



Housing Blog

by Sharon Hannah

New Guidance for gaining access to SU Homes

As Telecare Service Providers (TSPs) upgrade to digital gaining access to Service Users homes is most often required. A new guidance document was approved at TAG to help with those service users who may be more difficult to reach.

For housing who may be upgrading their warden call or choosing like many to firstly assess a telecare need and making switch to more bespoke dispersed solutions, access can sometimes be delayed or difficult to gain.

The guidance document, **Accessing Service Users Homes** - was developed with TSPs in response to difficulties gaining timely access to homes and not just for digital upgrades but testing, maintenance, programming, etc.

The guidance promotes a resident-centred approach:

- Communication in clear plain-English,
- Support for people with additional needs,
- Flexible and range of appointments,
- Gradual escalation through housing processes and procedures,
- Formal tenancy provisions, only as a last resort.

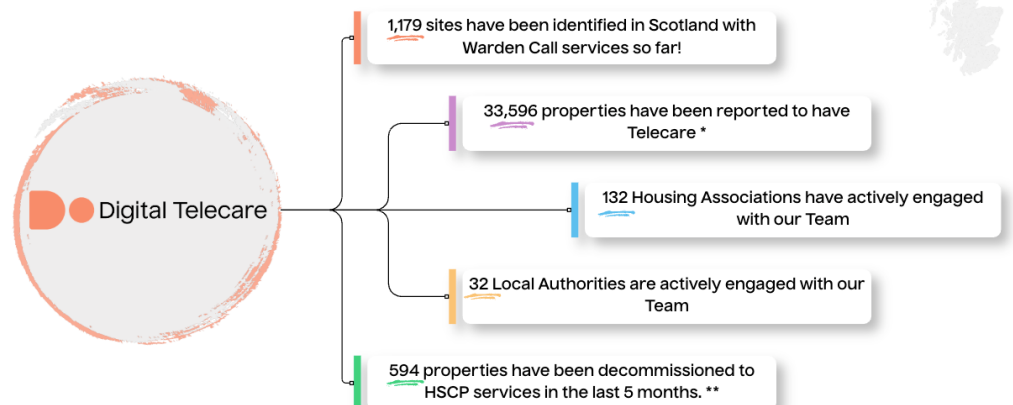
It also stresses that TSPs should keep accurate records and an auditable trail which can often be helpful if as a last resort a formal route for access is required to protect service delivery and service user safety.

A very relevant question was raised about access arrangements where perhaps domestic abuse is a known factor; the group agreed that the document should acknowledge not just domestic abuse but person-specific risks/flags and where signposting to relevant local processes or policy is needed.

My thanks to those who helped gather up this guidance which will of course be added to our resource library in the Playbook.

Through the continued collaboration of the below partners, we have been able to successfully engage and identify:

Housing Data in Scotland - Q3 2026



**For more
information,
please contact**

**[Digitaltelecare@
digitaloffice.scot](mailto:Digitaltelecare@digitaloffice.scot)**

Housing statistics for Scotland

Since the start of the year, housing progress has been monitored through ARC reports on analogue and digital status.

The highlight paper above shows that 132 housing associations and 32 local authorities are helping to identify the digital status of 1,179 sites reported as having warden call systems or support services. Twelve local authorities either have no housing telecare responsibilities or have completed migration. Many have carried out partial upgrades, introduced ATAs or bridging solutions, while some plan to move to dispersed alarms. We estimate that more than 33,000 properties receive telecare services. Only 62 organisations have yet to respond, although I expect around half will not have telecare equipment or analogue-supported services such as lifts, fire alarms or door-entry systems.

As decommissioning in favour of dispersed solutions gathers pace, more local HSCPs are accepting housing referrals for people in non-supported accommodation, including retirement housing. The shift of telecare links from housing providers to HSCPs can make the overall picture harder to track.

We continue to support housing providers through regular meetings and engagement. However, working with Scottish ARCs remains the most effective way to map analogue and digital connections and build a clearer national picture.

Thank you to everyone contributing to the quarterly ARC statistics. Your information helps us support organisations most at risk of missing the digital transition deadline.

Actions for TSPs and ARCs

TSPs and ARCs are asked to help housing partners move from initial engagement to digital assurance. Please:

- Review intelligence on housing schemes and identify those still dependent on analogue connectivity.
- Refer housing partners to Digital Telecare where migration status remains unclear.
- Prioritise sites and housing partners experiencing increasing equipment failures.
- Escalate unresolved technical or supplier issues to Digital Telecare.
- Share effective migration approaches and case studies so that good practice can be promoted across TSPs and the wider sector.

Why action is urgent

Planned withdrawal of analogue services in **January 2027** leaves little time to confirm dependencies, agree safe migration routes and complete testing. Further delay increases the risk of failed or delayed alarm calls, while spare parts for legacy analogue equipment are becoming scarcer and more expensive.

Temporary services such as Pre-Digital Phone Lines (PDPL) may maintain continuity in some area, but they are not available everywhere and cannot replace sustainable, long-term digital migration and strategic housing plans.



Communication and engagement progress

Contact lists from the Scottish Housing Regulator, Scotland Excel, The Property Institute and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations have supported the six-week marketing and communications strategy. We again attended The Property Institute conference this year, reinforcing the migration message with members. The ministerial letter is nearing completion. Once signed, the SFHA will distribute it to housing chief executives.

Key message

The programme remains well positioned overall. The immediate priority is to identify remaining analogue dependencies, pinpoint the highest-risk sites, confirm safe migration routes and escalate urgent issues.

Please share this update across your housing, IT, ARC, commissioning and operational networks. Continue reporting significant changes, blockers and examples of good practice to the Digital Telecare team.

**For more
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