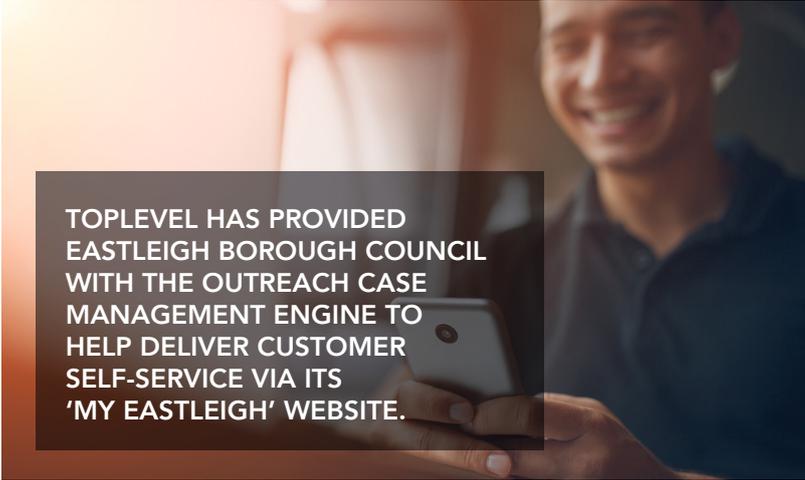


CASE STUDY

EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

'MY EASTLEIGH' SELF-SERVICE PORTAL USES OUTREACH



TOPLEVEL HAS PROVIDED EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL WITH THE OUTREACH CASE MANAGEMENT ENGINE TO HELP DELIVER CUSTOMER SELF-SERVICE VIA ITS 'MY EASTLEIGH' WEBSITE.

The dynamic self-service portal is key to the council's aim to promote digital inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring citizens have multi-channel access to council services in line with the Digital-By-Default drive. Outreach is being used both externally, to handle customer correspondence and bookings via the website, and internally to provide a room booking solution and forms with associated workflow.

Eastleigh Borough Council, in Hampshire, covers approximately 80 square kilometres, with a population of around 125,000 and over 53,000 households.

The mostly suburban borough stretches down to the east of Southampton, encompassing Southampton Airport and the Ageas Bowl Cricket Ground. Densely populated, Eastleigh sought to improve and enhance its digital channel for accessing its services.



THE CHALLENGE

Eastleigh Borough Council first began looking at creating an interactive digital channel two years ago, initially considering launching a mobile application alongside a customer portal on its website. However it was deemed that maintaining a mobile application as well as a portal would result in too great an overhead given the potential level of usage in a district council area. In addition, the greater take up of 3G and availability of free Wi-Fi meant it made more sense to develop one device agnostic solution.

A key design criterion for the portal was that it would be a single place to carry out transactions with the Council, enabling users to apply for services, make bookings and payments, track the progress of requests and sign up for services.

The in-house built 'My Eastleigh' website is designed to encourage 'Channel Shift' whereby users elect to use the online resource rather than using other more expensive channels such as calling the contact centre. This will relieve the pressure on the call centre at peak times and free up staff to respond to other enquiries. Residents can also contact the council when they choose to and not just during opening hours.



WHY TOPLEVEL

Eastleigh Borough Council originally approached Toplevel because it needed to streamline room bookings for staff and provide an online booking facility for residents, but quickly realised the wide potential of the Outreach platform. The Council was also looking to update and extend the functionality offered by its existing forms system which was out of date. Discussions with Toplevel revealed it would be more economically viable to take the entire Outreach product suite rather than to retain the old system, giving the council a single technology solution capable of delivering a wide range of services in addition to electronic forms. Moreover, Outreach would provide the council with complete autonomy, enabling the team to internally develop, integrate and host the solution themselves.

In September 2013, Toplevel delivered training to show Eastleigh Borough Council how to implement the Outreach platform and its modules from Design Studio to Workbench, to eBookings, eForms, ePayments and eProcess.

Non-technical members of staff were quickly able to manipulate the eForms module while developers began to use .NET to integrate the platform with the front and back office systems.

Initially the organisation began using the eBookings module internally for room bookings which proved useful when the council moved its Head Quarters to the town centre in early 2014. eForms provided some urgently needed new forms before the formal launch of the My Eastleigh customer portal.

Phase one of the self-service portal project launched in June 2014 and included online forms, reporting, payments and automated email alerts for waste collections and notification of new planning applications.

To provide the best possible customer experience Outreach needed to be able to pre-populate online transactions based on existing customer information stored in the council's CRM system. Integration can often present a challenge but Eastleigh successfully integrated their customer portal, CRM and other back office

systems, enabling the council to deliver the best possible customer experience.

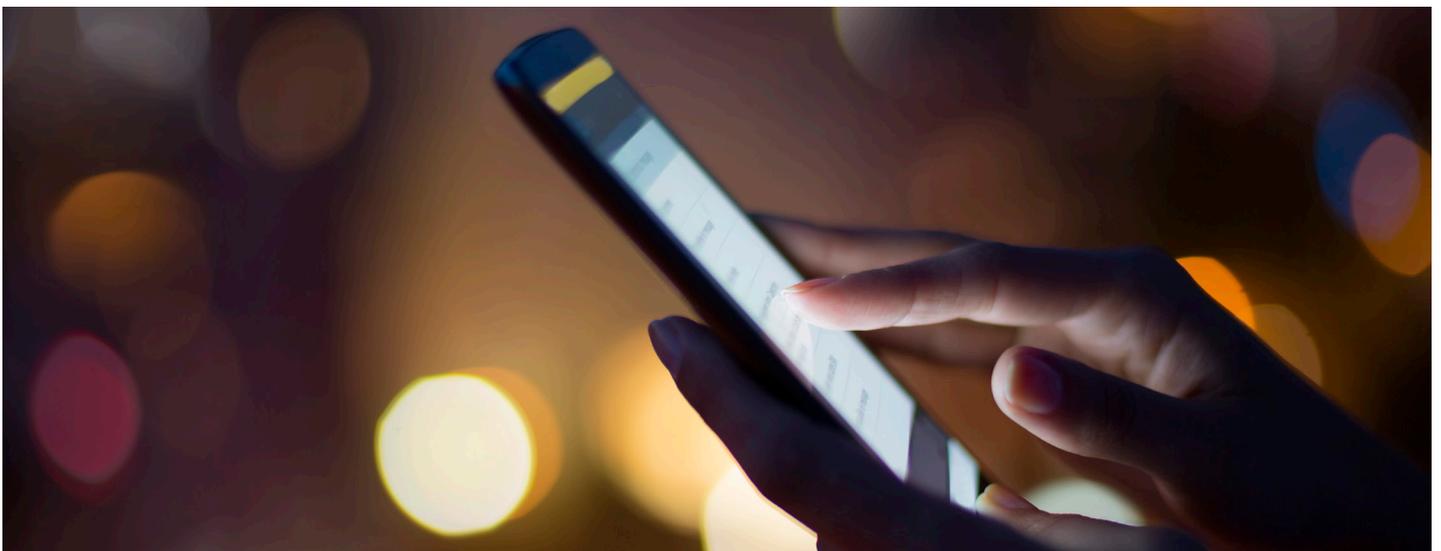
However SSO did not mean security was compromised. Within the portal, Outreach provided a secure window enabling staff to monitor user activity, from log-on to form submission, with all steps of the process recorded in a full audit trail. A security assessment carried out by independent penetration testers post-launch verified the security of the implementation as a whole.

The site also had to be easy to use, and support for mobile access over any device was essential. Here the Outreach Responsive Design feature came into its own, enabling portal forms to automatically resize to the device being used to access the site. This sees subtle changes made to the information on the screen, from automatically resized images to the removal of extraneous buttons and enlargement of specific fonts, making complex transactions possible over the small screen.

“

To do that we had to make the back-end systems talk to each other. 'My Eastleigh' is a building block and everything we add will sit on that so it was important to get the foundations right. Mostly we do not ask residents to log in to carry out transactions with us, but when they are required to I stipulated that I wanted "Single-Sign-On" (SSO), so that you sign-in and can get to everything, making it as simple as possible."

DAVID BERROW, SENIOR BUSINESS ANALYST,
EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL



RESERVATIONS DONE VIA SELF-SERVICE

An online booking facility for the Council's free summer activities for children, Park Sport, opened shortly after the launch of My Eastleigh. There were 3,000 bookings in the first 11 hours, with an instant 90 percent online take-up, proving the value, robustness, and stability of the solution and the demand for this type of service.

The activities are often over-subscribed and generate large call volumes, so online booking had the potential to create real channel shift.

Thanks to the Outreach Booking module, Eastleigh were able to heavily promote the ability to book Park Sport activities online via the portal. This meant parents could see the availability of places and book at a time to suit them.

In addition to automating the booking process and handling large volumes, the Outreach platform also provided the security assurance needed to process such bookings.

The sensitive nature of the information being processed, such as children's names and contact details, make data protection a key concern and the council needed to obtain parental consent before processing booking requests. Both of these conditions made security a priority so the system was configured to track if the user had logged-in and that consent has been given before progressing the booking.

“

The option to book by phone remains but in previous years parents have asked for online booking so we're pleased to be able to offer that. The fact so many have chosen to book online demonstrates the importance of offering services online. Plus it smoothes out those peaks of demand, freeing up our contact centre staff to respond to other things.”

DAVID BERROW, SENIOR BUSINESS ANALYST,
EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

BENEFITS

In terms of achieving strategic objectives, the Outreach platform has already demonstrated its worth, automating processes and increasing channel shift.

In addition, Eastleigh Borough Council has been able to use the migration into Outreach to standardise and improve current working processes. By examining the information being requested and the processes involved, such as where information goes, the council has reduced bureaucracy and can now cast a critical eye over how services are designed in the future.

Looking forward, Eastleigh Borough Council intends to continue to use Outreach both internally for cross-departmental workflows and externally. It will further utilise the RBAC (Role-Based Access Control) and workflow features to automate internal approval processes, so as to maximise efficiency gains from electronic working, and will also continue building the customer-facing services housed on the 'My Eastleigh' portal.



TOPELVEL – Secure online case management

Call us now or use the enquiry form on our website to discuss how we can help you deliver your next project.

+44 (0)1453 852 700

✉ email@equiniti-toplevel.com

🌐 www.equiniti-toplevel.com

500 Stonehouse Park, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 3UT