Case Study

Historic Environment Scotland

IT Policy System Implementation

"Getting the IT and Information Security Policy Framework right in HES was a Senior Management Team commitment. It was driven from the top with Information Governance being given the budget and the resources to identify and purchase a solution or expertise to address our requirements"
David Paris, Head of Information Governance

ABOUT HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) is the lead public body established to investigate, care for, and promote Scotland's historic environment.

They lead and enable Scotland's first historic environment strategy Our Place in Time, which sets out how the nation's historic environment will be managed. It ensures the historic environment is cared for, valued and enhanced, both now and for future generations.

HES is responsible for more than 300 properties of national importance. These buildings and monuments draw more than 3 million visitors per year.

The organisation is also responsible for internationally significant collections including more than 5 million drawings, photographs, negatives and manuscripts, along with 20 million aerial images of locations across the world.

About £14 million a year is invested by HES in national and local organisations, supporting building repairs, ancient monuments, archaeological work, the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme and the voluntary sector.

Their conservation experts provide guidance, training and technical research into Scotland's built environment. Through outreach programmes, they promote community and individual learning engagement with Scotland's heritage. They contribute to the Scottish Government's strategy to tackle climate change and reduce Scotland's carbon footprint.

BACKGROUND

As a new organisation, HES was lacking a complete set of IT security policies. The policies that were in use had been drafted by a subject matter expert, and reviewed and commented on by peers and stakeholders including -

- Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)
- Head of Information Governance
- Communications and Media
- Head of IT
- Trade Union Alliance

A variety of engagement methods were used with the stakeholders to progress policy work. Initial comments were gained via email, collated and the policy documents updated.

Final approvals would be gained from Trade Unions, HR and IT. The Senior Management Team were then sent all the policies for final comments and approval.

CHALLENGES

Whilst there was a formal approach to developing or reviewing policies they had only been updated periodically since their creation. This was because the work was treated and viewed as a task that could be stopped or started when the need arose.

This adhoc approach meant it was not uncommon for a staff member to raise a query about a policy which highlighted that the content was out of date or not in line with technological advances. Over time the policy content had become very inconsistent in

terms of the language used, formatting and approach. In some instances policy statements, through editing and changes, had become contradictory in nature. This left staff feeling disengaged from IT and Information Security issues.

Within HES it was also difficult to get a sense of any technical measures that should be put in place to allow the existing policy statements to be enacted. There was a lack of alignment or cross referencing of the policies with International Standards, best practice, existing legislation, or the ongoing changes in technology.

SOLUTION

"Getting the IT and Information Security Policy Framework right in HES was a Senior Management Team commitment. It was driven from the top with Information Governance being given the budget and the resources to identify and purchase a solution or expertise to address our requirements" says David Paris, Head of Information Governance.

When looking for solutions HES found suppliers that could provide policies delivered as simple paper based pdf's. In all cases the suppliers offered to deliver a set of policies and then leave them for HES to manage going forward without transferring any knowledge.

"We first discovered the Protocol Policy System (PPS) at an IRMS conference and liked how they could supply policy content in an interactive format. After discussing the PPS delivery process and maintenance program we were comfortable that we would have an ongoing partner for our IT security policy needs" says David Paris.

After building a branded and lightly customised first draft version of the IT Policy System an onsite workshop was booked and a PPS Consultant facilitated this exercise over 2.5 days with the stakeholders. The outcome of this exercise saw a final draft version of the HES IT Policy System built for review, final edits and submission for sign off.

BENEFITS

The project created good engagement with the main stakeholders in Communications, Human Resources, IT and the Trade Unions. HES now have a comprehensive suite of easy to read, customised and branded policies on their intranet, mapped to international standards such as ISO27002 and ISO22313. Sign off was given by the Senior Management Team meaning HES were then able to commence the next phases of the project being implementation, awareness training and education. The policy experts at PPS have been available to provide assistance with ongoing development and deployment of policies.

LEADERSHIP

A small working group is now set up in HES to look at any emerging or potential gaps in the current policy provision and ensure they are kept in line with the technical strategy. They will also be responsible for compiling, testing and implementing the HES specific policies following the same format as delivered by PPS.