

Grouped housing – Access control

The challenge

Anti-social behaviour is a major issue in some of the UK's more deprived or disadvantaged communities, and is estimated to cost the British taxpayer £3.4bn a year¹.

As a responsible Registered Social Landlord (RSL), Riverside signed up to the Government's Respect Standard for Housing Management in January 2007 which aims to deliver an effective response to anti-social behaviour by:

- Building stronger communities
- Increasing accountability
- Giving greater resident empowerment

How can technology help RSLs like Riverside to address anti-social behaviour in grouped housing environments?

¹<http://www.asb.homeoffice.gov.uk/article.aspx?id=9066>

Key learning

- As well as forming part of a planned programme of maintenance/upgrade works, access control systems can be quickly installed in response to specific urgent needs, protecting both people and property
- Relatively simple systems can make an enormous difference to the quality of tenants' lives
- Access control systems offer distinct advantages over traditional lock and key systems, providing increased security and flexibility



The PAC solution has transformed the lives of residents; when I visit the scheme I get lots of positive feedback. The project was really well managed – during the installation the Tunstall engineers were happy to engage with tenants and as a result we adopted some of their suggestions which have improved the workability of the system.

Olajide Akintelure, Assistant Director Property Services, Riverside South East



What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour comprises a range of unacceptable activity that can affect the quality of community life, including acts of nuisance, disorder and annoyance.

Examples include:

- drug abuse and drug dealing
- damage to property
- prostitution
- groups of people causing annoyance/intimidation

About Riverside

Riverside is one of the UK's leading RSLs, providing support and affordable housing to more than 80,000 people of all ages and circumstances throughout England. Established for over 80 years, the group has won the Housing Excellence Awards' Social Landlord of the Year in both 2008 and 2009, partly in recognition of its work promoting communities where people feel secure and tackling anti-social behaviour. Riverside is committed to ensuring that each one of its customers feels safe, respected and supported in the home they have chosen.

Background

Marcus House and Bryanston House are part of a Riverside scheme located just off Peckham High Street in South London which provides 45 homes to families and older people. Tenants were feeling increasingly unsafe as the incidence of anti-social behaviour around their homes began to escalate, and they routinely had to clear away evidence of drug taking and prostitution, and even human waste, in communal areas.

Tenants reported these issues to Riverside, and it responded by reviewing means of making the scheme more secure without inconveniencing the tenants. All Riverside properties are subject to an ongoing programme of maintenance and improvement works, but because of the issues experienced, the homes in Peckham were prioritised, and Riverside moved quickly to ensure their tenants safety.



Easikey Door Controller



PAC fob and reader

The solution

Riverside has a long established and successful relationship with Tunstall, and therefore it turned to them for advice on the access control solutions available to improve the quality of life for its tenants in Peckham.

Following a site survey, Tunstall recommended installing both vehicle and pedestrian gates at vulnerable points in the scheme, in combination with a PAC access control system. This would see the installation of PAC Easikey Door Controllers with built in Oneprox readers adjacent to the new gates. Tenants would be issued with PAC fobs to enable them to come and go freely simply by swiping the fob over the reader, but the scheme would be secure and inaccessible to anyone without a fob.

Designated members of Riverside staff were issued with editor keys, which allow them to manage access for individual fobs, without the need for the fob to be present. As tenants change or if fobs are lost, the system can be quickly and easily updated to keep the scheme secure. Fobs can also be issued to allow access to the emergency services, and can be provided to allow short-term access – for example, to tradesmen for the expected duration of works.

Results

Each tenant has now been issued with a discreet fob which allows them access through any of the gates, and they can arrive home without fear of intimidation or harassment. Incidents of anti-social behaviour have been eradicated since the installation of the PAC system, and Riverside plans to employ the technology to many other sites in future, where currently traditional locks and keys are being used.



About PAC Easikey

The PAC Easikey 250 system is a cost effective access control system for applications such as tenanted buildings, small commercial offices and schools. It can control up to 2 doors and provide access for up to 250 authorised people.

Key benefits

Economical – inexpensive to install and eliminates the costs associated with replacing traditional locks and re-issuing keys

Stand-alone – doesn't require the use of a computer for operation or management

Low maintenance – the key fobs don't require batteries and can be read an infinite number of times

Robust – there are a range of compatible Easikey proximity readers with vandal and weather resistant features, and the vulnerabilities of traditional lock and key systems are eliminated

Convenient – programming is simple, with installer mode allowing the customer to add/remove users using editor keys and manage basic system functionality

Accessible - Easikey 250 has an easy to operate user interface, backlit LCD display which conveys clear and simple instructions and a comprehensive user help guide to set up and manage the system

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