

Partnership working servicing multiple manufacturer systems

The challenge

Jephson Housing Association Group (JHAG), a charity, was founded in 1970, and manages over 16,000 homes throughout England providing general family housing, low-cost home ownership, housing for older people and housing for people with support needs. In 2015, Jephson merged with Raglon Housing Association to form Stonewater Housing Association, managing 31,000 homes.

Stonewater has a Value for Money Strategy in place which ensures the organisation delivers its social objectives in the most cost effective way possible. Part of this is an Asset Management Strategy which applies high maintenance standards in order to ensure that its homes continue to meet the needs and aspirations of current and future residents.

How can Stonewater work in partnership with suppliers to ensure they are delivering maximum value and benefit to residents whilst reflecting local circumstances and needs?

What we did

Tunstall and Stonewater (then Jephson) have been working together since 2005, and Tunstall is currently maintaining the community alarm systems at approximately 50 sites under a bespoke service contract, developed to meet their specific needs. The sites are located throughout the UK, and each benefit from Tunstall's dedicated engineer service, where the same engineer attends each site whenever possible, allowing him to become familiar with the scheme and its equipment, and encouraging the development of strong ongoing relationships between the engineer and site staff and residents.

The sites covered by the contract contain a wide mix of equipment, including systems manufactured by Tunstall over a long time period, and third party systems from a range of other manufacturers. Tunstall engineers are trained on all community alarm equipment and have access to a comprehensive stock holding, and so are able to support every scheme, no matter what system has been installed.



The current service and maintenance contract is based on Stonewater's bespoke specification, which includes:

- Response within 24 hours including weekends and Bank Holidays
- No charge for "fair wear and tear", including triggers/pendants
- No charge for engineer travel time
- No charge for no access visits
- No charge for engineer visits to faults due to BT line failure
- No charge for engineer visits due to operator/user error
- Free returns to our Service Centre on dispersed Lifeline units in need of repair
- Customer Satisfaction Centre contactable 24/7/365 for fault reporting
- Software updates at each service visit
- Smoke detector upgrades from battery to hardwired (up to 10%)
- Smoke detector annual clean and test
- Non-repairable smoke detectors replaced new for old (if within manufacturer's life expectancy)
- Battery replacement to any equipment under the contract
- Rectification of cable damage
- Rectification of storm damage
- All costs associated with accidental damage, misuse or any other cause
- Training of new and existing scheme managers
- Adjustment of time clocks twice a year
- Annual service to equipment at each scheme location

“ Our working relationship with Tunstall is excellent. Both parties feel able to pick up the phone at any time to clarify things or discuss the contract. It's this open dialogue that has given us real confidence. We are dealing with potentially life-saving equipment so it's essential that it's in the hands of someone we can trust. The challenges are larger for us as we have systems installed by a number of manufacturers and the fact that Tunstall can service them all is a real plus for us.

Sue Gillespie, Housing Manager, Stonewater

Results

The development of a bespoke service contract has meant Tunstall's engineers deliver against specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Each month – the dedicated Tunstall Regional Service Manager reviews the contract KPIs and addresses any issues this may highlight. A bespoke report is also issued to Stonewater for their review.

Each quarter – an email is sent by the Stonewater contract manager to each Scheme Manager to ask for their assessment of Tunstall's service. All comments are then discussed by the Stonewater contract manager at a meeting the following week with Tunstall's account manager and regional service manager.

This qualitative and quantitative approach has enabled a continuously improving service to be delivered to Stonewater residents, as positive results are widely communicated and can be included as part of best practice, and any issues can be dealt with swiftly and in an atmosphere of cooperation.

Tunstall also provides training on the systems to all new scheme managers, ensuring they not only feel confident they are using the equipment properly but also getting maximum benefit from it. In 2013 Tunstall's Account Manager and Regional Service Manager attended Stonewater Scheme Manager Days around the country to deliver training on how the Customer Satisfaction Centre process faults from the first report to completion. This training was a great success and has helped Scheme Managers to understand the way their calls are handled and the importance of the information they provide when reporting a fault. Implementing this

training has meant that Stonewater can be assured that even new staff are familiar with the systems, and that any service requirements will be responded to appropriately as they have been reported in the right way.

Case study

Mulberry Court in Newbury is a retirement development with 23 one and two bedroomed apartments. Its community alarm system was recently subject to a complete failure, and the Scheme Manager immediately called Tunstall to report the problem. Two engineers attended the site, and not only fixed the system but also reassured the Manager that they would not be leaving site until they had done so.



“ I feel lost without the alarm system, and found it quite stressful when it wasn't working. The Tunstall engineers arrived quickly and it immediately gave me confidence as they promised they would not leave without having resolved the problem, even if that meant supplying a temporary solution. As it was, they resolved the problem in about an hour with a minimum of disruption. On another occasion an engineer changed a light bulb for a resident. It's a small gesture but one that meant an awful lot. We have found the Tunstall engineers go over and above what is required of them, and that makes an enormous difference.

Angela Foote, Scheme Manager, Mulberry Court

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