

New tech for Newydd

Alan Evans, Housing Manager, Newydd Housing Association

Newydd Housing Association is a charitable housing association that offers 3,000 affordable homes for rent and sale to people in mid and south Wales. Alan Evans, Housing Manager, tell us how they approached making sure tenants in their independent living schemes will remain safe as the communications network in the area becomes digital.

Looking to the future

I've been working with Tunstall ever since I began this role fifteen years ago as we use their warden call systems in our schemes. The systems are decades old now, and although they're still working perfectly well, it is becoming harder for the Tunstall engineers to source the right parts when they need them, although they always do! The digital switch seemed a good prompt for us to look at replacing the systems, and so we began to review options. Being our existing technology partner, we of course asked Tunstall for guidance. They have an in depth understanding of our organisation and their engineers know our schemes inside out. Tunstall's team listened to our needs and together we developed a solution that would address the challenges we felt we face, as well as meeting our budgetary requirements. With their expert support we had the reassurance that we were investing in the right solutions to improve the experience of our tenants and our staff, and systems that would give us a platform for the digital future.

People-focused

Two schemes have been commissioned so far, with five more to follow. Tunstall talked to the tenants with us, explaining what would be happening, and involving them in the process. Not all contractors do that in my experience. Whenever Tunstall staff are working in the schemes, they are always extremely mindful that these are people's homes, and act with due respect and courtesy. They're always happy to chat to tenants while they're there, and it's not unusual for an engineer to pop into a scheme if they're passing just to make sure everything is ok.

Extra value

We've taken the opportunity to add CCTV as part of the upgrade, so we can link everything together and deal with one provider for all the onsite technology, which makes life easier for us. We're also having digital Noticeboards installed in the ground floor areas of the schemes, so we can communicate relevant information to tenants quickly and clearly. The Noticeboards can be updated remotely, which will be brilliant as currently a member of staff often has to drive to a scheme and pin a physical notice on a board on the wall. We can also

promote any upcoming events, helping to make sure everyone has the opportunity to attend if they'd like to, and we can add other notices and information.

Part of the family

The Tunstall team are basically an extension of our team. Everyone is on first name terms; we don't say a Tunstall engineer has been booked, we talk about them as a trusted colleague coming to see us! They don't just know their business very well, they know ours too. We're able to trust them that when they give us advice, whether that's from an engineer, customer service or sales, we know they're acting our best interests and those of the people we support. They understand how important the technology is and work with us to make sure we get robust solutions that will meet our needs for years to come, and help us continue to deliver excellent services to our tenants and customers.
