

# Case Study

## Adur & Worthing Council uses TellJO to prioritise their housing advice list

- Adur & Worthing Council serves a population of 176,000.
- The housing team were under severe pressure with residents waiting for urgent housing advice.
- TellJO was used to identify and triage residents who had completed a Housing Advice Form.
- The Council's teams worked with residents on a priority basis.

### Adur & Worthing Council

Adur & Worthing sit between the south coast of England and South Downs National Park. Each has a rich history, made up of distinct coastal and rural towns, villages and communities including Shoreham-by-Sea, Lancing and Southwick. In 2021, the population of Adur was 64,500 and Worthing 111,400.

### Proactively preventing homelessness

Within Adur & Worthing, there are pockets of deprivation. The Council has a mission to ensure that everyone has a safe, secure, and sustainable home. The Housing team were under significant pressure due to the cost-of-living crisis, with the frontline team working off a long list of residents who had completed a Housing Advice Form and were awaiting urgent housing advice. The team needed a way to identify the most vulnerable residents on the list, so they sent the residents an invitation by text to complete a TellJO digital wellbeing assessment. Our digital engagement allowed residents to check in and explain the challenges that they were facing. We use 63 indicators of vulnerability which can be accessed via a dedicated reporting suite.

## Using TellJO to **identify** the most **vulnerable** residents

1 in 4 of residents on the Housing Advice list completed a TellJO digital wellbeing assessment, of which 70% received a triage phone call from TellJO. The triage call enabled TellJO to validate the current requirements of each resident classify them into four groups:

- **High – 25%** were referred to **housing** due to Section 21, medical issue, under threat or domestic abuse.
- **Medium – 15%** were referred to Adur & Worthing's One Stop **prevention team**.
- **Low – 30%** were referred by TellJO to external organisations for **specialist support** such as debt advice.
- **Remove – 30%** Housing problem **solved** and can be removed, with no requirement to contact.

## Making **triage calls** to prevent homelessness

Charlotte Westbrook, Customer Excellence Manager at TellJO made the triage calls to Adur & Worthing vulnerable residents identified by TellJO. She said ***"The most vulnerable residents I spoke to were facing complex problems. They weren't choosing between eating or heating. They were in a much worse situation than that. There was a single mother who had no permanent place to stay with her 3-year-old son. I spoke to someone else who was sleeping in their van, stopping at service stations to wash. And another person was so severely affected by Multiple Sclerosis that they had to reduce their working hours to 15 per week and required urgent income support. It was reassuring to know that the Housing team were on standby to immediately help these people."***



**Tina Favier**

Director of Communities  
Adur & Worthing Council

***"As part of our Proactive Agenda, we are seeking ways to be more efficient in supporting more people at the "prevention stage". We need to ensure we use our valuable staff in the best way. Therefore, TellJO has been a brilliant tool. It enables us to reach out to more people. It empowers our Adur and Worthing Councils teams to digitally triage our vulnerable residents, identifying potential risks such as homelessness and poor mental health. Most importantly it enables many of our citizens to self-help and direct themselves into help, especially before their challenges escalate and hits a crisis point."***

## TellJO outreach to residents who had completed a Housing Advice Form

Number	%	Status
357	100	Received an SMS from Adur & Worthing Council
83	23	TellJO Assessments completed
52	68	Triage calls completed
21	25	Flagged as urgent due to Section 21, Medical issue, under threat or domestic abuse
12	15	Referred to One Stop for support in benefits grants or wellbeing
25	30	Removed from list as housing issue resolved
34	41	Residents placed directly into money advice by TellJO
18	22	Experiencing Addiction
29	35	Unhappy with landlord
35	42	Suicidal thoughts
8	10	Home access concern
49	59	Diagnosed mental health condition

\*Campaign data released with kind permission from Adur and Worthing Council

## TellJO – Embedding Digital into Adur & Worthing’s prevention and cost saving strategy

By using TellJO, Adur & Worthing Council were able to achieve specific strategic objectives whilst realising significant benefits:

### OBJECTIVE

- Understand which residents needed the most urgent support.
- Engage instantly and at scale to identify the most vulnerable residents.
- Triage TellJO respondents to prioritise the support they needed.
- Help identify Section 21 residents and those with a medical issue, under threat or suffering domestic abuse.
- Identify residents who could be supported by the Council’s One Stop prevention team.
- Provide soft signposting to external support services such as Samaritans and Refuge.
- Create a unique personalised consent-based vulnerability profile for each resident.
- Capture resident voice.

### BENEFIT

- ✔ Residents respond instantly and are much more likely to disclose vulnerability digitally.
- ✔ No wait time or backlog to reach out to vulnerable residents.
- ✔ Each Council team could then focus on specific urgent cases.
- ✔ Housing could prioritise them and are not overwhelmed by residents queueing for support.
- ✔ Offered prevention-based support in benefits grants or wellbeing.
- ✔ Enabling residents to self-help digitally saving officer time.
- ✔ Saving time; Staff are not required to do a fact find exercise with residents.
- ✔ The Council now have a dashboard tracking resident vulnerability.