**active housing**
by Hallnet

## Case study
# Making maintenance requests easier for 11,380 households

How we helped Northampton Partnership Homes dramatically reduce the administrative burden of maintenance.

NORTHAMPTON PARTNERSHIP HOMES

## Background

Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) is an arms-length management organisation (ALMO) that is responsible for the management of council housing services.

Established in 2015, the ALMO is responsible for over 25,000 customers – NPH has a significant task on its hands in delivering maintenance services to those homes, and support to tenants inhabiting them.

In 2018, as part of the ALMO's last 5-year plan, it was recognised that there was a need to improve tenants' and staff's abilities to open, track and manage repairs online. Any new platform needed to not only achieve improvements for end users but needed to seamlessly integrate with the existing Customer Facing Portal, Housing Management System, and Job Scheduling tool.

After a competitive, two-phase tender process, NPH selected our Active Diagnostics solution.

> " The uncertainty of the pandemic has presented numerous challenges for colleagues and residents alike, making it more difficult to plan and deliver services.
>
> We have embraced technology to enable agile working across all service areas, which has enabled services to continue throughout the pandemic. "
>
> *NPH corporate plan 2021-2024*

## Success Criteria

With significant investment already made into existing platforms it was absolutely critical for all stakeholders that Active Diagnostics integrated intuitively and meaningfully with those tools:

- **Capita Open Housing** – (main HMS used for repairs)

- The system needed to enable staff and tenants to more easily log maintenance requests that would be automatically raised within Open Housing in real time. For staff users it was also important to seamlessly launch a diagnostic solution from within the system. Active Diagnostics by leveraging Capita Web Services to fully integrate with Open Housing in real-time.

- **Open Access** – Open Access is Capita Open Housing's customer portal which provides tenants with an online facility to manage their tenancy.

- Enabling tenants to use the diagnostic tool from within the portal was hugely important. With Active Diagnostics, tenants can self-select appointments, and track progress of their repairs from directly within Open Access.

- **Kirona DRS** – Used by NPH's schedulers and the contact centre to allocate jobs to trade operatives. We we integrated directly with DRS to maintain real-time appointment management. This now enables tenants to select their own appointment times, and maintenance staff to arrive when expected, with all the information needed to complete the job.

## Project Delivery

Timely delivery of the project was hugely important: stakeholders were keen to demonstrate value to internal staff and to tenants as quickly as possible, while ensuring that the replacement of the existing system was done so without risk.

To achieve this, we implemented a phased delivery that enabled us to gather real user feedback as early as possible. This meant we were able to meet client and tenant expectations more quickly and ultimately ensure swifter, more seamless take-up of the platform once released.

A key requirement for NPH during this phase was to be able to create and manage their diagnostics scripts and rules.  To achieve this, we worked closely with the client's DLO throughout the implementation to ensure each script would lead to the correct statement of record in order to improve Right First Time statistics. We performed the initial script upload to Active Diagnostics and provided comprehensive training for NPH staff members to enable them to manage scripts themselves in future.

## Overcoming adversity

It's inevitable in any project involving multiple software tools, and a variety of stakeholders that some challenges will occur. How those challenges are addressed is often one of the measures of project success. COVID, however was neither expected or an easy hurdle to overcome.

Coming a year into the project, where tenant adoption was on the rise, COVID forced NPH to switch off the entire tenant portal as the organisation – like many others – struggled with service demand.

However, while this meant that tenants were unable to access the diagnostics tool themselves, it provided Active Diagnostics an opportunity to shine in the contact centre, where it made it helped staff more easily manage jobs raised by tenants calling in. As a result, it's now a staple tool for the staff raising repairs.

## Results

Now thoroughly embedded into the contact centre's processes, NPH now sees around 2,000 jobs raised through Active Diagnostics each month from the contact centre alone.

The solution is fully integrated with all of NPH's other tools, meaning the client and tenant have full visibility of repairs requests. We've also helped NPH dramatically reduce the administrative burden of raising new jobs: The average time now taken to raise a job online through Active Diagnostics is just 1 minute 39 seconds, compared to a sector average of over 4 minutes.

## The future for Active Diagnostics

The housing sector continues to face tough challenges with rising cost and availability of materials, as well as a shortage of skilled workers.  AT Active Housing, we continue to work with NPH, and clients across the country to help them maintain and improve the efficiency of their maintenance and repairs programmes and help, where possible to mitigate the effects of these challenges.

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To find out more about Active Diagnostics, and how we can help you continue to deliver good service to your tenants in spite of current economic challenges, please get in touch on **0800 023 9024** or email **sales@activehousing.co.uk**