

CASE STUDY

PLACES FOR PEOPLE



The Company

Places for People is one of the UK's largest property and leisure management, development and regeneration companies. With assets in excess of £3.1 billion, it owns or manages 148,000 homes across the UK.



Service Type

MobileLWP

The Challenge

Places for People employs a range of staff including Housing Officers, Site Services Staff, Community Safety Staff and Income Collection Managers. Due to the nature of the work, much of which is conducted alone and possibly out of hours, and the environments staff may be working in, such as customer properties or communal areas, Places for People must ensure its staff are protected and safe at all times.

The company originally had a lone worker solution in place. However, it was no longer proving adequate due to outdated software with no GPS functionality and unreliable processes which relied too heavily upon staff keeping their calendars up to date.

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It was not a sufficient safety measure and a new, up-to-date system was required to ensure staff safety. The new solution needed to meet the following requirements; the ability to integrate with the internal Alarm Receiving Centre; competitive pricing (due to the large volume of lone workers); avoidance of the inconvenience of a dedicated device (making a smartphone app desirable); and ease of use.

In 2013, Places for People began investigating what the lone worker solutions market had to offer.

The Solution

Following extensive research over two years, and trialling five different lone worker solutions, Places for People chose Crystal Ball's **MobileLWP**. It was approved by higher management for implementation in early 2015.

Leanne Moran, Customer Service Centre Team Leader at Places for People, explains why the business chose Crystal Ball:

*"There were many reasons why we chose Crystal Ball. First and foremost, **MobileLWP** ticked all the boxes that were required – which no other solution did. Because of the cost, no dedicated device being needed, the ability to link with our Alarm Receiving Centre and the user-friendly software, Crystal Ball came out on top when compared to the other four lone worker solutions that were piloted. We also chose Crystal Ball because of the positive feedback we received from both the Alarm Receiving Centre staff and our lone workers. This was very important to us."*

With **MobileLWP** in situ, Places for People can now effectively safeguard its lone workers through a convenient smartphone application. Routine Welfare Checks allow the lone workers to set timed intervals during which they require monitoring. If a lone worker fails to respond when a session expires, a panic alert will be activated automatically to alert Places for People's internal Alarm Receiving Centre.

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MobileLWP also offers protection through a manual panic alarm function that is activated by pressing the smartphone's hot key or a button within the app.

MobileLWP provides Places for People with reporting capabilities with full event audit trails of lone workers' session histories; a particularly useful feature for line managers when dealing with customer service enquiries and other management matters.

Alongside Crystal Ball's standard **MobileLWP** solution, Places for People has also been provided with additional bespoke reports and enhanced features within the Crystal Ball portal. Crystal Ball has developed these additional features to meet the business's specific requirements, says Leanne Moran:

"Crystal Ball has developed a bespoke report for us at our request which enables us to view lone-worker session history as a snapshot. This is very useful for us as it enables us to see all lone-worker activities at a glance. For example, how many times a lone worker has checked in to a Routine Welfare Session, how many times a panic alarm has been raised, and so on. The lone worker admin page within the Crystal Ball portal has also been enhanced allowing for multiple emergency contacts to be entered. This makes it clear to us that Crystal Ball are committed to continuous development of their products and service and we certainly value this at Places for People."

The Outcomes

Since implementing Crystal Ball's **MobileLWP**, Places for People has received positive feedback from its staff, as Leanne Moran explains:

"The feedback from our staff has been great; they are finding Crystal Ball much easier to use than the previous solution. It is also convenient for them. They already carry around a number of electronic devices and therefore feel much happier knowing that the lone

worker solution does not add to that. They also feel much safer now that we have visibility of their locations because they know they are being looked after and feel a greater level of security. It has given them peace of mind when conducting their jobs."

Leanne also comments on how delighted she is with the extensive support and training the business has received:

"The service and support Crystal Ball has offered has been absolutely brilliant! Every credit to them. They have provided us with dedicated training days where our Crystal Ball account manager has visited and trained our staff to the masses. The Crystal Ball team has also set up the application on every Samsung smartphone that they have provided us with which has been a great help."

"We are currently looking to expand Crystal Ball into other business areas within Places for People, as we are keen to provide support to as many staff as possible and we absolutely believe that Crystal Ball does this."

Leanne Moran, Customer Service Centre Team Leader

Since the implementation of Crystal Ball has been such a great success for Places for People, the management team has future plans to roll it out to other businesses within the group. Leanne says:

"We are currently looking to expand Crystal Ball into other business areas within Places for People, as we are keen to provide support to as many staff as possible and we absolutely believe that Crystal Ball does this."