



Sue Shirt

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“The crisis has given the organisation a narrative and an impetus for a more radical pace of change... and a greater acceptance for implementing new ways of working that are sailable rather than being 100% ready.”

Sue observed that the Covid crisis has spawned a phenomenon similar to the aftermath of the 2015 budget announcement. Stonewater has been on a transformation journey for a while, and like most organisations the pace of that transformation is often limited by how much the business feels it can manage whilst delivering services. Now there is a greater appetite to try, to innovate, and to accept that Stonewater will be forgiven for failure. Afterall, necessity is the mother of invention, as the saying goes.

The service enhancements delivered by Stonewater since lockdown are many and include digital signups for customers, with a full digital lettings offer coming in July. One of the biggest and bravest changes includes rolling out an entirely new customer services model.

Live Response

‘Live Response’ is about providing a first-time response and service - early resolution, improving satisfaction, managing expectations in this situation and reducing waste calls. The model is tenure, patch and ownership blind. Once lockdown hit, it took Stonewater only five weeks to turn

the regional pilot (which was running pre-lockdown) into a live national service model.

Proactive Outreach

Alongside Live Response sits ‘Proactive Outreach’. A new model for dealing with slightly more complex customer needs where a proactive contact predicts and manages service delivery - such as avoiding ASB, financial support, vulnerable customers, etc. This model has also launched nationally, from concept, in a matter of weeks! The model triggers proactive customer contact from Stonewater when specific criteria are met, such as a lack of contact, indicating there may be a problem.

Speed of innovations

“Both these changes would have been another year in development and testing but thanks to the newfound impetus we have identified ways to get new service models in place quickly that help our customers right now.”

A great example of how customer centric continuous improvement can happen at pace and with customer experience at our heart.