

# case study

Boston Borough Council is located in Lincolnshire in the town of Boston. It serves a population of around 65,000 residents living both in the town as well as in more rural areas within the Borough.



## What is My Council Services?

My Council Services provides public sector organisations with innovative smartphone and web applications that enable self-service customer access, contact centre management and mobile working. The My Council Services platform is unique. It is the only fully synchronised, dynamically configurable and integrated multi channel customer self-service and mobile working platform. The combination of innovative, cost effective technology and made-to-measure professional services ensures clients realise rapid returns on their investments.

## Improving online services at Boston Borough Council

At a time when significant budgetary challenges remain a feature of the local authority landscape, Boston Borough Council recognises that the best way to ensure that it will be able to continue to provide effective and cost efficient services to citizens is to move more transactions online. This push towards channel shift online is driven by a desire not only to save money but also to offer improved service levels to citizens.

Therefore, in late 2015, Boston Borough Council decided to start making use of the My Council Services customer digital access platform, which offers the range of flexible, customisable web and mobile eforms that it wanted. The Council decided to focus initially on one area of business, whilst at the same time beginning to phase out its previous eforms system.

## The key drivers behind Boston Borough Council's decision to move to My Council Services eforms were:

- The Council wanted to have a suite of web and native mobile eforms that were both mobile responsive and dynamic. My Council Services provides this.
- It was important for the Council to use eforms technology that would link with the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) address database. My Council Services offers integration with the LLPG as part of its service.
- The Council needed to have eforms technology that could immediately be used to take payments online. My Council Services provides this functionality.

The Council decided to take a phased approach to implementing this change and the online ordering and payment of green garden waste services was chosen as the pilot project.

## The green garden waste payment project

The collection of green garden waste is a discretionary service provided by Boston Borough Council. Prior to 2015, this service was available free of charge and used by 18,000 households. In 2015 the decision was taken to introduce an annual collection charge and a charge of £30 is now levied on each household that uses the service.

In making this change, the Council was keen to ensure that the business process designed to facilitate this new transaction was streamlined, cost efficient and that it offered a good overall customer experience.

### The process

Working with Abavus, the Council built a single responsive My Council Services green garden waste eform. This form is linked to the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and also enables payments to be taken. Citizens can choose to make this transaction in one of three ways:



Using the eform to provide their details and make payment themselves directly via the Boston Borough Council website.

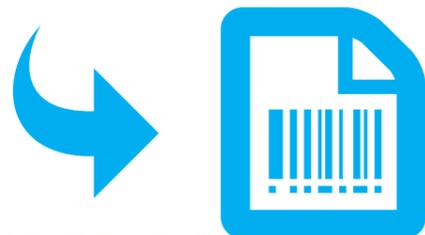


By phone – citizens can call the Council's contact centre where customer services operatives complete the eform for them and take the payment.



Face-to-face – citizens can come into the Council's offices where one of the Council's customer services advisors will help them complete the form and make payment.

Once the transaction is made, the subscriber's details are automatically downloaded, using the My Council Services webservices to a third party system which triggers the dispatch of a barcoded sticker for the householder to place on their green garden bin. The Council's bin collection operatives in the field then know which households have paid for the collection service.



### The launch

Because of the seasonal nature of the service (offered for 10 months of the year) the timescales set for delivery of this new process were rigid. Abavus and the My Council Services team had to work quickly and effectively with both the merchant service provider and Boston Council's implementation team to get the process live by the agreed date.



During the **first day** of operation  
**1,036**  
citizens subscribed and paid  
for the service

On the **second day** a further  
**1,346**  
citizens subscribed and paid  
for the service

By the end of the **first week**  
**4,149**  
citizens subscribed and paid  
for the service

Within **three months** of launch  
**over 11,000**  
citizens subscribed and paid  
for the service

### Achieving channel shift

One of Boston Borough Council's objectives for the project was to encourage as many citizens as possible to process their green garden waste subscriptions online. Within three months of launch almost half (45.7%) of all transactions were being processed through the web portal without the need for customer service operative involvement.

### Return on investment

Budgets are extremely tight in local government and so every discretionary service that Boston Council offers has to be evaluated to ensure that it remains appropriate and cost-effective to deliver. By levying a subscription fee and automating the process of collecting it using My Council Services, the green garden collection now offers more value to citizens in the form of improved service, whilst being cost neutral to the Council.

### Next steps

Based upon the success of the green garden waste project, Boston Borough Council has begun rolling out other digital projects making use of My Council Services technology. These include a project to improve the Council's identification of and response to fly tipping, as well as a project to enable citizens to book the Council's collection of bulky items service online.



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## What Boston Borough Council says about the project

Jason Bagley -Technical Project and Development Analyst Boston Council said

### On the My Council Services technology set:

*'We knew that we needed to replace some of our existing technology if we wanted to make some of the business improvements necessary. Having seen what My Council Services technology could offer now and in the future we knew that it was the right product for us.'*

### On the project implementation and delivery:

*'We had really tight deadlines to meet that could not be changed simply because of the nature of the service to be offered. It was really refreshing therefore to work with a supplier who was totally committed to ensuring that our deadlines were achieved. From the project commencement to launch Abavus worked flexibly, competently and comprehensively.'*

### On the future:

*'The success of the green garden waste project has given us real confidence and impetus to expand the My Council Services footprint at Boston with other digital projects that we are soon embarking on.'*





## About Abavus Ltd and My Council Services

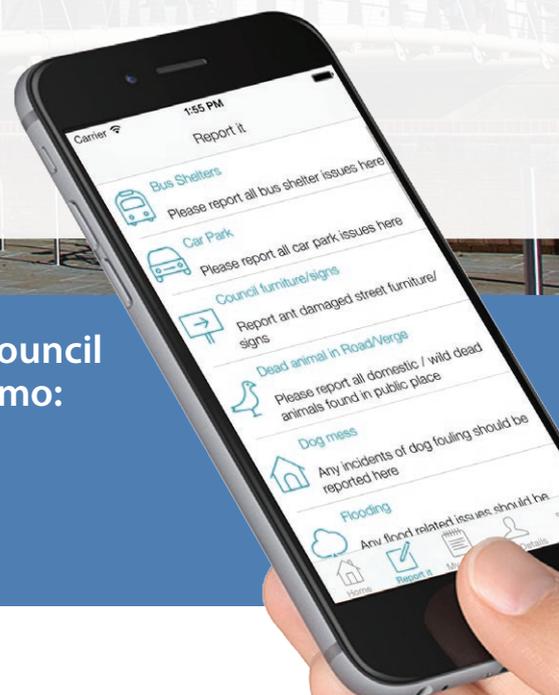
Abavus is a partner to iTouch Vision and the exclusive certified partner for My Council Services. Over the last five years Abavus has delivered operational consultancy alongside accredited training and development to UK public sector organisations. During that time Abavus has also been involved with the implementation and setup of IT platforms.

iTouch Vision is a leading innovator in the development of technology applications focused on increasing efficiency and improving the customer experience for both public sector and commercial organisations.

My Council Services is the flagship of its current development activity.



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iTouch Vision

For more information about My Council Services and to book your free demo:

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