



...without fear,
or favour...

CASE STUDY AGE CONCERN HOUNSLOW

“ We sought ISO certification to improve the quality and consistency of the services we offer to older people. ”

Stephen Hawkins, Chief Executive and Company Secretary of ACH



Age Concern Hounslow (ACH) provides services for older people in Hounslow, focusing on developing an active age programme, information, advice and support services (including personal care and a handyperson service).

Age Concern Hounslow (ACH) are one of an increasing number of Age UK charities that have chosen The British Assessment Bureau (BAB) to assist them in achieving the internationally recognised ISO 9001 quality and ISO 14001 environmental management standards. Having successfully achieved and maintained ISO 9001 with BAB since 2008, and ISO 14001 since 2009, ACH have demonstrated their ongoing commitment to ensuring the quality of their services and improving their environmental credentials.

WHY ISO CERTIFICATION?

Stephen Hawkins, Chief Executive and Company Secretary of Age Concern Hounslow (ACH), with overall responsibility for staffing and services of the charity, explains the importance of maintaining a formal quality system.

“ We sought ISO certification to improve the quality and consistency of the services we offer to older people. We also needed to ensure that our quality management framework meets the requirements of commissioners of services. ”

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Once an organisation decides to go-ahead with BAB, they are assigned a Lead Assessor who remains the principal contact throughout the registration process and beyond. Prior to a formal Audit, the Lead Assessor visits to explain the standard and undertakes a conformity evaluation of the organisation's current arrangements for quality management. The organisation then receives a detailed report including all required actions and together, with their Lead Assessor, determine an appropriate timetable for the Audit Assessment. Stephen says of this process,

“ The initial process was relatively straightforward, with clear information about expectations and explanation of the process. ”

Once an organisation is ready for a formal Audit Assessment, an assigned Lead Assessor makes the required arrangements for an Audit to take place. Stephen says,

“ Although subsequent audits have been quite tough, there has been sufficient flexibility for corrective action plans to be implemented to deal with any areas of non-compliance. This is essential if small voluntary sector organisations – heavily dependent on volunteers – are to maintain appropriate standards. ”

WHY BAB?

BAB has over 40 years experience in the assessment industry and the BAB brand is revered as a hallmark for quality and rigour. BAB is proud to work with a large number of third sector organisations, and regional Age UK charities represent a large proportion of these clients. Stephen tells us why he chose BAB over the competition.

“ It seemed to me that BAB offered flexibility and value for money to enable small, voluntary organisations to develop a robust quality framework and monitoring systems within the constraints of a budget. ”

BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

BAB is committed to helping their clients progress and achieve outstanding results through the application of effective standards and management best practice. The benefits of this include a more motivated workforce, less re-work and increased customer satisfaction. Clients tell BAB that gaining certification can also help to gain funding, qualify for tenders and set them apart from competitors. Stephen says,

“ I believe ISO certification to be a significant factor in our success in winning a Council contract to deliver information and advice. Certification also improves our image to funders generally. ”



THE BRITISH ASSESSMENT BUREAU

Our reputation was established in 1969 as a specialist in certification scheme management. In 1997, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry approved the use of the word 'British' in our corporate title in recognition of our pre-eminent status.



Today, we certify organisations to recognised standards like ISO 9001 (quality management) and ISO 14001 (environmental management) and provide a range of associated training. Outside of ISO standards, we design and manage bespoke assessment schemes. Such schemes are based on the establishment of standards, which can be developed to be recognised company-wide, industry-wide, nationally or internationally.

We are active in the area of setting national standards and are expert contributors to the influential British Standards

QS/01 and AUS/01 committees. These committees have the responsibility for representing the UK in quality management and audit standards issues, as an ISO (International Organization for Standardization) member.

Above all else, we believe it essential to work with our clients as true partners. To this end we are committed to being recognised as the most customer focused certification body in our industry. In independent client satisfaction surveys, 99% of our clients said they would recommend us. We are also proud to be a customer service award winner and have been a recognised Investor in People since 1999.

UKAS

The United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) is the sole National Accreditation Body recognised by Government to assess organisations that provide certification services to internationally agreed (ISO) standards.

Because we are UKAS accredited, our clients can be assured that they are receiving the most appropriate service for their needs. Engaging a UKAS accredited certification body is often a stipulation for public sector tenders and large-scale private sector supply chain work. It also facilitates access to international markets since the UKAS name is recognised throughout the world.

Our maxim 'without fear or favour' typifies our ethical approach. We will never allow the fear of consequences or the promise of favour to influence our professional judgement. In addition, as a UKAS accredited certification body, we are overseen by a powerful Impartiality Committee that ensures our objectivity and independence.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON
CERTIFICATION AND HOW YOU COULD
BENEFIT CALL US ON **0800 404 7007**
OR EMAIL **help@british-assessment.co.uk**

www.british-assessment.co.uk

