

Talking TECS: Consortium Procurement

Drew Frame, Procurement Manager, Consortium Procurement

As the UK continues its transition to a digital communications network, Drew Frame, Procurement Manager at Consortium Procurement (CP), the Procurement arm of the Northern Housing Consortium talks about the benefits of using its TECS Framework and the support CP can offer.

Many people are still unaware of the digital switchover, and those that are not always fully sure of the impact on their services and how to develop and implement a strategy to ensure the safety and independence of tenants/residents isn't jeopardised while they transition from analogue to digital.

The digital future

Technology Enabled Care Services (TECS) have long been a vital part of the way housing providers deliver services to the people they support. Their primary function has always been to enable people to easily get help in an emergency but newer systems can offer so much more than this. For example, alerting care staff to a resident at risk of falling who has just left their chair, or notifying the monitoring centre if a tenant's house has become too cold. The move to digital will create a platform for future innovation, using intelligent insight to help care become more personalised, proactive and preventative.

However, negotiating the move from legacy equipment to the digital future can feel bewildering. Registered providers may feel ill equipped to assess whether their existing hardware will remain operational, and unconfident to make decisions about choosing new equipment that will require significant investment and impact upon the lives of users and colleagues for years to come.

Here to help

As the digital switchover deadline approaches, CP is here to help. We help our members to make an informed decision based on their requirements and access a large number of major suppliers' products and services via direct award, ranked award, or further competition.

We can also help to guide providers through the procurement process – our top tips are to:

- Survey existing stocks and supplies - what do you have already, and how long have you had them? What upgrades or replacements are needed to transition to digital? What is the capacity of your workforce to implement changes ahead of the deadline?
- Assess the marketplace – digital resources frequently evolve. Get in touch with our suppliers to better understand the solutions relevant to you.
- Procure - decide on the tech that will meet your requirements. Compliantly procure through Consortium Procurement's range of solutions, including our OJEU and Public Contract Regulations (PCR) 2015 compliant TECS framework, which provides an accessible route to market, available across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Optimising your investment

We're here to help ease the pressure by helping you explore your options and make effective, value for money choices that work for your organisation and ensure the continued safety of residents. Working with partners such as Tunstall, we can help you keep up to date with the very latest technology and service delivery models, and as well as providing a foundation for you to fully realise the benefits of the digital switch.