



Increasing efficiency and cutting costs Orbit Heart of England

“Our decision to work with Investors in Excellence has already paid dividends. By applying clear processes, we’ve been able to make significant cost savings across our business and we’ve seen a dramatic improvement in staff and customer satisfaction.”

Louise Oakley, Head of Business Excellence, Orbit Heart of England

Background

Orbit Heart of England was established in 2008 following a merger between Heart of England Housing & Care and Orbit Housing Association. Part of The Orbit Group - one of the largest housing groups in the country – the organisation is dedicated to providing high quality, affordable homes to those in greatest need and it operates throughout the Midlands, employing over 600 people.

In 2009, Orbit Heart of England identified a number of issues associated with the way it was re-letting properties including:

- Inconsistencies in costs and standards across different geographic locations
- Unacceptable time lags between tenants vacating a property and new tenants moving in
- Poor customer satisfaction

Keen to address them as quickly as possible, the senior management team explored various options and in November 2009, Orbit embarked on a quality improvement programme with Investors in Excellence (IiE).

The benefits of excellence

Under IiE’s guidance, Orbit pulled together a team of front-line and managerial staff from across the business to look at its re-let procedures. Tried-and-tested lean management techniques were used to review and challenge existing ways of working and the results speak for themselves:

- Creation of a revised ‘Re-let Standard’ which is now being applied across the organisation
- Estimated £240,000 cash saving as a result of improved budgeting on repairs/property maintenance
- Clear definition of roles and responsibilities resulting in less ‘wasted time’ and duplication of activity
- Estimated saving of six days in maintenance time per void (equivalent to £82,500 per annum) thanks to improved communications and administration procedures

- Significant reduction in overall re-let times (improved from an average of 26.9 days to an average of 17.5 days)
- Enhanced customer satisfaction levels following extensive consultation linked to process improvement
- Fourteen staff members trained in lean management techniques
- Further training from liE now enabling Orbit to roll out bespoke internal training programmes.

Want to reap similar benefits? Then get in touch today to find out how the liE team can help .

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