

Expense On Demand Case Study



The Riverside Group Limited

Delivering value to Not-for-Profit housing sector leader



The Riverside Group is a leading registered provider of social housing in the UK, providing support and affordable housing to people of all ages and circumstances throughout England.

Headquartered in Liverpool where it was established from modest beginnings in 1928, the organisation's assets are now valued in excess of £1.6bn; turnover is steady at around £250m for the last four years. Managing over 51,000 properties and employing around 2,400 full time equivalent staff, it assisted over 6,500 people in need of social care and support services in 2009.

Customer service statistics rate that better than 8 out of 10 tenants are satisfied with the overall service received. This is underlined by the fact that the organisation has achieved recognition for excellence through being awarded Social Landlord of the Year for two consecutive years.

Meeting the challenges of growth



In recent years, a programme of consolidation and organic growth has enlarged the organisation across the UK. Responding to such change led to the appointment of Gareth Harold as HR Systems Project Manager. "Previously the approach to expenses was to use separate forms for mileage and other expenses.

Employees needed to locate line managers to check receipts and countersign forms to be passed to payroll for processing," explains Gareth Harold.

"Manual processing posed problems for the payroll team and financial reporting was difficult. Firstly in terms of handling it was laborious; it took, on average, two people a working week to input the claims."

He continues: "Secondly we couldn't fully report on expenses; we could report figures paid to individuals, but we couldn't break it down to see what expenses were classified out as - either mileage or details of other expenses."

"Without complete visibility of the many expenses that could be generated during the course of an average working day, the organisation lacked insight to identify patterns and understand spending behaviour," says Gareth Harold.

Online expenses is a strategic move



As an organisation in the Not-for-Profit sector Riverside is partly funded from the public purse. In this age of austerity and public sector spending cuts, there is an emphasis on maximising value for all stakeholders. Gareth Harold says, "We have taken other

Key Facts

The Riverside Group Limited

- A leading registered provider of social housing in the UK
- Social care and support services for people in need
- £1.6bn in assets, managing over 51,000 properties with 2,400 staff

Challenges

- Delivering value for all stakeholders from productivity and cost efficiency
- Simplifying claims processes for workers, line managers and the payroll team
- Providing expenses visibility and analysis with detailed management reporting

Solution

- Online expenses system replacing paper forms and receipts
- Meets the differing needs of diverse, multi-site, time-shifted workforce
- Fits with strategy of using online systems for HR processes
- Extended functionality supports duty of care

Key benefits

- 20% overall reduction in expenditure across 2,400 staff
- Support for implementation issues and culture change
- Unrestricted support for optimisation and further development
- Support on technical and strategic issues and legislative advice

HR processes online, including payroll, holiday bookings and appraisals. Opting for a web-based expenses system is another element in our strategy of deploying online solutions to release productivity and cost efficiency."

"We went to tender for a number of expense systems. We eventually opted for Expense On Demand because it is highly scalable, more configurable and has a good price point," continues Gareth Harold. Expense On Demand provides online expense management facilities to staff across 357 sites. "We are a diverse organisation with many different needs across the workforce. The advantage of this online system is it allows us to meet these differing needs."

"Working patterns mean staff may not see managers for a number of weeks and this creates a delay in claims processes. Checking receipts and obtaining sign-off was an issue, but now claims are validated by managers online and submissions to payroll are automated," says Gareth Harold.

The system reinforces expenses policy with point of entry reminders and by capping claims where necessary. The system is highly configurable and allows us to apply different rules for different employee groups. The solution also supports Riverside in fulfilling its duty of care responsibility. Before submitting personal vehicle expenses, employees must confirm roadworthiness and insurance status within the expenses system.

20% savings across 2,400 staff



Fully rolled out since June 2011, results are above expectation. Gareth Harold easily identifies ROI. "We anticipated that we would reduce mileage claims costs by 10%. This has in reality proved to be 12%, and across the whole expenses bill the reduction is 20%."

"Some potential suppliers had a 'this is the product and this is what it does' approach," observes Gareth Harold. "Expense On Demand is not like that. We have received unrestricted support for implementing and tuning the system. The Expense On Demand team listens to our feedback and provides complete support in tailoring the solution to meet our needs."

This includes strategic and legislative as well as technical facets of the solution. "Expense On Demand keeps us in the loop on the system road map and advises on the best way to apply our expenses policy for our tax position." Says Gareth Harold.

In larger organisations, migrating users from paper expense forms to automated online systems can create new issues. Gareth Harold says: "Expense On Demand supported our cultural change programme. Mileage is a good example which we now calculate down to an accuracy of a tenth of a mile. Some users couldn't understand that. Also they couldn't understand why A to B mileages do not necessarily equal B to A mileages. The data supporting the mileage calculations is optimised to include route factors such as one way systems and roundabouts."

"Expense On Demand understands our need to demonstrate value for money. It is an alignment not only at a business strategy level, but between our colleagues; individuals that recognise the value in working with each other," says Gareth Harold.

Testimonial

Gareth Harold, HR Systems Project Manager

"Expense On Demand understands our need to demonstrate value for money. It is an alignment not only at a business strategy level, but between our colleagues; individuals that recognise the value in working with each other"

About Expense On Demand

Expense On Demand is a hosted software solution for managing and tracking employee expenses and time sheets. Using a web browser, employees complete electronic forms that then follow an automated process for online approval and payment.

Hundreds of thousands of people use Expense On Demand in over 70 countries around the world. It saves organisations time and money, eliminating errors associated with manual entry and enforcing local expense policies, tax rules and corporate governance procedures.

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