

Remote technology gives tenants real-time help in their homes

In March 2020 the Coronavirus pandemic struck hard, confining millions to their homes. Kingdom Housing Association (KHA) in Scotland had already chosen XMReality Remote Guidance before the crisis. When lockdown came, it soon became clear what a far-sighted decision it was as tenants were able to carry out urgent repairs simply and swiftly in their homes, with no risk of inviting infection in. KHA Interim Digital Director Gary Haldane explains.

Challenge

How does a Housing Association with over 4000 properties help tenants make repairs to their homes, when an international pandemic means external service technicians aren't even allowed in? At the end of March strict social distancing measures came into force in the UK, with citizens only allowed out of their homes for one hour a day, told to keep a distance of two meters between themselves, and to avoid small gatherings of even friends and family.

People were, however encouraged to "keep in touch using remote technology", and for Scotland's Kingdom Housing Association that was a key solution. KHA had already started using XMReality Remote Guidance just before the lockdown came in place. The company is a passionate advocate of digital technology as a key way of enabling tenants to be more independent and active, which was why KHA chose to implement Remote Guidance before the crisis.

"I knew when I first saw XMReality Remote guidance that it would prove very useful" says Gary Haldane. "I just didn't realise how useful until we went into lockdown."



KINGDOM Housing Association

About: Kingdom Housing Association is a Registered Social Landlord with charitable status and over 4000 properties. It has two subsidiaries: Kingdom Initiatives Ltd, a non-charitable subsidiary and Kingdom Support and Care, a Community Interest Company providing care and support services to help people to live independently in the community.

Kingdom strongly champions digital services. Over 2,500 tenants subscribe to the digital My Kingdom portal where they can pay their rent, book repairs, message staff and more.

Where: Kingdom's HQ is in Fife, Scotland

What: Kingdom provides housing for a wide range of needs, the majority for social rent, plus Mid Market rent properties, affordable housing for sale and factoring services.

How many: Kingdom has around 380 staff with a turnover of approx. GBP 20 million per annum 2019.

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– Gary Haldane,
Interim Digital Director
at Kingdom Housing Association

Solution

With XMReality Remote Guidance, one of KHA's trades operatives, or service technicians, can be present to guide tenants in fixing problems, in real-time, in their own homes, without even having to step foot inside the property.

Using video technology on a standard mobile or tablet, the technician can identify faults and then demonstrate how to fix them on the shared screen with their own hands. The tenant sees the technician's hands in their own home, showing them step-by-step how to fix the problem, whether it's fixing a door, locating a leak or connecting a washing machine. A wide range of simple but often high-impact repairs can be fixed remotely this way, all whilst maintaining public health guidance on social distancing.

Gary Haldane: "Our tenants have been amazed at how simple it is to use and we've already had really positive feedback from tenants who have used the service. Our main priority during the coronavirus pandemic remains the health and wellbeing of our tenants and staff. Using this means we're not only able to deliver the level of service our customers expect in a highly efficient manner, but we're also able to do our best to minimise the transmission of coronavirus too. This technology has the potential to be a game-changer..."

Results

As the parent company of the Kingdom Group, Kingdom Housing Association serves a rich, diverse range of tenants and homeowners, and has an impressive service record. All digital solutions need to actively contribute to a high-quality service environment.

This is one of the first times an Augmented Reality-based solution like Remote Guidance has been used by a housing association in the UK. KHA are passionate champions of digital services, systems and solutions. Haldane sees digital technology as a vital tool to better serve tenants, and help them become more independent and active: "Ensuring we have effective digital systems makes a difference in terms of continuous improvement, effectiveness and efficiencies".

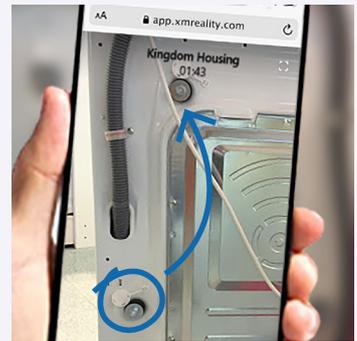
XMReality's Remote Guidance solution was introduced in KHA through a partnership between XMReality and UK housing technology consultancy DTL Creative. Dave Loudon, Founder of DTL Creative: "When the coronavirus hit we decided to help housing associations as much as we could. We're working with several tech companies to offer free support to help them manage. The remote guidance from XMReality is amazing and is just one of many innovations we're offering to housing associations to help during this difficult time. As a company we want to ensure technology and innovation is at the forefront of thinking in housing, so we're pleased to be working with the Kingdom Housing Association who are embracing technology to improve tenants' lives."

"Remote Guidance from XMReality is amazing... we're pleased to be working with the Kingdom Housing Association who are embracing technology to improve tenants' lives"

– Dave Loudon,
Founder of DTL Creative



1 A KHA tenant with two young children finds that her washing machine leaks during each cycle.



2 A KHA trade operative sends a link to her smartphone. One click on that and he demonstrates exactly where to locate and fix the problem.



3 The problem has quickly been solved and the tenant can once again use the washing machine.

Do you want to know more about XMReality?
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