

Case Study



SpeakInConfidence: NPT Homes

The Client

With nine thousand properties situated across the Neath Port Talbot County Borough, NPT Homes is Wales' third largest housing association and employs just over five hundred staff in a number of roles.

NPT Homes is committed to the wellbeing of the communities it serves, offering a range of services and community engagement programmes to benefit this cause. From providing diverse support services to managing repairs and maintenance in-house with its own Direct Labour Organisation (skilled trades), including window and door manufacturing and installation, NPT Homes prides itself on being more than just a housing provider.

The Challenge

Celebrating its sixth anniversary in March 2017, NPT Homes is well-established and making a huge contribution to the communities of Neath Port Talbot. After this encouraging start, the organisation felt it was time for a culture shift in order to increase customer focus and drive operational efficiency.

The aim in 2016 was for NPT Homes to move away from the mistaken outward perception of being a council service; a restructure and a new corporate identity was needed to aid this shift. Embarking upon a restructure meant that engagement with staff was essential in order to ensure a smooth transition.

Culture changes were also starting to take place amongst NPT Homes' leadership, with Senior Management making an intentional shift from managing to leading and exploring positive ways to develop staff.

With a large number of employees working remotely, NPT Homes faced the challenge of bringing teams together to provide a streamlined service. A system was needed to capture the voice of all staff, wherever they worked; for everyone to feel included and that their opinion was valued.

Key Objectives

- To provide a way for staff to raise issues and concerns safely, particularly during a season of change
- To promote healthy discussion on the company's continued growth and improvement
- To encourage connection with and input from remote workers



NPT Homes is one of the largest social landlords in Wales and has responsibility for over 9,000 properties across the Neath Port Talbot County Borough. The organisation is committed to providing good quality housing and a range of services to help people manage their homes.

As a community housing mutual, NPT Homes continually works to understand the needs of its tenants and members to deliver services based on what matters.

A priority for NPT Homes is to bring all of its properties up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). This multi-million pound investment will be completed in 2017. Following the completion of this programme, NPT Homes will continue to maintain its tenants' homes and enhance the communities in which they live.

The Solution

After exploring different tools to support staff engagement, including an internal system, NPT Homes felt that an external portal would be a more trustworthy option for staff, who prefer to receive external notifications rather than email correspondence from management directly.

SpeakInConfidence was implemented in September 2016, with two managers allocated to provide responses to incoming dialogues. Using the Push Questions functionality, management were also able to send an initial engagement review in October.

For remote employees, TextInConfidence was an ideal solution for capturing anonymous feedback.

Most recently, NPT Homes has started to implement forums through **SpeakInConfidence** in order to promote whole team discussions in a neutral online environment.

“ *The reason we brought in **SpeakInConfidence** was to enable a safe haven for people to raise issues and concerns if they have them* ”

The Results

By giving employees a chance to raise their voice anonymously, NPT Homes received a range of genuine concerns and helpful questions through **SpeakInConfidence**. By the end of Christmas 2016, over a hundred dialogues had been submitted by employees.

The initial question about NPT Homes' engagement process received the most dialogues, while other submissions included ideas about new groups, technology enquiries, and questions about processes and decisions made, with a handful of employees sharing observations which could lead to potential problems.

“ *We've had a really good response on what's working well, what we needed to improve on, and what our employees' apprehensions were about* ”

The Reward

During a time of immense change, **SpeakInConfidence** has allowed NPT Homes to maintain essential communication with employees across the business.

Since the initial push, management has been able to address and resolve dialogues received. A second engagement review was sent via Push Questions in January 2017, with positive dialogues being submitted – employees are happy to have the system available to use if they require it.

Moving forward, NPT Homes will also be encouraging the use of **SpeakInConfidence** forums to enable whole team discussions on a range of relevant subjects. This will bring new teams together following the recent company changes.

