



Lean Business Solutions



Case Study - Voids

The Customer: Knowsley Housing Trust



★ **The Challenge:** Voids

★ **The Solution:** Lean Intervention

KNOWSLEY
HOUSING TRUST

★ **The Results:** Reduced turnaround time on voids and lettings

When Knowsley Housing Trust needed to meet its organisational target for upper quartile performance on turnaround times, some lean thinking was needed in order to fully optimise the void process.

Lean Business Solutions (LBS) was recommended to help the company approach the problem and make sense of the chaos. Voids and vacant property turnaround in Knowsley Housing Trust was a problem which needed drastic action. Lean Business Solutions was selected because of its reputation, pragmatic approach and the fact that the team “spoke their language”.

People within the organisation who were already involved in the voids process were asked to volunteer to work on the project, alongside other key stakeholders including clients and contractors.

Lean Business Solutions guided the team using a step-by-step approach, to map out existing processes and identify those that were relevant from those that weren't.



Key performance requirements were identified and a new procedure for managing empty homes and recording performances was agreed. Using very practical methods and a lot of common sense, the results were enlightening and the team worked through the issues to achieve the outcome required.

A presentation summarising the nature of the problem and proposed resolution was presented to the Chief Executive and Directors, with dates and deadlines for improvement.

Improvement in performance came quickly after implementation, and as a result of the lean process, Knowsley Housing Association became the best performer in the North West in the first quarter of the financial year - two years ahead of their original schedule.

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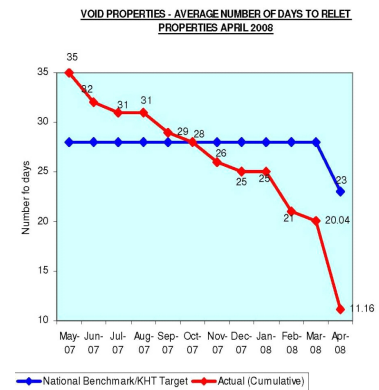


Results Achieved:

- Reduced turnaround times - from 6 weeks to 11 days
- Reduced average costs for void work despite a high re-let standard
- Team constantly looking for efficiencies and consistently perform to maintain Board targets
- More effective team management.

Voids and lettings is a key process which has wide reaching implications, impacting on rents and former tenant arrears, as well as tenant satisfaction and neighbourhood development and improvement. There is also the direct cost of repairs, security of empty properties and the consequent rent loss. A robust voids and lettings process also helps reduce the churn of tenancy turnover.

A lean intervention on voids will typically aim to halve void turnaround and reduce the repair and security costs, whilst achieving and improving the lettable standard.



“The help and support provided by Lean Business Solutions has been invaluable. Not only have we fine tuned our service to deliver a better customer experience, but we have also achieved top quartile performance along the way too.”

Alan Disley, Director of Neighbourhood Services, Knowsley Housing Trust.

“Lean thinking really works. However, it’s no easy ride, you have to work at it, but lean works for you if you work for it! The principal of lean is now firmly embedded within Knowsley Housing Trust, and is something we’ll seek in all aspects of work we undertake. We’ve all enjoyed the experience a great deal, and the support from Lean Business Solutions has continued long after implementation.”

Val Foote, Service Manager, Voids and Lettings, Knowsley Housing Trust.



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