Grand Union Housing Group Case Study

Grand Union has been in business for almost 25 years and provide 12,000 homes for more than 27,000 people across Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Hertfordshire. Social Housing demands fresh thinking and tough choices about how more homes are built and how households and communities are supported for the better. Grand Union welcome the challenge this brings and embrace the need for digital, financial and business breakthroughs to meet different needs.

Results

100%
of data
within compliance documents checked

18%
advisory issues
time is saved as we only have to go through advisory and non-compliance issues

8%
non-compliance
accuracy of results, we sanity checked a % of results which proved the system was correct

Challenges

When I initially started to look for solutions the volume of data was often a challenge, we were spending too much time and resource going through documents and checking documents from contractors to ensure validation.

As we are developing our agile working model I needed something future proof, to enable remote working and align our department with the vision of the company going forward. I liked the idea technology should take away the monotonous tasks to enable us to take advantage of the skill sets of our team.

Solutions

Accuracy

With compliance an ever-present spectre on our horizon it is good to have our back covered and no other system seemed to be as accurate.

Agility

It nicely with our ethos and agile working environment, we needed a system we could access remotely rather than dealing with piles of paperwork.

Investment

It was an important investment for us, and it means we can automatically prove from certificate production through to it being stored that it is correct and compliant … or if it is not something is done about it.

As the software was designed from a social housing perspective this was inherently understood which results in a solution that fixes the issues we face.

The Benefits

We no longer have our full resource tied up manually looking at certification, saving at least a couple of hours per day. They can spend more time on other roles and responsibilities such as fire sections. The task has become less onerous as they now only have to deal with the non-compliant (8%) and advisory (18%) issues that come in instead of having to go through 100% of documents trying to find the issues, which is apparent when someone is on leave.

There are many benefits that you don't foresee until you start to input your certificates and use the trend analysis for your assets. The system pulls extra data out of the documents allowing us to be ultra-safe. We are also able to tweak the software to our specifications accessing what becomes a fail and what is an advisory. This allows us to be extremely precise, it enables the whole process to be less 'black and white' / 'pass or fail' which is a huge added value.

With regards to our contractors, it has highlighter poor practice that they are relying on their engineers and sending across documents which have not been checked. We are now able to go back to them, with the evidence, to ensure we get exactly what we want back in the future. The majority of our non-compliant documents have shown to be a human error such as a typo or document not being filled out correctly, which has lead to an understanding of the education and additional training engineers require.

Gas engineers have historically not been in an environment to use innovative technology and due to this culture I was expecting resistance 'we've been doing it manually for years', but they have taken well to the system and have begun the journey with us, which has been great. We are excited to see a real advantage when we roll it out across electric next month.

I was looking for a solution that could fit directly with our legacy systems, that our team could use and understand easily, that would be efficient and provide a strong return on our investment. As the software was designed from a social housing perspective this was inherently understood which results in a solution that fixes the issues we face.

Cameron Jeffrey
Tenant Safety Manager, Grand Union Housing Group