

Case Study: EMH — Embedding Mental Toughness into People Strategy to Empower Confident Decision-Making



About EMH

EMH is a not-for-profit organisation providing housing and social care services across the East Midlands. With around 1,200 employees, their operations span diverse sectors—from managing over 20,000 homes to supporting adults with complex needs through care services. The organisation operates across a broad geography, from North Derbyshire to Northampton, with an equally broad range of employee roles and responsibilities.

The Challenge

EMH faced the common challenge of organisational ‘roll bleed’—where the boundaries between roles blur, leading to stress, burnout, and a lack of clarity in decision-making. Their customer-facing teams handled everything from routine repairs to deeply sensitive issues like domestic abuse. Leaders were juggling change and pressure, and many colleagues struggled with confidence in making timely, values-based decisions.

Cultural silos, legacy terms and conditions, and the emotional intensity of the work made it clear that traditional wellbeing and leadership development approaches weren’t enough.

Our Approach

Working with EMH, we took a strategic and phased approach that focused on building mental toughness as a core capability, not just a training intervention.

- We began with Mental Health First Aid training for 16 staff from across the business.
- We then piloted the Mental Toughness programme with 40 housing colleagues, building awareness around how mindset impacts performance, stress, and relationships.
- Building on this, EMH trained 10 internal MTQ practitioners to embed a sustainable, evidence-based approach to development, leadership, and wellbeing.

Rather than a ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution, we co-designed targeted interventions:

- To support staff returning from sick leave or facing personal pressures.

- To equip teams going through change with the resilience and clarity needed to respond positively.
- To empower leaders to make confident, calm decisions—at the right time and for the right reasons.

We integrated our work into EMH's existing frameworks, including their internal coaching programme and values-based tools like the Barrett model.

The Outcome

EMH's people strategy now places mental toughness at the heart of development, wellbeing, and change.

- Teams now report stronger self-awareness, more open conversations, and improved communication styles.
- Facilitators are actively supporting colleagues across the organisation, helping them be the best version of themselves.
- Leaders are empowered to take ownership, avoid role ambiguity, and support a psychologically safe culture.
- The MTQ model is being used proactively to prepare teams for future challenges and change.

The programme has helped create a shared language and mindset around confidence, control, and commitment—ensuring that colleagues feel equipped, valued, and supported.

In Their Words

“Jo and Anthony really helped us articulate what we were trying to do—even when we couldn’t put it into words ourselves. They got under the skin of our organisation and designed something that worked for us, not just a generic solution.”

— *Karen Harriman, People Manager, EMH*

Designing practical, insight-led solutions that build confidence, accountability, and leadership strength—where it matters most.