



Making a difference where you live

Durham County Council Housing Contractors

Case Study Overview

Durham County Council is using Kirona's Intelligent Mobile Contractors Solution to improve its Housing Repairs service.

The mobile working solution has helped the council streamline the way jobs are carried out, and in doing so the council has managed to achieve its performance indicators, eliminate its back log of work, and offer an improved service to the customers of its 6,132 properties.

Business Challenge

Durham County Council's Housing department, like many other authorities across the UK, was finding itself faced with the need to become more efficient in order to meet its performance targets, and one of the main areas highlighted for improvement was the housing repairs service.

Durham receives the majority of the repairs requests from residents by telephone. The calls are handled by the contact centre and details are entered into the authorities Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. The repairs themselves are then carried out by the council's contractor workforce.



County Durham has a population of 493,500 people across 12 major centres including the City of Durham

Previously, admin staff would manually allocate paper based repairs works orders to the contractors. Contractors would visit the office in the morning to collect their works orders and then travel to the job sites to carry out their allocated repairs (including making hand written notes and recording their use of materials). When they had finished their day's jobs the contractors would return to the office to drop off their paperwork, where the information would be entered into Durham's housing back-office system by an admin colleague.

With this working practice a household repair could wait several weeks before being completed, and management wanted to bring these service times down. They quickly identified that contractor's travel time to and from the office in order to collect and drop off paperwork, and the administration time of allocating jobs and re-keying data into office systems was significantly reducing the number of jobs they were able to carry out.

For more information contact Kirona

Barrington House, Heyes Lane, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, SK9 7LA, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)1625 585511 Fax: +44 (0)8702 200764 www.kirona.com

The Solution

Having identified the need to improve their working process, Durham came to realise that a mobile working application, integrated into their Northgate Housing Contractors system and their newly acquired 360 job scheduling system, might offer them the solution. After exploring available suppliers they decided to implement the market leading Intelligent Mobile Solution provided by Kirona.

Now, the works orders entered into their Northgate Housing system are automatically scheduled to contractors through the 360 job scheduling engine and thanks to Kirona's Intelligent Mobile Contractors solution, staff can view these jobs from any location on a mobile PDA device; therefore removing the need for them to travel into the office. When on site, contractors also use Kirona's application to record work information and materials used, and if the job is different to what they have been allocated, then they can vary the works order on their PDA. Once the contractor has completed a job, including any variations to the works order, the information is sent wirelessly over the mobile phone network to update the Northgate Housing and Contractor systems, removing the need for re-keying of paper work.

Along with this real-time access and capture of job information, Kirona's Intelligent Mobile Solution is also helping Durham to monitor how much time is spent by staff on their activities; time spent on site, lunch, travelling etc, which is helping the organisation to calculate how much each job costs, and how they can further refine their working practices.

Outcomes and ROI

Durham County Council's mobile solution has helped them to reach the goals they set out to achieve at the beginning of the project. Ultimately it has facilitated a more efficient working process for contractors and it has helped improve the service offered to customers.

Durham's Outcomes:

- Previously residents may have waited weeks for a repair, now **contractors can be there within an hour** and there is **no back log of work**.
- All tenant's are offered an appointment for repairs, this has **reduced the amount no access calls** enabling them to allocate resources where they need them most
- Thanks to the availability of job details on PDA's and the ability to vary works orders, the average **number of jobs completed in the first visit stands at 97%**
- Direct population of information into the back office means that **data is accurate and precise**; there are no lost forms and no problems reading handwriting

Final Comments:

Steven Brown, Repairs and Maintenance Manager

"Our service response times have never been better, with the mobile working solution contractors can respond to a repair within the hour and tenants see immediate progress being made."

For more Information

To find out more about the Durham's project, discuss your organisation's needs, or learn more about mobile working best practice; contact Kirona contact@kirona.com or visit our website; www.kirona.com

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