CASE STUDY

IOT TECHNOLOGY: A KEY TOOL IN HULL CITY COUNCIL'S COMPLIANCE AND SAFETY STRATEGY

TOGETHER WITH

Hull
City Council

HULL CITY COUNCIL (HCC) ARE ROLLING OUT AICO'S EI1000G GATEWAY ACROSS THEIR HOUSING STOCK TO IMPROVE COMPLIANCE WHILST CREATING SAFER HOMES FOR RESIDENTS.

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Having a large housing portfolio to manage and ensuring they are all compliant with the various legislations is a key challenge for Social Housing providers. Hull City Council (HCC) are rolling out Aico's Ei1000G Gateway across their housing stock to improve compliance whilst creating safer homes for residents.

HCC currently manage over 24000 social homes around the Hull area. The council's aim is to create an inclusive, resilient and safer community for their residents.

THE CHALLENGES OF COMPLIANCE AND DATA MANAGEMENT

As a landlord, gaining access to properties once they have been let is a challenge, access rates vary depending on the trade and the reason for entry. Traditionally, gas teams experience the best rates due to the testing being enforceable, however, Electrical Inspection & Condition Reports (EICRs) typically struggle to gain access.

HCC like many social housing providers found it a challenge to ensure their properties' Fire Detection systems were compliant for the duration of a tenancy. They would regularly attend properties and note that key components of the Fire Detection system were missing.

This caused concerns for HCC as they were investing in properties and upgrading them to the latest standards (BS5839-6) only to have key elements go missing. Not knowing when the items were removed meant that the resident could potentially have been living in a non-compliant property for nearly a year before anything was noted as missing.

HCC wanted to ensure the integrity of its housing stock was not weakened by interference with alarms, and to be notified should there be any potential issues within the property. Compliance in this day and age is a key challenge in an RSL's role. Ensuring housing stock is maintained to the correct standard guarantee's adherence to regulations and that properties are safe for families to live in creating the safer communities that HCC want for their residents.

REMOTE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE HOMELINK PORTAL

After consulting with their local Aico Regional Specification Manager (RSM) Gareth Iveson, HCC opted to utilise the Ei1000G Gateway across their whole housing portfolio, this was to be rolled out during property upgrades and void periods.

The Gateway enables HCC to extract data from the fire and carbon monoxide alarms, which is sent seamlessly to the HomeLINK Portal. The Portal has various reporting tools which provide insight into fire and carbon monoxide alarm system performance. With easy access to this information, forecasting alarm replacement and maintenance is easier than ever, with handy reporting tools to help HCC stay compliant with the latest legislation.

The remote property management solution also includes custom notifications and tags so that the right departments and individuals get notified at the right time, increasing accuracy and providing a rapid response.

Working with Aico has allowed us to monitor and maintain the standards set by BS5839-6, we have utilised the Gateway system from Aico to ensure properties are compliant with current standards, ensuring the safety of our residents. It also allows us to choose where alerts from properties go, we can then send alerts to Housing Officers who can make contact with residents to check if there are any problems.

Michael Illingworth, Programme Manager, HCC

During the installation of the Gateway HCC embarked upon training from their local Aico RSM, Gareth Iveson to learn the best way to utilise the HomeLINK Portal and how to get the best ROI from the product.

THE TRAINING COVERED:

- Prioritising alerts as they come in

- Investigating any issues that arise

- Running reports

- Monitoring the expiry dates of the alarm heads, to programme for future capital replacement programme's

- How to set up custom notifications and alerts

These sessions helped HCC ensure the information the data they received is utilised in the most effective manner.
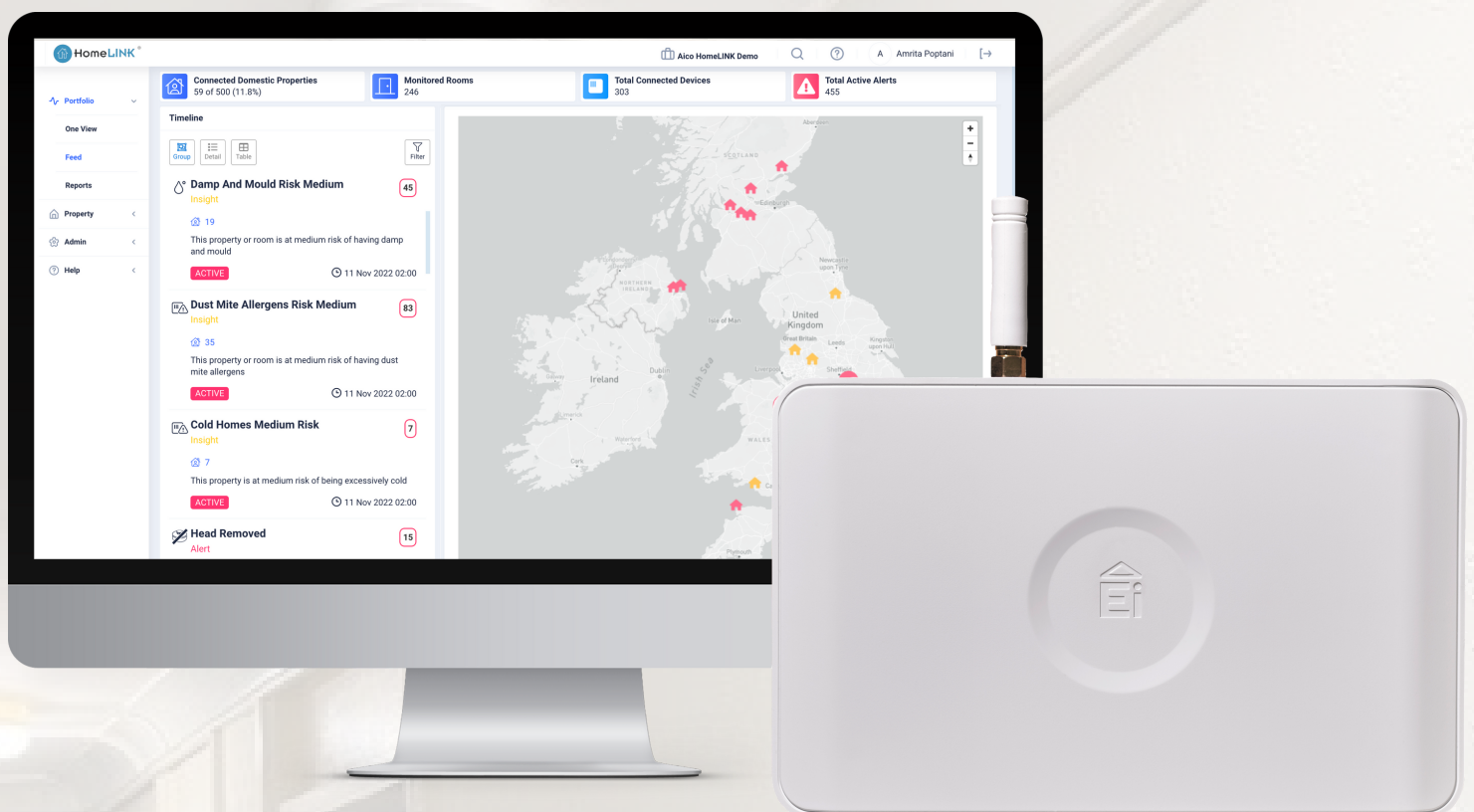
FUTURE PLANS FOR HCC

The HCC had already committed to a programme of Smoke Alarm upgrades taking them from an LD3 system, covering circulation spaces and escape routes only, up to the latest standard of LD2, covering circulation space and escape routes and also high risk areas like Kitchens and Living Rooms, this is the recommended minimum standard made in BS5839-6.

HCC already has over 3000 Aico Gateways connected to their dashboard, meaning that around 12% of their stock is now fully compliant with LD2 and is being monitored remotely to ensure resident safety.

Working with HCC on this project has been great for me. Having been involved in the initial development of this project and then seeing it through to a stage now where approximately 15% of their housing stock is now being monitored is a great achievement, Hull should be congratulated for their commitment to the safety of its residents.

Gareth Iveson, Regional Specification Manager, Aico

HCC is now looking at the possibility of expanding this further with the specification of HomeLINK Environmental Sensors. These would link to the already fitted Gateways and allow the landlord to proactively monitor the environmental conditions within the property, identify issues and provide insights into risks like damp and mould, fuel poverty and poor indoor air quality.

To find out more about how the Gateway is designed to create healthier, safer homes please visit - aico.co.uk/homelink/fire-co/