



West Midlands-based social housing provider **whg**, is pioneering customer service solutions for the future with the help of Omfax Systems.

whg, which was formed in 2003 following a stock transfer from Walsall Council, houses almost 40,000 people and has invested more than £350 million in its homes over the past 11 years.

In March 2012, the organisation unveiled a new office at 100 Hatherton Street, which plays host to 29 contact centre advisors, with 12 more advisors based at five offices across the borough providing face-to-face customer service.



THE PROBLEM

“Following the stock transfer of 19,000 homes in 2003, we faced a huge challenge,” said Ann Parkes, Customer Excellence Manager at **whg**.

“We had to start from scratch. We had nothing in place for processing general enquiries and knew we wanted to make significant improvements to the level of service we had been able to offer our customers in the past.

“With 41 customer service advisors, we needed to ensure the whole team were aware of the new processes and procedures that were rapidly being implemented as we found our feet as a new organisation.

“At the time, each new advisor required around 3-4 months of training before they were fully proficient in dealing with enquiries over the phone or in one of our five receptions.

“Not only did we want to cut training time, we wanted to ensure that 80 percent of enquires were dealt with at the first point of contact and in a consistent manner”

THE SOLUTION

The formation of a new organisation gave **whg** the opportunity to reinvent how the housing sector delivers customer services.

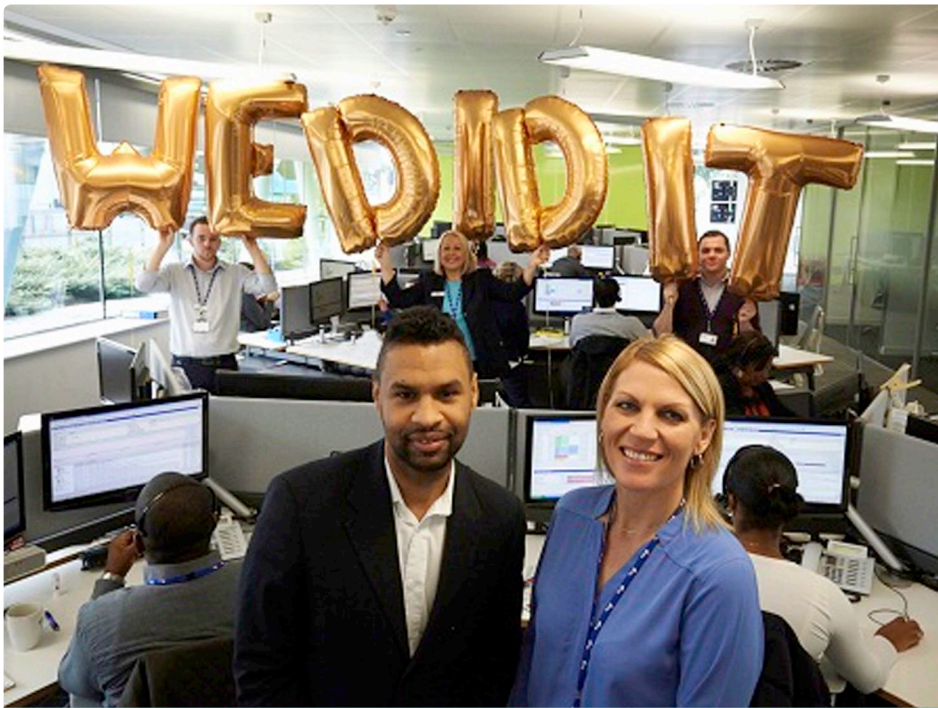
In 2012, **whg** cemented its status as one of the best customer service providers in the UK by investing in new state-of-the-art offices. **whg**'s new office at 100 Hatherton Street boasts everything from ergonomically-designed headsets to temperature and light regulated office space – all designed to improve the performance of its customer service advisors.

whg has invested in the very latest technology and systems to improve the efficiency of its services and its relationship with its customers. It began working with Omfax Systems in 2004, and has integrated the Keyfax Inter•View software into its existing customer service solutions.

Working in harmony with **whg**'s Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) system, provided by MIS, Keyfax Inter•View can access a vast databank held by the landlord on its customers and properties.

“ With the help of Keyfax Inter•View, which integrates seamlessly into our existing systems, we have been able to simplify our processes to deliver quick and comprehensive solutions to our customers' enquiries. ”

Ann Parkes,
Customer Excellence Manager at **whg**



Russell Mumford and Helen Roberts celebrate the record-breaking success with **whg**'s customer contact centre staff.

This allows advisors to have the information they need to deal with enquiries first time and in the fewest possible number of steps. It also ensures advisors never need to ask the same question twice.

Peter Graddon, Director of Omfax Systems, said: "We worked closely with **whg** to develop a bespoke call flow management system for every type of enquiry, ensuring that solutions are reached in the least possible steps. Thanks to the databank held by **whg** and using Keyfax, advisors are no longer prompted to ask customers questions where they already hold the answers on the system.

"This allows advisors to personalise the call and speed up the entire process. We are also helping **whg** build a clear picture of both their customers and their properties, as every time they receive an enquiry they are able to gather more data that allows them to provide a better and more efficient service.

"We have also enabled them to cut training times for new advisors."

BENEFITS

The majority of calls handled by **whg** are now resolved or actioned in the least number of steps, with 80 percent of enquiries handled at the first point of contact.

whg has been awarded several accolades for its customer services. Most recently it received the highest ever score recorded in its Customer Experience Audit, beating big name brands, including Vodafone, BUPA, First Direct and Standard Life.

Ann Parkes, Customer Excellence Manager at **whg**, continued "Our scripts and systems have been developed to a point where advisors can have a very clear picture of the customer and the property.

"This not only ensures enquiries are dealt with quickly, but also cuts out duplication. This in itself creates efficiencies and offers value for money service. In addition, we are able to tailor services to meet the individual needs of our customer.

"This has improved customer satisfaction and enabled us to deliver a better service.

"We have also begun collecting data on our properties, which enables us to ensure the correct materials are available to trades people carrying out the repairs.

"Thanks to our investment in our CRM system and Keyfax Inter•View, we will soon get to the stage where we will no longer need to ask the type or make of items, for example, taps, doors etc, the technology will recognise it, informing the trade person attending the repair accordingly.

"We've created a customer service system that is both efficient and intelligent. If a customer reports a repair frequently, the technology will flag this and prompt the customer service advisor to identify if there is a reason behind it. It allows us to fix the underlying problem – saving time and money."

Advisors no longer have to go through months of training and, as the system develops, the organisation is reaching resolutions in fewer and fewer steps.

" Thanks to the improvements we have made to our customer services, we achieved the best ever customer service score in our latest Customer Experience Audit, beating several big name brands. "

Helen Roberts,
whg Customer Contact Centre Manager



Keyfax Inter•View – is a Dynamic Call Flow Navigation tool that empowers customer service advisors to handle a wide range of enquiries more effectively.

It provides advisors with expert guidance from qualified technical and social housing specialists, to give them a diagnostic system for handling all types of enquiries, problems or repairs, consistently and with confidence.

KEY RESULTS:

80% of calls now handled at the first point of contact.

All enquiries are now processed in the least amount of steps possible.

whg achieved the best ever customer service score in its latest Customer Experience Audit.