

# Tell Us Once Programme

...because your time matters

## A word from the top

A very warm welcome to the last newsletter of 2011 which has been a very busy and successful year for Tell Us Once.



**Lyn McDonald**  
Tell Us Once  
Programme Director

Roll out is going very well and by the end of December I expect over 300 local authorities to be offering the service. We are on course to have all of the councils signed up to deliver the service – 96% - operational by the end of March 2012.

In this issue Yvonne and Paul have described their experiences of Tell Us Once's roll out. I recommend that you read their excellent articles. It's been a long journey but there is still much to do and I remain determined to ensure that Tell Us Once is delivered safely and to the benefit of all our partners and the people that use the service. I would like to thank all our partners who have been working so hard toward our shared aim.

I wish you a Happy Christmas and all the best for 2012.

### Diane's message

As some of you will already be aware, Tell Us Once is changing. As the roll out continues and more of our partners go live, responsibility for the ongoing delivery and development of Tell Us Once live service will be taken over by the Tell Us Once Delivery Partnerships. Having been with the Programme since its inception I have been appointed Head of TUO Delivery Partnerships and I am busy building my team which will work with the Programme as it completes roll out and begins to take this new service forward.

My team's role will be looking for ways to expand the Tell Us Once service in an appropriate and sustainable way. This will build on the highly successful work the Programme has already been undertaking with its partners. Please feel free to contact the team if you have any ideas on how to improve Tell Us Once.

### Diane Leggo

Head of TUO Delivery Partnerships

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To contact Diane and her team, email [tellusonce.deliverypartnerships@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:tellusonce.deliverypartnerships@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

# Implementation update

Since the Change Reporting System (CRS) became operational on 20 September the service has been rolling out in local authorities across the country.

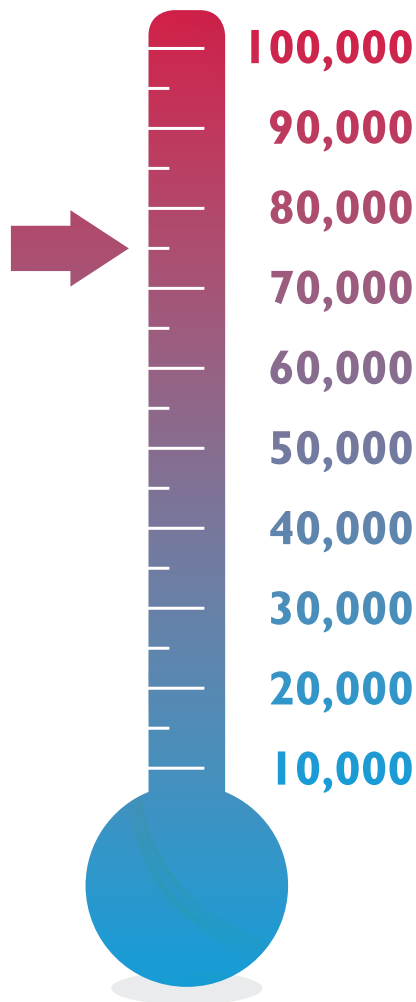
By the end of November the Tell Us Once Birth and Bereavement service was already being offered in 235 authorities. Since November 2008, around 75,000 people have been helped by using it.

In total, 96% of local authorities are now signed up and we hope to have the service available across those authorities by spring next year. If you would like to find out more about the birth or bereavement service please see [www.direct.gov.uk/death-tellusonce](http://www.direct.gov.uk/death-tellusonce) or [www.direct.gov.uk/birth-tellusonce](http://www.direct.gov.uk/birth-tellusonce). The bereavement site will tell people if service is available in your area.

Thank you to all our colleagues in local government without whose support and collaboration Tell Us Once would not have been possible.

### Useful links

- [TUO Account Manager](#)
- [National roll out map](#)



Number of people helped by the Tell Us Once service.

## Tell Us Once in the news

As the service becomes available across the country we want to promote it as widely as possible and reach as many people as we can. This will ensure that customers who require the service know that they can get additional help when they need it most. To help achieve this goal the TUO Programme has set up a temporary press office, which is entirely focused on sharing TUO messages and the benefits it brings for customers and organisations alike.

Since the press office was set up in late October TUO has had coverage across a range of local, national and specialist media, and has appeared online, in print and on the radio. They have been working closely with local authority press offices. So far the team has managed to place 38 press articles and two radio interviews.

There has also been an increase in activity through our Twitter account. Follow [@TellUsOnce](https://twitter.com/TellUsOnce) to find out what the Programme and local authorities offering the service have to say.

The communications campaign will continue until Christmas through a range of media, so search for us online. If you'd like to publicise the service through your own channels please get in touch at [tellusonce.communications@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:tellusonce.communications@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

# Giving birth to a new service

**Paul Quin**, Senior Project Manager from Sunderland reports

At Sunderland City Council we were lucky enough to be included in the 'Pathfinder Group' of local authorities who piloted the TUO Birth Service.

From the start we had a number of advantages which included backing from our Executive Management Team, a totally committed 'buy in' from my colleagues in the Registration Service, established GCSx connectivity and an established route to EAS registration. My colleagues in our Telephone Contact Centre also deserve a special mention for the way that they have embraced TUO. They are our TUO 'sales team' who are the first point of public contact with a potential TUO customer and, using well prepared scripts, are able to give our customers full information on the advantages of taking up the TUO Service. We also had the advantage that I'm a full time project manager which took much of the day-to-day organisational burden from the Registrars.

For us the transition to using the CRS for TUO Birth, far from being stressful, was very smooth indeed and it has helped to improve the service we provide for our customers. This was because the original 'Badger' spreadsheet based notification system, which we introduced in November 2010,



Sunderland's TUO Registration Team, from left, Dawn Bewick, Julie Wright, Suzanne Errington and Maureen Ball. had a number of complicated process steps which were open to human error. CRS on the other hand is a simple to use system which, because it is web-based, needs only a simple single click of the mouse to submit the form.

Although the introduction of the Bereavement Service in October meant additional responsibilities and duties this transition also went smoothly.

The key to these successful launches lies in the preparation. Since the beginning we have had an excellent relationship with our Implementation Manager, Kate Foster, who was able to provide face-to-face training for both Registrars and the service providers in the various Council departments. We also produced our leaflets well in advance and thoroughly tested our connectivity before 'going-live.'

Both our customers and our council staff have really welcomed and embraced TUO. The introduction of the Service, and in particular Bereavement, has enhanced the Registrars' job satisfaction, and judging by our consistent take up of TUO Birth which runs at around 70%, we've managed to maintain public take-up success since last November. Our colleagues in various Council departments are delighted with the data that they receive and the ease with which it can be accessed. They are busy collecting information so that we can assess the efficiency benefits which will undoubtedly accrue from TUO.

# TUO supports Seaham's service to customers

Some of the keenest supporters of Tell Us Once have been the staff working on the front line in the Department for Work and Pensions.

Feedback from civil servants across government has been "we need it yesterday."

Yvonne Cranson from the DWP Bereavement Service who are also responsible for handling TUO notifications has kindly offered her feedback on the impact of Tell Us Once on a frontline team in the Department for Work and Pensions.

Yvonne works in Seaham Pension Centre where she and three colleagues are responsible for dealing with TUO. All TUO notifications for benefits administered by the DWP go to the team, they process the pension service referrals there and then. The team also

forward the information to other benefit delivery areas across DWP so they can carry out their actions, ensuring a swift customer outcome.

TUO, by removing the need for the next of kin to notify the death for each benefit, is reducing customer contact across the Department. It enables adjustments to benefits to be made quickly, again enabling a better customer service and outcome.

Yvonne reports "TUO has been great and painless. Benefits can be adjusted within 48 hours, and often within 24 hours; a great improvement on past performance.

"A small teething problem is that the TUO telephone line is still being used from time to time by those who have not registered the event or wish to confirm the procedure has been completed."

To resolve this guidance for local authorities information for customers will emphasise that the line cannot be called unless the death has first been registered and the customer has been issued with a unique identifier.

Yvonne said: "Working as part of TUO service has given me great satisfaction. I can deliver a professional service quickly at a time when it really matters to people."



Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling MP, the Minister of State for Employment, visited Epsom and Ewell Borough Council to see Tell Us Once in action. Epsom and Ewell offer Tell Us Once in partnership with Surrey County Council and staff from both councils and the Programme were on hand to talk about the service with the Minister.

**Tell Us Once is now live in over 50% of local authorities and has helped at least 75,000 people.**

# Working with Energy

## What is ERA?

The Energy Retail Association represents the six main electricity and gas suppliers in the domestic market in Great Britain (British Gas, EDF Energy, npower, E.ON, Scottish Power, and SSE). We work closely with government, NGOs, charities and other organisations in England, Scotland and Wales to ensure a coordinated approach to dealing with the key issues and finding ways to continually improve customers' experiences with their electricity and gas suppliers.

## How did you first hear about TUO?

A colleague attended an OFWAT conference which included a TUO new business team presentation. She was impressed by both the idea of TUO and the enthusiasm of the presenter. Talking to him afterwards, she became more convinced that this was a great way of trying to help customers at times when they were feeling most vulnerable. She then made contact with the programme to find out more, and agreed this was

something which could be of interest to our members. I took over the engagement and have been liaising between ERA members and the TUO NBT ever since, giving consideration as to how we could work together for the advantage of the citizen.

## How did your members react to the prospect of working alongside Government?

We at the ERA work alongside Government in a variety of policy areas, and were impressed by the can-do attitude of the TUO programme. We are excited at the opportunities that the sharing of information between the public, private and 3rd sectors could bring (with the explicit consent of the citizen of course) and are keen to share our knowledge and experience by being involved in helping to shape a service which could assist so many people.

## Alun Rees

Policy and External Relations Advisor  
Energy Retail Association (ERA)

# Going forward...

The future for Tell Us Once is dependant on the continued success in expanding the service in different ways:

- Taking birth and death into more departments and gaining maximum efficiencies across Government
- Using TUO in new ways, potentially other life events or services such as changes in marital status
- Sharing information outside of Government for the benefit of citizens, the taxpayer and our delivery partners.

To move towards these goals, TUO New Business has been working with a variety of potential partners both inside and outside Government.

First, we have been working with other government departments to identify how they could use our current service to greater effect. Secondly, we have been considering - at a strategic level - how we could use TUO differently,

for example for the benefit of NHS.

Outside of Government we are undertaking a period of learning. Following mailshots and presentations to professional and trade bodies, we have been engaging with organisations acting as champions for their sector to examine how we could potentially work together to share information (with the consent of the citizen) for the benefit of everyone involved.

The next stage will involve taking our learning from this phase, testing it with citizens and stakeholders and then feeding it into the development of the service.

All of this work is leading us towards refining a product which is of value to citizens, government and the organisations we can inform. If you want to give us your views or find out more about our work, please contact us at: [tuo.newbusiness@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:tuo.newbusiness@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

# Tell us in 5 | The Tell Us Once 5 minute interview



**Tony Bracey**

Programme Manager – Public Services ICT (Information and Communications Technology)

## Brief description of Job/role

Programme Manager – Public Services ICT (Information and Communications Technology) within the Office of the Chief Information Officer, Welsh Government. Responsible for improving through

the use of ICT, the effectiveness and efficiency of the public sector in Wales by: identifying opportunities for innovation in e-enabled public service delivery; acting as the conduit between the Welsh Government and public services; and managing the development of pan-Wales public service improvements.

## What has the Welsh Assembly/you done to help a local authority prepare to deliver the Tell Us Once Service?

The Welsh Government has been engaged with the Tell Us Once Programme from very early days, spending time with the TUO team to understand the concept and the benefits the programme can provide to both citizens and service providers. The Welsh Government is keen to assist the TUO programme by working with Welsh Unitary Authorities to ensure that there are sufficient resources available to ensure a successful implementation.

The Welsh Government has facilitated several events involving representatives from across all 22 Welsh Unitary Authorities and the TUO team to provide the opportunity for the TUO programme to be explained, seek 'buy-in' from the Unitary Authorities, and offer practical support in the roll-out of the programme across Wales.

## What do you see as the main benefits to local authorities?

With the ever increasing financial constraints on public services, transferring more services online is one of the practical options to reduce the administrative burden. The TUO programme has achieved a balance between this need and the sensitive nature of bereavement.

## How does TUO help Unitary Authorities deliver better services?

Placing front line services online is only the first step in achieving efficiencies. However the TUO

concept has encouraged Unitary Authorities to look at other service provision and question what can be achieved using a similar approach.

## How does Tell Us Once help you transform access to services across Wales?

We now have an opportunity to use the TUO concept to critically analyse not only how citizens engage with public services, but also how public services engage with each other. The Welsh Government, Welsh Joint Emergency Services Group, Cabinet Office and Association of Chief Police Officers are working in partnership to develop a solution to allow multi-agency direct electronic information transfer to occur.

## How would you like the service to develop?

As we place more of our public services online, I think we have an opportunity to use the TUO concept for other citizen-facing services.

# Contact us

TUO Regional Account Managers are your first point of contact in relation to TUO matters within your local authority. They will be happy to provide you with further details about the service.

Region	Account Manager	Email Address
South West	David Ward	<a href="mailto:david.ward1@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">david.ward1@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
West Midlands	Jan Withers	<a href="mailto:jan.withers@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">jan.withers@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
East of England	Sue Francis	<a href="mailto:sue.francis@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">sue.francis@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
North West	John Davis	<a href="mailto:john.davis@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">john.davis@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
East Midlands	Ian Gillott	<a href="mailto:ian.gillott@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">ian.gillott@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
London	Frank Kitson	<a href="mailto:frank.kitson@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">frank.kitson@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
South East	Darren Evett	<a href="mailto:darren.evett@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">darren.evett@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
North East	Carol Wright	<a href="mailto:carol.wright@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">carol.wright@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Scotland and CoSLA	Ann Adam	<a href="mailto:ann.adam@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">ann.adam@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Wales and LGA Wales	Mark Davies	<a href="mailto:mark.davies14@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">mark.davies14@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Yorkshire and the Humber	Gillian Priestley	<a href="mailto:gillian.priestley@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">gillian.priestley@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>

## TUO Communications

If you are having any difficulty getting in touch with any member of the TUO team covering your area of interest, please email the TUO communications team who will assist you using the following email address:

[tellusonce.communications@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:tellusonce.communications@dwp.gsi.gov.uk).

## Feedback

Any feedback you have on this newsletter and its contents would be most welcome to the following email address:

[tellusonce.communications@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:tellusonce.communications@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)