



Kitchen after upgrading

Project brief

The brief entailed:

Carrying out Void works that meet the Government's Decent Homes standards using working methods that deliver a high level of customer satisfaction, both for the client and residents

Notting Hill Housing Group (NHHG) is an innovative housing association and one of the largest property developers in London. They house people in need and help residents become homeowners.

A recent Government initiative, the Decent Homes Standard, is intended to achieve upgrades to social housing stock, ensuring that it meets acceptable standards for warmth, weatherproofing and modern facilities.

ABC Building & Maintenance Contractors Ltd (ABC) were contracted in March 2008 to carry out Void works for NHHG involving 250 residential properties per annum. The contract value was £4.25m over 3 years.

Initiatives have been devised to ensure the service offered remains tailored to the needs of the local community. The benefits of this holistic approach include:

- Opportunities to standardise materials and components across the council's stock
- Efficiency gains (void turn around times) for the client in contract management
- Risk identification, sharing and management of voids
- Photographic evidence of works required and completed
- Targeting year-on-year improvements



Kitchen before upgrading

The photos are an example of a kitchen replacement that meets the Decent Homes Standard carried out as part of the Void works project.

What the project entails

- Void inspections are carried out within 24 hours of receipt of the keys of the property, or at the time of keys collection where applicable
- A health and safety risk assessment plan is carried out on all void properties by the ABC safety adviser including asbestos surveys if required by the client
- ABC's void supervisor / surveyor will attempt to identify essential repairs and electrical upgrades in accordance with the client's Void standard
- Supervisors carry out random site inspections to monitor works in progress to ensure completion by the target date. They co-ordinate with operatives and carefully check each phase of repairs being carried out and sign off each section
- As the repairs to any particular property are due to finish the supervisors and surveyor will inspect the works to ensure it conforms to the specification and ABC's own standards
- ABC also carry out a post works completion inspection to ensure all requirements of the Specification are completed in accordance with the Contract and good building practice before applying for the Certificate of Practical Completion
- ABC maintain a self auditing system using a pre- handover checklist and notification of completion of repairs to ensure resident and client satisfaction at the completion of the works
- The majority of the work is planned, so there is a phased hand over, once ABC are satisfied that all works have been duly completed to the quality of standard jointly agreed. Also handed over at this time is the photographic evidence of works carried out before and after, the repair schedule, electrical and gas certificates, property keys and the tenant welcome pack

How the project is going - time, cost, quality

The contract is still ongoing and every month ABC reports to the client on how they are performing in the areas of:

- Client satisfaction (Void turn around period)
- Quality of work and zero defects
- Cost predictability
- Time predictability
- Increased productivity
- Efficiencies and Cost Savings

The headline from the most recent survey completed in May 2011 was: ABC are achieving 100% void turn-around on all schemes.

Client feedback:

"ABC has been contracted by NHHG for many years to carry out Void repairs. I personally have been working with them for approximately two years. I would like to say that the management and the staff have carried out the works in a very professional manner, have always helpful and friendly, have kept me regularly updated on the works in hand and have speedily resolved any issues arising.

I would highly recommend ABC to anybody who requires a reliable & professional company."

Brian Graham, Void Building Surveyor, Notting Hill Housing Group

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