

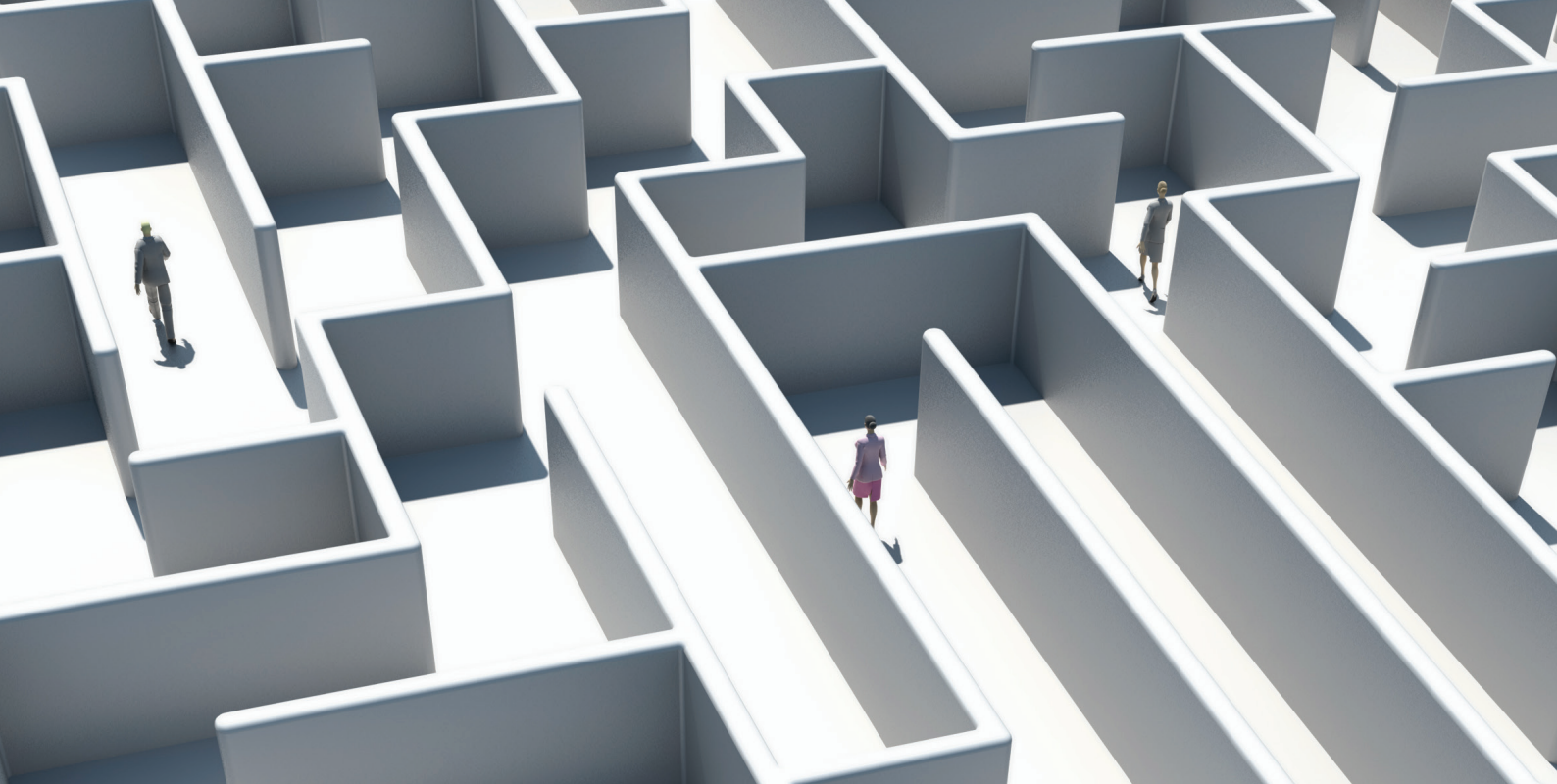
Adult Social Care Services

A DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TOOLKIT



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Introduction

Navigating the maze of Adult Social Care — finding the right path amidst twists and turns

For many seeking adult social care support, the journey feels like navigating a complex maze. Just when they think they've found the right person to help, they hit a dead end and are forced to backtrack — left to repeat their story or chase unanswered emails and unreturned calls.

But it doesn't have to be this way.

Local authorities that embrace digital transformation ensure citizens always find the right path, accessing the right support or advice, at the right time, without unnecessary delays. This toolkit provides practical steps, best practices, and expert insights to help your adult social care teams transform their service delivery and create a more accessible, easy-to-navigate, and co-produced services.

CHAPTER 1

The current challenges in Adult Social Care

From reactive to proactive support

Local authorities are under pressure due to:



CHRONIC UNDERFUNDING

A projected funding gap of **£2.3 billion** by 2026.



RISING DEMAND

1.98 million new requests for adult social care in England in 2022-23.



STAFF SHORTAGES

Increased workload, outdated working practices, and relatively high turnover.



IRRELEVANT ENQUIRIES

Too much of the staffs time is spent handling recurring question quires that are not relevant to the service.

Without a clear, streamlined system, citizens and carers struggle to navigate the complex support landscape, leading to delays and dissatisfaction.

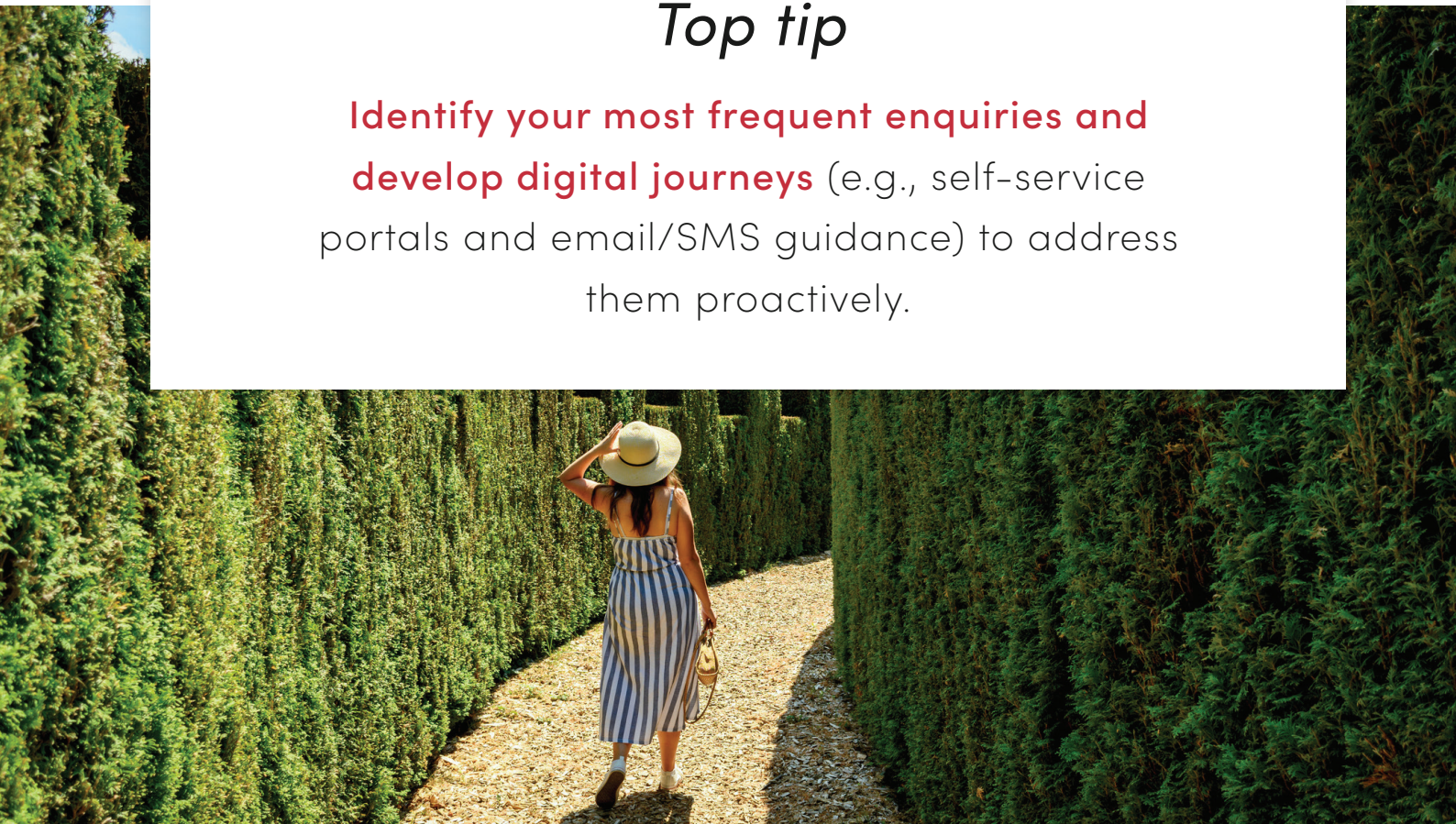
The digital solution

Councils can alleviate these pressures by leveraging self-service tools, automation, and strategic communications, ensuring service users and potential service users a) get answers the first time around and b) are kept informed about the services they are eligible to receive and how to get them.



Top tip

Identify your most frequent enquiries and develop digital journeys (e.g., self-service portals and email/SMS guidance) to address them proactively.



CHAPTER 2

Embracing digital transformation to focus on people (not paperwork)

From reactive to proactive support

Traditional adult social care models rely heavily on phone calls, emails, and in-person visits – creating bottlenecks and repeat contact. Next-generation digital services enable councils to move toward proactive, data-driven customer engagement.

Key digital solutions:

Self-service portals | Potential service users can find relevant information independently, reducing the need for direct contact.

Effective triage | Rules-based workflows to categorise requests and prioritise urgent cases.

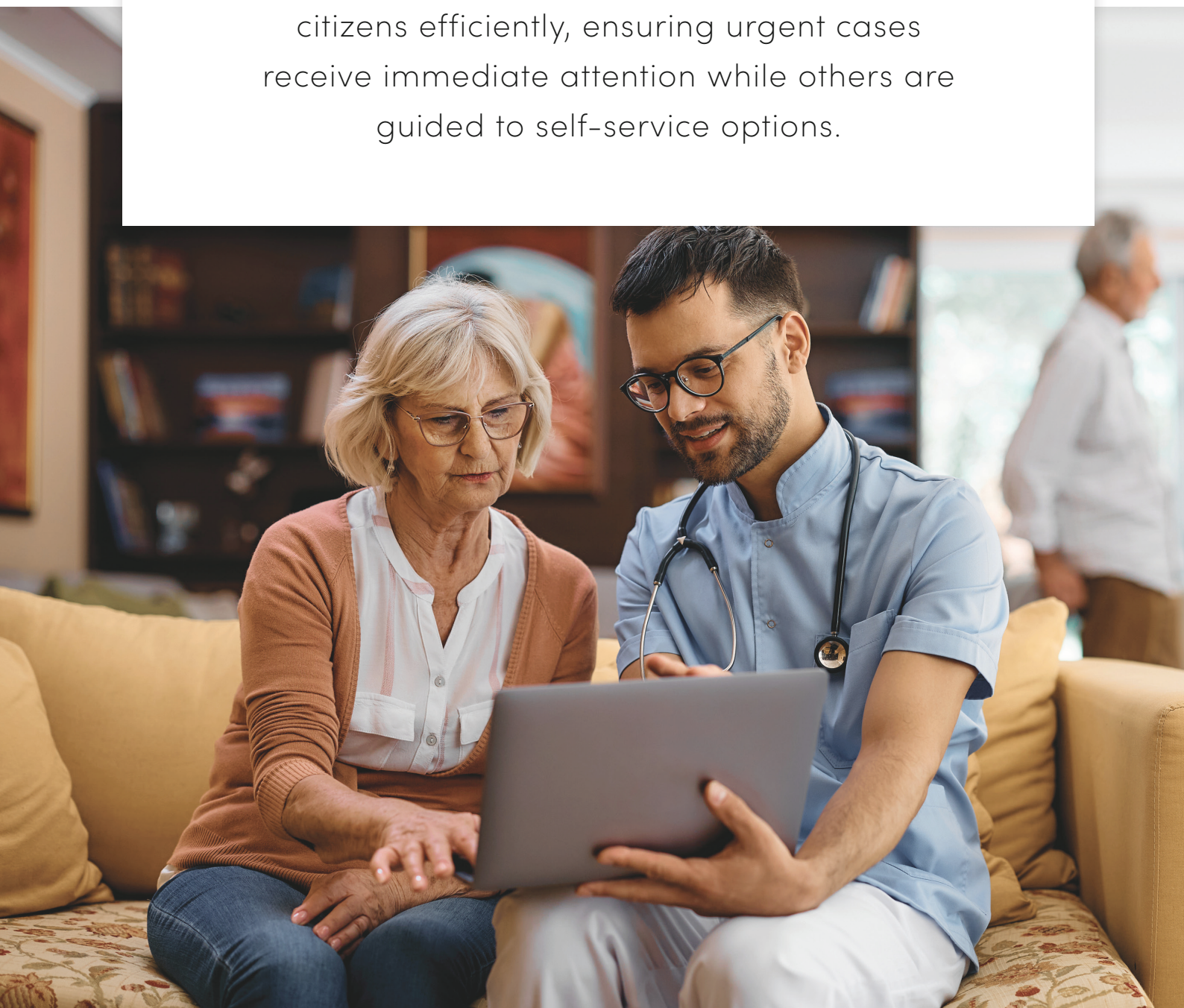
Strategic email campaigns | Human-centred communications and customer engagement provide ongoing guidance and support, hyper-personalised to the needs of digital service users.

Automated case management | Reduces administrative burdens, freeing up social workers for complex cases.



Best practice

Implement a digital triage system to direct citizens efficiently, ensuring urgent cases receive immediate attention while others are guided to self-service options.



CHAPTER 3

Self-service and digital triage – making access simple and fast

The reality facing councils

Many social care teams are overwhelmed by repeat enquiries that could be resolved through structured self-service tools. A well-designed portal ensures service users and potential service users find the information they need without frustration.

Triage systems: prioritising urgent cases

A **diagnostic approach to care** ensures urgent cases are escalated immediately, while non-urgent enquiries receive appropriate guidance.

Triage workflows can:

- ✓ Identify emergencies and direct them to **specialist teams**
- ✓ Route general enquiries to **self-service information hubs**
- ✓ Signpost citizens to **charities, community services, or alternative support networks**

How to build an effective self-service system:



Use clear, jargon-free language to make information accessible.



Ensure mobile-friendly design for people accessing via smartphones.



Integrate with AI chatbots to provide 24/7 support.



Signpost effectively to guide service users to the right information instantly.

Many social care teams are overwhelmed by repeat enquiries that could be resolved through structured self-service tools. A well-designed portal ensures service users and potential service users find the information they need without frustration.



Quick win

Analyse call logs and emails to identify the top reasons people contact your service. Develop a digital triage system to automate responses to the most common issues.

CHAPTER 4

Self-service and digital triage – making access simple and fast

More than just a drip campaign: the four phases of communication

Strategic communications in self-service digital pathways go beyond simple drip campaigns. They ensure that individuals receive timely, relevant, and highly personalised messages through automated yet thoughtful engagement strategies. By applying the four phases of communication – Awareness, Understanding, Engagement, and Action – councils can create impactful customer journeys that improve access to essential services.



Phase 1: Awareness — introducing key information

The first step in strategic communications is creating awareness. This involves providing individuals with initial, high-level information about available services and resources.

Example:

- » **Caregivers of dementia patients receive an introductory email** outlining available resources, support networks, and contact details for assistance.
- » **Disabled citizens are made aware of financial support** and accessibility services through targeted messaging.



Quick win

Analyse call logs and emails to identify the top reasons people contact your service. Develop a digital triage system to automate responses to the most common issues.

Phase 2: Understanding — providing clarity and relevance

Once awareness is established, the next phase focuses on helping users understand how services apply to them personally. This phase involves breaking down complex information into digestible content.

Example:

- » **A follow-up email campaign for caregivers includes tips** on managing care responsibilities and links to expert advice.
- » **Citizens applying for financial assistance receive step-by-step guidance** on the application process via email and SMS.



Quick win

Use segmentation and personalisation techniques to ensure users receive only the most relevant and useful information to prevent overwhelm.

Phase 3: Engagement — encouraging interaction

Engagement happens when users begin to take an active role in the communication process, whether through clicking links, signing up for services, or asking questions.

Example:

- » **Older adults receive invitations** to join community support groups, attend local events, or access social subscriptions that improve their well-being.
- » **People receiving financial guidance** are encouraged to use online tools that assess eligibility and provide personalised recommendations.



Quick win

Monitor open and click rates to refine messaging and optimise future campaigns, ensuring that users remain engaged and informed.

Phase 4: Action — driving meaningful outcomes

The final phase focuses on inspiring action — getting users to apply for services, attend events, or provide feedback that enhances future communication strategies.

Example:

- » **Service users complete applications** with greater ease, reducing the need for staff intervention.
- » **Citizens provide real-time feedback on service experiences**, helping councils identify and resolve pain points in the customer journey.



Quick Win

Build in opportunities for feedback at key touchpoints, using surveys and service user stories to continuously refine services.

Always-on engagement through strategic communications

Councils can create a seamless experience that evolves based on user needs by integrating strategic communications into service delivery. Automated, data-driven campaigns ensure individuals receive the right support at the right time, while councils benefit from improved efficiency and engagement. Unlike social media or webpages, the information will always remain persistent and searchable within a person's inbox whenever and wherever they need it.

By leveraging the four phases of communication, councils can deliver next-generation adult social care services that truly make a difference.



CHAPTER 5

Improving digital engagement and user experience

Ensuring accessibility and trust

For digital services to succeed, they must be human-centred and accessible. Always apply human-centred design principles when creating next-generation social services.

Consider:



Mobile-friendly design | Many users rely on smartphones.



Plain English content | Avoiding jargon improves engagement.



Secure data handling | Build trust with transparency and compliance.



AI chatbot | Provide instant support for common queries.



Customer first | Always have the customer in your mind's eye when making decisions about service design.

By streamlining service requests and designing the process around the human, councils not only save staff time but also improve customer satisfaction. Instead of waiting on hold or sending multiple follow-ups, individuals can receive immediate guidance on available services, eligibility requirements, and next steps through digital channels. This approach is particularly effective for recurring enquiries, such as financial assistance for care services, where authoritative and trustworthy guidance can be automatically delivered.



Quick win

Human-centred design is collaborative and can take place anywhere. Pick a process and get a good mix of staff together. Find a room with a big white wall, set up your stages and tasks and start mapping your current state, look for pain points and think about how technology can make people's lives easier for everyone.

CHAPTER 6

Overcoming barriers to digital transformation

Addressing digital literacy gaps

While digital transformation offers many benefits, a key challenge is ensuring **all people can access and navigate digital services effectively**. Not everyone is comfortable with digital tools.

Solutions include:



Alternative support channels (e.g., phone, in-person assistance)



Training sessions for digital literacy in libraries and community centres



Accessible design features (e.g., screen reader compatibility, high-contrast visuals)

Training staff for digital-first services

Councils must equip staff with the skills to manage digital interactions effectively.

Consider:

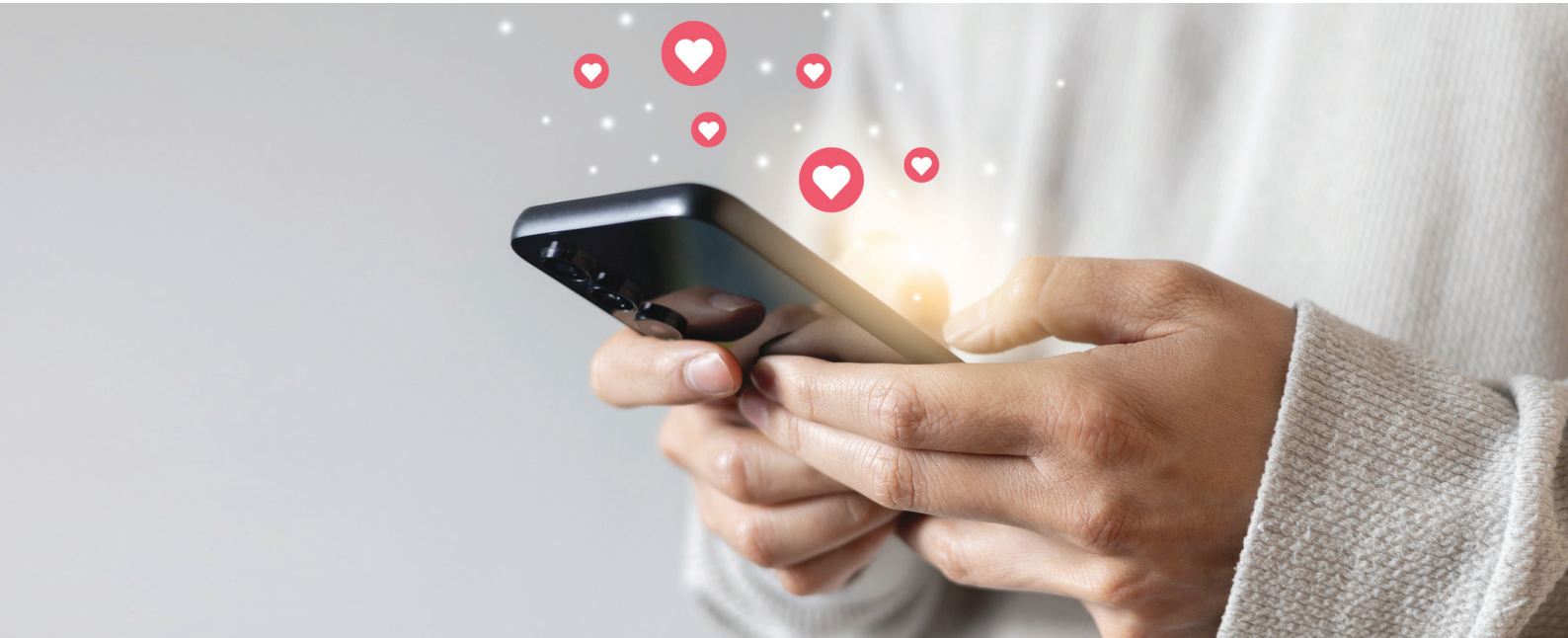
✓ Training on new digital skills

1. Writing for the web
2. Email creation
3. Best practice for form building

✓ Workshops on data-driven decision-making

✓ Soft skills training for guiding citizens through digital processes (e.g., tone of voice)





Best practices for improving digital engagement

To maximise the impact of digital services, councils should:

- ✓ **Involve users in the design process**, using community research and user testing to refine communications and self-service processes.
- ✓ **Promote hybrid support models**, ensuring those struggling with digital platforms can access alternative assistance. Always build in an escape hatch when designing digital services.
- ✓ **Use real-life success stories**, demonstrating how digital solutions have positively impacted **service users to encourage staff to get onboard and join the transformation.**

By focusing on human centred design, user experience, AI integration, and strategic communications, councils can break down barriers to digital adoption, improving efficiency while ensuring a more inclusive social care system.



Quick win

Walk in their shoes. Sit down with some of your service users over some cake and coffee. Invite them to access your service while you observe and get their feedback on any pain points and/or accessibility issues they encounter. Use this feedback to improve your processes and user experience.



Conclusion

Take the next step with Granicus

Digital transformation is key to improving adult social care efficiency, accessibility, and citizen satisfaction. By embracing self-service tools, strategic communications, and data-driven decision-making, councils can eliminate the dead ends in the system and ensure citizens always find the right path.

Hints and tips for implementation:

- ✓ **Start small:** Begin with a digital triage system before expanding.
- ✓ **Prioritise accessibility:** Ensure platforms are user-friendly and mobile-friendly.
- ✓ **Train staff:** Help teams adapt to digital processes.
- ✓ **Encourage digital adoption:** Promote self-service options to citizens.
- ✓ **Monitor and improve:** Use data to refine digital services.

How Granicus can help



Implement
self-service and
triage solutions



Enhance
engagement
with strategic
communications



Leverage data
insights for
smarter service
delivery



Evaluate your
current system and
provide relevant
next steps



Ready to learn more?

Let's navigate forward through
the maze, not backtrack!

Contact Us
