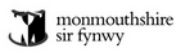**logicdialog**

A guide for the Local Authorities...

How Local Authorities can save £20,000 a month (or more) *and* better support society's most vulnerable citizens by using this no code technology that can be deployed in under a day.

About logicdialog

With logicdialog, Local Authorities can effortlessly implement AI-powered digital assistants to streamline core services, resulting in cost savings and enhanced citizen engagement. Our platform is trusted by over a dozen Local Authorities throughout the UK and is recognised as the leading service automation solution in the sector.

Trusted by...

About this guide

logicdialog has been a trusted partner of Local Authorities since 2018. Our clients are leveraging the power of AI-powered digital assistants to streamline operations, reduce costs, and enhance the citizen experience. Through extensive data analysis and client interviews, we have gained a comprehensive understanding of the challenges facing Local Government. In this guide, we share our insights and showcase how the implementation of our integrated, intelligent digital assistants can address these challenges and bring significant benefits to Local Government operations. With more than a dozen Local Authorities already utilizing our platform, logicdialog is the most widely-used service automation platform in the sector.

While all data, comments and case studies are anonymised, we would like to thank some key contributors, including West Berkshire Council, Agilisys, Monmouthshire County Council, Carmarthenshire County Council, 8x8 Inc., and Central Bedfordshire Council.

If you have any comments or would like to discuss your Local Authority's needs, feel free to contact us at https://www.logicdialog.ai/contact

Thanks for taking the time to look through the guide and we hope you find it useful.

Team logicdialog!

The backdrop

The Local Government sector in the UK continues to grapple with a range of complex challenges that have a negative impact on the provision of services.

Funding and budget cuts

The financial limitations faced by Local Authorities, primarily due to government funding cuts, have greatly impacted their ability to provide essential services to their communities. The County Councils Network (CCN) has raised concerns that upcoming budget cuts in combination with increasing inflation could prove even more detrimental than previous austerity measures. It is projected that 40 of England's largest county and unitary authorities will be facing immense financial pressures, potentially adding an additional £3.5bn to their costs. These budget constraints have resulted in Local Authorities having difficulty in maintaining the basic levels of service they currently offer.

An ageing population

The ongoing demographic shift towards an ageing population poses a significant challenge for Local Governments. As the population ages, the demand for social care and other support services increases, putting a strain on Local Authorities' resources and budgets. Budget constraints make it difficult to meet the growing needs of their ageing population.

Digital transformation

It's a paradox that the same financial constraints that make it difficult for Local Authorities to maintain existing services also impede their ability to invest in digital transformation.
Without sufficient funding, Local Authorities struggle to adopt new technologies and digitise their services, hindering their ability to meet the evolving needs of citizens and businesses.

This guide suggests that by utilising AI-powered service automation tools like logicdialog, Local Authorities can achieve cost savings and enhance service delivery to citizens, *despite* facing budget limitations. It outlines a plan for Local Authorities to effectively implement these solutions to meet the demands of their evolving citizen needs.

Increased expectations

Citizens accessing council services today expect to do so digitally, at any time, on any channel, in any language, and from any location or device. Local Authorities therefore face increasing pressures to offer digitised services and self-serve capabilities.

Moreover, for these digital services to be widely and sustainably adopted, they must be easy to use, secure, and available 24/7 across multiple channels such as mobile apps, websites, and conversational interfaces like chatbots and digital assistants.

A successful self-serve strategy allows citizens to access services and information without having to physically visit Local Authority offices, make calls or send emails - saving them time and effort.

When citizens use digital channels to access (and manage) their personal information, submit enquiries, make complaints, check accounts, update contact information, track requests, register for permits, apply for council services, and offer feedback, everybody wins.

These digital services don't just provide convenience and accessibility for citizens by improving engagement; they also help Local Authorities become more efficient and cost-effective in their service delivery.

Digital assistants can facilitate all of the above... and more.

Overall, Local Authorities are facing increased pressure to offer digitised services and self-serve capabilities in order to meet the expectations of their citizens, and drive down operational costs.

Ironically, delivering on the above requirements is often less complex, less daunting and less expensive that an organisation may assume.

The aim of this guide is to remove some of the unknowns, so you can begin your AI journey step by step. Please read on...

Digital assistants - what are they exactly?

A digital assistant is a software program that can understand natural language text and voice commands to complete tasks for the user.

Digital assistants can perform a wide range of tasks such as reporting missed bin collections, taking payments, answering common questions, automating permit requests, making recommendations, and controlling other systems through integrations.

The most effective digital assistants use artificial intelligence and machine learning to improve their capabilities over time, and they can be accessed via websites, portals, smartphones, mobile apps, messaging apps (like Whatsapp), or smart speakers like Alexa and Google Home. As more and more citizens use a council's digital assistant, the business can begin to identify trends in the conversational data that will help them to continually refine and improve their services.

The automation of core tasks coupled with the insights gleaned from conversational data is proving to be a powerful combination.

The automation of core tasks coupled with the insights gleaned from conversational data is proving to be a powerful combination for the local government sector.
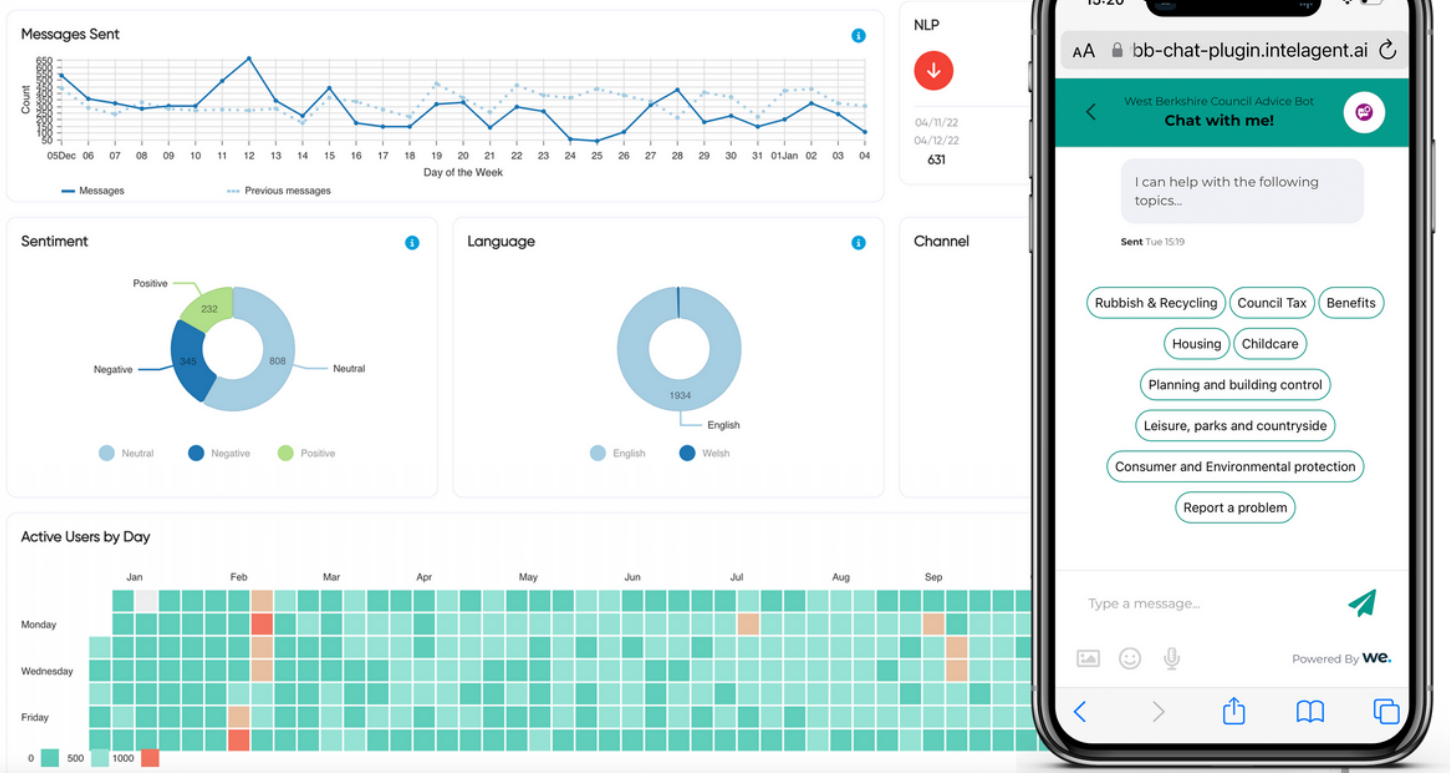
Digital assistants in Local Government

In a recent 'MyCleverGroup' survey, Local Authorities ranked second only behind the Utility firms in terms of customer (citizen) frustration. While Local Authorities are admittedly hamstrung by the challenges already highlighted in this guide, there *are* simple solutions that are quick to implement, and proven to have a profound impact of efficiencies and service levels.
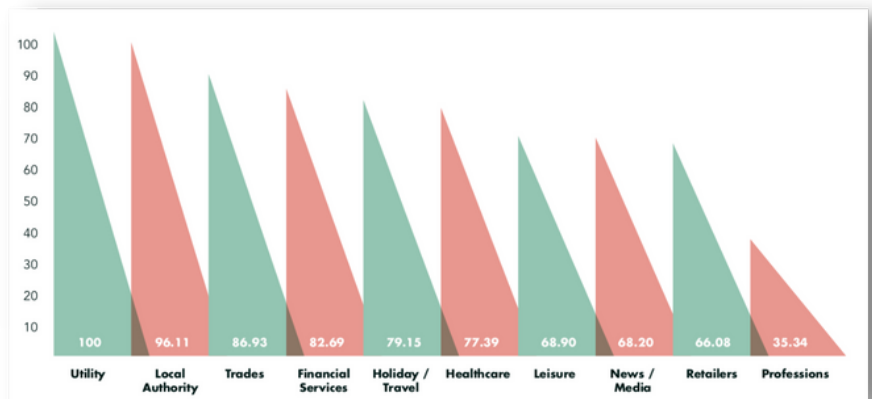
Whether you work in a cross functional contact centre, or within a specific service area such as **waste and environmental services, housing or revenues and benefits**, there are undoubtedly advantages to leveraging AI powered digital assistants.

**Digital assistants in waste and environment services**
We know that waste collection is a huge driver of inbound contacts for Local Authorities. We also know that **up to 80%** of these inbound contacts could be fully automated. Doing so drives massive time and money savings, and logicdialog has already helped a number of Local Authorities clients drive down calls and emails across this (and other) service areas.
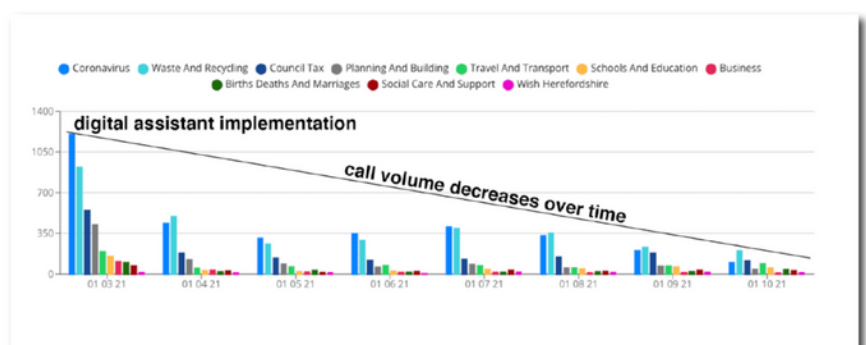
Digital assistants can help streamline waste collection and environmental services for UK local authorities in a number of ways:

- Online self-service portals: Local authorities can implement an online self-service portal that allows residents to report missed bin collections, request new bins, or request special collections, such as for large items or hazardous waste. This can reduce staff workload, and allow them to focus on more complex tasks.

- Chatbots or voice assistants: Local authorities can use chatbots or voice assistants to provide information about waste and recycling services to residents, including details about collection days, what can be recycled, and how to dispose of hazardous waste. This can help to reduce the number of phone and in-person enquiries and free up staff to focus on more pressing tasks.

- Real-time updates and notifications: Local authorities can use digital assistants to provide real-time updates and notifications to residents about their waste collection schedule and any disruptions or changes to services. This can help to reduce confusion and ensure that residents are able to properly plan for their waste collection.

- Streamlined reporting and data collection: Digital assistants can be used to streamline the process of reporting missed bin collections or other issues with waste and recycling services. This can help local authorities to identify and address issues more efficiently and improve the overall performance of their waste and recycling services.

Overall, the use of digital assistants can help local authorities to streamline waste collection and environmental services by providing convenient online self-service options, answering frequently asked questions, providing real-time updates and notifications, and streamlining the process of reporting issues. This can help to reduce the workload of staff and allow them to focus on more complex tasks, ultimately improving the efficiency and effectiveness of waste collection and environmental services for residents.
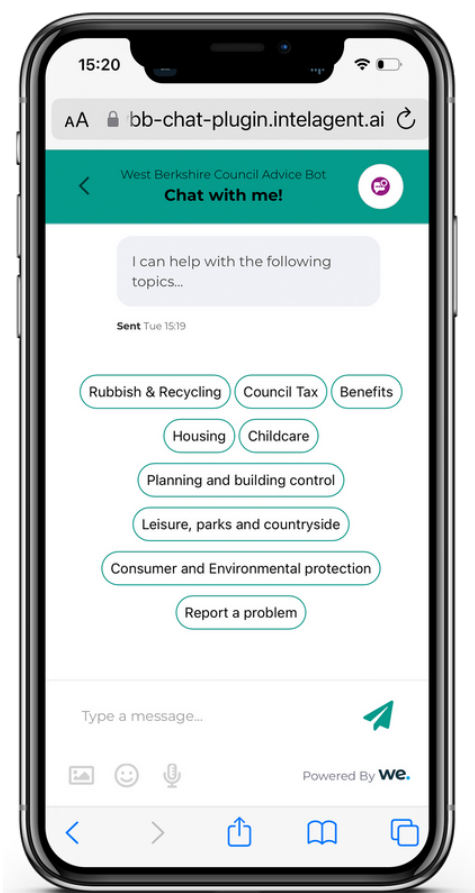
Case study... A Local Authority.

Monmouthshire County Council supports its citizens with a digital assistant, called Monty!

Always striving for innovative approaches to citizen services, Monmouthshire County Council engaged logicdialog to deploy a bilingual (English and Welsh) digital assistant. Serving a rural and ageing population of around 100,000, it was deemed that a simple, self-serve digital channel would prove popular among Monmouthshire's residents, and free up council resources to support the regions' most vulnerable.

The project
Having gained an understanding of Monmouthshire's highest volume, lowest value inbound traffic types, logicdialog set about designing conversation flows and integrations that would automate service lines such as waste and environmental services, education, highways and local information.

A 'town hall' was set up to gain citizen feedback on the digital assistant, and a Twitter poll was held to vote on a name for the bot. The name chosen was Monty! Both initiatives proved a great way to raise awareness of Monmouthshire's new channel.

The results
Monmouthshire typically takes 50,000 calls per year. Around 54% of these calls are related to waste and environmental services. That's a total call volume of 27,000 relating to this topic. Monty has successfully answered (and therefore deflected away from call and email) 84% of these enquiries. In real terms, that's 22,000 less waste related calls and/or emails.

'Something that our Community Hub staff talk about is that Monty can deal with the missed bin collections so their time is freed up to find a homeless person a home. We need to continually drive efficiency, which Monty will enable us to do'

- Abigail Barton, Communications Manager

250K
chats handled since launch

22K
Reduction in waste related calls

84%
percentage of automated resolutions

logicdialog

Implementing a digital assistant - 20 steps to take.

With 5 years of experience and successful automation projects for the likes of Amnesty International, AS Roma, Diageo, and The AA under our belts, we know what it takes to deliver enterprise-level service automation into global clients.

We've also completed over a dozen projects in the Local Government space. That means we've learned (sometimes the hard way) that the key to a successful digital assistant deployment is to follow as many of these steps as you can.

Steps may vary based on your organisation's specific goals and needs, but if you need any help, **just reach out to us** and we'll join you on your conversational AI journey...

For now, this is a great pathway to follow...

- [ ] Define your goals and objectives for using chatbots or digital assistants.
- [ ] Determine which tasks or processes can be automated or assisted by chatbots or digital assistants.
- [ ] Evaluate your current technology infrastructure to ensure that it can support chatbots or digital assistants.
- [ ] Research and compare different chatbot or digital assistant platforms and tools.
  Identify the specific needs and preferences of your target audience.
- [ ] Determine how you will integrate chatbots or digital assistants into your existing systems and processes.
- [ ] Consider how you will train and manage your chatbots or digital assistants.
- [ ] Develop a plan for monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of your chatbots or digital assistants.

Implementing a digital assistant - 20 steps to take.

- [ ] Identify any potential legal or compliance issues related to the use of chatbots or digital assistants.
- [ ] Determine how you will handle sensitive or confidential information.
- [ ] Consider the potential impact on your workforce, including any potential job displacement or the need for up skilling.
- [ ] Establish clear guidelines and protocols for using chatbots or digital assistants.
- [ ] Determine how you will handle customer inquiries or complaints related to chatbots or digital assistants.
- [ ] Develop a plan for handling technical issues or malfunctions.
- [ ] Consider how you will handle data privacy and security.

- [ ] Determine how you will handle updates and maintenance for your chatbots or digital assistants.
- [ ] Develop a plan for promoting and marketing your chatbots or digital assistants to your target audience.
- [ ] Consider how you will handle any potential negative public perception or backlash related to the use of chatbots or digital assistants.
- [ ] Establish a budget for implementing and maintaining chatbots or digital assistants.
- [ ] Assemble a team or task force to oversee the implementation and management of chatbots or digital assistants.

We recommend you print these checkpoints off and use this list as a high level checklist to support your digital assistant project.

Measuring success - key metrics.

There are a number of success metrics you should consider when assessing the success of your project. Most enterprise level platforms will provide data on the following key performance indicators...

- **User adoption**: This measures the number of users who are actively using the digital assistant. High user adoption rates indicate that the digital assistant is providing value to the users.
- **Task completion rate**: This measures the percentage of tasks that are successfully completed using the digital assistant. A high task completion rate indicates that the digital assistant is effective at helping users achieve their goals.
- **Time savings**: This measures the amount of time that users save by using the digital assistant to complete tasks / find resolutions.

- **Customer satisfaction**: This measures how satisfied users are with the digital assistant. High levels of customer satisfaction indicate that the digital assistant is meeting the needs of the users.
- **Cost savings**: This measures the amount of money that the business is able to save by using the digital assistant to complete tasks. This is important because it can help businesses reduce costs and improve profitability.
- **Increase in revenue/speed of collection**: This measures the increase in revenue or reduction in pay delay that the business experiences as a result of implementing the digital assistant. This is important because it can help businesses grow and expand.

There's a myriad of conversational data metrics businesses can leverage to understand and improve the performance of their digital assistant. Head to https://www.logicdialog.ai/resources to learn more about conversational data and how to use it to better understand your customer needs.

Summary

We hope this guide outlines the challenges faced by Local Governments, (such as funding and budget cuts, an ageing population, and digital transformation), and how the implementation of AI-powered digital assistants can address these challenges.

The adoption of digital assistants enables Local Authorities to offer digitised services and self-serve capabilities, improving efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Digital assistants can perform a variety of tasks, such as reporting missed bin collections, answering common questions, and automating permit requests. By using AI and machine learning, these assistants can continually refine and improve their services.

To successfully deploy a digital assistant, follow the pathway we have presented; defining goals, evaluating technology infrastructure, and developing plans for monitoring and measuring effectiveness, and you can ensure success.

Logicdialog is a trusted partner of Local Authorities since 2018, and provides AI-powered digital assistants to help streamline operations, reduce costs, and enhance citizen engagement. As the leading service automation solution in the sector, logicdialog is used by over a dozen Local Authorities in the UK. We'd be happy to support your AI journey.

Book your free consultation today and we would be happy to advise on how best to integrate conversational AI into your Local Authority for the benefit of the business and your citizens.

"54% of all enquiries are handled by the digital assistant...

We've already given hundreds of hours back to the contact centre"

Monmouthshire County Council

logicdialog

Thank you!

logicdialog.ai

logicdialog

Contact us at paul@logicdialog.ai