

99% of Wiltshire's new governors access induction training

David Marriott, Chair of NCOGS and Head of Governor Services for Wiltshire Council, shares his experiences of Modern Governor at Wiltshire Council.

With over 15 years experience as Head of Governor Services for Wiltshire Council David Marriott has the busy job of ensuring that the council's school governors have the skills needed to fulfil their roles. With 235 schools in the area, a base of 3,000 governors need to be trained.

Using Modern Governor e-learning as a vital part of a package of blended learning for governors David has developed an approach to governor training which provides flexible access for all governors.

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In November 2009 David was elected Chair of NCOGS (National Co-ordinators of Governor Services) - the national committee representing local authority providers of services to school governors. In this case study, David shares his experiences of Modern Governor.

Why Modern Governor?

“E-learning and the benefits associated with it has been of interest to me for a quite a while. Faced with the challenge of ensuring that 3,000 school governors had access to relevant and timely training, I found that Modern Governor provided the answers.

Prior to using Modern Governor, the electronic training that was delivered resembled little more than having a text book on screen with no visuals and certainly no engagement.

My interest peaked in using e-learning after a number of Modern Governor demonstrations at Wiltshire Council, NCOGs and South West COGS, the regional group. As an authority, Wiltshire Council decided to roll out Modern Governor due to the quality of modules on offer, accessibility and the value for money.”

How did you roll out Modern Governor?

“Wiltshire Council piloted the Modern Governor e-learning initially with 20 governing bodies from a mixture of primary and secondary schools. The feedback received from governors was positive - the only fear being that Modern Governor might replace all forms of learning. However, with such a diverse audience of school governors, it's important to us that Modern Governor, though integral, is just one of a few elements that form our blended approach to learning. “

What do your school governors like most about Modern Governor?

“Top of the favourites list are the bookmarking capability and ease of accessibility.

In these busy times being able to start and stop your learning as time permits is paramount. Because of the way the courses are structured governors can complete bite-sized chunks of e-learning, mark exactly where they left off and easily revisit when they are ready. As well as fulfilling a voluntary role, school governors have other commitments such as work and family, indeed many are also elected members.

The ease of access ultimately creates a flexible learning environment for busy governors. We’re finding the most popular modules are often the most fundamental such as ‘My Role as a Governor’ or the most

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topical, such as ‘Community Cohesion’.”

How has your module “The New Governor” affected the uptake of induction training by your school governors?

“We’ve found “The New Governor” module, based on our whole day induction training, crucial in giving our governors access to essential skills and information. In the last financial year 86% of all new governors participated in induction training. A further 13% did so via Modern Governor.

Less than two years ago, when Wiltshire Council didn’t have Modern Governor less than 49% took part in induction training.

Doing the online training appears to encourage attendance at face-to-face training, so far from undermining or replacing more traditional approaches, it complements and promotes them.

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We’ve found that one of the motivating factors for governors to do this training is that they get a certificate once they’ve completed the module which they can then use in an Ofsted CPD evidence file.”

What next?

Contact elaine@moderngovernor.com or call 0207 101 9383 to hear more about Wiltshire’s blended learning programme and discuss how Modern Governor can help you make your training budget work harder.