



**Golden Gates  
Housing Trust**

**Golden Gates Housing Trust is the largest provider of social housing in Warrington.** As an organisation we face significant challenges as we deliver a massive programme of investment in our homes and neighbourhoods. This programme will deliver £105M worth of improvements in our stock over the next 5 years and £530M over 30 years.

### THE CHALLENGE

Our workforce has risen from around 230 staff in 2004 to over 370 staff in 2013 and we have recognised the need to communicate more efficiently to cope with the increased workload.

The challenge faced is common with other Housing Trust organisations. *“How do we continue to deliver high quality services transparently without having to further expand our contact centre team?”* stated their Director of Housing Management, Peter Fitzhenry.

We offer a response maintenance service, where customers place repair requests with our customer contact centre. Historically, these have been passed to trade operatives in a paper format. This was time consuming, inefficient and expensive, placing significant travel and administration costs on the organisation.

Our paper based practices relied heavily upon our contact centre team to process paperwork but the increased workloads resulting from the investment programme meant that we were forced to look for a paper-free solution.

When a service request was fulfilled, the trade operative would often take five or more days to return the service paperwork to the contact centre. During this period the contact centre staff had no visibility of the status of the request, preventing them from providing service information to the end customer.

### THE SOLUTION

Footprint Solutions are market leaders in the provision of mobile working solutions and we chose to deploy their iPad reporting solution iForm Pro™ to provide the paper-free service reports that we needed.

One of the major attractions of the iForm Pro™ solution was that it could be easily configured to automate our existing service forms. This minimised the training needed for the trade operatives as the developed forms looked similar to the original paper-based forms.

The solution provided a quick and structured method of collecting information using simple check boxes, drop down option lists, radio buttons and pre-completed fields.

The software also utilises many of the iPad™ standard user interface items such as date and time wheels so that users were



already familiar with how to fill out forms.

Additionally, signatures and photos can be captured on the iPad™ and there are built-in areas of forms where users can sketch plans and drawings directly into the form. *“The simplicity of using the iForm Pro™ solution and the fact that it is an integrated device that communicates directly to our contact centre were key to the project’s success”* stated Steve Lamb Head of ICT Services.



*A leading housing provider creating quality homes and neighbourhoods where people want to live*



## THE SOLUTION

Operatives can now take photos of a site or location and hand draw onto the photo using iForm Pro™. The form is delivered along with all photo attachments, plans and any comments written onto the attached media. This has saved them approximately one hour per operator per day in saved administration time and the solution has saved the trust a substantial amount of money.

The photo handling capability of the solution has proved invaluable in service scenarios where operatives have had to explain snags or defects noticed during property installation / adaption jobs. The customer is even able to sign-off noted issues on the photo to accept the issue before it is reported to the contact centre.

iForm Pro™ also supports hand-written form filling providing a fast and convenient method of capturing generic service information such as job comments or customer feedback. The solution converts the hand written content into data on the device and the operative can review, and, if necessary, amend this information before sending it to the service centre in real-time.

iForm Pro is convenient to use and can save the operator significant time when completing service paperwork. The ability to select pre-defined option list data (i.e. job classifications and SOR codes) from drop down menus is fast and accurate and it delivers data that is 100% accurate at all times.

When the operative submits a form from the iPad™ the solution will capture the exact location of the operator. This information can then be plotted on solutions such as Google™ Maps to provide visual cues as to where the team are operating within the community.

## SUMMARY

iForm Pro™ was simple to implement, easy to deploy and it closely resembled the historic paper-based forms which made end-user training easy to complete. It has allowed our operatives to return real-time service information back to our contact centre where previously this information would have taken five or more days to materialise.

More significantly the solution has improved our service levels and reduced the operational cost of service reporting. We are now embarking upon phase two of the project where outbound service task information will be sent to trade operatives using iForm Pro™ thus automating outbound work allocation to the teams and delivering further cost-savings and service improvements.

Footprint Solutions even provided a risk-free trial where several of our forms were developed and used in a controlled field-based trial prior to any solution commitment from the trust. This allowed us to make sure the solution was a good fit for our organisation before any sizeable commitment was made.



## THE BENEFITS

- ✓ Removal of all paper-based forms and associated costs
- ✓ Electronic forms returned from any site in just 15 seconds
- ✓ Service levels dramatically improved through accurate communication
- ✓ Closer progress monitoring and improved work prioritisation
- ✓ Supports "on the job" photos and sketches / plan layouts which are returned with forms
- ✓ Removal of all manual data entry activity and reduced errors
- ✓ Removal of all postage and travel costs associated with the return of paper-based forms
- ✓ Client sign-off of services using a hand written signature
- ✓ Elimination of paper freed up contact centre staff enabling them to focus on service and team management activity
- ✓ Payback achieved in just 4 months



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