

ISO 9001 chosen to help continually improve services



"I am extremely pleased that we have received this ISO 9001 accreditation, which proves to our partners and customers that Peaks & Plains is committed to providing an excellent service, and that we are always looking for ways to improve this service."

Tim Pinder
Chief Executive,
Peaks & Plains Housing Trust

Customer needs

- Excellent housing services for their customers
- Continual growth and innovation
- Improvement in operating efficiencies
- Improved reputation with customers and suppliers

Customer benefits

- Improved compliance and risk reduction
- Competitive position improved
- Internal Process improvements and reduced operating costs
- Improvements in brand reputation

Why certification?

Peaks & Plains Housing Trust is a social landlord that was created in July 2006 with the transfer of 5,000 homes from Macclesfield Borough Council.

The Trust is a registered charity, providing homes and housing services to those in need across the local area. Although the main customers are the tenants, they also provide services to private residents through TrustLink Telecare support.

Peaks & Plains are committed to being more than just a landlord, and to improving the lives of their customers, working alongside a wide range of community organizations and charities to help make a real difference to the area.

ISO 9001 certification was chosen to support the organization's long term objectives of:

- Continuing to deliver excellent housing services to their customers
- Furthering their social goals with their partners
- Driving responsible business growth and innovation.

"We are continually developing in order to provide the best service to our customers that we possibly can. The ISO certification with BSI ensures we remain committed to developing and enhancing services, in addition it evidences our approach to quality which leads to us meeting pre-qualification questionnaire expectations"

Once we had our initial meeting with BSI, we had confidence that with the systems we already had in place we could meet the requirements of certification. It gave us the confidence that we wouldn't need to utilise external consultants and offered us value for money savings." said Neil Bancroft, Service Improvement Manager. Also 'Attaining the certificate demonstrates our approach to providing a quality service to our customers. The standard offers a framework which focuses our attention on continuous improvement and gives staff confidence to carry out their daily tasks effectively"

Implementation

The ISO certification was new to Peaks & Plains and as a result, they had to consider the resource implications for implementing the quality system and maintaining it.

The first step was to purchase a copy of the standard and spend time researching it to understand it fully. They then developed a bespoke internal electronic document management system which houses all procedures and documents. In addition, it holds audit information and has specific rules around document control.

It was vital to involve the entire team in this process. From the outset, all the staff within the service were made aware of what they were aiming for and why. Information was shared with staff at regular team meetings where they were updated on progress against the standard. Staff were also involved in a full review and update of the quality procedures which were already in place.

There were some difficult aspects specifically in the internal audit element of the standard, so they opted for additional auditor training to support their aims.

The whole process took just over five months from initial sign up with BSI.

"BSI were extremely helpful, whilst they were respectful of their position to examine our system as auditors, the team were always willing to confirm if what we were supplying as newly devised documents, would meet their expectations in an audit situation. This meant we had confidence in what we were doing which allowed us to focus on the next task" said Neil Bancroft

Benefits

Peaks & Plains believe that achieving ISO 9001 demonstrates their commitment to quality and improvement.

Various system enhancements have been achieved as a result of the certification. Areas of weakness have been identified which via the system, has enabled them to reduce process in-efficiencies and resolve problems, to the benefit of clients and customers.

They have found that working with BSI who are such a recognisable brand, helps people to understand their aims and understand that they have high expectations of the services offered. It demonstrates commitment to providing services in a way which is customer centric and efficient.

Specifically Peaks & Plains say that it has helped with:

- Reducing costs
- Market access
- Compliance
- Risk reduction
- Competitive differentiation
- Process improvements
- Benefits to the brand reputation

The future

Peaks & Plains Housing Trust plan to continue developing the system and using it to demonstrate their commitment to customers and partners. It is planned to use the system to help drive process efficiencies critical in tough financial conditions. Kerry Garratt, Product Marketing Manager at BSI said "we are delighted that the Trust continues to drive customer and business benefits from ISO 9001 and BSI look forward to working with them to help them improve their performance and achieve their long term goals"

Next steps

ISO 9001 is a quality management system standard designed to help an organization focus on customers and drive continual improvement in its internal processes. Almost 900,000 organizations are certified as being compliant to the standard in 170 countries worldwide.

Find out how BSI can help your business make excellence a habit – visit bsigroup.com

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