



GOLDEN GATES HOUSING

Golden Gates Housing (GGH) is Warrington Borough Council's (WBC) Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO). GGH manages 9,000 properties on behalf of the Council. The Housing Inspectorate judged GGH to be a three star organisation with excellent prospects for improving its service for its customers. On achieving this award, GGH joined a small band of 10 housing organisations who have achieved the Housing Inspectorates highest rating.

VISION

Our vision was to provide a more responsive service for users as we were moving to a position where every one of our employees would get their work electronically.

Steve Lamb, ICT Manager at GGH

GGH's technology strategy was very much seen as being at the heart of this successful inspection. Peter Mercer, GGH's Chief Executive says "From the start, we felt that our approach to ICT was the key to long term service improvement for our customers and value for money for the company."

Upon analysis GGH's technology strategy had a number of overlapping priorities which needed to be addressed in any changes that were implemented:

- Challenging their existing arrangements through procurement
- Building a technology base that would directly benefit their customers
- Looking for long term partnership arrangements with top performing organisations
- Using technology to deliver a value for money strategy
- Looking for ways to improve the work life balance of their employees

Early in the process of modernising its technology base GGH identified its IT help desk and first line of support as a key component of its new approach. Steve Lamb, ICT Manager at GGH says "To make our new strategy work we needed to take a fresh look at how we supported our users. Our vision was to provide a more responsive service for users as we were moving to a position where every one of our employees would get their work electronically."

In the first instance, Warrington Borough Council provided help desk support via a service level agreement, leaving GGH to deal with most first line enquiries directly. In keeping with their priorities, they felt that they needed to modernise their approach and to improve this part of the service.

Several key issues were identified as part of the review process. Fundamentally a more flexible approach for the help desk service was needed. This was particularly important in order to help the employees and board members working outside standard 9-5 hours. Also, the fact that the system was linked to the Council's network restricted third party access to its services.

As a result of this review one thing became clear to GGH "We worked closely with our colleagues at the council" says Steve Lamb "But it became apparent that our business objectives were taking us down different paths. So, with the support of the Council, we decided to look for our own solution."

With no internal capacity to set up its own in-house service, GGH decided to devise a specification of what level of service it needed and to look for a solution from the commercial sector. CNT were selected as the chosen partner as a result of the resulting tendering process.

The solution that CNT provided delivered key benefits and features to GGH which helped address the issues that had been raised. These included:

- Real cost savings
- Help desk support across their new operational times
- Help desk analysis to allow a greater understanding of user issues

- Professional, customer focused help desk operators
- Remote access into GGH's systems to resolve support problems quicker
- Access to additional first line support
- Flexible first line support covering up to 40 locations across the region

CNT's relationship with GGH continued after the initial project was completed and continues to go from strength to strength. Steve Lamb comments "Our technology base has been transformed and this has meant a massive change programme. Throughout this, CNT has been a key player in this process. The quality of help desk support has been first class and the flexibility and professionalism from the first line technicians has been exactly what we needed."

BENEFITS

Calico estimates that the improvements made by the intelligent communications environment have enabled the organisation to achieve an annual saving of £350,000.



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