

The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) successfully introduced Self Service as a simple channel-shift solution for dealing with Revenues & Benefits enquiries. Having been a valued client for several years, CEC have been thrilled with the operational and financial benefits that Self Service has delivered, significantly freeing up FTE's and improving levels of customer service 24/7.

Introduction:

Prior to the introduction of Self Service, City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) felt they were not delivering the most efficient and cost effective telephone service for residents. Customers often had to wait in lengthy queues to speak with someone, even for straightforward enquiries where direct contact was often unnecessary. The strain on resources resulting from high volumes of calls was also having a detrimental effect on work processing times, leading to unacceptable customer service standards.

Objectives & Priorities when implementing Self Service:

- A commitment to enhance customer service and reduce complaints across the Revenues and Benefits department, without increased associated costs.
- Due to high call volumes all year round, and in particular during annual billing, it was important that any support service was robust and flexible enough to deal with very high demands and the diverse requirements of its users.
- Call abandonment rates at peak times could exceed 35% and line capacity issues further compounded the resource shortfalls. It was a matter of priority to reduce them, especially during peak periods.
- In the same way that internet users have access to the council 24/7, CEC wished to extend the same level of service to telephone users.
- It was essential the service maintained or improved collection rates.
- Self Service was initially trialed via a six month pilot for Revenues & Benefits. It has been extended for a further year with the addition of a Self Service web and e-mail enquiry facility.



Testimonial:

"The service has been a roaring success in terms of providing 24/7 customer service, resolving large volumes of calls and releasing resources – so we are now operating with less FTE's than last year. Due to the high volume of calls received by our Revenues and Benefits department, we needed to be confident that any support system could handle peaks and troughs in demand. Self Service has exceeded our expectations and I am confident our customers are able to access or leave accurate information 24 hours a day. Having successfully answered over 173,000 enquiries in the first six months, Self Service has provided invaluable support to our Contact Centre and bridged the gap between customer demand and available resources"

**Head of Revenues & Benefits
at City of Edinburgh Council**

Operational & Financial benefits:

- ✓ Self Service handles an average of over **33,500 calls** per month, successfully resolving around **58%** of these calls. This means **only 42%** of incoming enquiries require agent intervention.
- ✓ This equates to the work of **17.5 FTE's**, making a net value / saving of approximately **£427,500 p.a.** (after the total cost of Self Service equating to less than 2 FTE's).
- ✓ Self Service implementation saw a significant reduction in the abandonment rate for Revenues and Benefits enquiries as every call is answered immediately by the system.
- ✓ Self Service has effectively supported CEC's valuable resources, freeing up considerable staff time to focus on the callers who need direct interaction and greatly improving work processing times.
- ✓ Many customers were pleased that they could access information quickly without having to wait in lengthy queues to speak with someone when they did not need to. Consequently, very few complaints have been received about the transition to an automated service.

Demonstration:

Revenues & Benefits service: Call 01183 150438 / Visit EdinburghRB.latestinfo.co.uk