



CERTIFIED COPY of an ENTRY OF MARRIAGE
Pursuant to the Marriage Act 1949

Essex County Council

BV 41119

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY
Pursuant to the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953

DEATH

Entry No. 279

Registration district

Administrative area

Borough of



ECC's Registrar Booking Service.

Essex County Council Case Study.

Product available
via G-Cloud 13

Last updated:
06/09/24

Version
Number: 1.2

Who we are.

We're on a mission to improve access to public services. With our industry-leading GovBook automation platform, we've facilitated over 25 million citizen interactions and helped over 100 public sector departments improve the citizen experience, reduce costs & increase operational efficiency.

Our experience.

Working with some of the UK's most forward-thinking Registrar teams, we have co-created an innovative Registrars and Ceremonies Booking Service designed to transform the market. This service delivers the flexibility and technical sophistication needed to manage rotas, scheduling, resourcing, venues, tasks, payments, communications, reporting, and certificates—all within a single, feature-rich platform.

Accreditations.



We're a G-Cloud 14 Supplier, our solutions meet the WCAG 2.2 AA, and we hold accreditations for ISO27001 and Cyber Essentials Plus. We also guarantee an up-time of 99.95% or higher. Find out more [here](#).

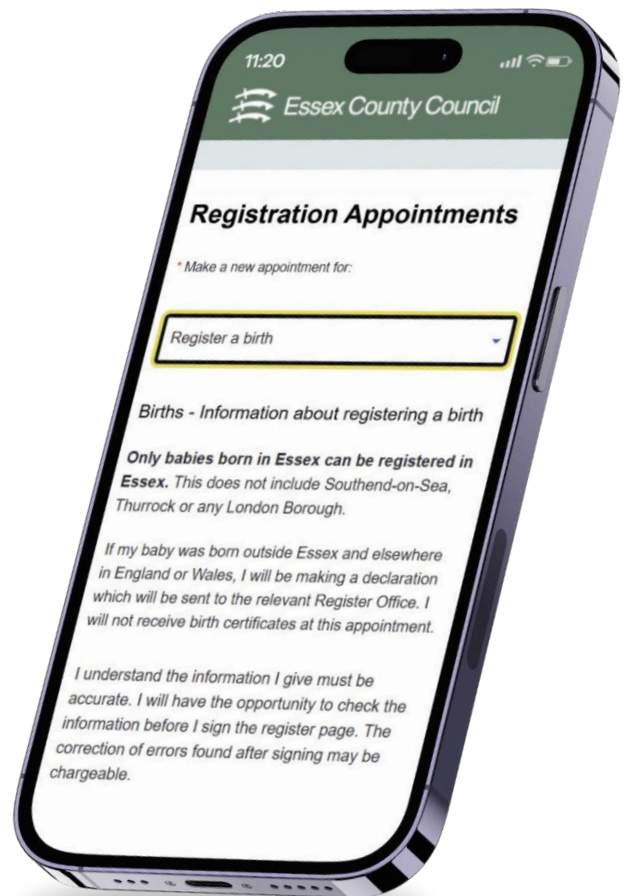
Project context.

Essex County Council (ECC) is the second largest registration service in the UK, serving over 1.8 million people. In April 2024, the council recorded an all-time low in deaths registered within the statutory five-day period. For the most part, Essex attributed this to low availability rates, inefficient scheduling processes/workflows, and limited flexibility, dynamism, and automation. Due to a sustained period of declining KPIs, a newly assembled team at ECC seized this opportunity to overhaul its workflows and transform how its entire Registration Service operates.

As part of this, the team sought a partner who could support their vision of making ECC one of the highest-performing Registrar teams in the UK.

Invested in making Essex's vision a reality, we've worked in partnership with the council to build a market-leading booking and case management system that:

- Autonomously manages service complexity
- Creates more availability for customers
- Improves reporting capabilities and
- Provides a dynamic, flexible service that responds to user needs



The Challenge.

ECC set an ambitious goal to complete this transformation within nine weeks. Motivated by this target, we immediately acted, concentrating on developing the essential functionalities for a Minimal Viable Product (MVP). This would enable ECC to swiftly implement its service-transforming process maps and business rules, effectively addressing the challenges highlighted in its audit of the previous approach.

These challenges included:

Limited Appointment Capacity:

The previous approach could only accommodate 6-7 appointments per day and had limited dynamic scheduling. The rigid appointment slots did not accommodate different types of appointments, such as birth versus death registrations, leading to wasted capacity and limited availability.

Manual Processes:

Due to the system's limited dynamism and scheduling complexity, staff had to manually amend appointment durations and add additional details, such as including an extra baby in an appointment or checking for a death declaration. This process resulted in wasted time spent cross-referencing information and adjusting appointment times.

Limited Reporting Capabilities:

ECC wanted to be able to collect, visualise, and analyse more data for continuous statutory and service KPI monitoring.

A Static Online Booking Process:

The customer-facing booking journey was hindered by a fixed set of questions that did not adapt based on the customer's input, leading to inefficient allocations, increased failure demand, and a sub-optimal user experience.

The Challenge Continued.

Excessive Customer Choice:

Working with General Register Office (GRO), ECC concluded that the previous approach overwhelmed users with too many booking options and lacked autonomous slot optimisation, pathway limiters, or booking rules. This resulted in avoidable appointments being scheduled outside statutory timeframes and other inefficiencies.

We partnered closely with the ECC team to address these challenges through a series of collaborative workshops. In these workshops, we gathered detailed insights, brainstormed effective solutions, and ensured that all stakeholders were aligned on the goals and strategies.

Janine Last, Head of Statutory and Regulated Services at ECC adds:

"Despite the really tight timeframes to deliver the project, the team felt very supported. Chad, Rich, and the bookinglab team took a deep dive into our service area to maximise what we could get from this project. We are fully bought into the product because of the support we've had."

The Solution.

Optimised Slot Allocations:

Given the scale of Essex's registrar provision, the council faced an uphill battle to meet its statutory KPIs. We developed a dynamic, rule-based scheduling engine designed to increase slot capacity to address this. The system automatically calculates appointment lengths, optimal slot allocations, and other details based on the information provided by the customer. As a result, ECC can now fulfil at least 12 appointment slots per day, doubling its previous capacity and eliminating the need for manual interventions.

The Solution Continued.

Configurable Business Rules:

Another critical feature of Essex's system is its configurable business rules, which autonomously maximise KPI targets. These rules guide users in selecting the correct appointment slots while concealing service complexity from both customers and staff. For example:

- If a customer enters a date of death within the statutory 5-day period, the system will prevent booking an appointment beyond those five days.
- Similarly, if a customer enters a date of birth within the statutory 42-day period, the system will not allow booking an appointment beyond the 42 days.
- However, if a customer is outside these statutory timeframes, the system recognises this and allows them to book the next-best alternative.

These examples highlight just a few of the transformative rules the system enforces to ensure compliance and maximise operational efficiency.

A Dynamic, Rule-Based User Experience:

Additionally, the system offers an intuitive, responsive user experience for both customers and back-office users by providing custom guidance messaging and pathway limiters based on user input. This minimises human error and guides users to the correct service with an easy-to-navigate booking experience. In extenuating circumstances, assigned back-office users can override these pathway limiters, ensuring maximum flexibility.

The Solution Continued.

Market-Leading Workforce Management Tools:

The system's advanced staff rostering capabilities have enabled ECC to plan staff time more efficiently, significantly reducing wasted capacity. The system autonomously allocates bookings based on best fit by utilising detailed staff profiles that include roles, skills, rotas, and covered locations. This market-leading rostering tool maintains real-time data on availability, training schedules, and non-appointment times, enhancing service visibility and ensuring optimal use of staff time.

Improved Communications:

In addition to these scheduling enhancements, the rollout of Essex's new booking system has significantly improved communication with both customers and staff. The Essex team can now send custom SMS and email notifications for trigger events such as confirmations, reminders, amendments, pre/post-visit instructions, and payment links. This has ensured customers have all the necessary information, resulting in fewer cancellations, reduced no-shows, and an enhanced customer experience. Additionally, ECC reports improved internal communications thanks to automated MS Teams alerts and email updates.

Enhanced Reporting Capabilities:

Thanks to the system's extensive reporting capabilities, ECC can now monitor death and birth registrations daily. Automated reports provide actionable, real-time operational data, allowing discrepancies to be quickly identified and addressed. This shift from reactive to proactive management has been pivotal in ECC's success.

The Solution Continued.

Janine adds that:

"We used this opportunity to completely overhaul and revamp how our service operates. We saw this as a chance for real change, and we've used the system to support our transformation process rather than simply adapting our technology use. When I joined the team in September 2024, my vision statement was: how do we become one of the highest-performing Registrar teams in the UK? This system and what it delivers will be key to helping us achieve this. The system will also play an important role in helping us manage the new death certification reform coming into place on the 9th of September."

The Early Results.

The impact of Essex's new system has been profound and immediate. In the short time the system has been live, the council has:

Achieved a 1000% ROI:

Since rolling out the system, Essex County Council has achieved an impressive 1000% return on investment.

Doubled Appointment Capacity:

ECC's capacity increased from 6 to 12 appointments per day, resulting in an additional 2,016 appointments per year.

400% improvement in statutory KPIs:

As of September, ECC hit 98% for deaths registered within five days, a significant improvement from 18% in April. AI-powered scheduling and autonomous business rules have been key enablers of this success. Since implementing the new system, ECC has met its birth registration KPI. In July, the statutory KPI of 98% was achieved.

The Early Results Continued.

Earned Acclaim From The GRO:

In recent months, ECC has distinguished itself as one of the few local authorities to consistently enhance its performance while others have plateaued or declined. This ongoing improvement is attributed to the new booking system and the transformative operational changes it has supported.

Top Performer Projection:

ECC is projecting to be among the top 5 performing local authorities (for its size) within the next twelve months, a remarkable achievement given their previous performance struggles.

Cultural Shift:

In just a few months, the ECC team has achieved a remarkable cultural transformation, completely remodelling the organisation's operations around appointments and staff scheduling.

Janine expressed her satisfaction with the new system:

"It is such a complex system, but it's so easy for users to operate. Without the system, we would not have seen changes this significant for another two or three years. In just a few months, we've transformed the service area, and it is transformational work. It's so much more than a booking system."

Phase Two: Building on the Success.

ECC and bookinglab are preparing for Phase Two of the project, which will see the rollout of an end-to-end customer experience platform for both registrars and ceremonies. Key features include:

Customer Profiles:

Customers will have profiles to manage all their registration and ceremony needs, reducing the need for manual follow-ups and decreasing call volumes.

Enhanced Customer Experience:

The platform will provide a seamless experience for customers, from booking to payment, further improving satisfaction and operational efficiency.

User Feedback Integration:

Collecting feedback via SMS/email will allow ECC to continuously improve the system based on real user input.

Note: As phase one matures and we begin building phase two, we will update this case study with additional insights.


Learn more.

Discover more about the product driving ECC's success [here](#).



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