

Northampton Borough Council has radically transformed its Revenues and Benefits service after a three year performance partnership with Northgate Kendric Ash. The Council has generated £5.7m savings, overhauled customer service and greatly improved staff morale, recruitment and retention. New claims are now processed 43 days more quickly and service quality is up to 98%.

Northampton saves 43 days and £5.7m

CASE STUDY



- **New claims processed 43 days quicker**
- **Changes in Circumstances down by 17 days**
- **Service quality now 98%**
- **£5.7m saved over 3 years**
- **100% self funded partnership**

“With the drive and support of Northgate Kendric Ash, our department has become an example to others.”

A Northampton Team Leader

£5.7 million boost over 3 years
Having achieved net savings of £5.7 million the partnership has transformed efficiency across the board.

New claims are processed in 16 days instead of 59, and Changes in Circumstances have been cut from 25 days to 8.

Service quality has leapt from 79% to 98%, Local Authority Error is down from 1.79% to 0.20%, and the Council Tax Collection Rate is up, as well, from 95.5% to a peak performance of 98%.

Government recognition
Northampton began its performance partnership with Northgate Kendric Ash in May 2006. Immediately prior to this the Benefits service had been downgraded to ‘double red’

status by the GMB and both the Revenues and Benefits services had been heavily criticised in CPA assessments.

As the partnership gained momentum, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate raised the Council’s rating from Poor to Fair. The Benefits CPA score rose from 2 to a strong 3, and the Government Monitoring Board (GMB) lifted the double red status from the service.

Not surprisingly, the Benefits team was shortlisted for the IRRV’s ‘most improved team of the year’ award in 2008. Better still, staff surveys show morale has been boosted from 31% to 81%. Recruitment and staff retention has been turned around too, with far less reliance upon expensive agency staff.

Sustainable savings of £25,000 a week

Northgate Kendric Ash, the transformation arm of Northgate works with local government to raise efficiency and performance across local authority services.

Committed to ensuring sustainable improvement beyond the partnership, Northgate Kendric Ash aligns itself to a Council’s strategic objectives, allowing for the development of the customer organisation – true service transformation as opposed to simple short term service improvement.

Now in addition to the increased efficiency and improved performance ratings, Northampton expect to make future savings of £1.267m per annum on an ongoing basis, around £25,000 per week.

“Let’s make change work”

Cost neutral performance transformation at Northampton

Self-financing

Northgate Kendric Ash work in house alongside customer's managers and staff to review and transform services utilising proven methodologies and techniques.

Importantly, they aim to ensure that clients always enjoy a zero net cost for their services and work on the basis of risk and reward, risking loss of fees in the event of under performance.



Northampton Borough Council's headquarters, the breathtaking historic Guild Hall, is one of the architectural treasures of Northampton.

At Northampton, the savings from improved performance have more than financed all fees for the partnership.

So far, throughout the UK, Northgate Kendric Ash have produced over £180m in cashable benefits across 91 authorities.

It has improved the operating environment and capability of over 7,500 council staff, and raised service levels for millions of citizens.

A safe pair of hands

At Northampton, both the Council and Northgate Kendric Ash acknowledge the success of the partnership in driving dramatic step-change through service provision. The partnership has now reached its natural conclusion and the Council are confident in their ability to continue to make ongoing sustainable improvements in performance.

"In working with Northgate Kendric Ash, we established a partnership that generated tangible performance improvements and a service that is now an example to others within the Council. Importantly their business model is structured to build upon the existing knowledge and experience of our core team, supplementing additional capacity and capability where required to support, mentor and foster a culture of continuous improvement. The team now has renewed drive and enthusiasm and, to date, we have collectively achieved significant financial savings, well in excess of our original targets."

Isabell Procter.

Director, Finance and Support.

Let's talk

With Northgate you get cost-effective innovation from public service experts. We help you increase efficiency and provide excellent service. Let's meet and discuss it.

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About Northgate Public Services

Teamwork, transformation, results. These three words summarise what you get from Northgate. Most of all, results.

Northgate is a public sector and utilities specialist that operates within strategic client partnerships to make change work for you. We help you transform your business processes, streamline the customer experience and reduce overhead.

Northgate clients achieve lower costs, less paperwork, better performance and more joined-up working. Northgate partners over 95% of UK local authorities and every UK police force.

Our technology manages over 40% of the country's social care records, processes over £12 billion of revenues and benefits, drives the electoral administration systems for 18 million people, manages over three million local authority and housing association properties worldwide, supports the national system for reporting police performance and enables real-time monitoring of Britain's roads.

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"Let's make change work"

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