

Submit-a-Plan Authority Case Studies

Brighton & Hove

Increasing Electronic Applications

Brighton & Hove Building Control have been accepting electronic applications through Submit-a-Plan since 2007 but were still receiving a significant proportion of hard copy applications. In May 2015 they decided to embark on a project to do away with paper files, actively requesting applicants and agents to submit their Building Regulations applications electronically. Brighton and Hove needed to reorganise the way they managed applications and to find solutions to the financial, qualitative and administrative problems that arose from scanning, viewing, printing and storing thousands of paper applications annually.

Brighton and Hove had been using Submit-a-Plan for nine years and Mike Sansom, the team's Building Control Manager could see the benefits of Submit-a-Plan for both the authority and their applicants and agents. Not only did the easy electronic forms and the specialist tools provided for authorities speed up the process of submission and approval but also greatly improved the accuracy of the application forms and the quality of the drawings received. With their applications submitted online, applicants would no longer need to print and post applications but could submit 24/7 and have them reach the authority instantly. By going "paper fileless" the team also knew they could make significant savings and reductions for their department in the time spent scanning/indexing and the space used for storing and archiving of paper applications. Mike's goal for increasing the number of electronic applications through Submit-a-Plan was twofold, to improve the overall efficiency of the teams systems, but also to improve arrangements for clients and agents who would benefit from cost savings in printing and time spent submitting paper applications.

One year on and Brighton and Hove have seen impressive changes with the percentage of their applications submitted electronically now at 95.5% and quicker, easier, more efficient systems of working within their department. With printing being a significant cost across Brighton & Hove Council, going paper fileless has meant the building control department will generate savings which they can then spend elsewhere. In addition there was a significant reduction in the business processes required to facilitate e working. Following the success of accepting almost all of their applications electronically, Mike and his team are now focussing on how DSLive can help in other areas where they wish to improve efficiency and make more progress in their 'modernisation agenda'. These areas include electronic inspections, online consultations and remote staff working.

Whats next for Brighton & Hove

Up until now the Brighton & Hove team have been testing a few options for managing and carrying out their inspections. These have included attempting to access the application documents stored on one of the councils' hard-drives using tablets outside the office and exploring a solution designed by their back office provider for recording inspection details on site. Neither of these options was found to be suitably efficient while the DSLive Inspections Module and App that works offline was in contrast positively considered as being intuitive of the processes, requirements and conditions related to Local Authority building control inspection.

For Mike and his team it will be important that they can all view, book, schedule and assign Officers to inspection visits within their shared DSLive accounts. While out on site they also need to be able to view inspection details and application documents and drawings offline using our app on their tablet device as well as add comments, conditions and photos to our electronic inspection reports, later uploadable to DSLive. On top of this, Mike has also stressed the increasing importance of being able to create routine weekly or monthly reports in DSLive to track inspections as well as having an automated approach to providing feedback or sharing inspection reports with clients, contractors and home owners in a move towards more transparency in the building control process. With our Inspections Module and App and information sharing solution PlanShare able to accommodate all these needs efficiently, Brighton and Hove are enthusiastic about trialing these solutions alongside their current DSLive setup in the near future.

Finally Brighton and Hove are on the verge of a change to remote working which is increasingly affecting Local Authority building control teams. With a move to desk sharing at Brighton and Hove, the ability to work remotely is becoming more imperative and therefore DSLive operating from the Cloud will become an increasingly essential business tool for the team. With applications and their related documentation stored electronically online and not on a council server, authority users can login and access them from any location with Wi-Fi, cabled, 3G or 4G connection, facilitating flexible working. DSLive was also recently redeveloped to be compatible with a range of mobile and tablet devices, another step in the process of making logging in to DSLive and accessing applications from outside the office even easier. Mike is confident that DataSpace Live can greatly improve the entire application submission and approval process for all parties involved. We are therefore delighted that Brighton's 'modernisation agenda' is so in tune with our own ultimate vision of a technologically efficient and virtually connected online Local Authority building control service suitable for today and the future.

Submit-a-Plan Marketing Resource

To increase their number of electronic applications Brighton & Hove followed some simple steps that are highly effective. Download them in our 'Submit-a-Plan Marketing Resource' at

<http://www.screencast.com/t/p4NVschj> or request it by email at helpdesk@resolutiondm.com

Carlisle City Council

PlanShare

The team at Carlisle Building Control were regular users of our previous consultation solution Consult Live. When they heard we had developed a more modern, advanced solution for sharing information and applications called PlanShare, they were keen to begin using it for all their consultation requirements. PlanShare is aimed at making the sharing of applications and other information with applicants, agents, consultees or local and fire authorities quicker, easier and more efficient. Carlisle are using PlanShare primarily to make up folders of documents for agents or partner authorities to look at and assess. In addition, Carlisle then download any approved documents that the recipient may share back with them through PlanShare.

Gillian Boyd, Technical Officer at Carlisle who has been leading their new use of PlanShare, has been very positive about how quick and simple PlanShare makes sharing documents, expressing how easy the drag and drop process is to use. Sharing in PlanShare is as simple as dragging and dropping documents into a folder and then sharing that folder by manually inserting an email address or adding one from your PlanShare Address Book, all within DSLive itself. Carlisle have found that being able to drop only the documents they wish to share into a separate folder make things much clearer and straightforward for officers and agents alike, simplifying the consultation process.

Once shared the recipient can access the consultation in their own DSLive account and are provided with advanced tools for viewing, measuring, marking up documents and posting comments. Any activity and comments posted within the PlanShare are logged and able to be viewed and responded to by the authority and other consultees, creating not only a dynamic shared consultation space but also a complete audit trail. Finally the design of PlanShare and optional 'sharing' settings allow the authority to protect and control the privacy of your confidential applications and data.

PlanShare Brochure

You can find out more about PlanShare by downloading the brochure at <http://www.screencast.com/t/dxQ0oJ4oZ> or requesting one by email at helpdesk@resolutiondm.com

Building Control Solutions

Partnership Configuration

Last year we were delighted to welcome Windsor, Maidenhead and Wokingham's newly formed Building Control Partnership 'Building Control Solutions' to Submit-a-Plan. The new contract followed an 8 year existing relationship between Submit-a-Plan and Windsor & Maidenhead and they were keen to see how our Partnership Configuration setup could assist the merged teams in managing their applications. Since then West Berkshire has also joined the partnership. Our Partnership Configuration has approved adept at enabling them to assign, monitor and keep track of the applications coming in to each of the departments.

Roger Paine, the partnership's Commercial and Operational Manager is enthusiastic in how DSLive will assist them in moving forward, enabling them to quickly and easily assign applications to the right team, create reports to monitor the work coming into each department and to offer online application payment for their clients. Roger has managed Windsor & Maidenhead and now the partnership for fourteen years and has expressed how integral Submit-a-Plan and DSLive has been during this time to improving their systems of working, managing applications and providing their clients the quick, simple online 24/7 service that they want.

Partnership Brochure

You can find out more about our Partnership Configuration by downloading the brochure here <http://www.screencast.com/t/z6hUqRk1G> or requesting one by email at helpdesk@resolutiondm.com

To find out more about any of the subjects covered in these case studies, or if you simply have a question about our solutions or free trials, please contact us at any time at the below details. Alternatively my why not download our full authority brochure.

SAP Authority Brochure:

<http://www.screencast.com/t/VyXzHpZtWXEw>

