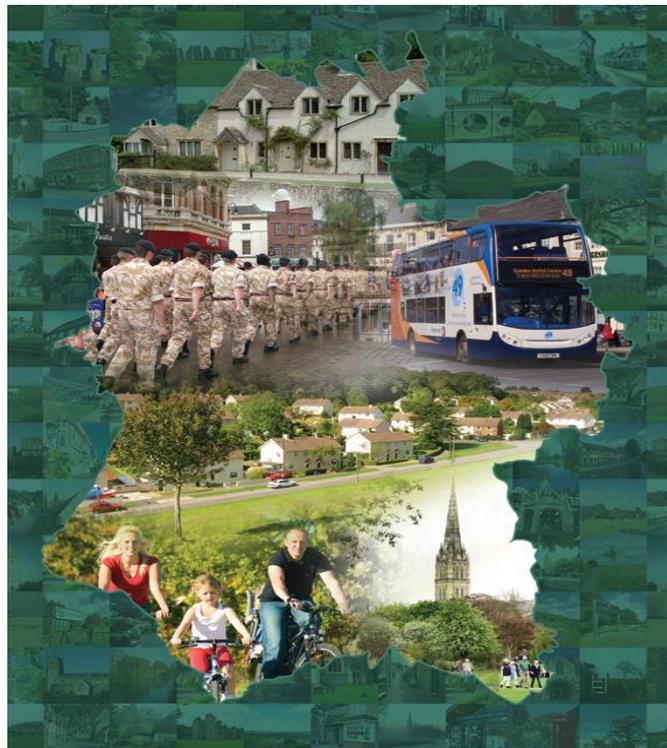




# Wiltshire Registration Service Customer Engagement Strategy



Wiltshire Registration Service - Recording Life's Journey!  
Updated March 2019 Version 1.3

**Wiltshire Council**  
Where everybody matters

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## 1. Introduction and Background

**Wiltshire Registration Service** is committed to delivering an excellent service to all its customers and we strive to continually improve the quality and efficiency of our service. **The Customer Engagement Strategy** outlines what you can expect from us and the various ways you can assist in helping us to improve the service we provide to the people of Wiltshire.

Please take time to read our Customer Charter which can be found at:

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/registrations-performance>

Civil registration is a vital service that affects everyone at some point in their lives. It provides a name and identity within society; a facility for marriage and civil partnership; evidence of parentage; and evidence of entitlement to inheritance.

It also plays a vital role in securing and protecting basic human rights and in supporting community wellbeing and social inclusion. The statistical information derived from civil registration is important to policy making and in allocating national and local resources and information and is essential to monitoring the health of the nation.

The activities of the registration service also underpin and support the Home Office's priorities of protection from terrorism, reducing crime and tackling immigration abuse. It is essential therefore that the local registration service continues to record accurate information, and passes on information regarding any fraudulent or suspected illegal activity to the correct authorities.

Wiltshire Registration Service is committed to providing customers with high quality registration services at key times in their lives, reflected in the facilities provided throughout Wiltshire in our three main offices, our 11 outstations and our service sited at Salisbury District Hospital.

The public are served in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations and the principles outlined in Wiltshire Council's policies and procedures. The service is customer focused and the high standard of service delivery achieved reflects positively on the local authority. This Customer Engagement Strategy will facilitate effective customer participation.

To maintain a high level of customer satisfaction with the services we provide, it is vital to understand client needs in addition to their views on the services and products that we provide. We can achieve this by ensuring regular dialogue with our stakeholders is established and maintained as part of our day-to-day business.

We aim to provide opportunities for customers to actively engage in the delivery of services by encouraging their comments which will be considered in setting registration development targets both locally and nationally. These opportunities are varied to ensure that customers can participate in a way and at a level that encourages them to participate both individually and collectively.

Wiltshire Registration Service submits Annual Performance Reviews to the General Register Office for England and Wales which confirms adherence to the Code of Practice, describes key service developments and outlines performance indicators.

Evidencing our Customer Engagement is part of this Code of Practice; Customer Engagement is included in our Service Delivery Plan and this document has been created to formalise our customer engagement strategy.

*We strive to:*

- Put people first in everything we do
- Listen to our customers and be responsive to their needs
- Make the best use of resources available to us, remaining innovative and creative and seeking continuous improvement
- Work with other departments and agencies to improve quality of service based on best practice and ensure that we remain efficient and cost effective to the people of Wiltshire
- Train, develop and retain highly skilled and valued officers who are empowered to deliver our goals. Recognise their commitment and acknowledge achievement

In order to deliver on these objectives, the Head of Service, Registration pursues a number of initiatives in consultation with all members of the registration team, customers and stakeholders including:

- Customer consultation to ensure services are developed and delivered in accordance with customer demand. [Run from January 2019 – March 2019. Next year 2019//20 a new survey will be added to the Stopford appointment system which will automatically be sent out to customers on completion of their appointment or following their wedding.](#)
- Utilisation of the Good Practice Guide to benchmark service provision against other providers in the region
- Regular review of the processes within the district to ensure that best use is made of the resources available
- Development of our partnerships with other local and central government departments, Approved Venues, Hospital, funeral directors and General Practitioners

## 2. Objectives/Aims of the Strategy

*This document aims to detail:*

- what customer engagement means
- Identify our customer base
- when customer engagement should be considered
- the types of engagement activities undertaken
- how the information provided from customer engagement activities is utilised

- how we feedback results and actions to our customers from their engagement with us

This document provides some principles for customer engagement for the Registration Service. We aim to tailor our strategy to individual customers/stakeholders and, consider this document to be a 'living document' which can be developed and changed. It is not an exhaustive list of engagement activities.

*By promoting participation, we will:*

- meet our statutory, regulatory and contractual duties and comply with legislation and codes of practice
- comply with the relevant guidance
- seek involvement of all customers regardless of age, gender, race, religion, marital status, political or sexual orientation or disability
- monitor the effectiveness of our performance and provide feedback to all customers

*We will work closely with service users and support services to ensure that we are helping achieve strategic outcomes. We will:*

- make participation easy and accessible to everyone
- promote real opportunities for participation
- provide resources to enable participation
- make sure the views and priorities of are reflected in the services we provide

We need to ensure that the services we provide are what our customers require. We want to the deliver the right services, in the right manner and at the right time! This customer engagement strategy outlines what we want to achieve as a service and how you, as a customer, can help.

### 3. What is Customer Engagement?

Wiltshire Council is committed to providing a registration service that strives to meet national standards in all areas. A continuous programme of service improvement is undertaken by regularly reviewing policy and procedures to reflect the needs of our customers and provide the best possible registration and celebratory services. During 2018/19 we have strived to improve performance in all areas and registration statistics are monitored monthly within the service and by the General Register Office for England and Wales.

Engaging with our customers helps to build a connection between the Wiltshire Registration Service and those accessing the services we provide.

## 4. How do customers get involved?

Every year we conduct a customer satisfaction e-survey. The results of this survey are collated independently and are provided to the department for publication on our service web pages <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/registrations-performance> We will report where expectations have not been met and explain how we aim to improve to meet customer needs.

*In addition to our e-surveys, customers can comment/contact us by:*

- Telephone
- Letter
- Email
- Website
- Customer comment cards
- Compliments verbal, written, emailed or entered on to our website
- Face to face contact at Registration offices and events such as wedding fayres
- Using the Council Complaints Process

Where an improvement can be made, provided contact details are supplied, the customer will be contacted and advised of the outcome of their suggestion. Occasionally, due to legal restrictions or council policy we may not be able to adopt or implement some suggestions, however again the customer will be notified, provided contact details have been supplied.

By taking time to participate in engagement activities, our customers have the opportunity to:

- Shape future customer experiences
- Improve communications between policy makers, service deliverers and service users
- Further understand laws, policies and regulations that govern standards
- Be involved in process improvements and influence decisions on local and national policies
- Identify innovative solutions that could exceed the expectations of our customers

## 5. Who are our customers and stakeholders?

- Members of the public who access statutory and non-statutory registration services provided locally, regionally or nationally
- General Register office (GRO)
- Home Office
- UK Visas and Immigration
- Wiltshire Council departments and other local authorities
- Central Government Departments including the DWP
- Office for National Statistics
- Coroner's Office

- Funeral Directors
- Clergy and representatives of Religious Denominations
- GPs
- Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Care Homes
- Social Services
- Approved Venues (licensed for marriages and civil partnerships)
- Genealogists and Historians

### *How can customers comment?*

- Respond to telephone or email surveys
- Use social media to keep up to date with our activities and engage with other customers
- Make comments and feedback through the website
- Discuss issues in person face to face with staff when attending a registration office
- Join a council customer forum
- Use the council complaints procedure if dissatisfied with any aspect of the service they receive

## **6. When should customer engagement be considered?**

It is essential for the service to recognise the value of feedback when it is given, wherever it is given and however it is given, and to react in the most appropriate fashion. For staff this could mean:

- Additional training sessions group/one to one
- Attending workshops
- Involvement in project groups
- Mentoring and shadowing opportunities

The council has a very clear complaints policy which can be accessed via the council website at: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/complaints-making-a-complaint> If you wish to make a complaint, you can do so either informally via a comments card or formally using the complaints process.

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 48 hours.

## **7. How can you access our services?**

There are several ways in which to contact us for information or to book an appointment or ceremony.

- To make an appointment for a birth or death registration please telephone 0300 003 4569 or book online at <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/registrations-births> or <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/registrations-register-a-death>

- To make an appointment to give notice of marriage or civil partnership please telephone 0300 003 4570 or book online at <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/registrations-ceremonies>
- To book a ceremony of any kind please telephone 0300 003 4570 or email [ceremonies@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:ceremonies@wiltshire.gov.uk)

### *In person:*

We have three main offices based in County Hall, Trowbridge (The Register Office). Bourne Hill, Salisbury and Chippenham Registration Office we also have 12 outstations throughout the county. Details and opening times of all can be found on our webpages at <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/registrations-office-locations>

### *Online bookings:*

We offer online bookings for those wishing to book to register a birth, death or notice of marriage or civil partnership appointment. Once you have booked you will receive a confirmation email containing the details of the appointment and what you will be required to bring with you by way of supporting documentation to your appointment. There are statutory timeframes for appointment types e.g. a death must be registered within five days of the date following the death. A birth must be registered within 42 days of the birth occurring. Appointments will only be offered within the statutory timeframes.

Customer engagement is embedded within the culture of Wiltshire Registration Service. In addition to customer engagement we wish to capture the views of other users and stakeholders on any changes to the registration service and future provision. Therefore occasionally questionnaires will be sent to:

- Funeral Directors
- Venues licensed for civil ceremonies
- Council members and officers
- GP Practices, Nursing Homes and Hospital
- Coroner
- Clergy and Appointed Persons
- Bereavement Officers
- Other local authority departments
- Central government stakeholders.

## **8. What do customers want?**

### *We believe they want us to:*

- Provide a cost effective, efficient, professional and easily accessible service

- Enable access to our appointment booking system so customers can book their appointment at their own convenience
- Listen to what they say and respond in a timely and decisive manner
- Continue to improve on ways of communication

## 9. How do we use the data collected?

It is essential that customer engagement is not just a 'tick in the box' exercise. The output from any engagement activity should be seen to be used in order to improve customer experience.

### *Therefore:*

- All feedback is shared with staff in team meetings and via email
- Employer/employee data is fed back to the Head of Service who will liaise with the Proper Officer about particular positive/negative feedback and action will be taken to implement changes deemed appropriate
- Summary of survey results will be posted on the Registration Website pages
- The Head of Service reports to the Corporate Leadership Team and Proper Officer with an analysis of feedback annually. This analysis is also incorporated into the Annual Report and Service Delivery Plan which is submitted to the General Register Office and published on the website
- Key performance indicators (KPIs) will be used to monitor the success of improvements

## 10. How do we communicate results and actions?

- On our website pages
- In the Annual Report and Service Delivery Plan
- In electronic emails/newsletters to stakeholders
- By personal correspondence with a customer, if not appropriate for general communication

## 11. Training

It is extremely important that every member of staff understands the importance of customer engagement. Taking on board customer comments leads to better decision making and leads to more satisfied customers. Each year every member of staff must complete a mandatory e-learning module on Customer Service and Delivery.

## 12. Equal Opportunities

Wiltshire Council understands that people have different needs and requirements and actively works against any form of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect as outlined in the Behaviours Framework. Our service provides equal access for everyone irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, belief or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

*Legislation which underpins this includes:*

Equality Act 2010  
Human Rights Act 1998  
European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages 1992  
Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006

### 13. Officer Responsibilities

*All staff will:*

- Be responsible for providing excellent service to customers and stakeholders at all times
- Be trained to the highest level of competence for their roles
- Uphold the council's Behaviours Framework when representing the council at work or outside events

*The Head of Service will be responsible for:*

- The collation of feedback and analysis of data
- Engaging with teams to implement service improvements/changes
- Publication of actions to be taken through the appropriate channels as documented above

### 14. Ownership of the Customer Engagement Strategy

Strategy owner: Proper Officer for Registration/Head of Service, Registration

Created: December 2016

Review 1: March 2017

Review 2: March 2018

Review 3: March 2019