Raven Housing Trust

Raven Housing Trust

NetConstruct Ltd

REAL ESTATES
SOCIAL HOUSING

Kentico's ability to seamlessly integrate with Raven's iHousing tenant management portal has successfully driven changes in customer behaviour. Users are increasingly self-sufficient, reducing admin and resulting in significantly less incoming customer service phone calls.

1,400+

unique registered customers using the portal each month

Background

Raven Housing offers both rented and freehold properties to leaseholders and shared owners, with limited specialist housing available for older people and temporary accommodation for the homeless within Surrey and Sussex. Its services include repairs and maintenance, tenancy support, help to tackle anti-social behaviour, financial advice and support, help with finding work or getting online, and youth services.

Goals

Raven made the decision to implement a new website as their existing platform was outdated, difficult to content manage and wasn't scalable to suit their current or future business needs.

The key objectives for the redesign and development were:

- increase available online services to existing residents including pay rent and repair requests, to reduce back-office costs, simplify processes and provide 24/7 access

- provide clear, accessible information that will enable existing residents to be more self-sufficient, reducing call volume to the Customer Service Centre

- increase online enquiries generated for new homes, both for rent and purchase

- change the behaviour of Raven customers and how they interact online

- interaction with their housing management system

Challenges

The greatest challenge posed by this project stemmed from Raven's varied audience groups across their properties and services,
coupled with their ambition to drive customer interactions online.

Raven's audience include existing tenants, homeowners, and potential new customers, all of which have varying demographics. Typically, the social housing sector has significant audience portions with much lower than average Internet adoption and, culturally, telephone remains their preferred contact method.

Other key stakeholders that needed to be considered within the project were housing developers, local authority partners, and local councillors.

Getting the balance of UX and design right to support each audience group through their user journey was pivotal to the success of this site.
To ensure user expectations would be met, in-depth persona work was

undertaken to get to the root of their needs to shape the new site's structure, navigation, and content.

The initial build started at the end of 2016. Unfortunately, part way through the front-end development, Raven made the decision to rebrand and reposition their organisation. The project was paused for several months which inevitably caused delays and amendments to wireframes and designs.

In a further complication, development of the Raven website ran alongside another project NetConstruct were undertaking for Raven on Aareon, their housing management system. Working with multiple teams within their organisation and running the projects simultaneously was not without its complexities. However, having previously built **iHousing**, partnered with Aareon on other implementations, and the benefit of their sector knowledge, NetConstruct were able to effectively manage the multiple stakeholders.

Solution

To meet the brief, Kentico's flexibility allowed the required templates to be designed and built to include component parts such as Widgets and several custom modules such as galleries and menus.

Kentico allows content editors to manage the website more effectively, with Workflows used to set up sign-off processes for publishing content. This overcame a major issue with their last website and was something Raven were keen to tackle in the rebuild.

As the site is more heavily weighted toward Widgets as opposed to WYSIWYG areas, a bespoke Smart Search index was implemented which allows a search index to be built based on the content of Widgets.

For seamless integration, the log-in functionality was used to integrate with the newly developed iHousing tenant portal.

Many of the audiences catered for by Raven have little experience in using the Internet. NetConstruct wanted faster user comprehension as research showed that users coming to the website wanted to perform very specific tasks. To increase engagement and online interactions, the user experience had to be made intuitive and clear. Using iconography, the website main areas were signposted, and larger buttons made it easier for these users to navigate the website with key features now more easily explained and accessible.
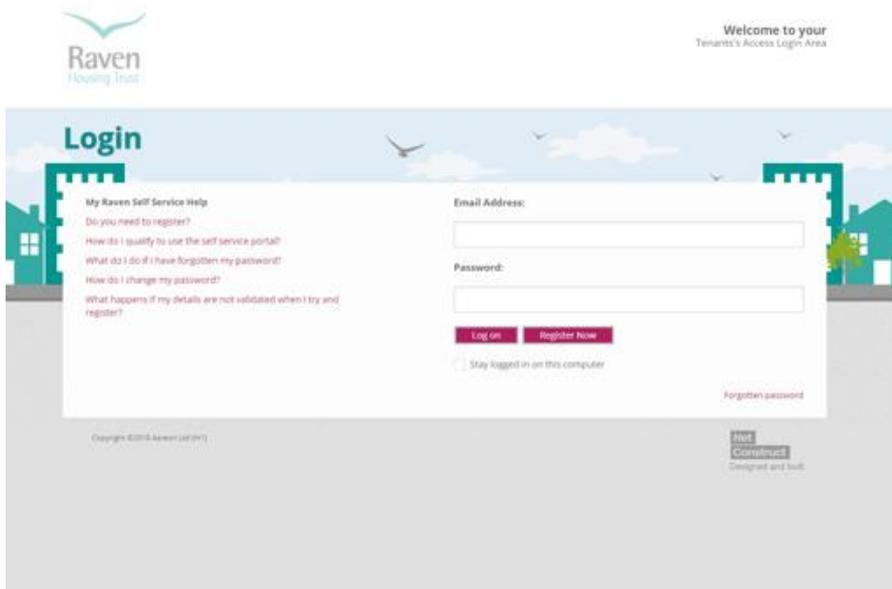
Results

The website now reflects and reinforces Raven's branding,
with great feedback received from customers, stakeholders, and staff,
particularly regarding how the website looks and works on a mobile device,
making it quicker and easier for customers to use the website:

- average time spent on the site has increased by 20% YoY since new site go live
- a very positive downward trend in call volumes into the Raven Customer Service Centre, in line with the core objective
- a large change has been observed in how Raven customers pay rent and view their personal information
- there have been more than 1,400 unique customers registered and actively using the website and customer portal monthly
- Raven now collect more than £160,000 in rent through their customer portal
- increase in web enquiries due to optimised online forms

Key Criteria for Choosing Kentico

Raven wanted a secure, stable, and reputable platform, with Kentico recommended by NetConstruct as the smart choice. This was based not only on NetConstruct's extensive knowledge and wealth of experience surrounding Kentico but also considered their understanding of the wider work they were undertaking for Raven on iHousing.

Buy-in was required from multiple stakeholders and a demo was conducted to validate NetConstruct's recommendation, showcasing the ease

at which content can be edited and the control Raven would have over roles, security, and localisations, as well as the ability to easily integrate with their iHousing portal.

Standardising their systems was important for Raven to create long-term efficiencies and cost savings. The long-term potential of using the EMS licence was also attractive to them.

NetConstruct Ltd

At NetConstruct our goal is simple—to build better digital. Part of the IDHL Group, we work with ambitious clients, engineering their websites to deliver digital services that enhance customer experience.

Working in partnership, we keep it simple, uncovering digital evolutions that make a real difference. Our team of strategic developers collaborates with inventive UX designers, crafting solutions to unlock the potential within your website.

We look ahead, striving for even better still. Through our expert analysis, scoping, and future phasing, it is our aim to ensure that your customers' next user experience will be better than their last.

NetConstruct Limited
Riverview Court
Leeds
LS22 6LE

01937 581 128

www.netconstruct.co.uk
hello@netconstruct.co.uk