

The importance of co-production in planning for a more digital future



The challenge

Created as the result of a merger in 2018, how has Beyond Housing worked collaboratively with the people it supports and Tunstall Healthcare to develop a single Technology Enabled Care Service (TECS) that meets the needs of its customers now and into the future.

“ The pandemic has fundamentally changed our relationship with technology, and also demonstrated how quickly we are able to make significant changes to the way we work if the need and will is there. As we prepare for a more digital future, this altered mindset will help us work more closely with our customers to make the most of the technology opportunity.

**Steve Rawson, Chief Operations Officer,
Beyond Housing**

What we did

Established in 2018 following the merger of Yorkshire Coast Homes and Coast & Country Housing, Beyond Housing is a not-for-profit Registered Provider managing 15,000 homes and supporting more than 30,000 customers. As a consequence, it was operating three different TECS services, which needed to be brought together into a single entity to ensure efficiency and resilience, and create a single point of contact for customers.

In planning the new service, Beyond Housing undertook extensive consultation with colleagues and many of the services' existing customers to help plan a five-year strategy for investment and service development.

This involved:

- Creating a business plan for the creation of a single brand
- Developing the plan to justify the investment in our digital transition
- Obtaining Board approval for the business plan and securing the investment
- Creating a single brand
- Creating a single set of terms and conditions
- Co-producing the new brand with our colleagues and customers
- Launching the new brand



Beyond Housing is fortunate to have a highly motivated team of colleagues who are passionate about what they do, and they were asked to use their experience and dedication to contribute to inform plans for the new service.

Beyond Housing also introduced a new approach to customer engagement, focusing on co-production. Hundreds of customers were involved during the process of designing the new service, with them, their carers and relatives being asked what they valued and what they wanted the service to deliver.





Results

The new service, named Reach & Respond, was established in December 2021, and now supports almost 9,000 people.

It has been designed based upon the feedback from customers about what is important to them. Their views were clear; they wanted unobtrusive, reliable technology and to feel safe in the knowledge that our operators and responders could be trusted to give them help and support when they needed it.

Post pandemic, there is increased recognition and acceptance of the role of technology in keeping people connected, safe and independent, helping to improve quality of life. Coupled with the UK's transition to a digital communications network, there is a once in an era opportunity to transform our services using technology.

With 93% of Beyond Housing customers having internet access in their home, there are clear opportunities to enhance services such as Reach & Respond, making them more personalised and preventative. A digital transition plan is currently being developed to ensure Reach & Respond is ready to upgrade its existing analogue technology well before the proposed digital completion date of the end of 2025. The upgrading of the existing technology base will also enable its customers to benefit from the latest developments, and Reach & Respond is

working closely with its customers and their families to ensure that they can gain the maximum benefit from this.

This programme of activity is placing Reach & Respond at the forefront of telecare enabled services, helping to ensure the service, and therefore its customers are prepared for future challenges.

“ Reach & Respond is integral to Beyond Housing's strategy for the future, and the decisions we make now will have a significant impact on how we deliver future technology gains and customise what we do to meet individuals' needs, enabling them to maintain their tenancies with us for longer.

Steve Rawson, Chief Operations Officer, Beyond Housing