

CASE STUDY:

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Hull City Council Hits £150K Savings Milestone with CORGI Driven Regulation 36a Change

As Programme Manager at Hull City Council, Jordan Barr oversees a housing stock of over 22,000 properties. With ambitious plans to improve the authority's already strong gas access rates, the council was faced with the issue of often having to bring forward the servicing profile by a number of weeks.

Here Jordan explains how the landscape has changed over the last twelve months and how CORGI's relentless drive to bring about change through the introduction of MOT-style gas servicing has had a positive impact on both the council's procedure and purse strings.

'Faced with difficulties in accessing properties, strict benchmarking and a regimented approach to gas safety checks, as an organisation we were driven to moving from a 51 to a 46-week cycle, bringing our servicing profile forward by several weeks. As a result, many of our properties were serviced twice in one financial year, leading to the frustrating position of incurring additional costs.'

Carefully managed implementation means success

'To overcome the IT developments required for the new MOT-style service schedule we ran numerous test databases prior to the launch, as well as holding working groups with all relevant staff and contractors. This time was invaluable, helping us to understand the legislation changes, what it meant for us as an organisation, the appropriate timeframe to switch to this system and ultimately how to fix any minor problems at the implementation stage.

Revolutionised approach to gas safety checks

'One year on from the changes to Regulation 36a and the positive impact it has made to Hull City Council can't be overstated. The new MOT-style gas servicing approach has meant that as a local authority we're saving around £150,000 each year.

'It has revolutionised our approach to gas safety checks. We're now equipped to tackle the delays faced as a result of tenants refusing access to properties, with the number of warrants required dropping, resulting in reduced legal costs as well as officer time dealing with these applications.

'Residents are also now more comfortable in the knowledge that their annual gas service takes place at a set date, rather than switching year on year.

A Catalyst for positive change

'The benefits to the Regulation 36a change extend further than the gas safety checks. It has become the tool that helped us make various other positive changes. We now have a focused and streamlined approach to gas access.

'After the regulation change, we decided to carry out a full review of our gas access procedure, moving our servicing programme from a 46 to 44-week cycle. This has given the compliance access team, which was newly created thanks to the savings this regulation brought about, two weeks to gain access prior to the expiry of the LGSR. The result has been unprecedented, with 100% of all our houses meeting gas access due dates for the first time ever!

'We also took the opportunity to move a large volume of servicing from the winter to summer period. It has helped free up the team's resources, providing much needed time to tackle the challenging winter months and achieve an impressive 99.9% attendance to all breakdowns within our ambitious target times – something that has further strengthened relations with our tenants.

Compliance: access all areas

'Thanks to the introduction of MOT-style gas servicing, it feels like just the start. As a local authority it has encouraged us to look beyond gas to the structure of all aspects of compliance, such as fire safety works in high rise blocks, smoke alarm servicing and EICRs.

// The change to Regulation 36a has been the tool required for Hull City Council to make some really significant savings...we're saving around £150,000 each year. //

// It has revolutionised our approach to gas safety checks. //

