

Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association and Cezanne HR

High-growth diagnostics company saves time and makes better use of resources



ISHA is a community and neighbourhood based housing organisation managing and developing quality affordable housing for people in North and East London.

The implementation of a Cloud-based HR system from Cezanne HR has seen Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association (ISHA) realise a multitude of benefits from improved employee productivity and time savings through to significant cost savings.

Like many in the housing sector, the Association has seen significant change and has grown rapidly over the last few years. A corresponding growth in headcount has given ISHA an administrative HR headache with a multitude of manual, Excel-based spreadsheet systems.

Faced with this ongoing dilemma and with the backing of the Association's forward-thinking executive team, Judith Leigh, ISHA's Head of People and Organisational Development, set out to explore the opportunities open to the Association to streamline and automate the HR process.

Limitations of 'traditional' systems

"My experience was pretty much with the more 'traditional' software vendors," explained Judith, "and I've always been a little disappointed at the limitations of those systems when it comes to doing the essential administrative and reporting tasks. I think that it's pretty much a prerequisite now that all HR systems should be able to generate meaningful management information and ensure that we can stay on top of key tasks such as being able to automatically calculate holiday entitlements based on multiple working time patterns.

"Luckily, the housing sector is really well networked and I've been in the industry for a long time. One of my contacts suggested looking at some of the

newer, more innovative Cloud-based providers and I sat in on a webinar where someone from Cezanne HR was explaining what was feasible these days and how cost effective it could be. I arranged a demonstration for me and then for the senior executive team and we were all very impressed by the functionality and cost effectiveness of the system.

"I visited one of the Cezanne HR's reference sites that they arranged for me but, more importantly, I also spent a day analysing the system at another of their housing sector clients that they didn't arrange for me. That's where the value of a good network comes into its own and, reassuringly, my personal contact was also a huge advocate of the company and its HR system so we were more than convinced."

Following further extensive and competitive evaluation, ISHA decided to adopt Cezanne HR's core system together with the module for holiday and absence management.



Configurable and flexible

The comprehensive nature of Cezanne HR's employee database, combined with the flexibility of the reporting, ensured that ISHA data in all its formats could be transferred easily into the system and is available for analysis.

The People Management module sits at the heart of ISHA's Cezanne HR system and provides everything needed to make HR management simpler and more effective by centralising and organising HR data, reducing admin overheads and offering better HR intelligence. This was coupled with the Absence Management module that gives ISHA greater visibility over sickness, automatic calculation of holiday entitlements, smoother approval processes, automatic alerts and other smart functions.

"The initial rollout of the first two modules was so successful," said Judith, "that it wasn't long before we started to look at the possibility of adding further functionality to our new HR system. We hadn't initially considered adding the time management and tracking module because we had assumed that trying to integrate our bespoke flexi working and reporting processes would be step too far. However, it became apparent through the implementation of the associated absence management tools and exploring the added functionality of Cezanne HR's additional time and tracking module that we could remove the huge administrative burden associated with our flexi working patterns."

Individual employee timesheets, showing daily contracted hours, are now auto-generated by the Cezanne HR system on a weekly basis. As staff complete them, they are routed to managers, who can easily review, approve or decline them.

Reporting is also straightforward, with HR able to quickly generate the reports they need.

ISHA has now added the Performance Management modules to its Cezanne HR system. The Performance Management element enables them to simplify and manage any kind of performance review from straight forward annual appraisals to more complex, multi-stage reviews throughout the year improving the process for both HR and all of the Association's employees.

"With a relatively low staff turnover, we don't recruit many new employees every year," explained Judith. "But the system has proved so flexible and cost effective that we are now considering adding a further module to cover recruitment and selection.

"Our experience working with Cezanne HR has been straightforward and a revelation from the outset," concluded Judith. "The sales process was very smooth and truly consultative; we never felt that we were being pushed into anything. The support from Cezanne since we come on board has been excellent and we have greatly valued how adaptable the Cezanne team have been at taking on board suggestions for other functions and tools. The ability to add functionality and configuration as we go – and to pay for it accordingly – has meant that even as a relatively small organisation, we can implement and enjoy a genuinely bespoke HR solution.

About Cezanne HR

We've built something special at Cezanne HR; a powerful, configurable HR software solution that's simple to deploy, easy to manage and remarkably cost-effective, whatever the size of your business. As a team, we've a long track record of delivering successful HR solutions to businesses worldwide. We've worked with companies of every size and across every business sector. That's why we decided from the very start to build an exceptionally robust and scalable SaaS platform for human resources management which, like our customer community, is growing all the time.