

**Tangible Benefits**

This integration has produced tangible benefits, both to the Council and its customers:

**For Chichester:**

- Planning Officers have significantly fewer interruptions, freeing up an average of 25 hours per week and allowing them to concentrate on the more complex cases.
- Officers returning from site no longer have numerous voicemail messages to respond to and those service requests the contact centre are unable to answer are captured and imported into the officers workflow, ready on his or her return.
- Best Value Performance Indicators are all in the top quartile, exceeding last years out-turn, and forecast to exceed this year's set targets.

Steve Carvell, Head of Development and Building Control at Chichester says: "Teams integrated into the contact centre report that the contact centre has been more successful than expected. The number of back office calls has fallen substantially resulting in fewer routine calls being dealt with by professional officers. Officers also consider the contact centre to have had a positive effect on the back office, increasing concentration levels and work efficiencies"

**For its Customers:**

- Prior to the contact centre, 39% of calls to the back office were either answered by voicemail or unanswered - unanswered calls in the back office have now been reduced to 5%.
- Callers now receive a personal response from a staff member rather than a voicemail message. 89% of planning customers say they received an immediate response to their enquiry, with 100% being satisfied with the helpfulness of the staff and the overall service provision. Some have taken the opportunity to put pen to paper:

"...I came to the Planning Department today for the first time. I was incredibly impressed by the help, courtesy and efficiency with which I was treated..."

As well as an excellent reaction from customers, Chichester host visits from other local authorities who have given very positive feedback:

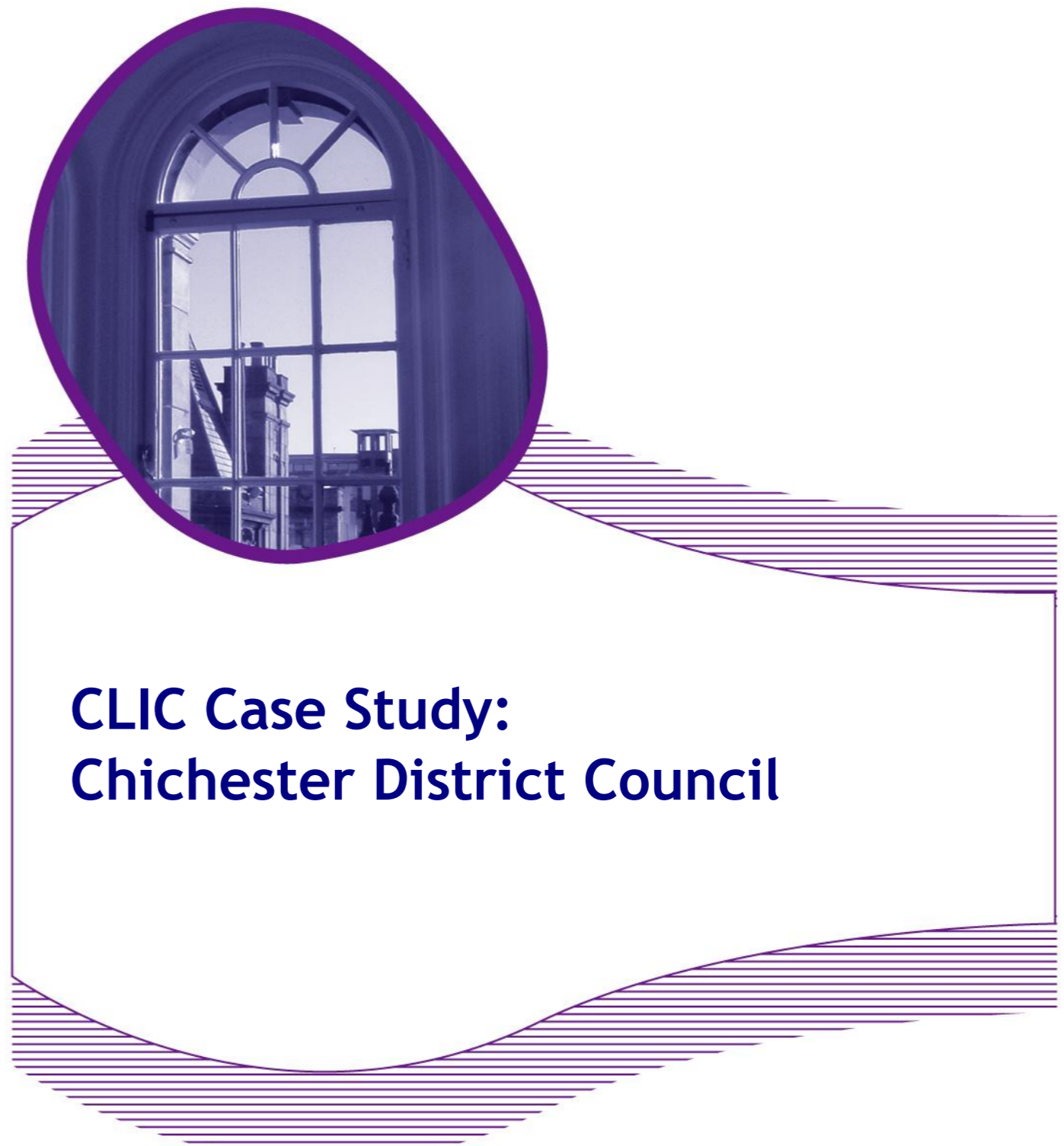
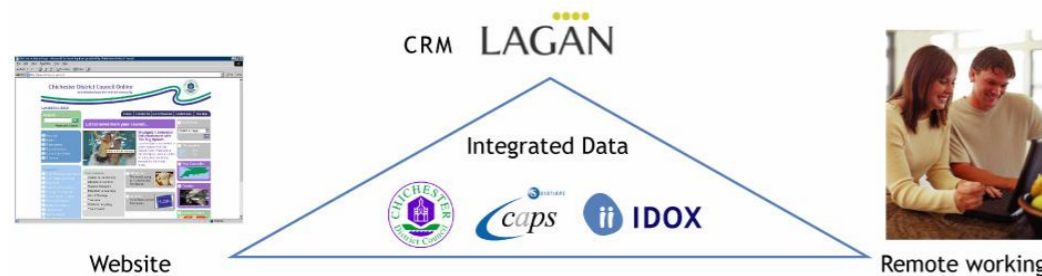
.."we found your approach most enlightening. We were also impressed that of all the Councils we have spoken to, yours is the only one which appears to have thought through the overall integration issues.. "

.."we took a lot of useful information with us and were very impressed with the way staff have adopted the system with ease.."

**The Future**

The pilot project has provided Chichester Council with a solid foundation upon which to base a corporate roll-out to other service areas. In rolling-out the contact centre, Chichester Members will be taking a strategic approach to the future accessibility of their services, aligning systems and services in order to maximise efficiencies and provide customers with true choice and flexibility in how they do business with the Council.

The pilot has emphasised both the intrinsic links that must be addressed in order to gain true business transformation and revealed an appetite for integrated and accessible information, whether that be online transactions through the website, remote access for staff working in the field, or direct customer access. The project also demonstrates the efforts required, and the excellent results that can be achieved in delivering against Priority Service Outcome G24, due for compliance in March 2006.



**CLIC Case Study:  
Chichester District Council**

November 2005

To reach marketing for IDOX, please email [marketing@IDOXplc.com](mailto:marketing@IDOXplc.com) or call 0141 574 1910.  
[www.IDOXplc.com](http://www.IDOXplc.com)

Introduction

Chichester’s customers are reaping the benefits of a sophisticated technology integration project.

Chichester District Council has been piloting a contact centre for the Council’s Housing and Planning & Building Control services using CRM software, deeply integrated into back office systems to maximise the number of service requests answered at first point of contact.

Aimed at linking the planning department’s two back office systems (CAPS Uni-form and IDOX Software) with the contact centre’s customer relationship management system (Lagan Frontline), the project has enabled Chichester Council to offer 89% of planning customers an immediate response to their enquiry. The project is also distinctive in the degree to which the three technology providers involved (CAPS Solutions Ltd, Lagan Technologies Ltd and IDOX plc) worked in partnership with the Council to provide a truly “seamless” solution.



“...the way I was dealt with was excellent. Please keep up the good work.”

Jane Dodsworth, Information & Management Services Corporate Advisor, Chichester District Council commented, “The project has transformed the way we do business in these service areas. We have seen huge improvements, both in terms of the Council’s efficiency and in the quality of service we are able to offer our customers.”

She added, “Council Members recognise the value of being able to speak to an individual on first contact whose sole purpose is to champion that enquiry, particularly in areas where the services we provide have a direct impact on people’s lifestyle and the environment in which they live and work.”

“...many thanks for your prompt and efficient service.”

Background

A government-funded survey revealed that 70% of the enquiries handled by the Council were considered to be relatively simple, with 88% being resolved within 5 minutes. Reviews conducted by the Council also indicated that routine enquiries were frequently handled by professional Officers. A contact centre, which would release Officers from dealing with routine enquiries, as well as improve accessibility to the Council’s services, seemed the obvious answer. The Council’s Housing and Planning & Building Control services were chosen to participate in a one-year pilot project which has been running since January 2005.

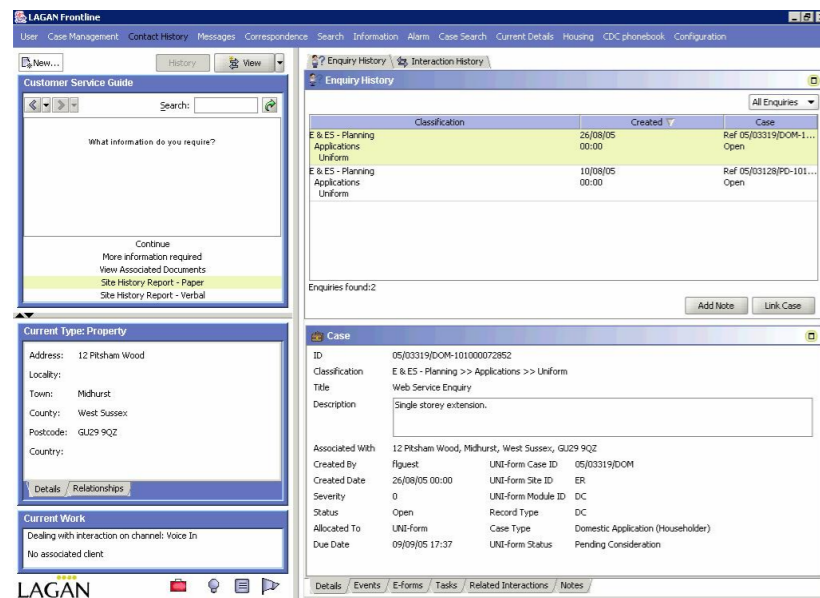
First stage of integration: The Housing Service

The Housing Services Choice Based Letting System was integrated into the contact centre, using Lagan Technologies’ Frontline customer relationship management (CRM) system. The integration enables contact centre staff to answer 80% of enquiries at first point of contact.

Chichester Council then went on to link the services of the contact centre with Planning & Building Control, both to improve the effectiveness with which planning enquiries were handled and to bring greater efficiency to the planning back office operation.

However, linking the contact centre’s CRM with the planning service’s back office systems was a complicated task, involving the integration of three separate management information systems.

The first stage involved integrating the contact centre and the planning system (CAPS Uni-form). CAPS Solutions and Lagan Technologies developed a standard interface which provides real time access to information held in the back office systems. If a change now occurs in the planning system (for example, to the status of a planning application), a tracking record is created in the CRM system, ensuring the contact centre history is automatically updated.



Whilst the integration of the planning and CRM systems was already a significant step forward, Chichester identified further opportunities to improve customer service by linking Lagan Frontline to IDOX Software (the existing workflow and document management system). The objective was two-fold:

- to achieve a complete contact history of all documentation and data relating to an application, and
- to enable the Planning Officers to receive service requests from the contact centre directly into their workflow in-tray, providing a seamless line of communication from front to back office with minimal change to existing work practices.



The third and final phase of the project was to enhance the IDOX process of scanned documents to link case files to citizen-based records in the CRM system, as well as maintaining the existing property-based link to CAPS Uni-form. Now, when a piece of correspondence is received by the back office, a scanned and indexed image of the new document is auto-linked and made viewable by the contact centre. If an individual is not known to the CRM system, a new file is created in the back office system which then automatically instructs the CRM system to do the same.

Passing Calls from Front to Back Office

Complex calls that cannot be dealt with by the contact centre are passed to the back office. Any call logged in Chichester’s CRM is passed to the back office in a fully transactional manner, using IDOX workflow. The call is tracked by the CRM system as it moves within the workflow, enabling an operator to advise a repeat caller as to the precise status of the enquiry, action taken, or to update the enquiry on the customer’s behalf. When the call is closed off in the back-office workflow, it is also closed within the CRM system.

Implications of the Integration

The integration of all three systems has proved highly successful. Planning enquiries are now handled in the first instance by the contact centre, with only more complex matters referred to planning officers. Contact centre operators use scripted questions and answers, ensuring that information is delivered in a consistent manner and that agreed protocols with the back office are followed. The scripting drives the process and presents the information, functionality or access to systems at appropriate points, streamlining the service and avoiding the need for operators to navigate back office systems.

Enquiries and Applications made via the Web

Planning applications made online are delivered to the planning department’s back office and routed, via workflow, to the relevant planning officer. The contact centre has immediate access to information received via the Web. If a customer rings about an online application, the contact centre has immediate access to it, together with all associated workflow and document information.



“in essence, all touch points - whether phone, letter or web enquiry are automatically registered on our systems - regardless of where they originated from”. Jane Dodsworth, IMS Corporate Advisor.