges and opportunities for the housing sector.

Our programme brings change-makers together in fast-paced 'sprints' to develop technology-forward solutions around the sector's most important issues.

We bring the latest innovation thinking together with an action-oriented approach and cross-industry collaboration in a fast-paced programme to produce rapid results with a view to generate long-term industry solutions.

The PropertyLab approach.

Cross industry collaboration. We bring a select group of forward thinkers in housing and technology to offer new perspectives.

Fast, lean and action oriented. We don't just discuss, we do. We tackle issues and find ways to create practical change quickly and without big budgets or risk.

The latest thinking, tools & tech. A programme structured with the latest lean-and-agile design thinking. We walk you through every step of the process for the most impactful results.



1. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The PropertyLab methodology.

PropertyLab uses 'Human Centred Design' techniques to find opportunities to make step-changes, rather than incremental improvements to systems and processes. Over the 14 week sprint, every piece of activity – from deep-dive research, to workshops and fast-paced development – is focused on empowering stakeholders to 'get the job done' faster, better and more efficiently than ever before.



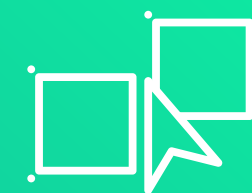
Phase 1: Research

In depth analysis and interviews. A 360 approach to uncover new insights on how systems and process really work at every level of an organisation.



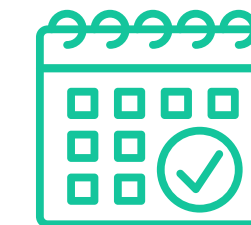
Phase 2: Discover & prioritise

Discuss and prioritise the challenges and opportunities uncovered in in-depth interviews and research.



Phase 3: Development

Fast-paced product development, featuring collaboration and feedback sessions with stakeholder groups.



Phase 4: Delivery

A prototype product focused on creating a step-change for the sector, founded on rigorous insights and developed with our cohort.



1. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PropertyLab Sprint #1: Automating Compliance.

In PropertyLab Sprint #1, we focused on regulatory compliance. We saw the opportunity to empower teams with technology by bringing data together, streamlining and automating inefficient processes and creating operational transparency to create a step-change in issue remediation and reporting.

The cohort.

We believe that the key to innovation is a diverse set of contrasting challenges and differing perspectives. That's why our first cohort of nine organisations - chosen from over 70 applications to the programme, featured landlords both large and small and a range of focuses: from strictly social housing to more traditional residential property too. Our approach also aims to gain input from a diverse set of stakeholders too, taking into account the views and experiences from over 32 interviewees of varying seniority, team and function.

ASTER
GROUP

believe
housing

ForViva

Golden Lane Housing
working in partnership with monacop

Hull
City Council

karbon
homes

L&Q

Notting Hill
Genesis

Peabody

rhp



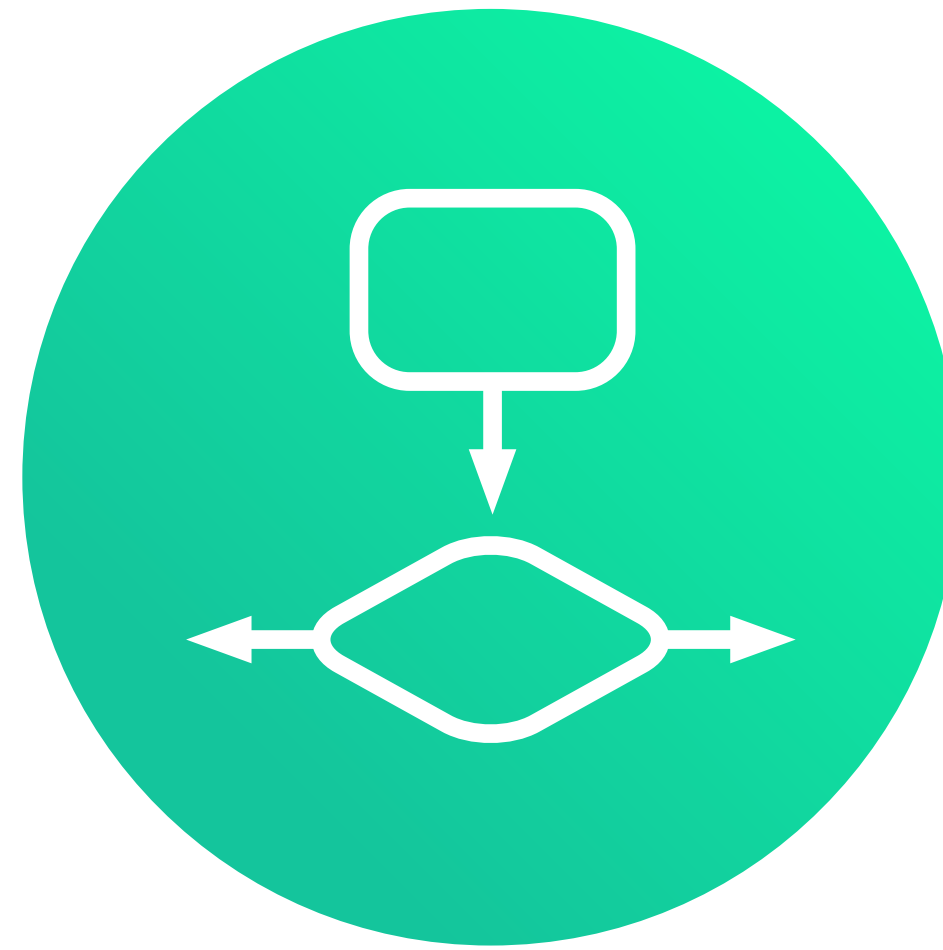
1. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PropertyLab Sprint #1: Research.



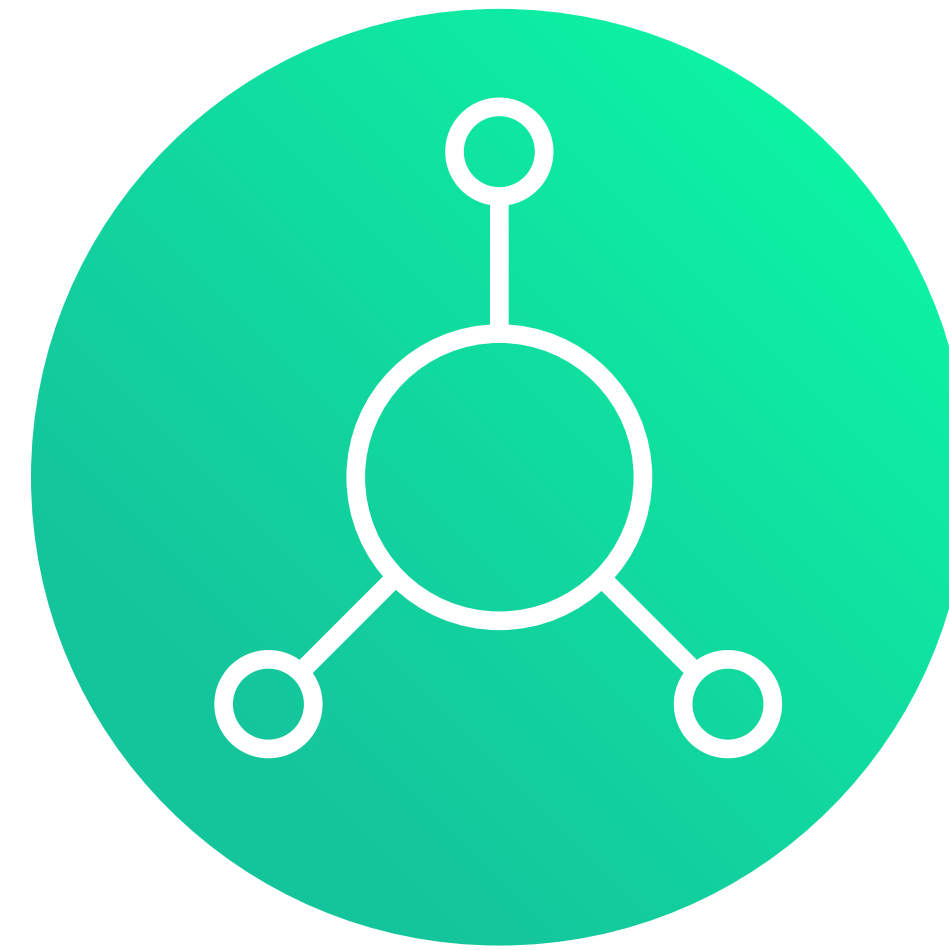
32

Interviews



18

Process maps



9

Ecosystem maps

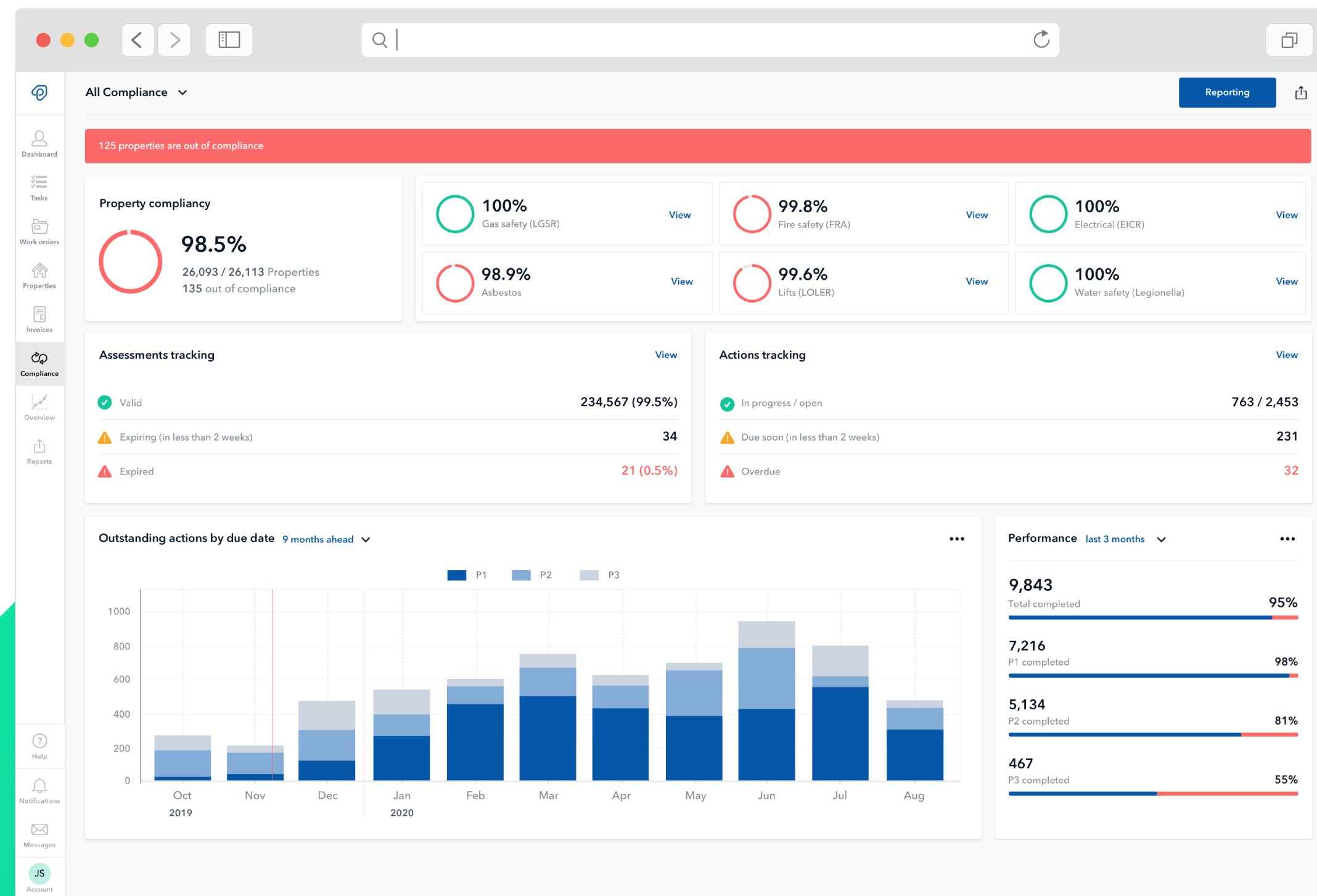


700

Lines of insight

1. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PropertyLab Sprint #1 Outcomes: A revolutionary new approach to compliance.



One system solution.

Our approach brings together all areas of compliance through a single platform, for both reporting and taking action. It brings Tradesmen and Housing Associations together too, utilising a common system to track, address and rectify compliance issues.

One source of truth.

Our one system approach creates radical transparency in your operations. It means live status reports for an entire portfolio, across all areas. It means better insights and decision making, with the reassurance you have the correct, most up-to-date understanding.



1. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PropertyLab Sprint #1 Outcomes: Key features for compliance management.



Live insights & reports with a powerful compliance dashboard.

No more ambiguity or systems overload.

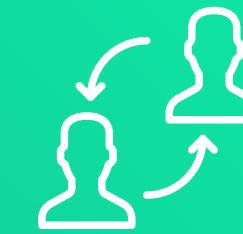
Our solution provides a single dashboard for all compliance actions and reporting – making it easy to analyse issues, assessments and actions individually or as a full summary report.



Easy, automated end to end management of compliance processes.

No need to jump between systems.

Our solution stands alone or alongside our Work Order system. Actions and follow-up work can be efficiently managed, tracked and automated for every area of compliance.



Clever task management that drives operational team efficiency.

Align teams, with everything in one place.

Sort, prioritise and allocate tasks faster than ever before with our Kanban-style board. Drive efficiencies for all stakeholders with smart pipelines, workflows and automation.



Response to the PropertyLab programme.



Ian Wright

Disruptive Innovators
Network (DIN)

"We saw the opportunity to work with Plentific on developing the PropertyLab concept as an essential piece of sector education to make leaders aware of the potential to transform service delivery to their tenants and residents. DIN members were inspired and excited to develop new skills around design thinking and problem solving. It also demonstrated the speed with which new solutions could be brought to market through collaboration. We are very supportive of housing providers getting involved in future rounds of the lab."



Andy Isted

Head of Business
Development and
Strategy at Peabody

"We've found the whole PropertyLab programme to be extremely beneficial - offering us unique access to the insights and best practices of some of the leading organisations in housing, steered by the innovation experts in Plentific. Traditionally, most large housing providers have manual, time consuming processes which we've been focused on streamlining at Peabody. The solution that's been built from our input throughout PropertyLab will help create a standardised process and platform across the entire sector - and help save considerable operational costs whilst improving services in future."



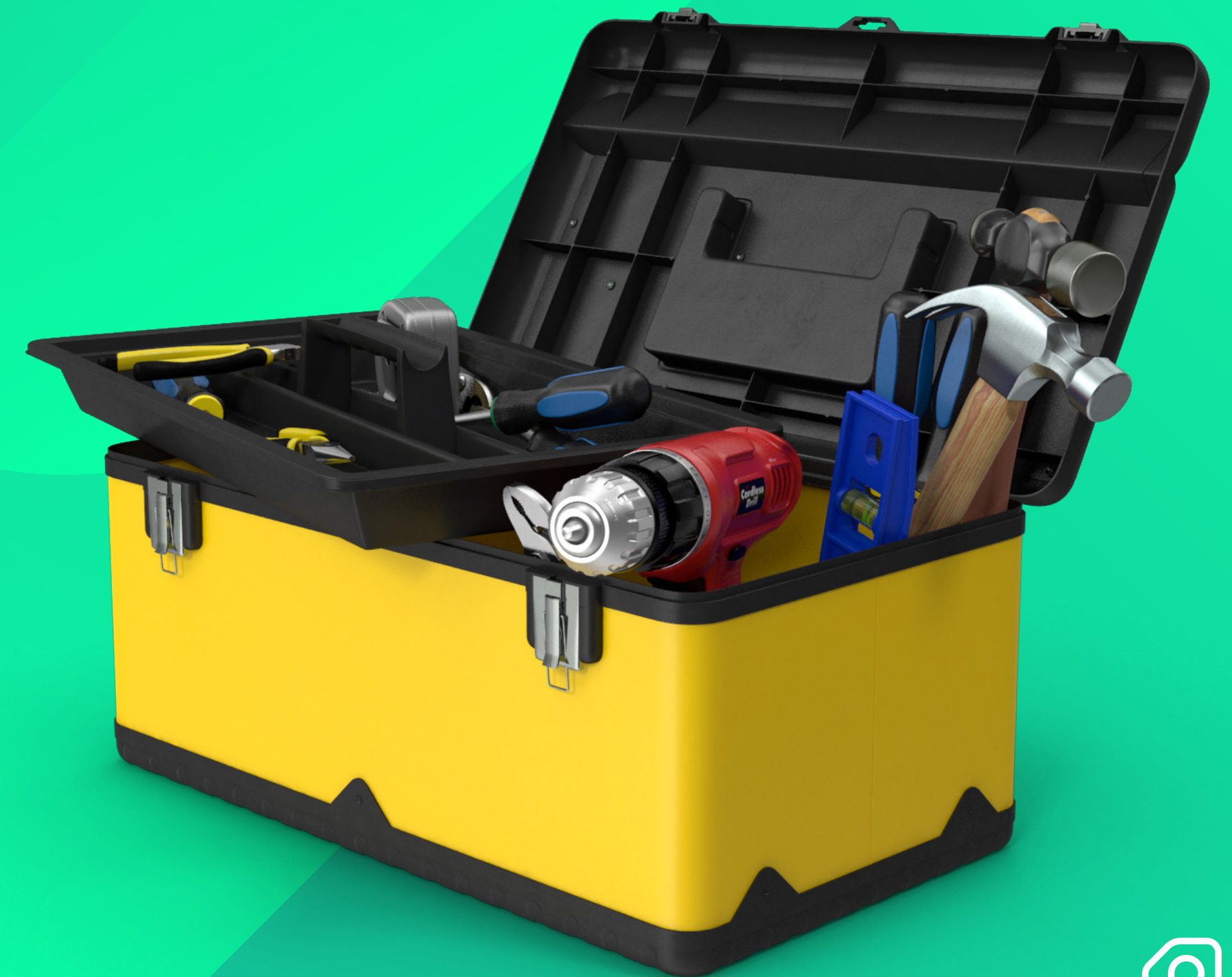
Elly Hoult

Group Director of Assets
at Notting Hill Genesis

"Like other organisations, the current pandemic has meant we have had to rethink our key processes, streamlining and automating as much as possible to ensure quality and efficiency. The PropertyLab process has helped us identify where the key opportunities for improvement lie within our compliance processes. We've been impressed by the work Plentific has done to design a one system solution to help organisations like ours manage all compliance areas in one place; they've really taken the time to understand our key challenges. We're looking forward to working closer with the rest of the cohort as they develop the product further."

IN-DEPTH INSIGHT

2.1 Delivering great customer service.



2.1 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: CUSTOMER SERVICE

An industry focused on delivering great customer service.

Throughout the programme, staff from all organisations and at every level stressed the importance of absolute excellence when it comes to providing safe homes for tenants to live in.

From both an operational and management standpoint, the tenant experience is a critical priority and developing solutions that overcome challenges around tailoring services to tenant needs, increasing the flexibility of services and improving tenant communications are key goals.

Over 80% of interviewees in our research felt that giving tenants more control to select visit times would benefit service levels and completion rates.

Fragmented systems and a lack of data integration were highlighted as key issues that inhibit an organisation's ability to deliver efficient services. These disparate systems not only hold back day-to-day operations, but undermine managers' trust in data and ultimately their ability to make informed decisions about a property portfolio.

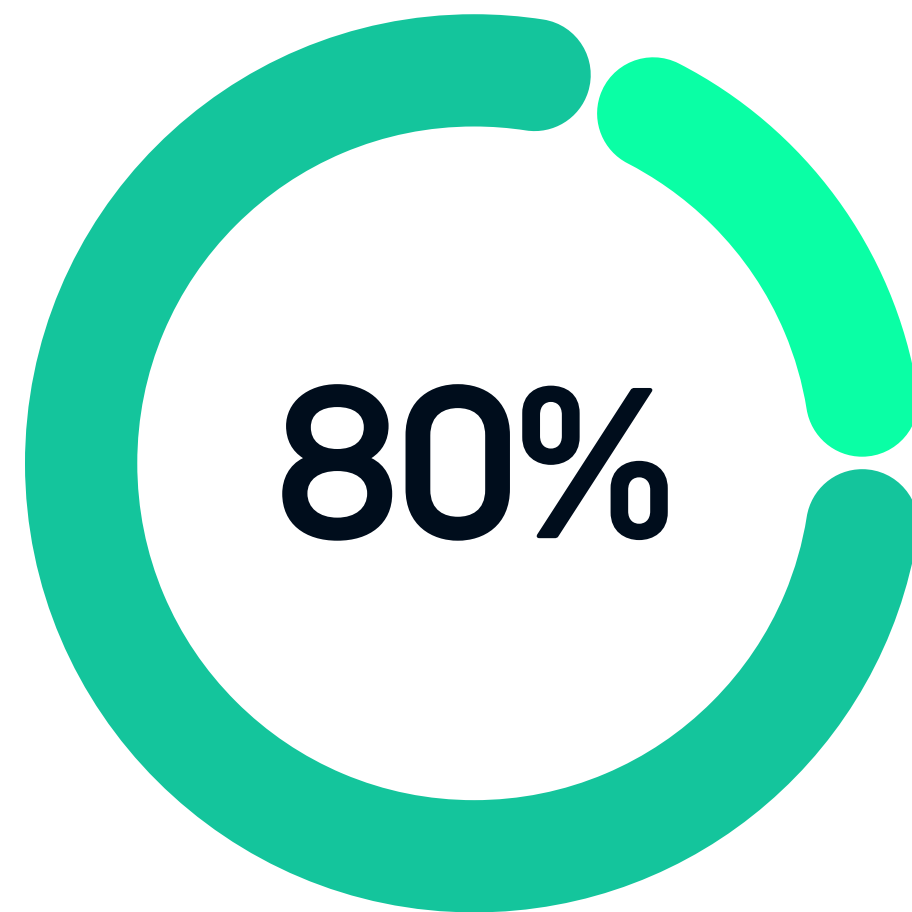
Key insights

- ✓ Strong communication at every stage of the customer journey is key.
- ✓ Tailoring communication to customer preferences may prove beneficial.
- ✓ Sector is shifting to an omni-channel approach for tenant communication – to meet changing needs of younger demographic.
- ✓ Bundling maintenance and repair jobs is key to reducing disruption for tenants.
- ✓ Contractor processes are key to improving the end-to-end customer journey.
- ✓ Service flexibility can transform customer service and potentially reduce compliance escalations.



2.1 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: CUSTOMER SERVICE

Cohort insights: Technology holds the key to delivering great customer service.



Control

80% interviewees highlighted the benefit of giving tenants control to select visit times that best suit their schedules.



Booking systems

7/9 organisations operate or are planning to implement a tenant-facing booking system for repair work within the next 18 months.



Flexible requests

Flexible requests for access can be met with tenants re-arranging appointments up to four times.



“

Giving tenants more transparency around the compliance of their own property could really help an added sense of ownership – particularly around booking in access appointments promptly.

Director of Customer Services – Housing Association, London



2.1 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: CUSTOMER SERVICE

Developing strategic solutions for customer service.

Our work with the cohort uncovered many valuable insights for improving customer service.

A key issue for many tenants – and the root of many complaints – are the intrusive visits required to conduct checks, maintenance and repairs to assets within the home.

Our discussions with the cohort uncovered that the key to reducing total visits to a tenant's home could lie in digital, mobile technology for contractors. Work orders administered through a mobile device could 'bundle' jobs, increasing the number of checks or actions per visit. Additionally, 'live' certificates verification could address prevent errors and any further return visits being necessary.

These insights touch on a larger issue of integration and synchronisation of crucial asset and operational data. The cohort highlighted the impact that this could hold for improving understanding of their portfolio and delivering better customer experiences.

Standout ideas

- ✓ Up-to-date asset register and reduction of data matching issues through on-site checks, performed as part of routine planned works.
- ✓ Asset tracking, and using on-site attendance to audit assets.
- ✓ Workflow management tools to guide an operative through issues.



“

From a digital perspective, I think we – and a lot of other organisations – are guilty of designing our external facing outlets to match what we do internally and don't actually put ourselves in the shoes of the customers.

Executive Director of People and Business Services – Housing Association, London



IN-DEPTH INSIGHT

2.2 Ensuring compliance.



2.2 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: COMPLIANCE

An industry focused on faultless compliance.

The use and storage of compliance data across the sector was a key theme highlighted throughout research and development. Over two thirds of stakeholders reported that manual data processes were big drains on operational time and cost, and that inaccuracies are common.

Certificate validation was surfaced as another crucial aspect of the compliance process. Many cohort members highlighted that there is still a significant amount of manual work involved whether an electronic, integrated system has been implemented or not. The root cause is a lack of standardisation - in the industry and between suppliers. This leads to a huge administrative burden. As a consequence, many housing providers manually check just a small sample-set of certificates to ensure compliance.

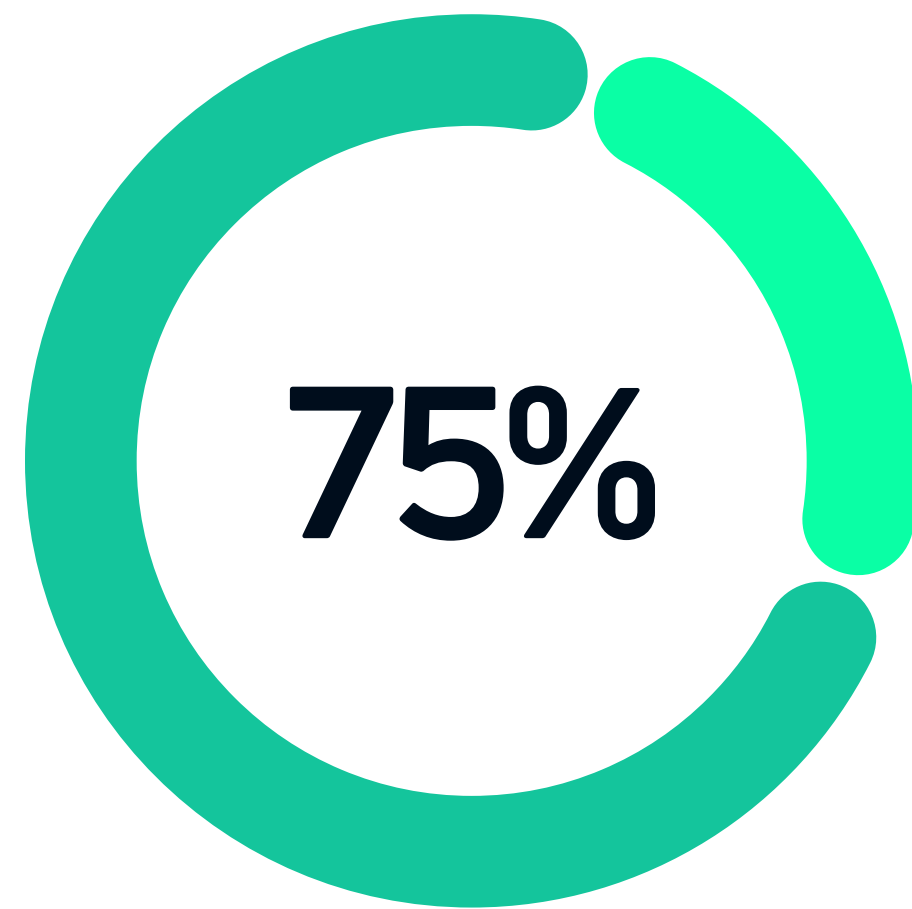
Key insights

- ✓ End-to-end data integration is the 'holy grail' for compliance and the single biggest desire across all stakeholders in our analysis.
- ✓ Integration between compliance teams and contractors is key to ensuring more open lines of communication and trust.
- ✓ Electronic, integrated certification has yet to be widely adopted across the sector.
- ✓ Gathering evidence and documentation for escalation is the single biggest resource burden for organisations.
- ✓ Building Managers find it challenging to prove that contact has been attempted in a number of ways.
- ✓ There is often no technology in place outside of a shared spreadsheet in an organisation to manage tenant communication across channels.



2.2 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: COMPLIANCE

Cohort insights: Gaining access & manual processes hold many operational teams back.



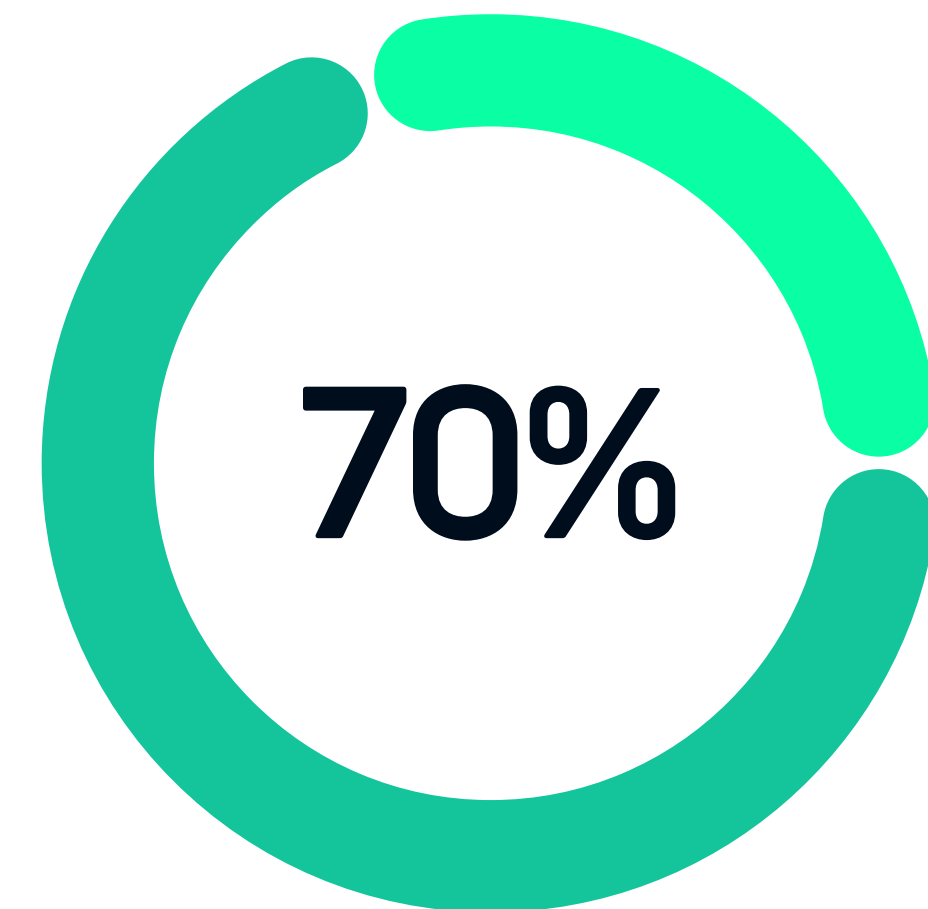
Gaining access

75% of operational staff interviewed identified 'gaining access' to be the most difficult part of their job.



A sector-wide issue

90% of organisations felt that gaining access to properties was one of the sector's most significant challenges.



Manual processes

70% of organisations felt that replacing manual processes with automated technology was a key priority for improving efficiency.



“

Each of the contractor teams have to go out and pick up those works, complete them and then notify the admin team that they have been completed. It's really disjointed, manually intensive, and relies on lots of chasing.

Business Development and Procurement Lead - Housing Association, London



2.2 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: COMPLIANCE

Developing a strategic solution for compliance.

Our work with the cohort uncovered many valuable insights across the regulatory compliance process.

Data was consistently highlighted by the cohort as the key theme that would unlock transparency, empower better coordination and collaboration.

It formed our starting point in developing a new solution. We believe that a tool that serves as an organisation's single source of truth could be transformative especially if it can integrate with internal and external compliance systems, automate data capture and standardise certificates for specific compliance areas.

Standout ideas

- ✓ Linking internal and external compliance systems and automating functions would significantly increase accuracy and efficiency.
- ✓ A solution that can extract, assesses and format all data from PDFs would cut down on time spend manually capturing data.
- ✓ An online dashboard to create greater visibility into matching relevant data would cut operational costs of the verification process.



“

No one's really checking 100% of every certificate that comes in, and we are relying on them saying yes, we serviced that certificate as OK, they must have carried out X, Y and Z.

Asset Information Manager – Housing Association, London



IN-DEPTH INSIGHT

2.3 Driving value for money.



2.3 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: VALUE

An industry focused on delivering better value for money.

In an already challenging economic climate for housing providers - further compounded by Covid-19 - the ability of teams to showcase value for money with their contractors is understandably a key area of focus.

Both the operational and the associated administrative burden of manual systems were identified as key challenges from a value perspective.

Another crucial aspect of value-driven operations revolved around performance. Our research highlighted the need for close managerial oversight to ensure budget targets are met.

Working to ensure that KPIs, budget metrics and performance targets cascade down and add value was identified as a crucial aspect of successfully optimising performance.

Key insights

- ✓ Managerial oversight and clarity on job volume and cost on a weekly basis is key to keeping on budget.
- ✓ Management teams want better visibility into the data behind their portfolios - and confidence in it to empower their decision making.
- ✓ Operational teams track compliance KPIs and headline budgets, but performance metrics often don't cascade down.
- ✓ Organisations without automation are incurring huge additional costs.
- ✓ Driving value with contractors is often challenging once variations in specifications and unforeseen on-site issues surface.
- ✓ There is a huge operational cost for organisations manually sorting, managing and authorising invoicing as well as an associated administration burden of excess work.



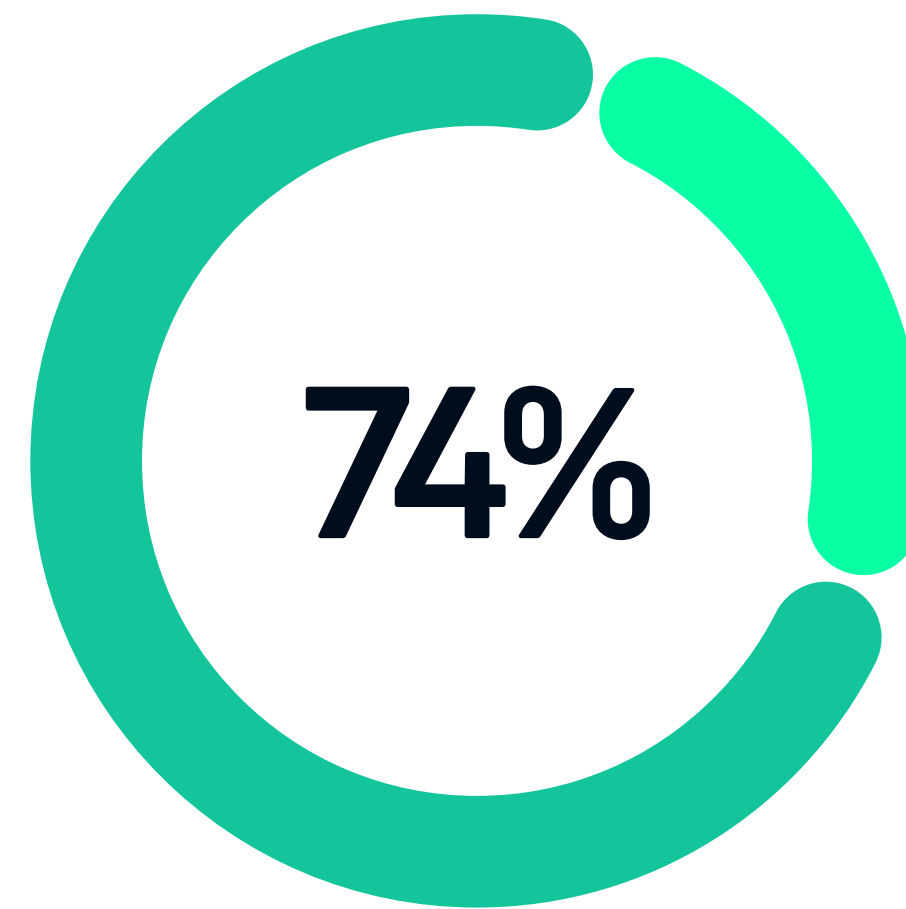
2.3 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: VALUE

Cohort insights: Administrative burdens could be adding to pressures of operational budgets.



Building pressure

92% of the Housing Associations surveyed said they felt pressure to lower costs in a climate of added scrutiny.*



Operational budgets

74% respondents stated they would have no choice but to reduce their operational budgets - particularly for repairs and maintenance.*



Invoice processing

Manual processing of 100,000 invoices a year could incur full-stack costs of up to £2M.



“

Even with all our automation, I still have to go through every order request and read it and make sure one of our contractors aren't trying to be slightly overzealous with their quotations.

Mechanical & Electrical Manager - Housing Association, London



2.3 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: VALUE

Developing a strategic solutions that deliver value for money.

Our work with the cohort uncovered organisations focused on delivering better services under unprecedented budgetary pressure.

To develop a solution that could drive value for money, we focused on reducing the burden of reporting by delivering organisations the ability to interrogate data, information and reports on job volume, cost, performance targets and budget metrics.

From a performance perspective, we looked at the benefits of introducing both automation to further reduce the administrative burden on organisations and improve operational efficiency.

Standout ideas

- ✓ A dashboard that can be presented and accessed at board-level, but can drill down into the detail of compliance areas.
- ✓ A dashboard linking all compliance systems together.
- ✓ Ability to link compliance to asset management to help manage new properties that come on board.
- ✓ A standardised certificate based on specific compliance area that is easy to use and simple to share.



“

Invoicing and pulling through the invoices every month is a key challenge. It's a big process to check what's come in, whether we've paid it, whether a contractor has remembered to charge VAT. It also happens at the end of the month, which is always hectic.

Gas Team Manager - Housing Association, North West England



IN-DEPTH INSIGHT

2.4 Data, integration & reporting.



2.4 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: DATA & INTEGRATION

An industry focused on integrating systems and better managing data.

Our cohort highlighted the complexity involved in running compliance operations with a diverse array of systems and applications to record and reconcile mission critical data.

At a day-to-day operational level, this often means that service delivery is slower, additional stress is placed on people and the organisation consequently faces greater associated costs.

For management, it results in a lack of transparency, trust in the data, and a slow turn around to get an up-to-date status review.

Manual processes and labour intensive administration in recording and managing complex information is one of the biggest inhibitors to process optimisation within housing compliance.

All organisations in the cohort - albeit to a varying degree - highlighted that breaking down silos of information, increasing transparency and reducing time spent capturing and recording data were their key strategic priorities.

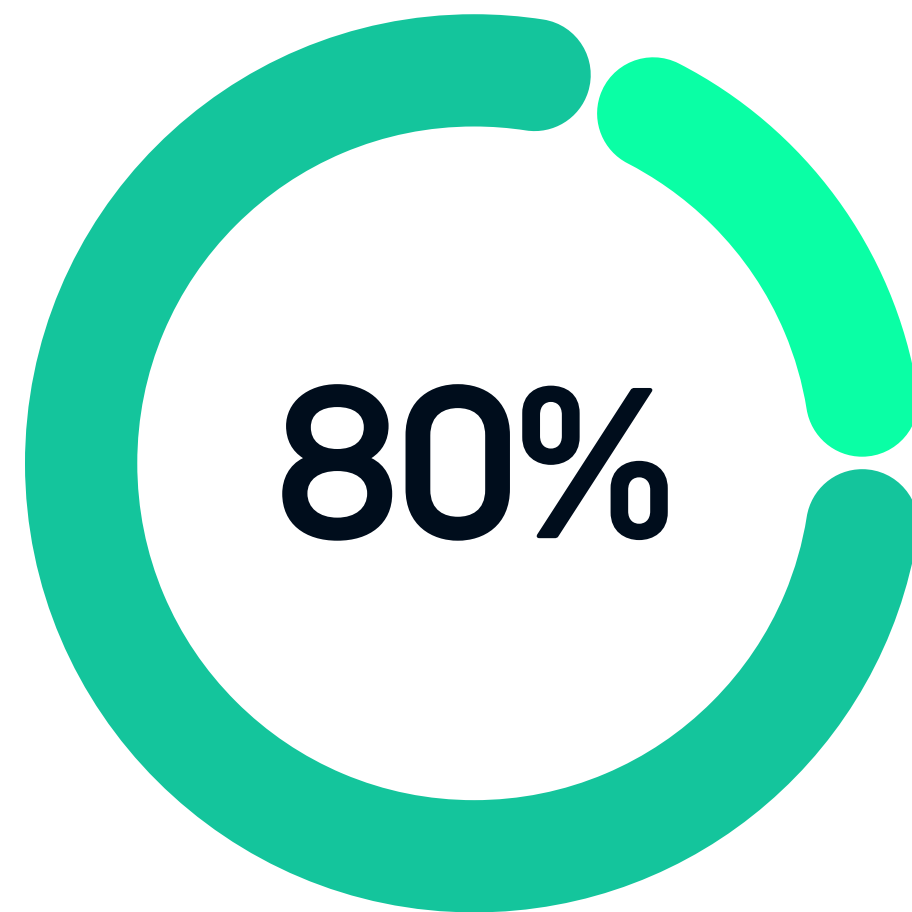
Key insights

- ✓ All organisations recognised a vital need to invest more heavily into technology and processes to reduce human error.
- ✓ The cohort wants to shift from a reactive to a more proactive approach with clearer visibility on reliable data.
- ✓ Organisations using contractors for compliance reported a major disconnect between contractors' systems and their own reporting processes.
- ✓ Organisations without access to digital gas or fire safety certification are hit hard with admin burden and additional costs in human errors.
- ✓ Key data is often spread across multiple systems or spreadsheets and managed by specific team leads of each compliance area with little collaboration.
- ✓ Consistency and reliability of data is a critical concern across the entire cohort.



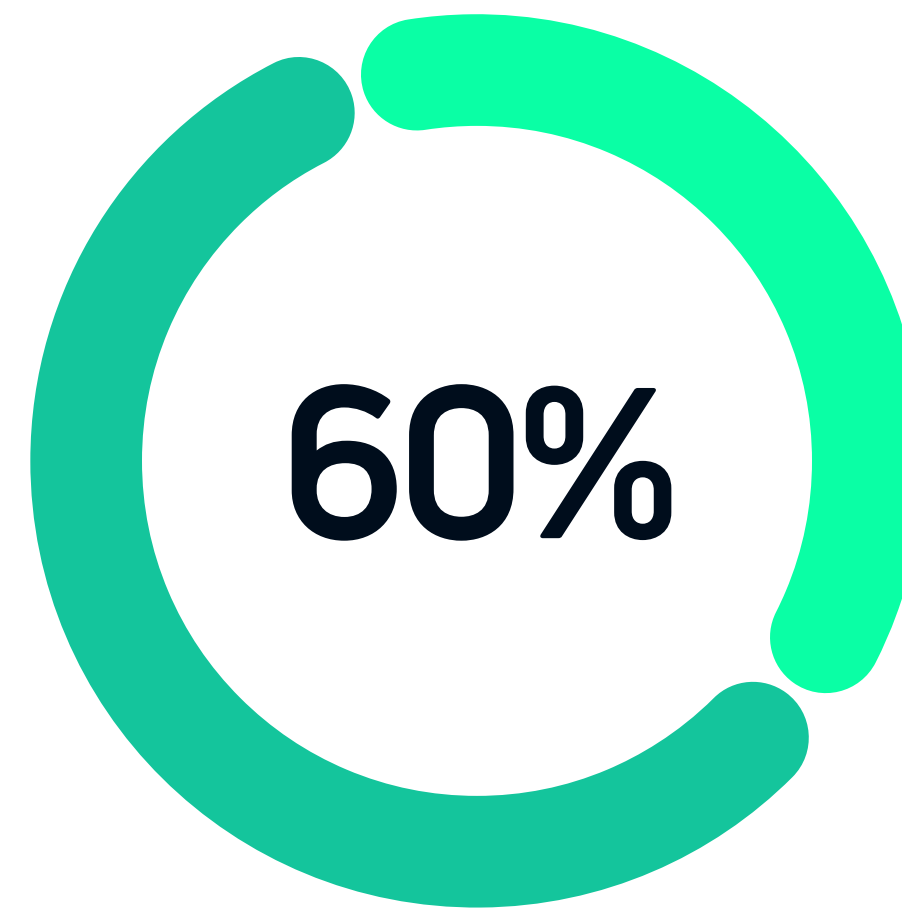
2.4 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: DATA & INTEGRATION

Cohort insights: Poor integration has a big impact on operations and reporting.



Reporting delays

80% of organisations take more than three days to report cross-function portfolio compliance.



Disconnected approaches

60% of those cohort members using contractors for compliance tasks reported a major disconnect between contractors' systems and their own reporting processes.



Mobile updates

Just 5/9 organisations use handheld devices to record data and update their systems.



“

We need to automate the process of where an order is completed, for example, gas service or any sort of periodic testing. Once an order is completed, a new one should be raised automatically, with a due date, rather than that being a manual process.

Head of Compliance - Housing Association, North East England



2.4 IN DEPTH INSIGHTS: DATA & INTEGRATION

Developing a strategic solution for data management.

Our work with the cohort uncovered issues in data and integration that strongly influence each of the three themes that precede this one.

We see that creating a single source of truth for both clients and contractors is the key to unlocking better value for organisations in the way they ingest, store, report and record compliance data.

Reducing inaccuracies and creating a sense of immediacy and trust in the precision of data available is crucial to empower key stakeholders to make more informed decisions.

Our research uncovered that a dashboard that brings together a single view of compliance, underpinned by a trusted digital platform that can automate key tasks could improve efficiency and dramatically increase trust in data across a range of compliance touchpoints.

Standout ideas

- ✓ An overriding dashboard that could be presented or accessed at board-level.
- ✓ A solution that can extract, assesses and format data from a variety of sources to reduce time and labour-intensive processes around manually capturing data.
- ✓ An online dashboard to create greater visibility with standardised certificates based on specific compliance areas.



“

As numerous contractors are using their own systems, it's an overly manual process updating our set of spreadsheets with key servicing dates, which is often seriously difficult across multiple contractors.

Compliance Manager – Housing Association, North East England



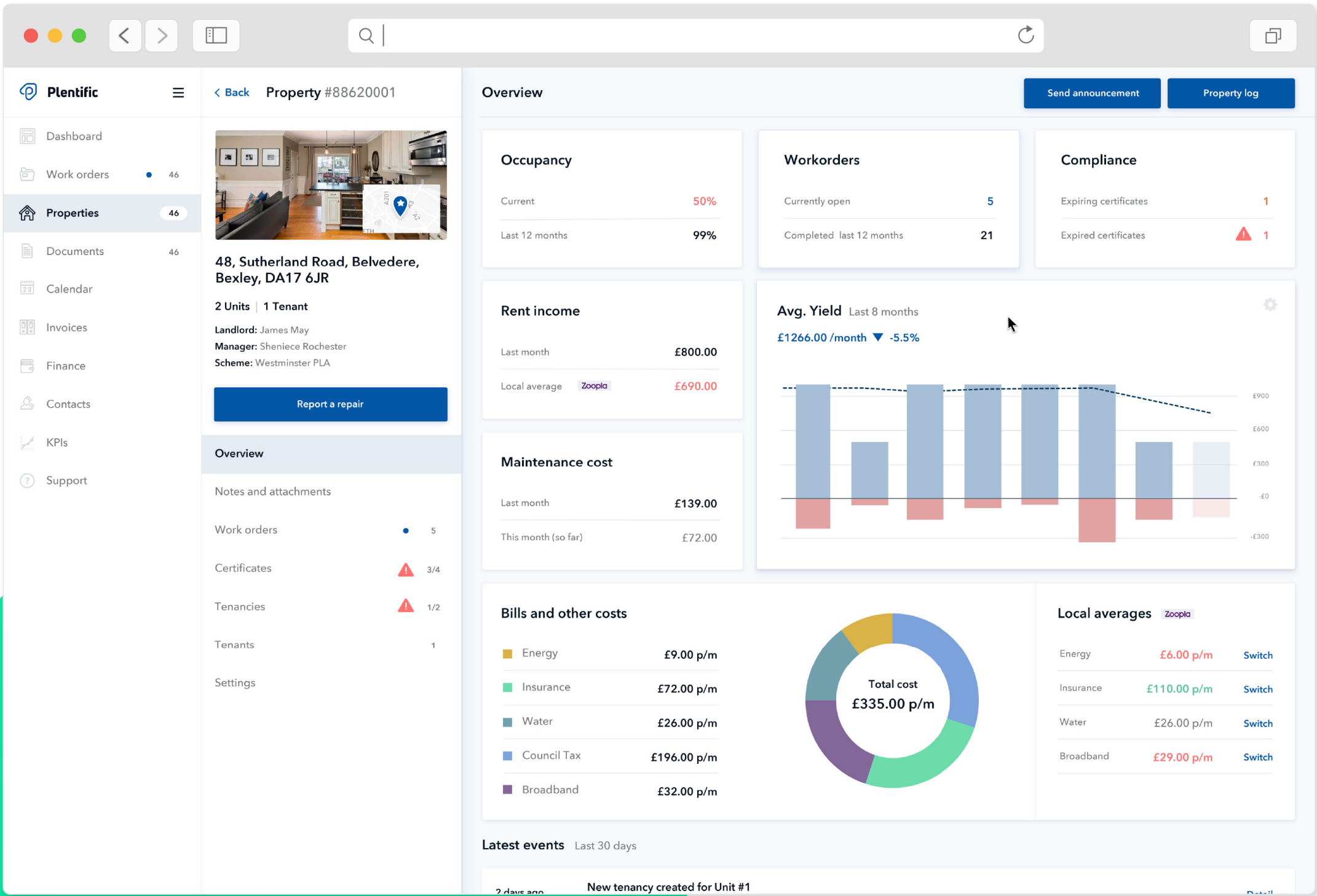
JOIN US

3. Learn more
& get involved.



3. JOIN US

See our prototype in action.



If you’re interested to understand more about our compliance product, request a demonstration or join one of our webinar sessions to see a live demonstration and discuss your requirements with the Plentific Team.

Learn more



3. JOIN US

Upcoming PropertyLab sprints.



Enhancing tenant experience & automating self-service.

Join a cohort focused on developing new processes and technology to improve the tenant experience. In this short seven week mini-lab, we'll hear from a range of experts inside and outside housing and explore how self-serve can be used to diagnose issues, create faster resolutions and reduce cost.

Begins:
August 2020

Duration:
7 weeks

Register interest at:
plentific.com/propertylab

[Learn more](#)



3. JOIN US

Upcoming PropertyLab sprints.

Automating void works.

Housing is in short supply. And we know that voids turnarounds are key to reducing cost, pressure and increasing available stock. Join a cohort to share best practice, address bottlenecks, and challenge current processes to automate the voids turnarounds.

Begins:
September 2020

Duration:
7 weeks

Register interest at:
plentific.com/propertylab

[Learn more](#)



3. JOIN US

Upcoming PropertyLab sprints.



A new management solution for trade businesses.

We believe that contractors and landlords can work better together. That's why we're focusing on creating a standalone product for trade businesses. Join a cohort of landlords and trade businesses of all sizes to create the perfect product to manage your business, work orders and communication from quote to completion.

Begins:
November 2020

Duration:
14 weeks

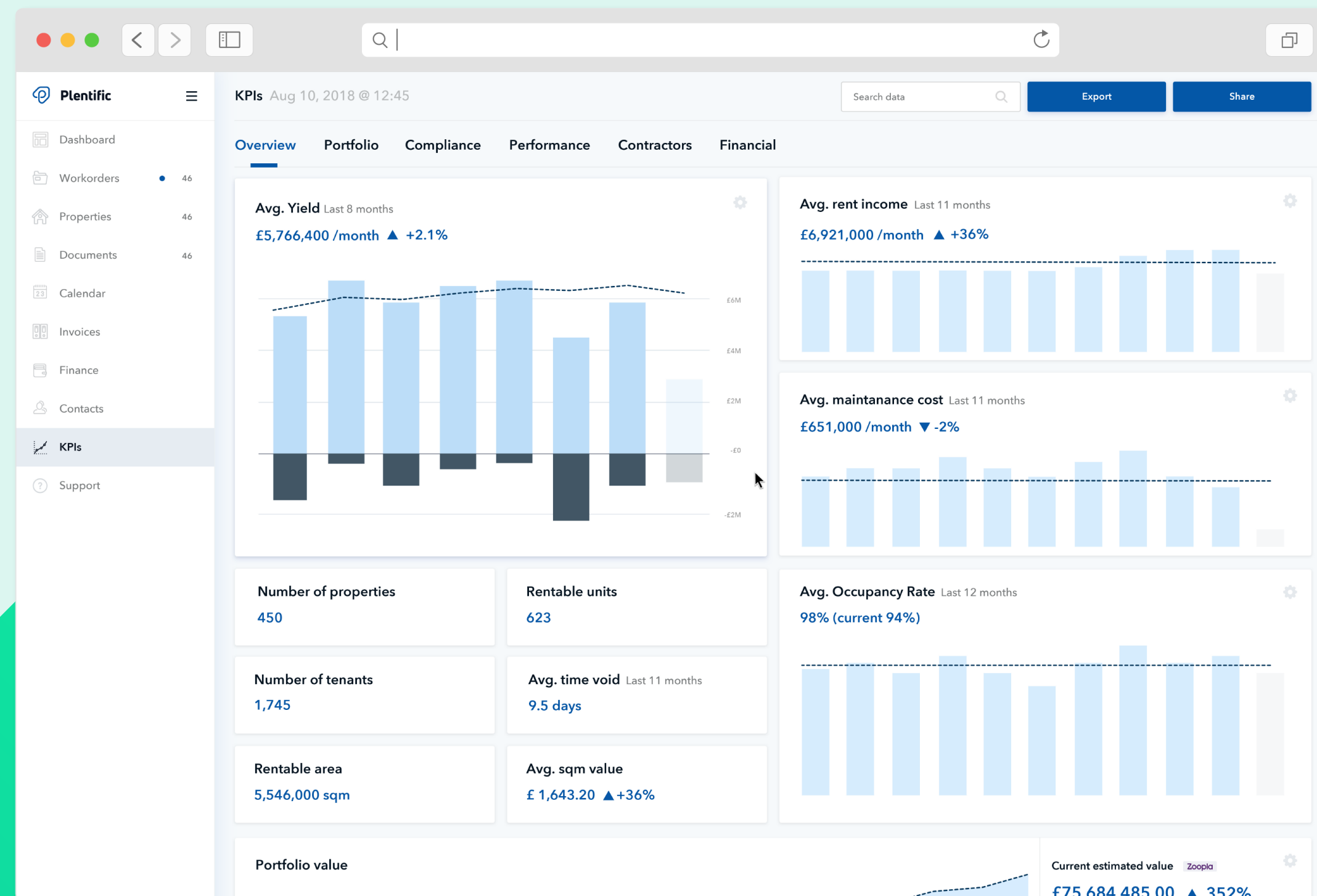
Register interest at:
plentific.com/propertylab

[Learn more](#)



4. ABOUT PLENTIFIC

What we do.



Plentific is one of the fastest growing PropTech companies in the UK. We work with landlords to deliver more efficient repairs and maintenance services.

We do it through a simple, powerful management platform and a network of verified trade professionals. We believe that wieldy, multi-year contracts with a single provider do not deliver value or efficiency across repair and maintenance works. Instead, we give our clients access to a digital marketplace of highly-vetted, local contractors, with full flexibility to procure on a per job basis.

Our single-dashboard solution makes it easy to manage repairs and maintenance work across a portfolio of properties. Our platform makes it simple to dynamically procure services from a marketplace of contractors. And our tools empower operational teams with efficient work order management tools and access to data and insights for better decision making.

For more information visit
plentific.com

Request a demo





See more at
plentific.com