



# Stewart Davison joins Dtl Creative

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Dtl Creative: Helping social landlords deliver excellent solutions



Stewart joins us in January as Director of Innovation.

Dave Loudon, founder and MD of Dtl Creative asks Stewart a few questions on him joining Dtl Creative.

And keep checking [www.dtl-creative.co.uk](http://www.dtl-creative.co.uk) for updates on our services, offerings and projects within the Social Housing Sector.

Stu, I suppose the first and most obvious question is 'why chose DtL Creative for your next opportunity in social housing?'

I was at a bit of a crossroads in my career, do I look out of sector, do I explore another supplier role? Every time I have looked to make a move into a new job role, the ability to grow and learn professionally is important for me. When Dave from DtL approached me with his ideas for the business and how he wanted to bring some focus to emerging technology and social housing, I was sold!

Can you let us know where the biggest challenge/s lies at present in social housing from a technology standpoint?

The core challenge hasn't really changed in the time I have been working in the sector, '...what is the right direction that my organisation should take when it comes to technology?' However, the sheer weight of new and emerging technology that could be utilised by the sector can look a bit overwhelming and that can make effective strategic planning difficult.

What does the many years you have in social housing bring to not only DtL Creative but also the sector as a whole?

I first entered social housing in 1998 when I joined a Housing Association in Bristol, and in the over 20 years since I have been fortunate to have worked at the frontline of housing. I have also worked in large suppliers like Capita ONE and more recently a small start-up, all focussed on technology and social housing. I have been both client and supplier and I bring this unique perspective to how I work with organisations.

In terms of what I bring to the sector...someone who has always been willing to put my head above the parapet and give an opinion on technology, for good or ill. Especially if I feel it supports one of my core principles, that access to safe and secure housing is a human right and that social housing is a positive force for change.

Can you give us an early indication as to what you will be working on and who you will be working with?

The areas of Internet of Things (IoT), Machine Learning/Artificial Intelligence (ML/AI) and predictive analytics are ones I have been tracking for a number of years and are ones that have real potential to fundamentally change the way the sector operates. I have already begun some early engagements with new entrants to the market in ML and intelligent scheduling, but I will be a bit coy on who they are, as it's still early days. When they can tell me how much my and DtL's involvement have helped their business and their clients I will shout it from the rooftops!

You are an advocate of Innovation (hence your job title) so can we ask you, Is IoT real? Do emerging technologies have a role in social housing? How do we make a difference to tenants' lives?

Wow, some big questions there! IoT is real, I was the first advocate of IoT in social housing, giving a presentation at HOMES over 5 years ago and it is very satisfying to see some of the questions I posed and the use cases I presented being discussed and demonstrated recently.

IoT is now an area of technology that I would encourage social housing providers to begin serious exploration as we enter the new decade and I have already had some interesting conversations with both IoT suppliers and housing organisations who are considering how a connected home can deliver a more effective service.

Emerging technology soon becomes the mainstream, remember the infamous quote from Steve Ballmer, then CEO of Microsoft when he saw the iPhone, "...it's a fad" The iPhone and touch fundamentally changed how society operated with technology, the areas of technology like IoT, ML/AI could be game changers for social housing. But it's not just the technology itself, how we use, and leverage technology is equally important, Uber is a good example of this. Whilst Uber can be decisive the core concept of streamlining the connection of the user to the service they need, simple as it looks, is actually potentially a paradigm shift in how services are sourced, managed and delivered. I'm always looking for the next Uber and I think there are a couple of scale ups who are entering social housing who have that potential. I'm keen to work with them, as what they offer could bring a revolution in social housing delivery and ultimately enhance tenants' lives.

Making a difference is key to what I am about and mirrors the core reason DtL Creative was formed. My LinkedIn profile says I'm '...the enemy of 'just doing the same thing'...' When technology is harnessed and used to progress the key aims of effective social housing then it's the service users, the customers, the residents, the tenants who win and for me that's what it's all about.