

**We want to put all of our customers at the heart of everything we do, reflecting their feedback in the design and delivery of services, and to provide appropriate support to those who need it ensuring that customer experiences are easy, effective and convenient.**

Customers contact us in many ways: telephone, online, face to face, email and post, depending on their needs and the service they want to access. We are committed to providing services which are easy to use, simple and effective. For everyone using our services we want to be easy to deal with. We will also try to provide specific support where customer needs require us to provide services in a different way. In the last few years, more and more people prefer to access services on their mobile phone or computer as this is quicker and more convenient. If we make it easy for them to access our services in this way, we can focus our limited resources on customers who are unable to do it online themselves. Therefore we want to improve our online and digital services.

## Did you know that it costs the council:



The council deals with a large number of customer enquiries each year. Broken down into different channels, on average there are:

Face to face	Post	Emails	Telephone calls	Web form	Web visits
64,920	4,500	78,402	426,166	80,500	4,466,532

## What do we want to achieve?

Outcome	What this means
<b>Better customer experiences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers understand what they can expect from us</li> <li>We are easy to deal with</li> <li>Aim to get it right first time, every time which reduces unnecessary multiple contact</li> <li>Simple, easy to understand policies and processes which are clear and encourage self-service</li> <li>Staff focused on providing good service and outcomes for customers</li> <li>End to end services designed from the customer perspective</li> <li>Improve customer satisfaction</li> <li>Improve the council's reputation as an organisation</li> <li>Increased trading / commercial opportunities</li> <li>Improve the experience of those visiting the city</li> </ul>
<b>Digital contact is the first choice for most customers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information is easy to find on the council's website</li> <li>The Southampton Information Directory (SID) provides updated information to help people to be self-sufficient and independent</li> <li>Customers can apply for services, inform us of changes, request information and pay quickly and easily online</li> <li>Services are designed so customers can use their own devices, with no need to register or download additional software</li> <li>Customers can complete most tasks digitally from start to finish, without having to contact the council directly</li> <li>Support is available for those who need it to get online</li> <li>Customers are involved in the design of digital public services</li> </ul>
<b>Engagement with customers influences design and delivery of services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen to and learn from the city's diverse range of customers, with different backgrounds and perspectives, using a range of communications methods to engage and consult them</li> <li>Customer engagement will foster communities and individuals to help people become more independent</li> <li>Customer feedback and insight will help improve council services by influencing the design of policies, services, systems and processes</li> <li>Keep customers well informed about our services, and any changes or issues which may affect them</li> <li>Provide high quality information across a range of platforms</li> </ul>

## Working together

### Council

- Listen, be open, honest and friendly
- Offer simple and effective services, built around our customers, using their feedback
- Help people to help themselves, and communities to support each other
- Provide value for money and focus our resources on people who need the most help

**HELPING MAKE SOUTHAMPTON A CITY OF OPPORTUNITY WHERE EVERYONE THRIVES.**

### Customers

- Have your say and get involved in shaping services
- Get online and use our online services
- Only seek help when it's really needed
- Get involved in your community
- Understand our resource pressures

## Who are our customers?



We deal with a wide range of people across Southampton, and our customers include everyone living, working, volunteering, investing, studying, running a business in or visiting Southampton.

**Our customers contact us for many different reasons, including to:**

- Get information from us, or give us information
- Apply for, book or arrange services
- Report issues
- Make payments
- Buy our services
- Access specific help and support.

## Key facts and figures



Southampton has **254,275** residents and this is expected to increase to **263,900** by 2022. In total the council dealt with at least **1,156,954** contacts in the last year. There are **127,601** properties which include residential and commercial buildings in the city, and of these we estimate:



A recent customer contact survey showed that approximately **50%** of telephone and email customer contacts were because we did not get it right first time. **Therefore we want to get it right first time, every time.**

As our population grows, there is increasing demand for council services. At the same time, we have less funding than ever before. We can manage this demand better at a lower cost if we improve the quality of our services, improve customer experiences by being innovative and working differently and make it very easy for them to access services themselves using digital channels.

Where does this Customer Strategy fit

