

# VANTAGE BULLETIN

## VALUE FOR MONEY: THE REGULATOR AND EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

Hello and welcome to my 8th bulletin. I hope that you all had a good break over the summer holidays and have come back refreshed and ready to face the challenges that lie ahead in the housing sector.

Over the past 12 months we have seen the introduction of the bedroom tax and a renewed focus on value for money from the Homes & Communities Agency ("HCA").



I know that a lot of you who came along to our seminar earlier this year got a lot from the session so expertly delivered by Graeme Foster from the HCA. I am planning to run a similar seminar later this year but more about that later.

In this bulletin I am going to share with you some of my thoughts and solutions about a concern that a number of housing providers have raised with me recently.

**"We are struggling to meet the VFM saving targets we set at the start of the year."**

The first thing we do with our new clients is to look at why targets aren't being met and the basis of the assumptions behind the targets. Two of the common areas that have been causing them problems are:

## 1. The expected efficiency savings from the implementation of a new Repairs appointment scheduling system isn't generating the financial savings that what we expected.

Like many organisations, this housing provider had invested a lot of time and resource into bringing in a new repairs scheduling system, with the expectation that the new Customer appointments system would make their delivery of repairs more efficient.

Vantage were brought in and soon ascertained that whilst Customer appointments were now at target levels, productivity levels had only risen by 5%.

Within three months and after a number of changes made by Vantage, the Client is now achieving productivity gains of closer to 25% higher than previous levels.

## 2. We are experiencing significant over spends by our contractor on voids.

A back log in voids for an In-house Service Provider led to a Client spending in excess of £300,000 a year of additional subcontracting resource to try and clear the back log, which they believed to be a consequence of the "bedroom tax".

Vantage extracted the data and upon examination of the underlying data and interviewing key personnel, we were able to determine that actual volumes of voids had only risen by 2% and that the problem was caused by poor productivity from some of their internal operatives.

This had been further compounded by key managers who did not understand how to use their productivity reports to manage the operation correctly. Vantage instigated corrective actions, productivity is now back on track and the use of sub-contractors has ceased.

### **Rather than take my word for it, here are some quotes from our clients who have benefited from our approach to resolve these problems and deliver long term sustainable savings.**

***"...We have made savings in excess of £3m pa which has put us on a very firm foundation for the future. We now have the priorities, insight and capability to move forward. It was a journey we couldn't have made ourselves..."***

***"...I am now delivering services in a way that has gone beyond my expectations. Where in the past we'd struggled to improve performance I now have a more motivated team, making the right decision at the right time and delivering higher performance levels at a lower cost. I'm confident I have a service delivering VFM..."***

Finally it is important to remember that whilst setting annual VFM and efficiency targets is an important part of the business planning cycle, we have found clients that work on three (or in some cases five) year plans

tend to produce better results in the long term.

As I mentioned at the start of this bulletin I am planning to run another seminar in November. As with my previous seminars I will be looking to share the latest value for money thoughts of the HCA, and give an insight into the Vantage methodology together with real examples of how Vantage have made a real difference for our clients.

More detailed information about the seminar will be coming to you later this month.

If you are interesting in arranging for me to visit you to have a chat about areas highlighted in this bulletin or any other value for money related issues [feel free to contact me.](#)



Regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tony Bryan".

Tony Bryan,  
Managing Director, Vantage Business Solutions

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