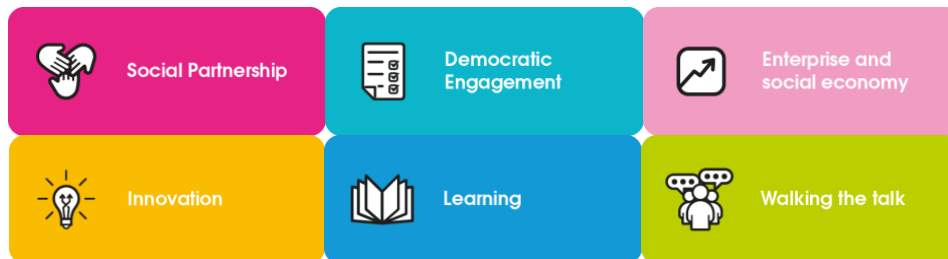




Co-operative Councils

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HOUSING



Swindon Borough Council

Modernisation in the field of Social Housing Roof Inspections

Modernisation in the field of social housing is often marked by the creation of intangible benefits that go far beyond mere cost savings and operational efficiency. One such example is the introduction of drones for our social housing roofing inspections, an imaginative move committed to enhancing how we support our tenants and improving the efficiency of operations.

This was a collaborative cross-Council effort along with, all important, engagement with and support from tenants, residents and members.

The roofing team's major business challenges were:

- Eliminating work at height where possible to improve alignment with HSE guidelines
- Improving the quality and efficiency of our roof inspections; having an accurate assessment for 'right-first-time' repairs
- Where possible, remove the need for scaffolding to inspect
- Reducing risk to others, improving inspection times and if possible, budget savings

Time was invested in upfront thinking, researching the potential concerns and barriers to acceptability, and devising strategies to mitigate them. The focus on governance and openness was paramount, laying the foundations for success. From day one, we implemented the nudge theory and went with an active opt-in approach, setting the stage for a paradigm shift in inspections.

Swindon are using a DJI Mini 3 Pro drone. It has enhanced safety, advanced pilot assistance systems and powerful sensing capabilities.

The feedback from tenants has been overwhelmingly positive: 94% positively responded to drones being used for social housing roof inspections. This demonstrates the strong voice and trust of the tenants in the Council's initiative and that the hard work on engagement, transparency in approach, actively seeking opt-in and governance was so important.

The use of drones has revealed fantastic results. We have shortened the average scaffolding hire time by 45%, and there have been no cases where additional work has been required; meaning we're achieving those right first-time repairs.

Drones have aided identifying non-roofing issues, completely avoiding the need for scaffolding and any working from height. Additionally, they're identifying hazardous materials, allowing the specialist team to act promptly.

The financial benefits are also substantial: we've seen an annual saving of £80,265.00. And the average inspection time with drones is just 17 minutes, a stark contrast to the previous 64 days. The investment cost was £2,500.

Drones have now become business as usual for the roofing teams. All teams are fully qualified, with each one having their own drone, ensuring the sustainability and continuity of this initiative.

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