



CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

BACKGROUND

Established in April 1996, Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) is the local government authority for the county of Caerphilly in Wales. It is responsible for more than 800 services including education, social care and housing, to a community of 181,000 residents.

THE CHALLENGE

As Energy, Water and Conservation Officer at CCBC, Paul Rossiter is responsible for water efficiency across the council's non-domestic buildings. With over 400 properties ranging from council buildings and schools to civic and leisure centres, it's Paul's job to ensure the council's water usage is as efficient as possible. Part of the role includes investigating potential leaks and higher than average bills.

Our previous billing process was challenging for Paul to keep on top of as individual bills were posted to all 400 buildings, meaning Paul didn't have visibility into what was being used at each site. If a high bill caused concern, it could be weeks before Paul was notified, meaning valuable time was lost and his ability to start investigating the issue sooner was hampered.

If Paul could centrally manage the council's water bills, he could improve his understanding of each site's usage, enabling him to react quicker to any change in consumption.

THE SOLUTION

We offered the council Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) as it allows billing data to be sent directly from Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water to CCBC by email, eliminating paper invoices, speeding up processing times and cutting the costs associated with manual processing. Previously, the authority estimated that it cost £8-10 to manually process each bill.

Rather than bills being posted to many different sites, we now send one combined monthly bill that includes up to 250 of the council's properties straight to Paul's team, with plans to migrate the remaining properties in the future. Not only that, but rather than it taking days for billing information to reach the council, it now takes less than two minutes for the EDI bill to arrive, enabling instant access to accurate billing data.

This instant access means Paul's team can ensure their water billing is accurate, and by interrogating the meter read data, CCBC can now identify any leaks that have developed, saving money in the long term. A good example of this is where the authority identified three significant leaks within Caerphilly leisure centre, which were completely hidden from view at the centre.

They now have a central point of contact within our billing team, who offer dedicated support and can help them to pick up on any anomalies or spikes in usage and query them immediately.

BENEFITS

The new solution has transformed the way CCBC manages its billing and water efficiency:

- **Able to identify leaks quickly** — Reducing the amount of money unnecessarily spent on water lost through leaks and increasing overall water efficiency.
- **Created a significant time saving** — The authority can now interrogate, process and pay 250 invoices within 30 minutes of receiving an EDI file. Paul's team can now use their time on higher-value tasks that help the council to become more proactive in its approach.
- **Receive the invoice data in a central location** — Allowing the authority to benchmark and target areas of high water consumption.
- **Eliminated paper from the billing process** — This is helping to limit the council's impact on the environment.
- Allows the authority to **make prompt payments**.

“ EDI has already saved the authority time and money. It's helped us discover an issue with Bargoed Library: we had been paying potable rates and the property was on a meter when it should have only been on one charging format. Thanks to the introduction of EDI we discovered this, and quickly obtained a rebate. It was easy to slot the EDI files into our database, and the process is so much quicker than processing a paper invoice. It's freed up our time to focus in on problematic areas such as suspected water leaks. ”

Paul Rossiter

Energy, Water and Conservation Officer, CCBC



Dŵr Cymru
Welsh Water

