



## Yvonne Castle

Chief Executive  
Johnnie Johnson Housing



“When the three-week announcement happened, we issued a survey to all staff asking if they could continue working at home for the next three months (until 23rd July) and 96% of respondents said yes!”

### Daily meetings

Johnnie Johnson Housing’s (JJH) executive team have been having daily huddles around their Information Centre for many years now. This meant that they had been following Covid-19 developments across the world and discussing it for weeks before the UK went into lockdown.

One of the first actions the executive team took was to establish a business continuity working group and quickly implement actions to minimise the risk to the organisation and their community. This included splitting the board and executive team for face-to-face meetings a long time before lockdown made this a necessity. The executive team also changed the way they ran their daily huddles, using a digital Information Centre and starting their virtual meetings earlier. This meant the business continuity group could meet with their delegated executive team leader immediately afterwards.

The executive team have developed a sound structure for their virtual daily huddles; concerns are reviewed every day but on Mondays they also look at the corporate plan and Wednesday the measures are reviewed. Since lockdown operational leaders have been invited to present their key metrics at the Wednesday meeting, and Yvonne reports having more confidence in the numbers and business performance than ever before. Without the artificial safety net of seeing people working, managers have become far more reliant on data to understand business performance, and as a result the data and information has become significantly better!

When lockdown happened, the executives instructed all teams to have daily huddles, most did pre-Covid but the frequency had slipped in

some instances to weekly instead of daily. The result is that staff started reporting that they felt ‘more connected to the business’ than they did before.

### Director of Data & Digital Transformation

JJH’s new Director of Data and Digital Transformation was recruited entirely virtually - another lockdown triumph! This included the usual rounds of filtering applications (over 80 received for the role), interviews, panels and digital assessment centres conducted using Webex - something JJH have never done before.

Within their new role, the Director of Data and Digital Transformation has set up a cross-organisational group of staff (predominantly junior and middle managers) called the ‘My Futures Group’, to proactively review what is working well during lockdown and assess what life afterwards should look like. The recommendations from this group are being presented to the board on the 16th of July and will form the basis for the new corporate operating model.

### Managing expectations

Yvonne is particularly proud of the way JJH has managed the expectations of it’s colleagues during this period of uncertainty. Many organisations were expecting an easing of the restrictions at the 3-week lockdown review point in early April and as we now know this didn’t happen. In a survey issued to all staff, 96% of respondents were happy to continue working from home for the next three months. This enabled JJH to manage the working expectations of their staff, and by the time the three months is up, they will have a clear direction to share thanks to the efforts of the ‘My Futures Group’. Don’t you just love it when a plan comes together!