




NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

UNIVERSAL CREDIT DIGITAL SERVICE (UCDS)

Transforming productivity in CTS
administration

Making the management of a complex
DWP ATLAS workstream much simpler.

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- 80% of UC claims automated
 - Information within DWP Notifications now presented in context
 - Backlog cleared and workload now manageable
 - Temporary staff no longer needed
 - Less experienced staff now handle this complex workstream

ABOUT NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- Services 133,570 residents
- Located less than 40 miles North from central London
- District formed in 1974, and made up of 24 wards
- 94% of residents are satisfied with the area as a place to live

One year on from migration to full service Universal Credit (UC), Anne Banner, Benefits Manager, talks about Govtech's Universal Credit digital service, eCAPTURE UCDS.

Q What problems and issues were you looking to address?

A "A backlog of work had built up. It was an unknown quantity in that it consisted of Notifications which we knew would expand into many more tasks once we loaded them.

Clarity of data was a problem. It wasn't clear what information was in the DWP Notifications we received and a lot of time was being consumed in interpreting these changes. A significant number required no action to be taken and we felt that having to review these was time wasted.

Cost was a major concern. We initially took on a temporary staff member to deal with the increased workload, but this was not sustainable."

Q What factors were important in identifying a solution?

A "This is a complex area so we needed trust in our supplier and confidence that they understood the process and our business requirements. Govtech already had our trust and confidence. We saw UCDS as a way to build on our successful partnership in Revenues.

Second, simplicity was vital. Initially, we worked from our document management system. The original PDFs were difficult to read, with information not presented in context. Assessors had to sift every page to find what they were looking for.

We were also having to work from a Task Manager in the core system. Assessors were used to working from DMS work queues and were less comfortable working this way.

UCDS provides a much better solution. Only relevant data is presented to the Revenues system and the PDF renditions generated by UCDS are clear and concise, displaying information in context to the assessors.

It's much easier now to explain awards to customers as all the values used are included in the PDF rendition created by UCDS."

Q How easy was it to implement UCDS?

A "It was very straightforward. Govtech advised our IT department on setting up the automated loading of files they returned to us so that there were no delays. A configuration workshop enabled us to explain to Govtech what rules we needed to remove data not relevant to our scheme, how we wanted to deal with anomalies in DWP data and what document types we needed for auto-indexing.

We loaded test files over a couple of days and were able to immediately sign-off and go live."

Q What impact has UCDS had?

A "We are the most up to date we have been in a long time, with only 2 days of UC files outstanding. I would estimate that 80% of our UC claims are now being properly automated. We now only need to look at Stop notices and the unmatched claims, of which there are far fewer. Previously, we were unable to view case information in unmatched files. Now we are confident we aren't missing any data as PDF renditions for all cases are loaded into our DMS. Notifications are sent to Govtech, returned and loaded on the same day.

Associated PDF renditions go straight into our DMS as completed work, other than Stop Notices and unmatched files which go straight to work queues. It is so much easier and clearer to check an award if the Officer is unsure. This has improved the confidence of less experienced staff."

Q How would you summarise the benefits of UCDS?

A "We have been able to keep up with the work without needing to take on more temporary staff to replace the experience of those who have since retired. It's enabled a smaller, less experienced team to cope sustainably with a rising, complex workstream."

ABOUT GOVTECH

Govtech is a trusted partner for its many UK local authority customers. As experts in digital process automation, we help councils to maximise returns on investments in online services, Customer Experience and Customer Relationship Management systems. Our hosted solutions integrate with all mainstream Revenues and Benefits systems and automate processing of online Revenues and Benefits transactions.

We track and monitor the automation rates, review these with customers and compare them with others. This helps you achieve more by freeing up skilled resources that are lost to manual checking and processing. As budgets tighten, demand and expectations grow and resources are stretched thinner, you're being asked to do more. Whether you use NEC Revenues & Benefits, Capita or Civica, our end-to-end eCAPTURE and webCAPTURE digital process automation services will help you to bridge the gap.

Have you ever asked yourself...

- How do I manage the Universal Credit workload associated with the daily Change Notifications?
- Will the problems get worse? Especially with the increase in reported changes as the economy opens-up, and incomes begin to fluctuate during an extended recovery?
- Does my current automation solution help, or is it just cluttering up CTS case histories with irrelevant change reports?

If so, then why not talk to us? Simply get in touch to explain what you need and explore how Govtech's UCDS can help your team to keep on top of this workload.

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