

Digital trailblazers

A Social Housing Champions Network case study: Fife Housing Group



“It’s been fantastic. It’s so useful to have those connections with other housing associations, to be able to meet people who are trying to do the same things as you, and to get peer support and ideas about how others are doing something.”

Beverley, Housing Manager and Karen, Communications and Marketing Manager, from Fife Housing Group discuss their involvement in the Social Housing Champions Network. Ideas, validation, opportunities to try new approaches and a supportive network have been key to their success.

You don't need to be techy to motivate

Beverley: I now say, 'think digital first'. When I was asked would I go on the Digital Motivators training, I had my reservations, because I thought 'I'm not IT-literate'. I was very quickly told that I didn't have to be a whizz kid to be able to digitally motivate our clients as well as our colleagues. So, I came away a very happy bunny!

Karen: The training changes your perspective, and it means you are more motivated to motivate your team.

Engagement across all staff levels

Beverley: All our housing team, operations advisors and our maintenance officers have gone through the Digital Champions Training. Housing officers are the forefront of our organisation, they speak to tenants on a day to day basis, whether it's in their house, in the office, out on site in their patches. They're all really enthusiastic about digital.

Karen: One of our board members and the chair of our Residents' Scrutiny Group went to the training. They found it really useful and are keen to get involved, so much so that we are looking to do some additional work with the rest of our Residents' Scrutiny Group. To have that support and understanding at board level is going to be invaluable.

Building strength and depth across an organisation

Karen: We put the Essential Digital Skills Checklist out to all of our board members, trades and office-based colleagues, and our Residents' Scrutiny Group. We're using that to pull together a training plan for anybody who feels they would benefit.

Demonstrating the benefits for tenants to encourage interest

Beverley: We had a community cafe just before Christmas, we thought that was the perfect opportunity to introduce our Digital Champions. We had a stand, a pop-up banner and some balloons, the Champs wore t-shirts saying: 'ask me how I can cut your costs'. The hook was about saving money at Christmas. We'll be doing that at all of our community cafes going forward.

Housing officers are enabling tenants to manage their digital Universal Credit accounts



I think the training has empowered the housing officers. When they're out in the area they sit with the person, talking them through the journal, showing them how to log in to it, what steps the journal has, what information is required. To actually sit with the tenant and see what information they've got in front of them on the journal gives both the tenant and the housing officers understanding of what's happening.