



SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL CASE STUDY

SCOTLAND

Scottish Borders Council is one of 32 council areas in Scotland. The Council is responsible for the provision of all local government services to approximately 115,000 people, living in around 1,800 square miles of South East Scotland. The Council headquarters are located in Newtown St Boswells and comprise open-plan office spaces, small cellular offices, council chambers and conference facilities. It houses more than 700 members of staff and uses over 150MWh of gas per year.

Jack Caldwell, Energy and Buildings Officer, is engaged to source and implement energy efficiency measures within budget throughout the Scottish Borders estate, with a view to reducing their carbon footprint.

Why did they choose Genius Hub?

Heating controls were needed to address the infrequent and unpredictable use of the rooms. There had been a number of complaints about the cellular offices being over and under-heated, and in addition, some offices were only being used for part of the day. The conference rooms had no heating controls at all.

Jack explained that the system would have to be integrated with existing infrastructure and it was important that it should be managed and maintained on-site and in-house.

Additionally, the cost of the system had to be justified by the savings that would be achieved.

What was the main concern?

Genius Hub was seen as a new technology. Although the Council was aware of the system working within similar buildings, it had not previously used it in any of their estate.

What did they like about the system?

The Genius Hub system has occupancy detection which provides a new level of control based on the occupancy of the rooms.

“Genius Hub went straight to the solution which is just what we want.”

Jack tells us that he did have discussions with other companies, but he felt that their solutions were cumbersome and very expensive. Other building control companies for example, offered a one-off bespoke system but that made it really expensive and needed engineers to be on-site to program it.

He adds, “The whole Genius Hub setup was done off-site and then the installation was really fast and easy.”



What were their first impressions of Genius Hub?

Genius Hub is a comprehensive retrofit solution for creating energy efficiencies, reducing energy costs and reducing carbon footprint. The system is designed to work with existing systems seamlessly. Jack told us he was impressed that Genius Hub did not hide the fact that this was a new sector for them. Jack went on to say, *“Wet radiators, electric heating, MVHR (Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery) - in fact I don't think there is much they (Genius Hub) can't do!”*

Jack recognised that not only were Genius Hub market leaders, but they were providing a unique solution.

The M&V (Monitoring and Verification) that Genius Hub offered meant that any tweaks needed were identified and constantly updated. Using degree day data analysis, compared with the last two years of data the Genius Hub System has generated efficiency savings of 33% in the first two months.

How was the installation?

Jack explains to us, *“New technologies can make people nervous, especially when there may be changes to how systems are managed. At no point during the installation process were our maintenance team nervous, as it was all very clearly explained and the interaction with our boilers and existing systems was very straightforward.”*

The whole Genius Hub installation process was underpinned with clear, concise communication.

“Fact that it is saving us 33% off our heating costs and no one has noticed is a really good thing in my view.”

Jack continues, *“The worst thing to happen during the install is when everyone goes... what do we do? Genius Hub went straight to the solution - which is just what we want. The installation teams themselves were excellent. Tidying up after themselves and at all times remaining quiet and respectful of the people around them.”*

“Not everything went to plan, but this was not a bad thing. It showed us how Genius Hub dealt with problems and we were impressed and gained further confidence that we can give Genius Hub any building and they will be able to deal with it.”

What were your staffs impressions of the Genius Hub?

Genius Hub is user-friendly and keeps things simple. Staff find using and interacting with Genius Hub good and it is easy to use.

Jack concludes by saying, *“To be honest - the fact that we've had very little feedback is a good thing.”*

He continues, *“People can be quick to pick up negatives, and for me as the energy manager always looking for ways to save energy across our estate, no comment is a good thing... so, the fact that it is saving us 33% off our heating costs and no one has noticed is a really good thing in my view.”*

In conclusion, installation of Genius Hub has been a successful pilot project, which has led to it being rolled out to more buildings in the Scottish Borders Council estate.

