

The implementation was so successful, and the benefits so clear, Peterborough has now decided to roll out Northgate EDRM across the whole council.

Reduced CO₂ emissions due to lower paper and printer use are saving around five tonnes of CO₂ each year.

The EDRM system has also allowed the council to offer an improved package of home and flexible working to staff, helping Peterborough meet its family-friendly working commitments.

Peterborough City Council is rolling out Northgate's electronic document and records management (EDRM) system across the entire authority after achieving significant efficiency and customer service benefits from using the solution in its revenues and benefits service.

Modernising Information Management



CASE STUDY

Let's talk

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Benefits:

- Significant cost savings
- Improved services
- Effective information sharing
- Reduced processing times
- Real-time performance monitoring

EDRM transforms efficiency and delivers massive savings

The introduction of Northgate's electronic document and records management (EDRM) system into Peterborough City Council's revenues and benefits service has delivered significant improvements in both efficiency and customer service. The implementation was so successful, and the benefits so clear, Peterborough has now decided to roll out Northgate EDRM across the whole council.

Mark Sandhu, Head of Customer Services at Peterborough City Council, says EDRM has been a vital part of the modernisation of customer services at Peterborough. He says with the call centre now having access to live data, staff there are equipped to provide

a much more helpful and efficient service, while also reducing both the time and costs involved in responding to enquiries.

He says: "EDRM across the Council has allowed the seamless movement of documents between front and back offices and the delivery of live data into the call centre. This has significantly improved our ability to deliver services to our telephone and face-to-face customers, and has reduced the unit cost of each transaction."

Paul Tonks, Transformation Director at Peterborough City Council, adds: "Working with Northgate we have steadily rolled the system out through the council in services such as: revenues and benefits, planning and building control, administration, and the Chief

Executive's office. Installation in children's services is currently under way.

From the outset we agreed with Northgate that the system would also in time be rolled out to our partners on the Greater Peterborough Partnership, our Local Strategic Partnership. This promises to bring significant benefits far beyond the Council alone."

The introduction of Northgate EDRM, and the improvements in efficiency, have been noticed and welcomed by organisations regularly dealing with the council.

Cheryl Quinton, Recovery Manager for local housing organisation Cross Keys Homes Ltd says: "The introduction of an EDRM system has improved response times to both staff



"EDRM across the Council has allowed the seamless movement of documents between front and back offices and the delivery of live data into the call centre."

Mark Sandhu
Head of Customer Services
Peterborough City Council

and customer enquiries, improved benefit uptake and reduced processing times for claims. It has also resulted in increased revenue for Cross Keys Homes from housing benefits."

Achieving better service at lower cost

Mr Tonks says EDRM was initially introduced into the revenues and benefits department at Peterborough as a way of delivering better services for less money.

He says: "In common with many authorities, Peterborough faced the dual challenge of improving customer service and reducing cost. Our revenue and benefits service was already excellent but we knew customer service could be improved and the service could be delivered at a lower cost."

He says the council evaluated the options for electronic document records management, and selected the Northgate solution because of its value, capabilities and ability to transform the way the council works.

He says: "Following a detailed review of the EDRM market we selected Northgate for its corporate functionality, value and process improvement opportunities."

He says the revenues and benefits department faced a number of challenges which the EDRM solution needed to solve.

There was a high risk of post and documents being mis-filed, and an inability to identify

the latest status regarding outstanding post. There were also many manually intensive tasks involved in linking incoming post with the thousands of paper files. Service teams were spending a lot of time simply collating "hard copy" information for a claim. And it was very difficult to effectively share the latest information quickly across the team.

Counter and call centre customer services needed to be located close to the processing teams and paper files so they could answer queries raised by customers.

The council also found it difficult to effectively monitor performance and to identify resource implications quickly.

In addition, storing and maintaining the paper files was proving to be both expensive, and took up large amounts of valuable office space.

The Northgate EDRM system has helped the council to address all of these issues – and success has been carefully monitored and the benefits documented.

Proven benefits

Peterborough has carefully scrutinised and monitored the implementation of the EDRM system, to identify where improvements and efficiency savings were being realised. It was the clear evidence coming from this process that persuaded Peterborough to implement Northgate EDRM right across the council.

Mr Tonks says: "Our benefits realisation process is thorough – it has to be as our focus is on return on investment. Mapped onto web-based software it enables us to manage each target and each milestone."

The council is saving £100,000 a year on administrative and clerical costs, from a reduction in the number of staff.

Reduced paper use and savings around copying, archiving and waste handling will save approximately £25,000 a year.

Removing paper files has reduced the amount of office floor space needed within revenues and benefits by around 10%. Freed from the need to access paper files, the counter and call centre customer services staff have now been moved to more accessible locations and unified around one central point. This has saved a further £80,000.

Mr Tonks says: "We have also reduced processing times in revenues and benefits to deliver a further £40,000 reduction in cost. Real-time performance monitoring has also allowed our managers to identify problems quickly and accurately, resulting in faster decisions."

Joining up the administrative offices across the council has delivered further efficiency improvements estimated to have delivered savings in the region of £60,000.

"This promises to bring significant benefits far beyond the Council alone."

Paul Tonks
Transformation Director
Peterborough City Council

"The EDRM system has improved response times, improved benefit uptake and reduced processing times for claims."

Cheryl Quinton
Recovery Manager
Cross Keys Homes Ltd