

# CASE STUDY

## Halton Housing

### Working smarter means working digitally



For the past five years this not for profit housing association has operated a digital policy that leaves many progressive companies in the shade. Much of this is thanks to its Chief Executive Officer, Nick Atkin, whose enthusiasm for digital technology led to him being named one of the leading digital power players in UK housing in 2017.

The introduction of mobile working, for example, ensures front line staff can access vital information in real time, allowing them to effectively deal with any issues that arise from home visits or customer feedback; all van stock is automatically re-ordered and stock condition surveys/block inspections completed electronically; the offices are paperless and everyone hot desks; flexible working is encouraged, which saves travelling time, improves employee satisfaction and retention rates; all staff have two devices to work from and communication is moving away from traditional email to Yammer, Skype and Facetime.

But the digital drive doesn't stop there, Halton Housing has launched a multi-functional app so customers can more accurately access services and make appointments in real time. Its long-term target is to get 90% of its customers online by 2018. So far 85% are using the Internet compared with only 17% in 2014, which means that target's clearly in view.

#### Intergas was right up their digital street

Last year, when Halton Housing's Compliance Manager, Colin Knox, learned about the Intergas Eco RF, he realised that this boiler was right up their digital street. The Eco RF has built-in software which, when connected to Intergas's Remote Management system, will 'talk' to you, wherever you are, as it's wireless. This will help Halton keep track of boiler performance without having to visit a property.

It also provides alerts to faults and real-time updates, making service and maintenance calls a time-saving reality. With the precise nature of the information coming in, parameter settings can be changed remotely when necessary to prevent potential problems from developing; more first-time fixes are also achievable.



Today's boilers must be more than energy efficient, they must be smart.



Eco RF's Remote Management system enables the boiler to communicate wirelessly with the contractor.

# PROGRESSIVE & RELIABLE

This system improves the duty of care to the more vulnerable too. If, for example, it's freezing cold outside but the heating's not on in a sheltered accommodation property, there could be a problem. Now this can be checked out and remedied immediately.

## Smart housing, smart boilers

The Eco RF has been installed in some of Halton Housing's new build properties and, as you would expect from this company, these new homes are anything but traditional. They are smart houses: pre-built, pre-clad with windows and doors in situ, before being lowered into place. They are so well insulated, heating costs are minimal, but smart boilers are a must and the Eco RF fitted the bill.

*"Now we can use live data to be more predictive, rather than reactive, and head off problems before they become one. I had to ask myself 'what's the catch?' but there doesn't appear to be one. I visited other housing providers where this system is already in operation, and decided to trial it in four of our new houses. Now the Intergas Eco RF will be one of the boilers being installed in all Halton Housing's new build."*  
Colin Knox, Compliance Manager, Halton Housing.

## Ultimate energy saver

Having one heat exchanger makes the boiler the ultimate energy saver as it doesn't have to work as hard to reach the required temperature. It condenses 100% of the time in heating and hot water modes, typically reducing carbon emissions by 20% and shaving up to a further 5% off gas bills. And as there's no diverter valve, auto air vent, secondary hot water plate heat exchanger or valve motor, all the parts that stick, leak and

let you down aren't there, making the boiler very reliable. It works at a pressure of only 0.2 bar and vacuum insulation keeps energy losses to a minimum and ensures whisper quiet operation. All boilers in the Intergas range can be converted to a sealed system, heat only, open vent, open vent combi or multipoint water heater too. Future-proof design means that they will work with LPG, solar PV and solar thermal systems and all boilers are open-therm ready.

## Ideal choice for retrofits

The boiler's exceptional ability to deliver reliability and energy efficiency makes it the ideal choice for Halton Housing's retrofits too. Retrofits currently amount to approximately 150-200 boilers a year but, as this digital relationship is built on delivering exceptional performance, both Halton Housing and Intergas are looking forward to a long-lasting one.

**Reverse top:** Halton Housing modular house  
**Reverse bottom:** Servicing the boiler at a Halton Housing property  
**Top:** RF module built in to the Eco RF

**Intergas Heating Ltd**  
Unit 2 Easter Park  
Worcester Road  
Kidderminster DY11 7AR  
T 01527 888000  
W [intergasheating.co.uk](http://intergasheating.co.uk)