

# CAPITA

## Developing digital communications with tenants at RCT Homes

RCT Homes is based in Pontypridd, South Wales, and is currently Wales's largest social landlord. RCT Homes manages 11,000 homes, formerly the housing stock of Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.

### The background

RCT Homes is not just a landlord; it is a major local social enterprise wholly owned by its tenants. Employing a Community Mutual operations model, the organisation places great emphasis on tenant empowerment and social inclusion changing tenants' lives, delivered through the hard work of hundreds of staff and the investment of millions of pounds. Through Members Forums and becoming Tenant Board Members, RCT Homes' tenants play a large role in the strategic direction of RCT Homes and the provision of its services.

### The challenge

As a long-standing user of the Capita Housing solution, RCT Homes wanted to develop their commitment to the community by furthering their social inclusion and tenant empowerment programmes with SMS technologies. In 2009, RCT Homes decided to take a technological leap forward, introducing SMS text communication services to allow the organisation to share vital information and stay in touch with tenants.

### The solution

Capita's Communication Manager (CMGR) was selected by RCT Homes due to its position as market leader for electronic tenant communications. CMGR is provided by Deeplake – Capita's chosen technology partner for SMS communications. Together with Capita Housing, CMGR provides RCT Homes with a range of powerful new tools to share information, integrate data, streamline operations and, most importantly, include tenants in decision-making processes.

### Benefits of Communication Manager from Capita Housing:

- Saves resources, time and cost through automated standard communications for many tenant and supplier tasks including rent reminders, balance enquiries, surveys and repairs appointments
- Improves response rates quickly and cost effectively when carrying out surveys
- Improves customer service
- Engages and involves tenants more actively
- Full delivery confirmation and audit trail
- Supports all text enabled mobiles
- Sends and receives SMS text messages within a dedicated client or via Microsoft Outlook
- Communicates simply and effectively with hearing impaired tenants, staff and suppliers.



Alun Dowling, Head of ICT at RCT Homes, commented,

"Communications Manager was one of the most innovative systems we had seen, and it opens up new opportunities for tenants to get more involved with RCT Homes and to be informed of what is happening. We are deploying SMS communications to improve a wide range of tenant services including repairs appointment reminders, surveys and rent management. The potential applications are limited only by our imagination as the system is so flexible. In addition to tenants' services, we have also found a wide range of internal uses, such as protecting staff with Communications Managers' Lone Working functions and in disaster planning and recovery."



## The results

Through the partnership between Capita Software Services and Deeplake, RCT Homes is benefiting from continuous software development. This is leading to increasing integration of the software applications making support and future developments simpler to plan and manage.

**Malcolm Wilson, Resources Director at RCT Homes, said, "We are delighted by Capita's ongoing adoption of best-of-breed technology. Improving communication with tenants and offering alternative ways to interact with us is at the core of our priorities and with Communications Manager, Capita is helping us to achieve this. The integration and partnership of the products reduces our risk in deploying new technology."**

SMS communications continue to be deployed in more and more areas of RCT Homes' operations. This is driving improvements in services and further developing valuable tenant communication features in the Capita Housing suite, based on Communication Manager's advanced workflow technology.

**Nas Hayat, Deeplake's Software and Service Director, managed the technical deployment and commented, "RCT Homes are a demanding and innovative customer. Communications Managers' advanced two-way workflow engine, underlying the SMS text engine, has been used to the full by RCT Homes. Communications Manager allows the most common tenant information requests to be satisfied in a more convenient and timely way than can be achieved manually, and RCT Homes are taking full benefit of this."**

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