

# Customer Engagement Strategy

2026-27



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We are committed to the delivery of an outstanding digital customer experience for our citizens and visitors to our city, so that Digital First becomes the preferred customer choice, and face to face and telephone interactions with customers are optimised to provide excellent customer support where it can add the greatest value.

With an ever-increasing demand on council services, it is essential that we are innovative and open to new ideas in order deliver efficiencies and value for money whilst continuing to support our community.

We will rigorously test the customer experience to ensure that it is inclusive and provides fair and equal access to all our users, including those who are most vulnerable residents.

We will work alongside our partners to promote a common approach to joined- up service delivery.

# What We Said We'd Do

Over the last two years we have delivered against the priorities set out in the Customer Engagement Strategy 2023-25.

## **Customer Led Improvement**

Customer satisfaction surveys are now in place across website, telephone and face to face, with the Customer Experience Team and IT Developers delivering improvements to customer journeys based on real customer feedback. This approach has been adopted across all customer engagement improvement work, ensuring we listen to our customers and make improvements based on their feedback.

## **Excellent Website Experience**

We have launched 34 new websites, including a complete re-platform of the corporate website, with half a million monthly visitors across all sites and a 50% increase in positive customer feedback.

## **Providing Easy Access to Necessary Information**

125,000 self-service myAccounts are now live, with almost half of our customers using self-service. We have developed several integrated and case-managed processes within our CRM system, providing updates on progress of vital services including blue badge applications, missed bin and highways reports, warm homes and housing adaptations referrals. In addition, there are 155,000 email subscriptions to a refined list of public topics, providing high quality information on relevant subjects.

## **Reduced Digital Inclusion**

Following a successful bid to LGA Digital Pathfinders, we delivered a pilot digital inclusion referral scheme which has formed the foundation for a corporate Digital Inclusion Strategy developed by a newly-established Digital Inclusion Task & Finish group. We have introduced our Here to Help support, placing Customer Service Advisors as Community Hubs based at critical locations throughout the city.

We are now building on this impact with a new strategy that sets out our approach to the continuous improvement of customer experience.

With an improved understanding of customer behaviour, we retain our 'customer first' approach with customer feedback incorporated at every level. We will focus our priorities across three core customer groups – those that do engage online, those that are online but do not self serve, and those that are not online.

The focus will be on continuing to develop digital access to services through coordinated web access and easy-to-use web forms that provide effective communication, encouraging online engagement and ensuring every customer has the opportunity to support our ambition for self-service. We will reduce avoidable contact, ensuring the best value from our contact centre and face to face offer, and we want every resident to recognise the Here to Help brand and understand our offer for digital support.

For our customers, this strategy outlines the improvements Hull City Council intend to make to the customer experience and is inclusive of all protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

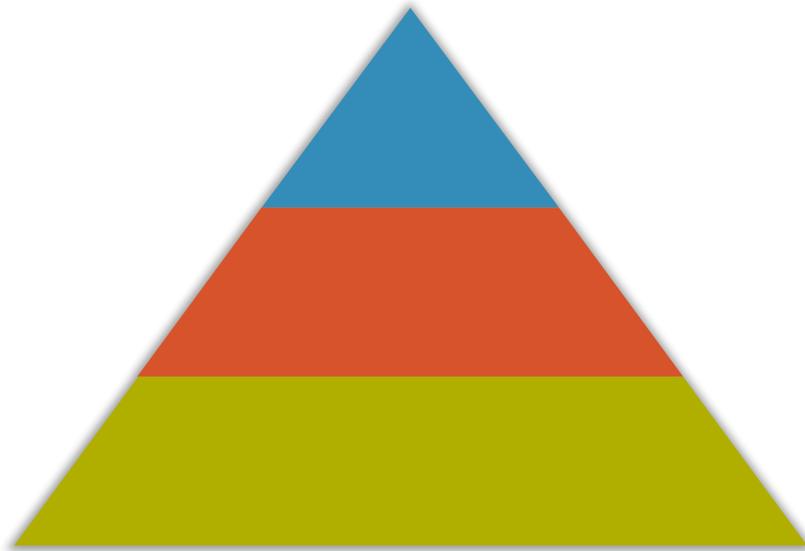
For our colleagues, it provides clear guidance on how we intend to deliver those improvements.

The strategy is delivered through our Customer Programme, led by the dedicated resource of the Customer Journey Programme Manager, working together and facilitating service areas to make the best use of technology and digital systems, to deliver our corporate priorities.

A 'customer' is defined as any individual, including residents, visitors and businesses, who interacts with, seeks information from, uses the services of, or transacts with Hull City Council, including reporting issues, booking appointments, paying for services and making applications.

In terms of engagement with Hull City Council, it's helpful to split our customers, broadly into three categories:

- Digitally Included Self-Servers – By volume of residents this is the largest group. They are digitally-included and they choose to self-serve. This group generally have the lowest service demand.
- Digitally Included Supported - This group will likely use the internet for other purposes but are much less likely to engage with us online.
- Digitally Excluded Supported – This group is digitally-excluded and as such are often unable to self-serve. This group tend to have a much higher service demand.



Residents

Digitally Excluded Supported

Digitally Included Supported

Digitally Included Self Servers



Demand

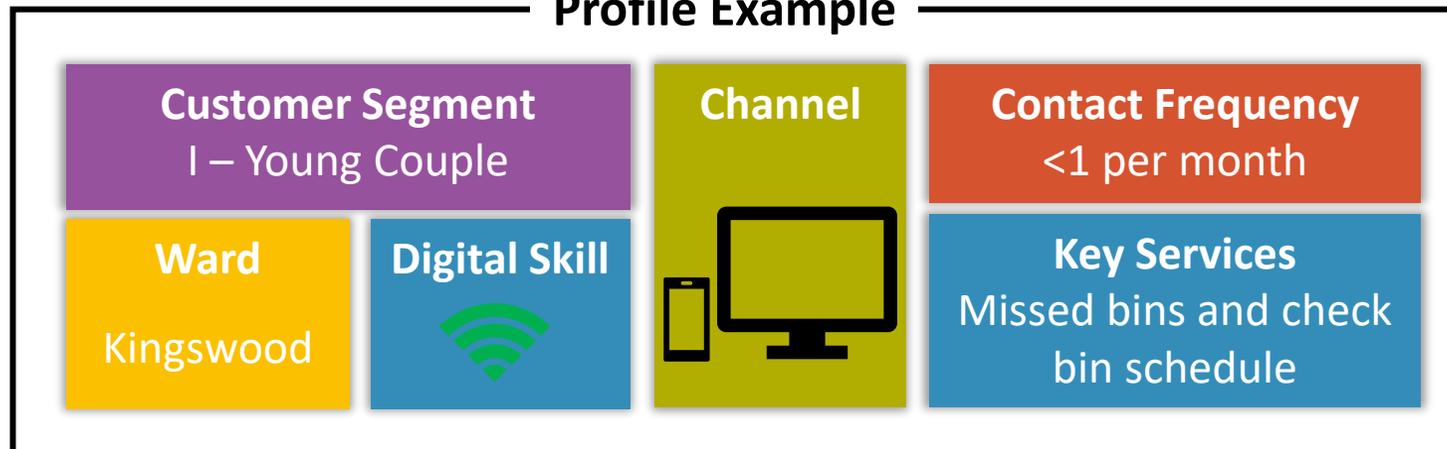
# Digitally Included Self Servers

Digitally Included Self Servers represent 40% of residents.

These residents are very confident using the internet and will transact with Hull City Council online with confidence.

An example of this customer group could be a young couple, residing in Kingswood, who contact us infrequently for transactions that are often simple.

## Profile Example



## What is the priority?

Keep the customer self-serving

## How can we do this?

Continue to provide high quality online services through service improvement projects including website and CRM

## What are we doing?

- Continuous improvement for website experience, including content review, navigation and page design, based on actual customer feedback
- New website builds including galaxy sites and destination management system
- Launch a digital user group to provide specific feedback on development
- Meet WCAG 2.2 standard for accessibility across all sites
- Prioritise case-managed and integrated processes for CRM development



## What is the priority?

Encourage further engagement

## How can we do this?

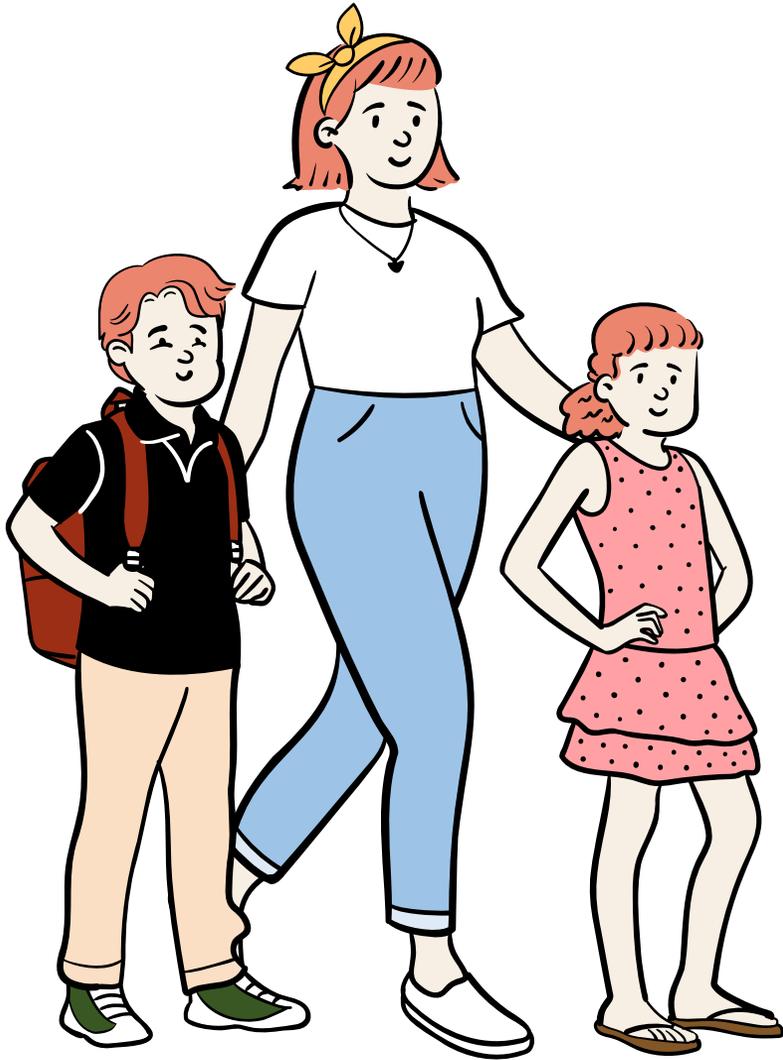
Increase sign up rates to consultation platform and email topics and provide high quality information

## What are we doing?

- Implement digital communication plan for Surveys & Consultation topic
- Continued partnership with Customer Insight team to ensure best value from consultation platform
- Onboard additional service area to email marketing platform
- Ensure best practice for email marketing through internal forums
- Provide support to service areas for email marketing campaigns



# Digitally Included Supported

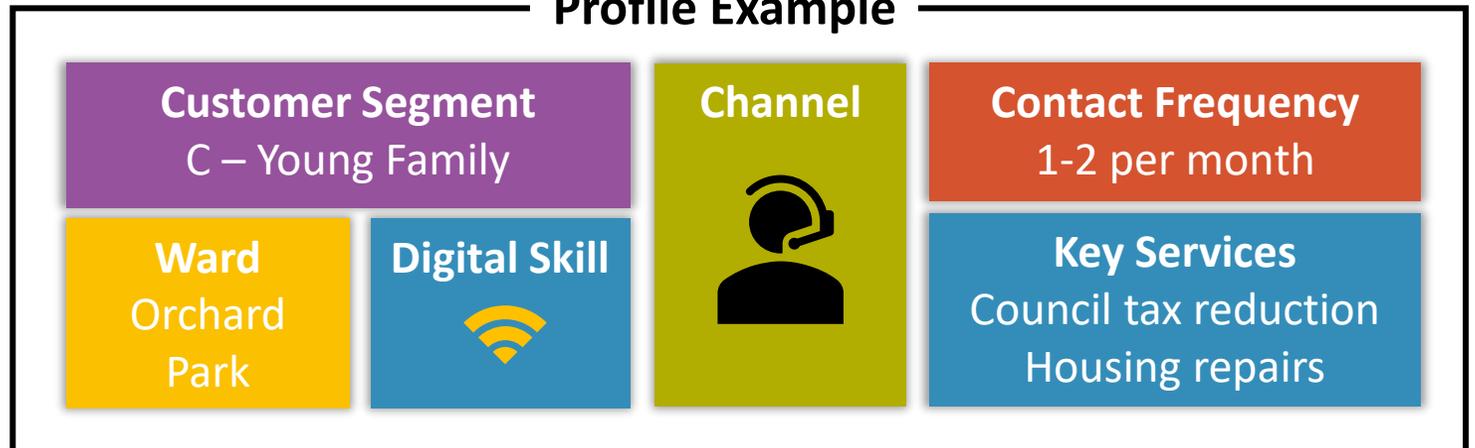


Digitally Included Supported represent 35% of residents.

These residents might use the internet for things like shopping and banking but prefer to speak to an advisor over the phone when engaging with Hull City Council.

An example of this customer group could be a young family, residing in Orchard Park, who contact us fairly frequently for simple-to-complex transactions.

## Profile Example



## What is the priority?

Encourage the customer to self-serve

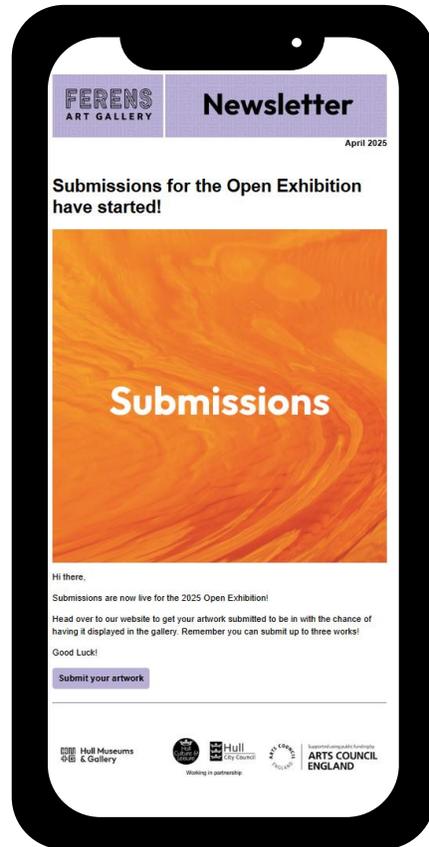
## How can we do this?

Promote the benefits of going online and actively redirect to self-service

## What are we doing?

- Launch a corporate communication campaign to promote self-service
- Understand customer needs based on actual customer feedback of telephone service including IVR self-service
- Prioritise improvements to self-service repair diagnostic tool with Housing service, including introducing online emergency repairs.
- Continuous improvement of webchat service for assisted digital support





## What is the priority?

Reduce need to contact Hull City Council

## How can we do this?

Improve outbound information provision and efficiency of back-office processes to reduce avoidable contact

## What are we doing?

- Undertake detailed analysis of high-demand service requests including Revenues & Benefits, Bins & Recycling and Housing transactions to establish key areas of improvement
- Align with Truth Poverty Commission to improve outbound messages
- Prioritise case-managed and integrated processes for CRM development to reduce avoidable contact

# Digitally Excluded Supported

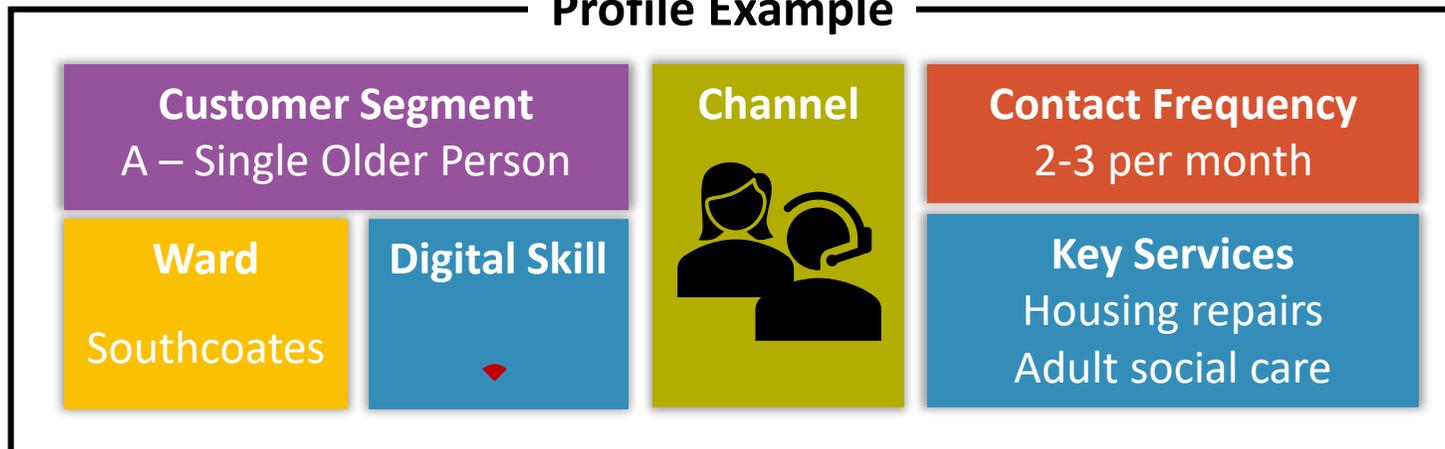
Digitally Excluded Supported represent 25% of residents.

These residents do not use the internet and will typically call or visit a Customer Service Centre or Community Hub for support.

An example of this customer group could be a single older person, residing in Southcoates, who contact us frequently for transactions that are often complex.



## Profile Example



## What is the priority?

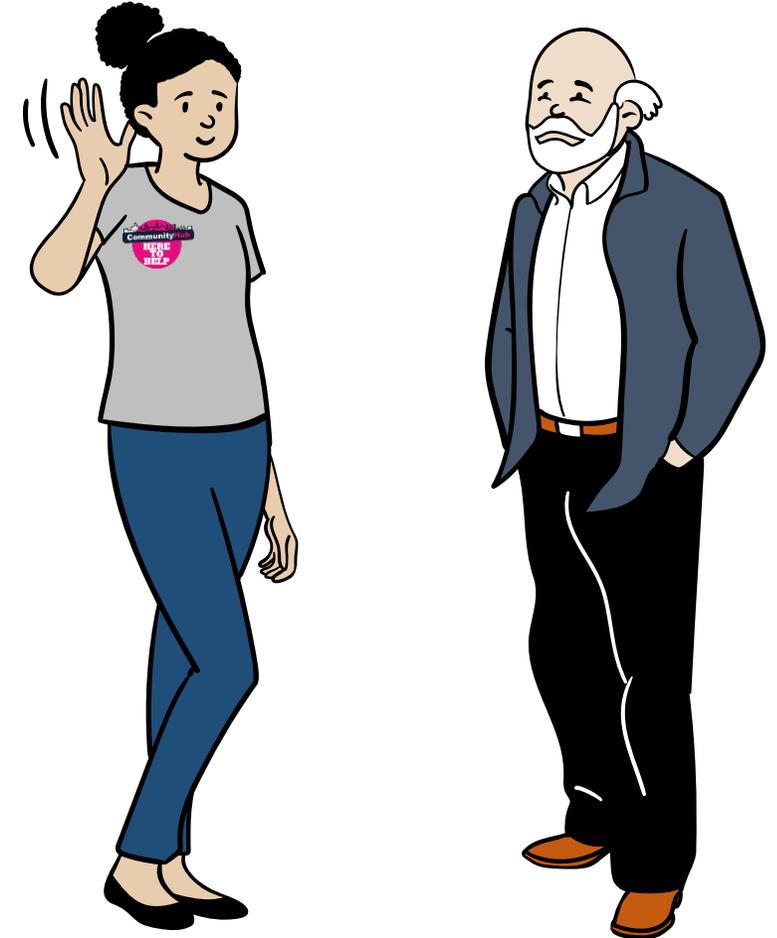
Provide accessible services

## How can we do this?

Ensure face-to-face and telephone contact channels are available and accessible to customers

## What are we doing?

- Continued rollout of Community Hubs at key locations
- Launch a corporate communication campaign to promote Here to Help
- Continuous improvement for telephone and face-to-face experience, including IVR review, navigation and advisor skills, proxy access review, based on actual customer feedback
- Implement a blended working approach to ensure best value from Customer Services resources



## What is the priority?

Improve digital inclusion

## How can we do this?

Utilise and co-ordinate existing resources within the city including internal services, VCS and health partners to improve digital inclusion

## What are we doing?

Deliver the HCC Digital Inclusion Strategy key priorities:

- Onboard a Digital Inclusion Lead Officer
- Launch a Digital Inclusion Forum and Board
- Implement a Digital Inclusion directory and triage tool
- Develop a Digital Inclusion awareness campaign
- Implement the Digital Inclusion Support model with staff training

