

CASE STUDY

Introducing a blended learning approach at Aldwyck Housing Group

Established in 1968, Aldwyck provides affordable homes to communities across the south east and east of England.

A Virtual College Case Study



“ One of the major benefits of online learning is flexibility. ”

The background

Aldwyck Housing Group is a not-for-profit social housing provider. It supplies over 11,000 affordable homes to rent or buy and management services for around 25,000 people across the south east and east of England.

It offers specialist support and accommodation for young people, those with disabilities and older people. Its supported housing and care services range from 24-hour a day care, to on-call support as and when needed.

Aldwyck also delivers a wide variety of services to other organisations in the housing sector including development and housing management.

The solution

Aldwyck’s blended learning approach combines e-learning with classroom based training.

‘Personal safety’ e-learning courses, for example, are taken by all staff including those who are office based. Frontline staff go on to do a face to face ‘lone working’ course.

Janice commented: “E-learning is ideal for new starters and refresher training.”

“It’s a great way of delivering factual underpinning knowledge which provides the same consistency in the level of understanding.”

“A blended approach ensures there are opportunities for discussion and a forum to clarify information.”

“It also allows us to provide extra assistance for individuals who are struggling on particular topics.”

“ E-learning is ideal for new starters and refresher training. ”

The challenge

Since March 2011, Aldwyck has used online resources from Virtual College to deliver a blended learning solution to its staff.

Aldwyck employs people in a wide variety of roles including plumbers, administrators and senior managers. All new employees now work through five specific compulsory online modules and must pass these in order to complete their probation.

Janice Ross, Learning & Development Advisor for Aldwyck Housing Group, commented: “We had to overcome a number of challenges before being able to make e-learning a success.”

One of their main challenges was the support of remote staff.

Janice commented: “We had 40 care workers based 40 miles from our head office in Houghton Regis.”

“Our challenge was in supporting members of staff who were used to more traditional classroom training methods and having somebody there to encourage them.”



The results

In 2014, over 100 Aldwyck staff went through e-learning induction training.

Janice explained: "We would previously have delivered all of our new starter's training via face to face, classroom based lessons."

"The introduction of e-learning has allowed us to deliver equivalent training for the same number of staff in significantly less time and a reduced cost."

"New staff are given a sense of inclusion. From the start, they can log on to their training and get to grips with introductory information. This helps them to feel more informed when they first start and reduces the amount of time required to complete training during their probation."

"One of the major benefits of online learning is flexibility. Face to face sessions are ideal for practical sessions but require a minimum number of learners to be cost effective. Previously it could be 6 months before some starters received new starter's training."



Janice Ross
Learning & Development Advisor
Aldwyck Housing Group

“ The introduction of e-learning has allowed us to deliver equivalent training for the same number of staff in significantly less time and a reduced cost. ”

What next?

Online learning is also ideal for mobile staff or those who are regularly away from the head office.

"We are looking at the possibility of producing some simple e-learning authoring in the future so that we can incorporate our policies onto the learning management system, for example."



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About Virtual College

With over 2 million online learners, Virtual College is one of the leading providers of e-learning in the UK. For over twenty years, we have provided online courses to individuals and companies across the world, breaking down the boundaries of traditional learning to deliver cost reducing, time efficient training. Unlike many other e-learning providers, our training extends to actual programme and qualification creation and delivery - resulting in a unique blended solution. The knowledge, experience and feedback that this delivery provides helps ensure that we strive to continually improve our solutions.

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