

Eliminating rekeying and revolutionising community visits with mobile apps



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

As one of the most densely populated administrative regions in the UK, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea council (RBKC) is dedicated to streamlining its services wherever possible. In order to best serve the community, as well as its own officers and wardens, here's how the council created two highly efficient and integrated mobile apps for use in the field.

The Challenge

In order to monitor and tackle issues such as noise pollution, parking regulations and complaints around construction, RBKC officers across a number of departments conduct regular checks within the community. Originally a paper-based reporting process, officers were required to return to base to rekey notes from each visit – or whenever access to historical data was required.

The Solution

To streamline these visits, RBKC sought to implement a front-end interface that could both send and receive data from existing systems and databases. Using NDL's [low-code Digitise technology](#), the council launched two apps for use within a number of teams working out in the local community.

The CREST app - RBKC developed and introduced its Community and Resident-focused Environmental Services Transformation (CREST) app, which allows its officers to report directly into back-office systems and databases through mobile devices. Designed specifically to assist its officers in the field, the app provides access to a range of helpful new features, such as:

- Map integration for location services
- Photo uploading
- Offline working, as data keyed will automatically be uploaded when connection is restored
- Access to historical data held in integrated back-office systems

Key Benefits

Improved data quality & accuracy

Reduced data loss risk, as well as better GDPR compliance

Rekeying processes are removed

Savings in paper/printing resources, costs & carbon footprint

Introduction of reporting with new data metrics

Enhanced employee morale



The NDL-based Crest App is easy to use and useful on site. It works great on the iPad. It is really useful in terms of giving you access to data in the field, and to update recordings following site visits.



Julian Trill
Noise and Nuisance Team Manager





The CREST app has revolutionised visits for over 50 officers across 4 different teams – Noise & Nuisance, Construction Management, Waste and Street Enforcement and Traffic Wardens. The app encompasses functionality for a wide range of reports, such as:

- Building control initial notices
- Outstanding inspections
- New enforcement cases & complaints
- Street search
- Warden referrals
- Parking suspensions
- Bonded sites and new developments

The Contract Monitoring app - Using the skills and knowledge applied to the overarching CREST app, RBKC has continued to drive digital transformations with its new Contract Monitoring app. Used by the council's Waste and Street Enforcement Team, the app allows 16 Waste Enforcement Officers to report on daily field checks. Based around the existing functionality and layout of CREST, it includes reporting features for a number of inspections, including:

- Street sweeper reporting & collection crews
- Recycling & Litter bins
- Tables & chair licences
- Toilets & portable toilets
- Leaflet distribution

The Benefits

Following the introduction of mobile working across RBKC departments, the team has found a number of overarching benefits - such as overall data quality and accuracy, significant time savings and reduced paper wastage. However, despite sharing functionality and integration, each app also delivered its own unique benefits to both RBKC and its residents:

The CREST app

- **Revolutionised checks, visits, and inspections:** The ability to recall and view information out in the field has directly improved the inspection process. Officers can now check information within the system while away from base, and enter new information while reporting.

- **Process improvements:** New CREST app features have improved the quality of data and evidence captured by officers during checks and visits. The ability to upload a photo means officers can populate detailed reports with visual detail, and map functionalities make it easier for officers to organise and navigate their community inspections.
- **Centralised data capturing:** Implementing a single system to be used across various departments has helped to unify the work of all four teams utilising the CREST app. All data inputted into back-office systems is now congruent, thanks to the uniform nature of fields within the application – improving both efficiency and data quality.

The Contract Monitoring app

- **Accelerated COVID-19 economy response:** As a result of the government's initiative to increase outdoor table and chair licences for businesses throughout the pandemic, RBKC now supplies over 2,000 table and chair licences to organisations within its constituency. The new, streamlined mobile app process has allowed Waste Enforcement Officers to manage this influx, and keep up with increased monitoring demand.
- **Improved resourcing:** In removing data rekeying, the new digital process allows Waste Enforcement Officers to complete an increased number of checks during working hours. The app inputs data directly into back-office systems – facilitating the completion of backlogged tasks.
- **Enhanced data quality, accuracy & reporting:** Data quality and accuracy is improved by the app's form-based functionalities – such as mandatory fields and input formatting – and reports are now generated automatically. This information can now be visualised more effectively within Power BI.

What's Next?

Following the success of apps launched within RBKC and neighbouring collaborator Westminster City Council teams, the council continues to identify new processes to streamline as part its ongoing digital transformation efforts.

