



January 2025

CASE STUDY

ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL
IMPROVE RESIDENT SAFETY AND
WELLBEING WITH AICO



TOGETHER WITH



RESIDENT SAFETY AND WELLBEING ARE A PRIORITY FOR REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORDS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL ARE TAKING ACTION AND HAVE PARTNERED WITH AICO TO CREATE SAFER HOMES ACROSS THE DISTRICT.

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Rother District Council is the local authority for Rother District in East Sussex, England. The council is responsible for providing a range of services to residents and businesses in the district, including housing in the form of temporary and supported accommodation, environmental health, waste collection, and planning.

A key focus of the council's housing services is ensuring that all residents have access to safe and habitable homes, protecting them from hazards such as fire, damp and mould, and issues relating to indoor air quality, regardless of the duration of their tenancy. By prioritising high housing standards, the council not only protects the physical and mental health of its residents but also contributes to a stronger, healthier community. To ensure the comfort and protection of their residents, Rother District Council have partnered with home life safety specialist, Aico, to install cutting-edge fire alarms throughout their properties, in addition to their HomeLINK Connected Home Solution.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Resident welfare is a key aspect of housing management - whether that is in the form of creating a habitable environment or ensuring that fire safety measures are in place.

In ensuring doing this, compliance with the British Standards, specifically BS 5839-6 is essential. The standard outlines specific recommendations for fire alarm systems in all domestic properties, relating to the type and design of alarm systems, their installation and the areas of a property to protect.

The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 is the legislation that requires landlords to ensure their properties are fit for human habitation, ensuring the property is structurally sound, has adequate heating, electricity and running water, and is free from damp and mould. Damp and mould are prevalent issues in the social housing sector today, particularly with the introduction of Awaab's Law to the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. The law requires landlords to investigate and fix reported health hazards within specified timeframes following the death of Awaab Ishak as a direct result to damp and mould in the social family home his family rented.

EXCEEDING STANDARDS

Rother District Council significantly enhanced fire safety standards by installing Aico's 3000 Series alarms across their properties. These alarms are Grade D1, meaning they are mains powered, equipped with a tamper-proof battery. The system is also installed to Category LD1 – the highest level of protection - which means that alarms are installed in every room of the nine properties involved, ensuring full property coverage.

- **Ei3028 Multi-Sensor Heat & Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarm** – combining a proven electrochemical CO sensor and thermistor heat sensor to provide heat and CO coverage in one alarm.
- **Ei3016 Optical Smoke Alarm** – containing a high-performance optical smoke sensor, best for detecting slow, smouldering fires in the living room, bedroom, hallway, landing or dining room.





Kathryn Harlow and her team are following BS 5839-6 and adopting a best practice approach when it comes to the safety and wellbeing of their tenants. In doing this the council are future proofing the organisation and showing due diligence.

*Paul Barrett, Relationship Manager,
Aico*



This alarm system upgrade is in addition to the Ei1000G SmartLINK Gateway and Ei1025 Environmental Sensor to help the council proactively protect residents. This advanced monitoring system will help to determine the system's effectiveness whilst monitoring the properties' indoor environment. This will be utilised to proactively address potential issues and ensure a secure and comfortable living environment for residents, particularly as more properties receive the installation of upgraded alarms and the 1000 Series.



The system was installed by Booker & Best, who completed Aico's Expert Installer training prior to the launch of the project. This is a free, award-winning course that is designed to ensure Electrical Contractors have all the information they need to install domestic fire and CO alarm systems effectively. The course is FIA CPD accredited, covering topics such as:

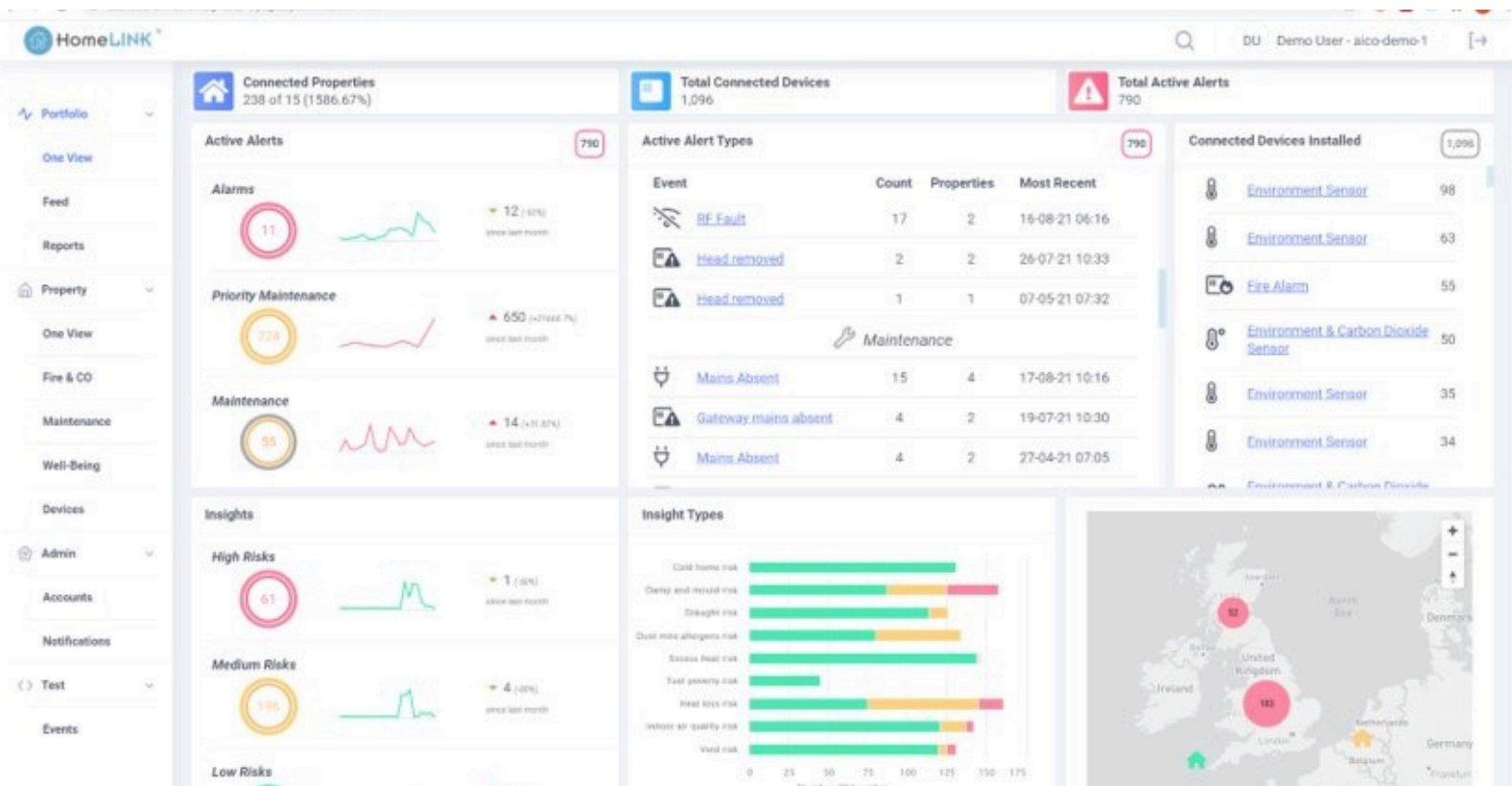
- Compliance
- System choice and specification
- Installation, commissioning and certification
- Testing, maintenance and troubleshooting

A PROACTIVE APPROACH

Environmental sensors within the properties continuously monitor environmental factors such as temperature, humidity, and indoor air quality. This data is collected by the gateway and transmitted to the online HomeLINK portal. By leveraging this data, Rother District Council can take a more proactive approach to property management, rather than reactive. The portal enables the development of implementable strategies surrounding energy efficiency, damp and mould, fuel poverty, and overall sustainability. The proactive approach allows the council to identify and address any potential issues within a property before they escalate, all while maintaining resident privacy by minimising the need for onsite inspections.

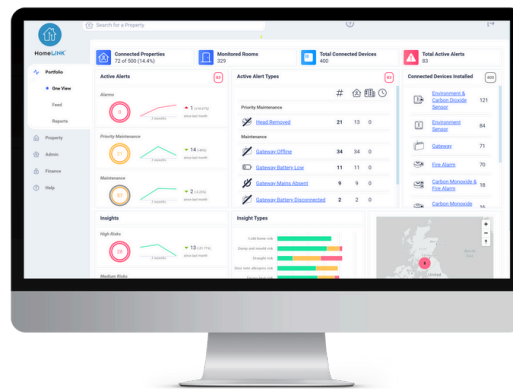
Additionally, the Ei1000G SmartLINK Gateway extracts data from the fire and CO alarms installed and transmits it to the HomeLINK portal. Through the portal, Rother District Council can delve deeper into valuable insights into alarm system performance, maintaining legislative compliance whilst cultivating safer living spaces. Insights surrounding the fire and CO alarms include:

- Activations
- Faults
- Alarm head removals
- Testing and maintenance reminders
- Forecasting alarm replacement dates





Bringing the data from the environmental sensors and fire alarms creates a Connected Home Solution, addressing every need through one platform. Communication and engagement with the resident are other key aspects of the council's goal to create healthier homes. This is facilitated by providing Rother District Council with the knowledge they need to speak to residents and diagnose any problems remotely. Additionally, the HomeLINK App for residents supports this open communication, providing tenants with real time property information.



THE HOMELINK RESIDENT APP

The HomeLINK Resident App empowers tenants to take control of their home's indoor environment. Built with their welfare in mind, the app provides valuable insights and personalised reminders, including alarm testing reminders, and offers practical tips on improving ventilation, reducing energy consumption, and maintaining optimal humidity levels. Through real-time alerts based on room conditions, such as high humidity, residents can actively prioritise their own wellbeing and prevent adverse situations from occurring. The app also notifies users with proactive solutions to mitigate identified issues, helping to reduce the need for costly call outs.

By empowering residents with valuable information and improving communication, the HomeLINK Resident App strengthens the relationship between Rother District Council and its tenants, leading to enhanced resident satisfaction and more efficient property management.

IMPROVING COMPLIANCE AND ACHIEVING NET ZERO TARGETS

Through the introduction of Aico's Connected Home Solution; the 3000 Series, SmartLINK Gateway and Environmental Sensors to their properties, Rother District Council and their residents can reap numerous benefits, including:



Increased Compliance - Rother District Council have exceeded the standards set by BS 5839-6 and are able to better comply with legislation such as Awaab's Law through the ongoing monitoring of properties and their alarm systems via the HomeLINK Portal. This allows the council to provide improved support to residents when it is needed, whilst building trust as they demonstrate a commitment to safety and quality.



Comprehensive Coverage - Remote monitoring of alarm activations enable the council to swiftly respond to emergencies and ensure resident protection. Additionally, the SmartLINK wireless interconnection and data monitoring module of Aico's 3000 Series allows alarms to connect so that when one is triggered, all alarms sound for full audibility, ensuring residents will be effectively alerted in the event of a fire.



Improved Living Conditions - Environmental monitoring empowers residents to improve their living conditions by providing real-time data on issues like dampness and condensation. This enables proactive action such as opening windows, and helps Rother District Council prioritise maintenance efforts, enhancing resident well-being.



Improving EPC ratings to assist with Net Zero targets – With insights into their home's condition, residents can better manage their energy use, contributing to higher EPC ratings. By improving the energy performance of its housing stock, the council can significantly reduce its carbon footprint and make tangible progress towards its Net Zero targets.



We are really enjoying working with Aico to improve our service to our tenants and maintain a decent standard of accommodation. We accommodate a range of tenants but the work with Aico has been particularly helpful when looking at tenancy sustainment for those with multiple compound needs. The staff have also really enjoyed the excellent training provided.

Kathryn Harlow, Housing Solutions Manager, Rother District Council



To find out more about Aico's HomeLINK Connected Home Solution and how it can help you ensure resident safety and wellbeing, please visit: www.aico.co.uk/homelink

