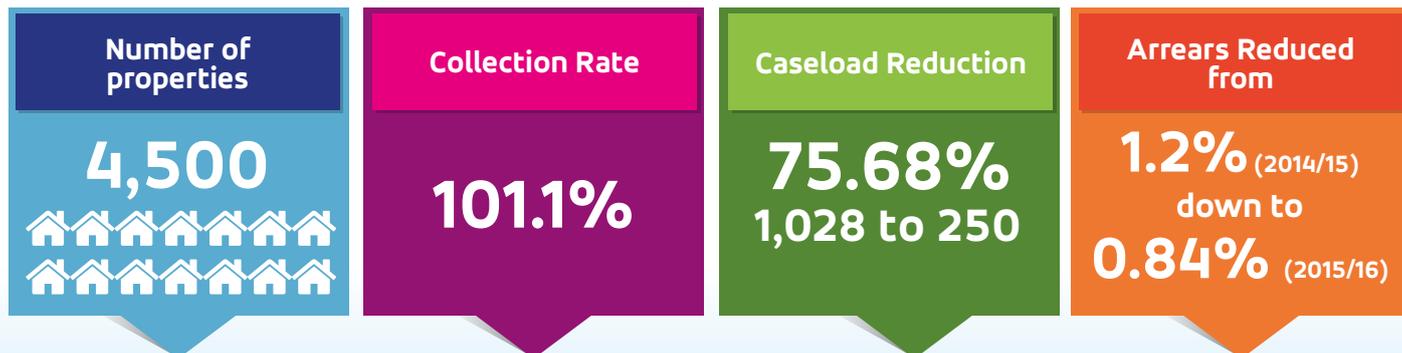


About Equity Housing Group

Equity Housing Group manages 4,500 homes in the North of England, the majority of their stock lies either side of the Southern Pennines in Cheshire, Greater Manchester and South Yorkshire. Equity has been a consistent high performer in terms of arrears, but they were keen to create greater efficiencies and officer capacity so they would be able to mitigate the challenges of ongoing welfare reform and the deployment of Universal Credit.



Before Rentsense

Prior to Rentsense Equity took a list based approach to arrears, as their HMS was ineffective in caseload recommendations, and according to Jonathan Brownbill, Financial Inclusion Manager at Equity.

“Housing Management Systems tend to focus on a ‘stair case’ escalation approach which can be easily upset by complexities.”

The list based approach worked in terms of performance but it was not the best use of officer time, they were checking records that they did not need to:

“Officer feedback highlighted they were spending a lot of time checking cases that needed no action and that process took two to three minutes per record and we were aware we needed to create efficiencies to maintain performance,” explained Jonathan.

The Looming Challenge of Welfare Reform

Equity was aware that ongoing welfare reform and the advent of Universal Credit would greatly impact officers’ workload and the time to manage their caseload. This coupled with the 1% rent cut meant that landlords were looking for tangible and immediate efficiencies.

To mitigate these changes Equity invested in Rentsense and set about changing their tenants’ culture to one of personal responsibility, which has proven to be a successful approach as tenants have become more self-sufficient and Equity now support less than 20% of residents, and those that are supported are the most vulnerable.

“The culture change set about putting the focus and onus on residents so they were not overly dependent on us or others,” explained Jonathan. **“This helps break the vicious circle in terms of workload and the expectation based upon officers, which was hugely important with the advent of UC.”**

The Effects of Rentsense

“We needed Rentsense to help free up capacity,” commented Jonathan. **“In turn what that has enabled us to do is have our officers spend more time with customers that need it, focusing on both support and enforcement where appropriate”.**

Myriad of Benefits

Since deployment of Rentsense, Equity has experienced a myriad of benefits, with the main aim of creating officer capacity being immediately realised, with it reducing the weekly caseload of over 1,000 cases to less than 300.

“Performance is good and so this wasn’t a main driver for us however arrears fell and our collection rate increased in our first year using Rentsense,” commented Jonathan.

Indeed arrears fell from 1.2% (2014/15) to 0.84% (2015/16) as collection rates for 2015/16 hit 101.1%. Rentsense has also created 0.74 officer capacity (aka FTE) within the team of 5 income officers. This has freed up their time so they are now completing their caseload, but more importantly officers are delivering greater support direct to the customers who need it. Equity also increased focus on activities such as former tenants’ arrears (FTA) and recharge collection as a result.

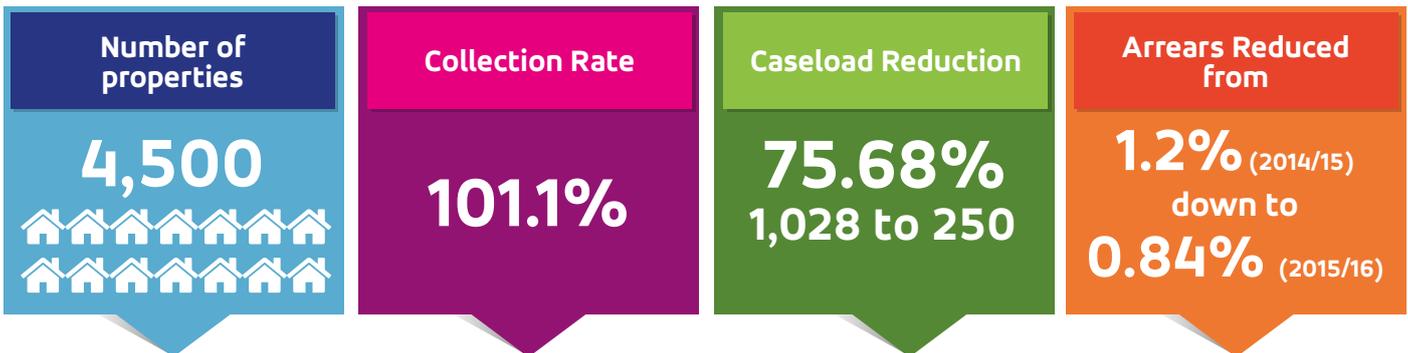
“Thanks to Rentsense we freed up two days a month per officer to target FTAs, previously we took an ad hoc approach, and as a result FTAs have fallen from 1.76% (2014/15) to 1.4% (2015/16).”

What’s more the grant funding that Equity help their tenants claim increased by £20,000 in 2015/16 and their evictions fell from 15 down to 7. **“Historically evictions have hovered between 15-20 per year, but with our culture shift and Rentsense this has helped facilitate this reduction in evictions,”** commented Jonathan.

So a year after going live with Rentsense and when asked if Equity would recommend the solution to other landlords, the response is resounding from Jonathan:

“As an Income Team you simply want to know who is in arrears then who is getting worse and by how much. Traditional Housing Management Systems are not effective at doing this – Rentsense is. Its interface is simple to use, you can select and design your own priorities and bandings, and it supports agile working.”

“We have found that Rentsense instils an officer culture around caseload completion which really works and brings the team together around a collective aim. For us it has delivered what we wanted which were efficiency benefits, but there have been many other benefits as well, from improved performance to a more focused approach to all activities.”



Find out more about Mobysoft’s Rentsense system...

Mobysoft’s Rentsense cloud application helps housing organisations maximise revenues, protect revenues and create much needed efficiencies.

Rentsense is a series of complex algorithms that analyses a housing organisation’s tenants’ transactional history that is coupled with a predictive analytical application that then predicts which tenants will and won’t pay their rent.

It then produces a list of tenants, in priority order, that need contacting that week regards their rent. This enables officers to contact the right tenants at the right time in the right order helping to drive down arrears.

Rentsense is compatible with all leading Housing Management Systems. To find out more please visit www.mobysoft.com