

Patchwork Housing Association and QL software from Aareon: Working in Partnership

Based in London, Patchwork Housing Association provides high quality housing and support services to young people who have a variety of needs. A forward thinking and innovative organisation, Patchwork manage around 250 properties for 650 tenants, and in addition provide a wide range of support services to over 900 vulnerable people, including tenants of other housing providers.

Patchwork have tailored their service provision consistently since their formation in 1970 so that they can continue to provide the best housing and support services to their tenants and service users. Patchwork are, according to their mission statement “positive about young people’s futures” and by providing a wide range of support services such as access to employment and training, Patchwork are helping many young people to reach their potential.

As any forward thinking housing organisation knows, it is essential to streamline efficiency and to constantly strive to provide the best services to tenants. Recognising the potential that the right housing software would have, Patchwork set about selecting a new software system to replace their previous, out of date system Excalibur in July 2003, and named the project “Project Freedom”.



Aareon were one of eight housing software suppliers initially asked to provide a short specification of their software solution. After analysing the responses, Patchwork selected four suppliers to give a presentation on their systems, with Aareon’s QL system being one of the four. From this, two suppliers were asked to proceed with the tender process. Aareon were invited to tender with their QL Housing product, and in December 2003 Aareon was chosen by the team on Project Freedom as the supplier to partner Patchwork on achieving their mission and objectives for the future.

Project Manager of Project Freedom was Tim Isaacs, Head of ICT. Tim was impressed with Aareon’s tender and the QL Housing solution:

“We chose Aareon for many reasons. The tender was professional and impressive and required very little clarification. The response included detailed information on costs, support agreements and realistic implementation days on top of a very strong suite of software that compliments Patchwork’s methodology.”

Continued overleaf



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Aareon's QL product incorporates a portfolio of solutions to meet the needs of today's social housing provider, regardless of size. QL Finance, QL Personnel and / or QL Payroll can accompany QL Housing, and QL extends its product range to cover all aspects of service delivery such as QL CRM, QL Mobile and QL e-Business. QL is a versatile solution for social housing providers, and Aareon have over 100 organisations throughout the UK currently using QL products.

Aareon believe that the implementation process builds the foundation on which our future relationship with the customer is determined, and as such we take great care to ensure that our implementation strategy works for both our customers and Aareon. After a smooth implementation, Patchwork went live with QL on 2nd August 2004 with 25 members of staff using the solution. Patchwork are keen to progress the implementation to the second phase, to include four locations using the system, extending the number of users to 100. Patchwork have also recognised the benefits of Aareon's web-based e-business solution I-Housing which will enable Patchwork's many support workers to access the solution via the web. I-Housing will also be introduced in phase two of the implementation.

Patchwork are already reaping the benefits of QL. As Tim Isaacs comments:

"The improvement in efficiency is vast – from small improvements that help daily operations to information that aids corporate planning. QL is already saving our staff man-hours on their daily operations, and we have been able to empower our Customer Service Team to take a more active role in front-line calls from our tenants and service users. In addition, we are now able to provide data into our Performance Monitoring figures, which we have been unable to achieve in the past".



Julian Metcalf, Aareon Project Manager
with Tim Isaacs of Patchwork

And the future? QL has already given Patchwork the opportunity to provide better services in customer service, repairs and maintenance, rent accounting and managing complaints. Patchwork are already working in partnership with Aareon to continue to deliver high service quality to tenants in the future. Within the next year Patchwork hope to introduce to tenants the capability of viewing rent statements or requesting repairs on line. Aareon are able to offer Patchwork their unique approach to partnership working by placing equal emphasis on account management, product development, implementation and support to ensure that Patchwork continue to maximise their benefits of QL.



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