



## emh Group

### How Enghouse Keeps emh Group Tenants in the Know

AN ENGHOUSE INTERACTIVE CASE STUDY

## Overview

### INDUSTRY

Housing Associations

### GOALS

Driving operational efficiencies and improve the customer experience for tenants

### SOLUTIONS

Enghouse Interactive  
Communications Center with quality management suite

### BENEFITS

- The system's outbound dialling capability, for instance, allows the contact centre team to gauge residents' level of understanding and then point them in the direction of the income management or financial inclusion teams if they have specific queries.
- Texting and emails, ensures that the customer facing team is aware of requests made and can manage the engagement process.
- Integration of systems dramatically increases productivity and efficiency
- Simply by offering callback helps emh Group to reduce queues, call times and abandonment rates.

## Clear Communication - How Enghouse Keeps emh Group Tenants in the Know

emh group began its work as East Midlands Housing Association in 1946, building affordable homes for ex-servicemen after the war. Today, it is an independent, profit-for-purpose organisation, which acts as the landlord for 18,000 homes, with specialisms in developing homes in rural communities and in providing housing, care and support services to people with learning disabilities.

The group aims to be among the best housing and care businesses in the country, leading the market as an employer and providing high-quality homes which contribute to sustainable communities. It is committed to helping meet the increasing demand for affordable homes in the region by building 300 new homes every year.

It is key for housing organisations to keep in close contact with residents, resolving queries, ensuring they are aware of the latest government regulations and how that affects their social and economic wellbeing and making certain they are ready to provide help and advice as and when required. emh group take these responsibilities seriously and they are embedded into its core values.

**"You don't want your staff to have to use multiple applications – it's confusing for them and inefficient. Use CTI integration to reduce the number of screens and applications your advisors need to use and you'll see productivity and efficiency benefits."**

David Morris, Head of customer service, emh homes (part of emh group)

EMH GROUP

## Working with partners for greater success

That is why the Group works closely with partners Montal and 5i who in turn work with solutions provider, Enghouse Interactive, to develop solutions that meet its customers' needs. It is also the rationale behind the group's decision to invest in the Enghouse Interactive Communications Center (EICC) solution to co-ordinate customer services.

Today, the group has a total of 80 customer service representatives in place that use the Enghouse Interactive solutions to manage and meet the needs of customers. The requirement has grown significantly over the years as the organisation has expanded.

## Changes in legislation

In recent years, the demand to keep closely in touch with residents has grown significantly in line with the raft of new Government legislation that has been introduced. As a result of the recent introduction of the bedroom tax, housing association tenants saw their housing benefit limited by the government, if the council decided that they had a 'spare' bedroom. Further to this, the introduction of Universal Credit is already having a significant impact on housing organisations, as benefit is now being paid directly to some residents rather than to the social landlord – i.e. emh Group itself. This means that residents have to pay rent to the group rather than having it automatically sent as was previously the case.

“Our current target is to resolve 83% of contacts at the first point of contact. We use codes within EICC to create reports which tell us how many calls we have matured and resolve and how many of each relate to either repairs or housing.”

Helen Bradford, Head of ICT,  
EMH GROUP

All of this is making it increasingly important that housing associations can engage proactively with tenants; provide relevant help and advice through outbound interactions and react quickly to inbound calls and requests through a wide range of digital channels.

Fortunately, using the EICC solution enables emh group to do all of this quickly and efficiently. The system's outbound dialling capability, for instance, allows the contact centre team to gauge residents' level of understanding and then point them in the direction of the income management or financial inclusion teams if they have specific queries.

Having to manage the needs of a large number of residents makes it important for emh Group to put in place a multichannel capability. Inbound and outbound voice calls and emails are widely used. The organisation also makes extensive use of the system's callback facility, particularly beneficial for residents for whom English is not their first language. They can simply select a convenient time, day and language and the EICC solution arranges the callback at that time. And simply using EICC to offer a callback helps emh Group to reduce queues, call times and abandonment rates.

Texting is used extensively to communicate updates, relevant news or details about upcoming events. Incoming texts are converted to emails before being accepted into the EICC system. This is then linked to emh Group's CRM system, where incoming and outgoing text messages are automatically recorded. Indeed, EICC features complete computer telephony integration (CTI) to the CRM solution that the group has in place. Agents using EICC can view relevant pop-ups of information about the caller's previous contact history during the call handling process.

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David Morris, head of customer service, emh homes (part of emh group), commented: "It's a compelling example of how our contact centre technology, with the Enghouse Interactive EICC solution at its heart, can be key in bringing benefits to housing association tenants. You don't want your staff to have to use multiple applications – it's confusing for them and inefficient. Use CTI integration to reduce the number of screens and applications your advisors need to use and you'll see productivity and efficiency benefits."

emh group also encourages a self-service approach from residents. The group has set up secure portals on its website to allow residents to review the current status of their account. General contact forms are in place also, the use of which generates internal emails to relevant emh Group staff. Any customer activity on the site is linked to the group's CRM system but also triggers an email into EICC, ensuring that the customer facing team is aware of requests made and can manage the engagement process.

## Deliver a qualitative approach

Types of engagement will include repair requests, chasing up repairs that have been arranged previously; as well as questions about housing benefit and whether it has been paid. According to Helen Bradford, head of ICT, emh group: "our current target is to resolve 83% of contacts at the first point of contact. We use codes within EICC to create reports which tell us how many calls we have matured and resolved and how many of each relate to either repairs or housing."

It's not just about meeting quantitative metrics though, it's also about delivering a qualitative approach. "Our customers have consistently told us that it's the quality of the call handling and the knowledge of the advisers that is most important to them," adds Bradford. That's why emh Group has also put call recording and agent evaluation software in place to monitor the quality of service delivered and also to further develop the agents, and has backed this up by offering more staff training, particularly focused on customer care.

## Bright Future Ahead

In line with this, though the ultimate object of any contact centre system implementation should be to improve the customer experience. Technology, and in particular the EICC solution is playing a major role in helping the emh group to achieve this. Expert and highly skilled staff are of course key but they need to be backed by the right technology implemented within a streamlined contact centre that can deal with queries received and whatever means of contact that is used.

As a Social Landlord, emh group is focused on engaging closely with your customers; helping them to resolve any issues and concerns they may have and providing the best possible customer service. In today's environment, achieving that is all about putting in place the optimum mix of expert engagement and powerful functionally rich technology and that's where the Enghouse Interactive EICC solution really comes into its own.

## About Enghouse Interactive

Enghouse Interactive develops and supplies the widest range of customer contact solutions on the market through an extensive network of value-added partners. Enghouse Interactive's integrated suite of solutions includes multi-channel contact center, self-service, attendant operator consoles and workforce optimisation. These solutions enable organisations to classify and respond to customers in the way that they want: quickly, efficiently and successfully, with minimal effort.

