

Home Connections Cloud Support Solutions

Service definition document



Home Connections Cloud Support Service Definition Document

Service Definition Document G-cloud 15

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Executive summary

Background

This document provides an overview of Home Connections and its offer

Home Connections Lettings Limited (HCLL) design and build online software solutions for central government, local authorities, housing associations and the public sector in general. HCLL has over 23 years of experience in creating and supporting digital services for authorities throughout the UK and has consistently delivered a full range of housing solutions at a level of quality above and beyond what is expected.

Home Connections are a 'not for profit company', wholly owned by Housing Associations and Local Authorities. As such we are able to **continually reinvest all profit directly back into our services**. As a result, we are always at the forefront of new technological developments and adhere to the most recent legislation.

Home Connections offers the most feature-rich Housing Software for around 100 local and central government customers. Home Connections has delivered state of the art digital services for the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government with the ongoing expansion of the Streetlink service <https://thestreetlink.org.uk/> which enables members of the public to alert local services about people sleeping rough. We have also delivered property matching software for the Home Office.

Home Connections offer cloud support solutions that can be rapidly deployed and tailored or configured to customer needs, whether they operate on their own or as part of a partnership. This model has helped us win contracts for large regional schemes – such as the Pan London Housing Moves scheme which operated with all 33 London boroughs. Our software is the platform for delivering the award-winning Homefinder UK housing relocation scheme that enables housing mobility across the UK.

The history of Home Connections is one of continuous innovation. We have been providing result driven solutions to companies and organisations since 2001. We work tirelessly to continually improve services designed to help your organisation reach their full potential. We use the most appropriate technology and partners to make sure our clients benefit and get well-specified products with low risk and high return on investment.

Home Connections is a private company limited by guarantee and registered with Companies House (5375099). Dun & Bradstreet rate us as five-star with a 'minimal risk rating' and as being 'superior to other firms in our industry'.

Vision

Home Connections wants to provide a great customer experience for our local authority and housing association clients and their housing customers; wowing them with the quality of our products and the service we provide.

Mission

Home Connections' mission is to use the latest technology to help people understand their housing options, to prevent and relieve homelessness and ultimately to secure the home of their choice.

Our clients

Our clients include Central Government Departments, Housing Associations, Local Authorities and other public authorities. A small but indicative range of these include:



Reference cases

Three brief reference cases that encapsulate the capabilities that our customers benefit from are described below:

Case Study: [Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government](#)

Empowering communities to end rough sleeping: DLUHC's innovative digital alert system



The challenge

Home Connections won the tender to deliver a public facing digital service to support the end of rough sleeping. An existing service was difficult to use, slow and clunky. The challenge was to seamlessly migrate from old to new system without disruption of service whilst simultaneously modernising the service.

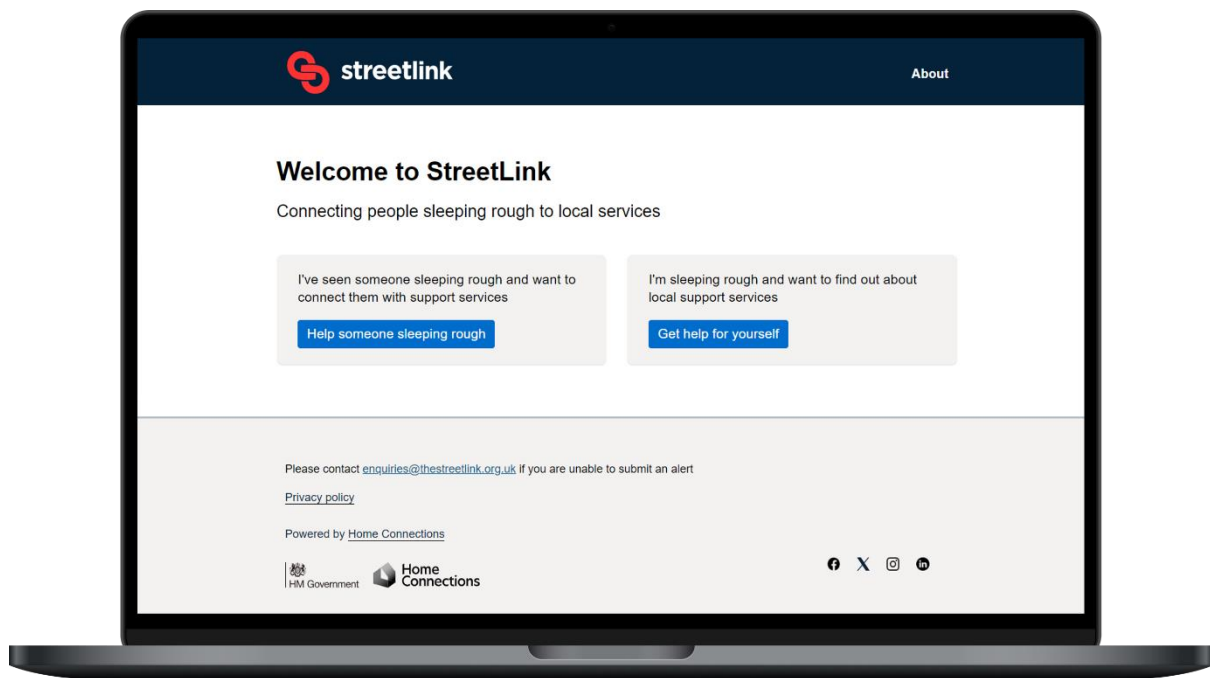
The outcome

Home Connections rebuilt and delivered a brand new service in record time (a matter of months) which is both faster and easier to use and generating better outcomes for people sleeping rough and duty-bound public services alike. From signing the contract in May 2023 to delivering a live prototype service to the public by September 2023 the entire service was built and delivered in less than 6 months.

How did we deliver success?

Embracing an agile approach in line with the GDS Service Standard, our team conducted a streamlined 'Discovery' phase to validate an existing discovery report and understand the current user needs and system requirements. This led to a focused 'Alpha' phase, where we developed and iterated high-level concepts based on user journey and story mapping.

The 'Beta' phase brought our prototype to life, meticulously testing and refining to ensure a seamless, user-friendly service. Our system was uniquely configured for Westminster Council, enabling real-time communication and extensive collaboration with key partners like The Passage and Shelter.



The results

- Almost 7000 persons sleeping rough found
- 323 local authorities actively working with StreetLink
- Above 90% H-CLIC returns consistently achieved

The system's innovative features like real-time messaging and an automated H-CLIC compliance & error checker have been instrumental in its success, achieving consistently above 90% H-CLIC (Homelessness) statistical returns.

What we learnt

- Our Agile approach is adaptable to requirements and developing teams and it ensures that the customers are the point of focus and that the problems they need to be fixed first
- Stakeholders also gain as the development is progressive
- Local authorities were able to use StreetLink for doing more case management and abandoned spreadsheets and other offline systems in favour of a single system
- We overcame issues around a web-based system and the challenges for rural locations
- In London we integrated and triaged direct to many London boroughs who use a third-party system CHAIN to interact with alerts

Case Study: Crown Estate Scotland's website launch: Doing more with less

Deploying LocalGov Drupal to power Crown Estate Scotland's new website

The challenge

Crown Estate Scotland needed to modernise its website and use an easier content management system whilst saving costs on website development and support.

Operating under the accountability of Scottish Ministers and the Parliament, Crown Estate Scotland is a public corporation managing a diverse range of assets across the country – from agricultural and forest lands to a significant portion of the seabed and foreshore, along with various commercial properties – to create lasting value for Scotland.

The outcome

Home Connections rebuilt the site in 3 months using the Drupal LocalGov framework. This is a content management system tailored specifically for the public sector, equips organisations with a robust platform that enhances communication, collaboration, and accessibility. Home Connections, a leading non-profit software solutions provider and social enterprise, uses this framework for all of the over 30 local authority websites it develops, manages and maintains.

In a digital age where government organisations are under increasing pressure to provide efficient and transparent services, [Crown Estate Scotland](#) is setting a great example. Their recent website launch, powered by the Drupal LocalGov framework and delivered by [Home Connections](#), embodies the theme of "doing more with less."

Cost-effective solutions

In the face of budget constraints and the ever-present need to make best use of resources, the LocalGov framework allows Crown Estate Scotland to "do more with less." With its open-source nature, Drupal LocalGov eliminates the need for costly licensing fees and reduces ongoing maintenance expenses. This cost-effective approach ensures that resources can be allocated where they are needed most, such as improving public services and infrastructure.

Accessibility

One of the primary benefits of the LocalGov framework is its commitment to accessibility. Crown Estate Scotland's new website is designed with inclusivity in mind, ensuring that information and services are available to everyone, regardless of their abilities or the devices they use. This inclusive approach not only complies with legal standards but also reflects the organisation's dedication to serving all citizens.

Robust security and compliance

Security and data privacy are paramount for the public sector. Drupal LocalGov places a strong emphasis on security, providing the necessary tools and features to safeguard sensitive information. Compliance with data protection regulations is made easier, reducing the risk of data breaches and ensuring that the public's trust is maintained. These features are at the core of LocalGov making sure that development team spend time on other key priorities.

Simple content management

The LocalGov framework simplifies content management, enabling Crown Estate Scotland to keep its website up to date and relevant. Crown Estate Scotland manages vast amounts of information, and with LocalGov's intuitive content editing tools, it's easier than ever to ensure that the public has access to the latest information, policies, and resources.

Sustainability

Crown Estate Scotland's commitment extends to environmental sustainability. By adopting the Drupal LocalGov framework, Crown Estate Scotland contribute to a greener future. The open-source nature of Drupal minimises the environmental footprint associated with proprietary software development. In addition, the framework's efficiency helps reduce server loads and energy consumption.

Visit Crown Estate Scotland's new website: <https://www.crownestatescotland.com>

Learn more about Home Connections' [web design and hosting services](#).

Case Study: West Lindsay District Council for Choice Based Lettings, Housing Register and Homelessness Prevention Software.

For West Lindsay we implemented a cloud-hosted fully integrated Choice Based Letting (CBL) System and Homelessness Prevention Case Management Solution. Includes Housing Advice and Housing Register customer application and back office functions that link to a Homelessness Prevention and Statutory Homelessness system. Temporary Accommodation units can be loaded for allocation.

The Home Connections CBL system enables full compliance with allocations policy and is compliant with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018.

The solution manages notifications of households at risk of homelessness via the Duty to Refer requirement without the need for manual data entry. Built-in Management Information reports for internal use and quarterly H-CLIC returns.

Why Home Connections

Home Connections is a social enterprise focused on delivering top quality digital services for both the citizen and the public authority. We are an organisation committed to delivering efficiencies through the better use of technology for the public sector which in turn is driven by greater customer satisfaction. Value and satisfaction for customers is the key success driver for Home Connections.

Our USPs

- We will deliver premium innovative solutions
- We have an Implementation Guarantee – we promise to deliver on time and to budget
- We certify great value for money
- We are owned by Local Authority partners

Our Products

Home Connections products are available as either an integrated suite or standalone modules. Customer access is via a configurable web front end, while business user access is often via an admin console - both routes are accessed securely.

Our key systems and modules include but are not limited to the following:

- Housing Needs Software (including Homeless Reduction Act, Housing Register, CBL)
- Property Matching software
- Case Management
- National Mobility via Homefinder UK
- Mutual Exchange (integrated to all products)
- Housing Advice, Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation
- Housing Employment Connections and Volunteering
- Smartphone Apps
- Business Intelligence & Data Engineering
- Fraud Detection
- Cyber Security Assessment
- Digital Delivery & AI
- UX & UR
- Agile Delivery Alpha
- Agile Delivery Beta
- Agile Delivery Discovery
- Cloud Integration Services
- Digital Delivery
- EazyLearn and Elearning and LMS Systems

- IT Training and Consultancy
- Online Form Builder
- Product Accessibility
- Rough Sleeper Case Management and Case Management
- Template Digital Skills Augmentation
- UX Product Design (using tools such as Figma, Miro etc)
- VfV Through Service Design
- Website Development
- Policy Implementation
- Election Management Software

Where relevant modules will be built on an integrated platform and database system including key features such as:

- Integrated AI
- Built-in API integration
- CRM
- Intelligent Workflow
- Automated Triage
- Communications (email, text, letters and web chat)
- Reporting
- Template creation
- Document management
- Appointments
- Printing
- Fraud detection

Home Connections business consultancy and IT services include:

- Cloud Hosting and hosting in our UK based data centres
- Front-line Support, based in UK
- Service Management (data processor and controller experience)
- Data protection and GDPR consultancy
- Agile and Prince2 Project Management and Business Analysis
- User Research
- Training
- Business Re-engineering and Lean Systems Analysis

Service Onboarding and Offboarding

Onboarding

Throughout the onboarding process, teams work collaboratively in multidisciplinary teams, including designers, developers, product managers, and subject matter experts. We use Agile methodologies such as Scrum or Kanban to manage our work, with regular ceremonies such as stand-up meetings, sprint planning, and retrospectives to keep the project on track.

We ensure our processes place a strong emphasis on user research, usability testing, and accessibility to ensure that digital services are easy to use, inclusive, and meet the needs of all users.

Onboarding typically involves:

1. **Discovery:** The discovery phase involves researching and understanding user needs, business requirements, and technical constraints. This often includes user research, stakeholder interviews, and analysis of existing data and systems. The goal is to gain a deep understanding of the problem space and identify opportunities for improvement.
2. **Alpha:** During the alpha phase, our teams develop prototypes and test potential solutions with users. This phase focuses on experimentation and learning, with teams rapidly iterating on designs and gathering feedback to validate assumptions and refine concepts.
3. **Beta:** In the beta phase, our teams build and test a working version of the digital service with real users. This phase involves iterative development, with teams releasing new features and functionality regularly and gathering feedback to inform further improvements. The goal is to create a usable and reliable product that meets user needs and is ready for wider deployment.
4. **Live:** Once the digital service has been thoroughly tested and validated, it moves into the live phase, where it is made available to the users. Teams continue to monitor and maintain the service in production, making updates and improvements based on user feedback and changing needs.

Service Ordering

Payment terms are subject to the specific details of the contract, however 50% payment for implementation is required at start up, with a purchase order, to cover the cost of the order. The balance costs are levied at the end of the implementation with annual fees raised in full at start of service.

Service Offboarding

Home Connections will agree to the customer providing 6 months' notice to terminate the standard SaaS contract. However, more complex services will require different levels of notice.

Project Management

Home Connections employees have extensive experience working in the housing and general public sector – to include, working with allocations, homelessness, voids and housing management departments.

We bring this experience, and all we have learned from it, to each project so that we can not only offer IT orientated solutions, but solutions that are well rounded and take into consideration policy needs.

We will use the following key principles and practices to foster collaboration, flexibility, and continuous improvement.

Formulate a Clear Vision and Goals: we will begin by defining a clear vision for the project and set achievable goals. We will ensure that everyone involved understands the project's purpose and objectives.

Build a Cross-Functional Team: we will assemble a cross-functional team with diverse skills necessary to deliver the project. This typically includes developers, designers, testers, and other relevant stakeholders.

Break Down Work into Iterations (Sprints): We will divide the project into smaller, manageable iterations (sprints).

Prioritize and Maintain a Backlog: We will create a prioritized backlog of work items (user stories, features, or tasks) that need to be completed and continuously refine and prioritize the backlog based on feedback and changing requirements.

Hold Regular Planning Meetings: We will conduct sprint planning meetings at the beginning of each sprint to define the scope of work for that iteration. The team will collaborate to select items from the backlog that they commit to completing during the sprint.

Encourage Collaboration and Communication: We will foster open communication and collaboration within the team. Encourage daily stand-up meetings (daily scrums) to synchronize activities, identify obstacles, and make necessary adjustments.

Embrace Change: We will be prepared to adapt to changing requirements and priorities throughout the project.

Promote Continuous Improvement: We will encourage a culture of continuous improvement within the team and conduct regular retrospectives at the end of each sprint to reflect on what went well, what could be improved, and take actions to address areas for enhancement.

Training

Training will be carried out on a training site which is a replica of live or remotely via our Eazy Learn (E-Learning Platform). It will be carried out once the system has been tested so that bugs and issues are rectified. The sessions will provide a relevant user guide and material for the system / module. Our trainers are experienced in delivering training for our systems and will follow up with after care and video support. The trainer will walk through the system in small chunks allowing time for trainees to 'click and learn'. The trainees will then be given an opportunity to ask questions during the session and provide feedback on their learning.

HCLL provides training online or onsite using the 'train the trainer' methodology. Ideally, this includes some of the staff having been exposed to the User Acceptance Testing (UAT) process. The idea is to train the selected staff to become local experts and deliver training to their colleagues. This type of approach keeps the cost of training to a minimum and ensures the authority has its own staff with excellent knowledge about all aspects of the system. Full training notes are always provided, with detailed explanations of each of the steps, as well as relevant screenshots. The test version of the system will be available even when live, to be used as a training environment for new staff – this will remain an exact replica of the live environment.

We successfully rolled out StreetLink across all London boroughs and trained outreach teams so they can directly triage alerts. Kam Basra

Service Levels - Support and Maintenance

At Home Connections we are extremely proud of our professionally run helpdesk which continues to receive positive feedback from our base of over 100 different customers. The helpdesk is contactable by telephone and email. Issues raised are logged automatically and flagged to the relevant technician in our team. The user receives an online reference so they can track the progress of the issue at any point in time. We keep users updated at regular intervals and will only close issues if the user confirms they are happy with the resolution. In addition to this, each client is appointed an Account Manager, and should they need to, they can contact this person at any time to discuss issues.

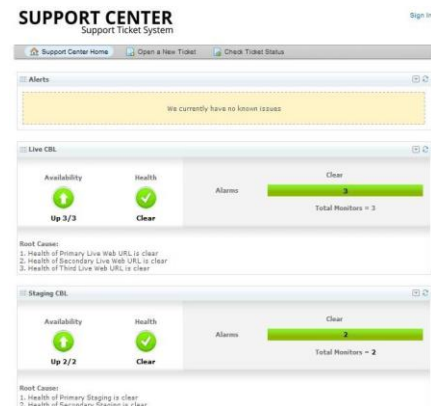
Home Connections targets 99.99% uptime availability. Planned down time is notified to all customers several months in advance, and generally speaking any downtime for maintenance and upgrade will take place prior to 7am during working days. The Home Connections Service Level Agreements targets will be reviewed each month by the support desk and also at a monthly management meeting to ensure compliance with targets.

Downtime issues are dealt with as priority 1 issues for our helpdesk and development teams to resolve. Automatic and manual monitoring systems are in place and preventative action will take place to tackle bandwidth, server processor, memory or other issues as soon as they are detected.

Our targets for response is 1 hour irrespective of the severity of the incident and for resolution is between 5 days for a serious fault and 15 days for a minor one. Our manned Primary Support desk is based in London and is available for voice calls between 9am and 5.30pm. The help desk mail system is available 24/7/365 and is monitored out of hours. Full system monitoring and maintenance is available from 4:30am through to 6:00 pm daily. Any critical incident is always taken as such, and trained members of staff are on-call and will see any priority 1 situation through to resolution. A core team are involved or available to cover the helpdesk and support operations.

Our Service Level Agreement targets are as follows:

Priority Level	Description	Target times for first response	Target times for fix	Longer term solution (if required)
A	A serious fault which prevents use of a critical	1 hour	6 working hours	5 working days
B	A fault which does not cause System Down but does cause serious inconvenience for users	1 hour	2 working hours	8 working days
C	A minor fault which causes little disruption or a request for information	1 hour	5 working hours	15 working days or as agreed
Other	Change requests	4 hour	Via discussion and agreement	



Escalations

Our escalation process is as follows:

Tiered Support Levels: If the issue cannot be resolved at the frontline level, it is escalated to higher tiers of support.

- Tier 1: Frontline support agents
- Tier 2: Specialists with deeper technical knowledge
- Tier 3: Advanced technical support or engineering teams

Escalation Criteria: Clear criteria are established to determine when an issue should be escalated to the next level. This includes factors such as:

- Severity of the issue
- Impact on the customer's business or operations
- Complexity of the problem
- Time sensitivity

Assignment of Ownership: Upon escalation, ownership of the issue is transferred to the appropriate team or individual responsible for resolution. This ensures accountability and prevents issues from falling through the cracks.

Communication with the Customer: Throughout the escalation process, clear and transparent communication with the customer is essential. Customers will be kept informed of the status of their issue, expected resolution times, and any updates or changes to the escalation plan.

Escalation Review and Improvement: Periodic reviews of the escalation process are conducted to identify bottlenecks, inefficiencies, or areas for improvement.

Upgrades

We update our software platform on a regular basis. All partners (business users) are upgraded to the most up-to-date version, free of charge. Regular updates may include fixes, patches and fine tuning of the system. New software functionality is updated according to the development roadmap and the specific needs of our partners. You can request the development of new modules via account management or user group meetings. The cost of development can be shared with other partners or from our investment fund.

As a non-profit distributing company, we will reinvest all surpluses into new product development. This makes our processes highly cost-efficient and guarantees continued development in the company.

Hosting and Disaster Recovery

Our service is hosted in a tier 3+ datacentre near Woking, UK. This facility has 24/7 manned security, access tag management and a separate security entry building. This also has lorry proof fencing and a vehicle holding area. All access to the site is logged and monitored. This is a managed fully redundant virtual platform in a hybrid VMware cloud. This platform is managed by Navisite (<https://www.navisite.co.uk/>). Home Connections uses multiple virtual Redhat Enterprise License 8 machines in a load balanced environment and dedicated Oracle 19c database in a separate subnet from the DMZ.

Home Connections is fully accredited under ISO 9001 and ISO27001. Home Connections Data Centres are fully accredited under SOC1, SOC2, ISO 9001, ISO 27001, ISO 50001 (energy management) and 14001 (environmental).

We monitor all aspects of our platform using Paessler PRTG tools, which allows us to track usage and peaks historically; this means that we can be proactive in managing growth, and highly reactive should a fault occur.

Production systems are backed up in real-time and daily to an external location near Redhill in the United Kingdom with the same security provisions as our production location.

Data transfer and service migration

Home Connections has a great deal of experience integrating data transfer and Services with multiple third-party systems.

In the past, we have provided interfaces that can work with data loads, triggered by the presentation of a data file in multiple formats, via sFTP or other file transfer methods. This also incorporates business logic rules and processing during the ingestion process. We are also able to accept this file data via web service feeds, which allows us to take output data from a third-party system produced statically and ingest it in real-time.

Our systems also provide a WebService layer as a combination of both, web-API and a 'Microservices' approach. For example, we publish a full API allowing for the business processes of end user property listing, bidding and reviewing status (CFE) to be presented in any third-party system. Our mobile application makes use of this layer, alongside order 3rd party developed solutions working from both mobile platforms and web applications.

The service layer includes user processes for end user authentication, session management, and business layer processing rules, alongside data presentation in standard formats; to include SOAP and JSON responses.

All data transfer mechanisms include security at multiple levels. This includes encryption in transport, acceptance of connection from trusted endpoints, as well as user and role-based permission validation. This flexibility means that the client can tailor our solutions to their existing business models and processes, allowing the system to meet both the required business and auditing rules.

Our Dynamic Forms solution also allows for full data retrieval of information entered by the person completing the form. During the build process it is possible, via the UI, to enter client specific data or codes into the question types. This allows for simple integration with either further transformation processes - to get the data into a specific format - or to allow direct ingestion with a third-party system.

The Service layer for the dynamic forms solution offers clients both Push style services - where our software instigates the transfer mechanism via an event within our applications - and Request services where a third-party system may request data in real-time in order to meet a particular workflow. For example, when an applicant completes a form, our services can push the data in both a pre-agreed or standard format to any known end-point. This utilises multiple transfer mechanisms (such as email, sftp, ftp, or webservice target). We also publish multiple services allowing a third-party system to request data in real-time, using multiple parameters to target a specific set of data. Or, alternatively, wide ranging options, such as specific application by either a user or unique ID, applications submitted between date ranges, applications completed but not yet requested by the third-party and applications that meet specific criteria, such as calculated banding or points values.

All these services offer real-time data processing and ingestion, allowing for continuity of workflow, either within a client's existing systems or by using our system as a primary driver and taking specific business processes from another solution. An example of this is our integration with a client called Northgate system. The large legacy dataset was used to provide calculation of points, bands, and duplicate checking during the completion of a new online form application provided by our Forms software. Data was exchanged in real-time between the two systems as the applicant completed the form, offering a unified and transparent process for the end user, as well as providing feedback during the process of answering the questions. The business logic only needed to be implemented within one system, saving time and money and enhancing the accuracy of the overall solution.

Customer Responsibilities

We will setup an Agile delivery team to implement the project, the key roles are listed below:

Product Owner: Represents the stakeholders and customers. They are responsible for prioritizing the product backlog, ensuring the team delivers value to the business, and making decisions about what features to include in the product.

Scrum Master: Facilitates the Agile process, removes obstacles that hinder the team's progress, and ensures that Agile principles and practices are followed. They also help the team become self-organizing and cross-functional.

Development Team: The group of professionals who are responsible for delivering the product increment. They are self-organizing and cross-functional, meaning they have all the skills necessary to deliver the product.

Stakeholders: Individuals or groups with an interest or stake in the project's outcome. They provide feedback, requirements, and support to ensure that the product meets their needs.

Customer or End User: The ultimate beneficiaries of the product. Their feedback is crucial for ensuring that the product meets their needs and expectations.

Delivery manager: facilitates the successful delivery of the project within an agile framework by empowering teams, managing stakeholders, mitigating risks, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Subject Matter Experts (SMEs): Individuals with specialized knowledge or expertise relevant to the project. They collaborate with the team to provide insights, guidance, and feedback on specific aspects of the product.

Quality Assurance (QA) / Testing Team: Responsible for ensuring the quality of the product by testing it thoroughly and identifying any defects or issues that need to be addressed.

After care (Account Management)

We ensure that our after care and account management processes continue to provide a high quality service level to help drive customer success and growth. Our account managers will:

Relationship Building: Our account managers are responsible for building and nurturing strong relationships with customers. They serve as the primary point of contact for customers, understanding their business needs, goals, and challenges.

Understanding Customer Needs: Account managers will work closely with customers to gain a deep understanding of their requirements and objectives. They will conduct regular meetings, surveys, and assessments to identify opportunities to add value to the customer's business.

Account Planning and Strategy: Account managers will develop account plans and strategies to maximize the value of the services for each customer. Account plans will outline clear goals, milestones, and action steps to drive growth and retention. We hold monthly or quarterly meetings with our clients to review projects and assess ongoing support needs, as well as identifying issues and areas for improvement. We hold 2/3 user group meetings per year.

Customer Advocacy: Account managers will serve as advocates for customers. They will represent the customer's interests and concerns, ensuring that their feedback is heard and addressed by product development, support, and other internal teams.

Customer Satisfaction and Retention: Account managers will measure and track customer satisfaction levels through surveys, feedback sessions, and other metrics and proactively address any issues or concerns raised by customers and work to ensure a positive overall experience.

Performance Monitoring and Reporting: Account managers will monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) related to customer engagement, satisfaction, and service uptimes. Every 6-12 months, we will conduct customer surveys to review user satisfaction with the service and to allow for customers to put forward their recommendations and suggestions.

Our development roadmap seeks to accommodate future UK and local government policy changes as well as incorporate technology innovations. We re-invest surplus back into the business, which allows us to carry out system infrastructure improvements on a regular basis; we carry out over £250,000 of system development investment each year.

Financial recompense

Home Connections will agree to a financial compensation package which accounts for key performance indicators, project delivery criteria or quality criteria not being met. We will discuss and agree these with the customer and have established various packages with our existing clients

Trial services

Home Connections will offer a 3-month trial service based on a vanilla version of the full functionality, subject to scoping and discussion with the customer.

Core Infrastructure and Technical Requirements

The Home Connections Cloud

Home Connections operates a cloud-based service which obviates the need for any local installation of hardware or software. All Home Connections systems are totally cloud-based and this enables end users and business users to access our systems via any device (including tablets and mobile phones) and from any location.

We seek to maintain internet browser compatibility with all major browsers, including backward compatibility to older versions.

Smartphone Apps

Furthermore, Home Connections has also developed specific smartphone Apps for its systems, to allow customers to access public facing systems using Hybrid Apps and dedicated Android and iPhone apps. ; these can be downloaded from the respective App stores. Home Connections is the first in its market sector to introduce such Apps and remains in the leading edge for use of this technology for social housing.

Integrated communications functionality

Home Connections system contains built-in communications technology enabling business users to communicate with customers through a range of channels. These include SMS messaging, email, letter generation and web instant chat. Communications are entirely controlled by the customer and can be limited to outbound, or to allow the receipt of inbound messages. Templates are under the control of the business customer and are created and edited via WYSIWYG ('what you see is what you get') editors. They integrate with the database via mail merge.

Document management

Document management capabilities for attachment and storage of data associated with the relevant records is available out of the box.

Responsive web design

Customer websites are based on state-of-the-art design, utilising a community based software – the LocalGov Drupal web content management engine. Customers select a template upon which to found web portal and obtain full content editing and management capability. Our SaaS websites are based on responsive design, enabling content to be displayed on any type of device.

Home Connections is committed to making all its online forms and websites accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. These regulations will make content more accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including accommodations for blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity, and combinations of these, and some accommodation for learning disabilities and cognitive limitations; but will not address every user need for people with these disabilities.

We are fully compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA standard.

Business intelligence (Power BI) reporting

Home Connections offers built reporting tools to produce standard reports and extracts that can integrate with third-party reporting software. We will also offer a business intelligence reporting tool, which harnesses cube-based reporting. This allows end users to develop a visual graphical dashboard of key performance indicators, and to drag and drop fields into a report creation sandpit. Reports can be transformed into graphs and charts at the click of a button. Data is exportable in multiple formats. Fields can be further drilled into to obtain data at an individual record (for instance at the applicant or property level).

Users will be able to create their own reports which can be saved and re-run when needed. This will include standard central government returns that housing providers are required to submit and any freedom of information requests. Some of the data required will be extractable through the dashboards and other data can be pulled from ad hoc.

All reports from BI can be extracted into Excel as CSV files. BI can be added as a link from the housing register or kept separate depending on the requirements.

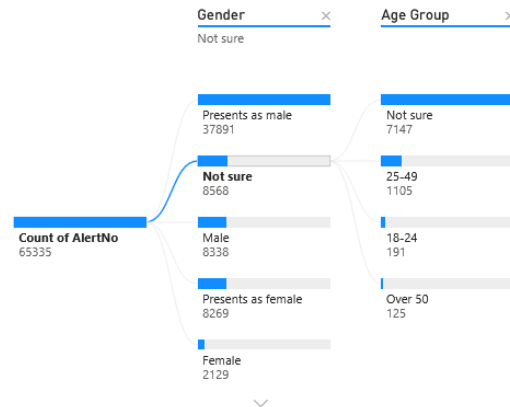
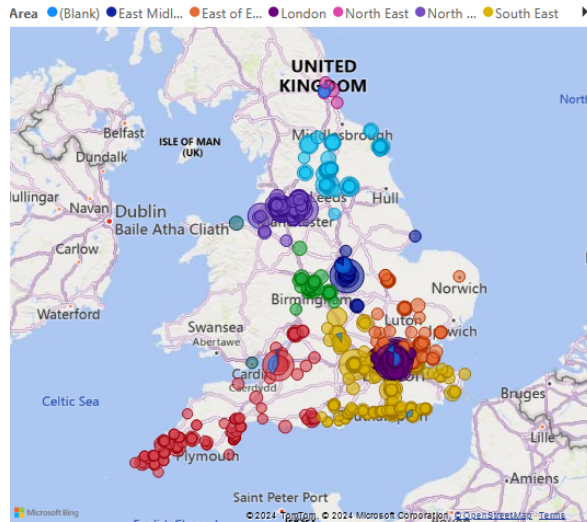
Reports can be easily created by users with no database proficiency as the system works on a drag and drop tool. To create a report, we will provide you with distinct, easy to use datasets.

Member of Public
54727
Count of AlertNo

Self
10608
Count of AlertNo

65335
Count of AlertNo

Count of AlertNo by Area



LocalAuthorityName	Count of AlertNo
Adur District Council	24
Amber Valley Borough Council	22
Arun District Council	137
Ashfield District Council	29
Ashford Borough Council	60
Babergh District Council	20
Barking and Dagenham Borough Council	421
Basset District Council	104
Total	65335