

Headlines

- ❖ **The UK Residential Market continues to grow, despite Coronavirus disruption.**
- ❖ **Our rents have increased by over 8% in 2020.** Occupancy sits at 98%.
- ❖ **We've invested heavily into technology to assist home working**



House Prices

The government has taken many well publicised steps to help support the economy during Coronavirus. Within the housing market, the main action is the stamp duty holiday. This has helped boost buyer activity.

Despite a second lockdown, we expect to operate normally

- Banks, Lawyers and Surveyors expect to remain open
- Construction is permitted. The Land Registry remains open.
- Schools and Universities plan to remain open.

We're forecasting 5-7% growth in the next 12 months.

The Rental Market

The rental market remains strong exceptionally strong. We've increased overall rents in 2020 by over 7%, despite Covid 19 (the long term national ave is 4-5%).

Overall Occupancy sits at 98%. Student demand has been very high this rental year, helped by our move to virtual viewings.

We're now looking at the pre-let season for 2021 and have set ourselves a challenge of doubling our re-signs to 50%. We believe the pandemic will help our re-signs.

We're aiming for 10-15% growth in overall rents in 2021.

Innovation

We're investing heavily to improve our service and assist with home working.



Technology

- ❖ New automated processes will help improve service and cut errors in repairs and finance.
- ❖ AI is being introduced into property management, which will allow faster response 24/7.
- ❖ Virtual viewings and videos are being expanded to the 2021 re-sign and pre-let season.
- ❖ ApplecrossInvestments.com now allows you to invest from your smartphone.

People

- ❖ As a business, we're investing heavily in 2021 to develop the knowledge and skills of all our people.
- ❖ We've overhauled how we recruit, train and promote. And launched a graduate training scheme.
- ❖ A re-structure will create Property Investment Manager (PIM) team. Each client will have one PIM.
- ❖ We've formed a specialist 'Repairs + Upgrades Team, to improve contractor service, and reduce costs.

Green

- ❖ Since 2006, we've cut the CO2 footprint of the properties we renovate by 30%.
- ❖ Our team have an ambitious target to reduce the CO2 footprint for new properties to zero, in 2021.
- ❖ We plan to offset our CO2 emissions as a business in 2021 by planting trees.
- ❖ And we'll work with tenants and Landlords to offset property emissions.

New Markets

- ❖ We're ambitious to grow the number of UK cities we can offer. Expect Liverpool in early 2021!
- ❖ We've set up new services for larger clients – existing and new. See www.SandstoneUK.com.



A message from Peter Grant

We had a data breach in early November. It did not involve any sensitive client data and was deemed minor in nature. I'd like to apologise for it and confirm that it arose from a mistake made by a member of staff when sending out a client survey / update via a system which is not normally used for such things. We've now taken steps to restrict who can send future client communications, and their sign off. We've also introduced new transmission protocols which must now be followed.