



# Managing a mobilisation

## Shaping a new service



### Our commission

To manage the mobilisation of an eight-year contract to support the in-house DLO with repairs and voids works.

### Client: Wandle Housing Association

Wandle Housing Association was founded in 1967 as the Merton Family Housing Trust and has grown into an organisation with over 7,000 homes across nine south London boroughs. It provides homes for rent (social and affordable), shared ownership, outright sale, and supported housing and also has a small portfolio of commercial properties and garages.



### Project overview

Following a rigorous, three-stage competitive selection process Wandle Housing Association awarded an eight-year contract to Mears to support its in-house repair team with repairs and voids works across its property portfolio.

Mears provides technical support and, expertise, IT infrastructure and access to its supply chain, while the repairs service, and its staff, remain employed by Wandle.

echelon was appointed to manage the mobilisation of the contract and to set up the new repairs team, helping Mears' staff to integrate into Wandle.



### The solution

echelon put in place an Interim Manager, who was based at Wandle for three days a week over a nine-month period. The manager led on shaping the new service and improving processes with a particular focus on HR, IT and finance. Building good relationships with both Mears and the in-house repairs team was key to a successful mobilisation.

Wandle's policies and procedures were collaboratively reviewed and echelon helped it to create KPIs and embed these into the housing association's system, as well as training staff on how to analyse and understand the data.

The IT system was reconfigured to integrate with the repairs service, enabling easy access to information such as costings and material/parts usage and allowing Wandle to gain a clear picture of where money was being spent and on what type of repairs. echelon supported Wandle with the recruitment, interviewing and taking on of new staff to work on the contract and worked closely with Wandle's HR team to realign its DLO to ensure that all skillsets were sufficiently covered. This involved looking at the team's capabilities and changing roles and offering training where appropriate.

Budgets were also set to align with the new project and echelon helped Wandle to drill down beyond key budget heading information, to establish exactly where and how money was being spent. As a result, Wandle was able to access more advanced business information, helping it to set budgets and to undertake a budget trimming exercise to ascertain whether money was being spent appropriately.

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## Key outcomes

The contract went live in mid-April 2018, but the Interim Manager stayed in place until the end of May, to ensure that all KPIs were producing correct results etc.

echelon continues to enjoy a good relationship with both parties and MD Mathew Baxter regularly attends core group meetings in the capacity of Partnering Advisor.



Wandle Housing Association has grown into an organisation with over 7,000 homes across nine south London boroughs.



*"I find echelon to be very helpful and honest in approaching what support can be offered and what actions to take even if they are hard to hear. The consultants are excellent and experienced plus offer one-to-one support at all times"*

Mandy Dunstan,  
Head of Operations,  
Wandle Housing Association

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