



At a Glance:

Sector

- Housing Association

Challenge

- Develop and maintain a corporate plan with service improvement programmes.
- Introduce a structured approach to performance management.
- Provide visibility for board members, stakeholders and staff.

Solution

- A multi-user desktop Ten based environment; to be upgraded to a customer hosted web-enabled solution based on Ten Web Server.

Green Light for Ten at Amber Valley Housing



Performance management tools have helped Amber Valley Housing to develop its corporate plan and instigate service improvement programmes. Using Ten the housing association was able to deliver a structured approach to performance management while providing clearer information to board members, stakeholders and staff so that performance was better understood at all levels.

Derbyshire-based Amber Valley Housing (AVH) took over ownership and management of housing stock from Amber Valley Council in 2003 and currently has around 5300 properties. It is regulated by the Housing Corporation and must provide a number of statutory performance indicators.

To establish the structures to deliver and improve services AVH recognised the need to manage performance and selected Ten following advice from an external consultant. Ten was first used to support development of AVH's corporate plan which included core values defining objectives in five areas: Top Performing People; Top Quality Performance; Financially Strong & Progressive; Positive Impact On Communities; More Than Satisfied Customers. Success depends on performing well in these areas, known as 'The Five Doorways'.

A model representing the corporate plan was created using Ten. Each 'Five Doorways' objective was defined in terms of the performance indicators and initiatives that contributed to successful service delivery. The resulting model was used in high level meetings which reviewed the overall plan.

AVH then broadened its scope to include models for all its thirteen departmental teams. Each team model incorporates the team's performance indicators which feed into the corporate plan and performance measurement procedures. There are 50 primary KPIs, 48 from the teams and two from corporate level. Each team also has subsidiary indicators covering team performance.



"It used to be difficult to report consistently across the organisation," says Les Harrison, Performance Manager at AVH. "This approach helps to put performance at the top of the agenda."

Performance is managed centrally with Les Harrison working with each team to deploy frameworks aligned to their business plans while meeting corporate objectives. The ability to make information accessible and understandable is a strength of Ten. One way it achieves this is by colour coding indicators to highlight performance above or below target. Red, amber and green signify 'bad', 'in progress, within target' and 'above target' but AVH also uses black when no reportable information was available.



Users can select an indicator and drill down to see what factors are contributing to its 'score'. This is helpful when identifying why targets are not being met. Information can be viewed from corporate and team levels to promote understanding of performance and interactions between teams. For example, missed property maintenance targets, covered by one team, might be caused by staff shortages, which are monitored by a different team. Team Managers have full access to their own plans while data collectors, project champions and team members have varying degrees of access managed by passwords.

“Ten highlights performance issues across the organisation,” says Les Harrison. “People can see quickly when information isn't available. This helps make team managers more accountable.”

The overall model is designed for simplicity and ease of use. Each section has a homepage providing access to lower levels. The 'Our Objectives' section, for example, reflects the 'Doorways' concept and leads to the five corporate goals. Clicking 'Top Quality Performance' leads to the underlying objectives and initiatives while drilling down further brings up more performance indicators and supporting documentation. For example, the objective 'To Implement IT Strategy' includes milestones, activities and actions with planned completion dates. In this way performance management is built around a series of hierarchical but related indicators aligned to and reflecting corporate structures.

AVH's key measure is its positive impact on communities and individuals. It has already achieved a number of successes and continues to improve performance. Many important indicators have risen in the past three years. Customer satisfaction has improved to 79 per cent and AVH expects to meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard ahead of target. The Housing Corporation awarded four green lights - up from three - in its last assessment.

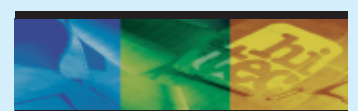
“Ten ticks all the boxes,” says Les Harrison. “We have a very simple system that provides the management information we need.”

AVH has embedded performance management and linked its strategic corporate plan to individual team plans with Ten and is now looking to extend its use. Performance management is currently a centralised role with links to each team. However the association plans to devolve more of these responsibilities to the teams. AVH has decided to upgrade to Ten's Web Server system so that users can access models and input data remotely using standard browser software. This may also lead to performance information being available to members of the local community and other stakeholders on the organisation's website. AVH has also decided to implement Ten's risk management module to help it assess and manage corporate risk.

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