



Housing Plus Group makes a successful transition to transformational HR



The Group's HR team has improved reporting, reduced administration, and gained more time to focus on strategic planning.

A self-service approach to HR needs

The Housing Plus Group serves 25,000 customers in Shropshire and Staffordshire by providing 12,000 homes, managing retirement living communities and delivering domiciliary care services.

The Group was formed by the merger of Severnside Housing and Housing Plus, which brought together over 600 employees. The HR team faced the challenge of managing all HR requirements for the combined workforce across the Housing Plus Group's six companies.

"Our HR software was quite antiquated: it just didn't meet our requirements with the functionality we needed," explains Helen Watkins, Senior HR Business Partner at Housing Plus Group. The HR team chose to replace its legacy system with Civica HR & Payroll, a single solution that streamlines management of a wide range of HR functions.

Outcomes

- ▶ Streamlines HR requirements management across a geographically dispersed group of companies
- ▶ Ready adoption of an easy-to-use self-service HR portal by 600+ employees, including 120 mobile users
- ▶ Reduced admin workload releases HR team members to focus on strategic planning
- ▶ Efficient reporting with built-in standard reports and the option to create bespoke reports
- ▶ An HR solution that underpins the successful transition to transformational HR.

"The Civica solution's self-service portal is intuitive — everyone is able to pick it up and use it very easily. It has created efficiencies for employees, managers and the HR team."

Helen Watkins, Senior HR Business Partner,
Housing Plus Group

Ease of use



Increased efficiencies



Support for mobile



More than 600 employees use the Civica solution to book annual leave, manage absences, claim expenses and mileage, conduct appraisals, and book and manage training.



A phased roll-out ensures smooth adoption

Among the key factors in the Group's selection of the Civica solution were its ability to support all HR functions using a single centralised set of personnel data, and its self-service portal. "The portal is intuitive — everyone is able to pick it up and use it very easily," says Watkins. "It has created efficiencies for employees, managers and the HR team."

To begin with, the HR team gave 240 people access to the Civica solution; and soon extended it to support more than 600 employees in administrative, managerial, customer-facing and building services roles.

The team ensured it imported only clean data into the Civica system. "To maintain this we conduct regular audits and, as we add new employees, we make sure we adhere to rigorous checks to ensure the quality and integrity of the data," says Watkins.

The HR team also took the precaution of rolling out the modules gradually, to ensure efficient access management and ease the demands on training. The rollout started with leave, followed by absence management, expenses and mileage claims, and appraisals.

In a later phase, the Group implemented the training module. As well as allowing employees to book and request training, the module enables management of training requests and evaluations through built-in workflow approvals. Training records are maintained centrally, and can be accessed by individuals and their managers.

The final phase involved rolling out the mobile self-service app, enabling around 120 employees to book annual leave and access their personal data from their mobile devices.

More time for strategic planning

Since adopting the Civica solution, the HR team has experienced a significant drop in administrative tasks. As a result, team members can spend more time on strategic HR planning, supported by reports they can generate quickly and efficiently from the Civica system.

"We used to be very spreadsheet based, but now we can ask the system for exactly the data we want, which gives us a big advantage — before we had to manipulate it to get the answers," says Watkins.

In addition to the standard reports available from the Civica system — which meet most of the Group's needs — Watkins has developed bespoke reports for managers and the wider business.

Transformational HR achieved

Under a five-year programme, the HR team helped all Group companies get to a position where managers manage their teams, and HR provides an advisory service.

"The whole purpose was to move from transactional HR to transformational HR," explains Watkins. "There's no doubt that implementing Civica HR & Payroll has helped us achieve this. Everyone says how easy the system is to use — and that includes feedback from our Directors and Chief Executive."

The HR team is now planning to add the recruitment module to the Civica solution. This will enable applicant data to populate the system automatically once a position is filled, creating further efficiencies.

120 employees now accessing data from the mobile self-service app

"The whole purpose was to move from transactional HR to transformational HR. There's no doubt that implementing Civica HR & Payroll has helped us achieve this."

Helen Watkins, Senior HR Business Partner,
Housing Plus Group