

Mike Scott - Introduction

I became Head of Tell Us Once in September 2015 and I'm proud to be part of this award winning service that we and our partners offer across central and local government. A few months ago we became one of the first government services to move to a cloud based IT provider while continuing to support citizens who trust us to reliably and securely notify the various parts of government on their behalf. I hope you enjoy this 5th birthday edition and would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who plays a part in delivering our quality TUO service to customers.

Registrars

Tell Us Once value Registrars' insight and experience to help us continually improve the service. Using their feedback, we created Tell Us Once (TUO) appointment-making scripts for use by Registrars or Local Authority (LA) Customer Contact Centres. They aim to properly prepare citizens for using the TUO service when attending their death registration appointments, by ensuring they have all relevant documentation with them.

This serves not only to maximise the benefits from using this free service at a time when citizens need it most, but also to help reduce valuable Registrar appointment time. The more prepared the citizen, the quicker LAs and Central Government Departments can stop payments or services, thereby creating resource savings.

Andy Carroll Interview

As one of the original pioneers of the service - when was your first involvement?

My very first involvement in what became TUO was in 2004 when a piece of work I led was published as part of a Cabinet Office report 'Making a Difference: Bereavement'. The final chapter set out a vision for how government could better support bereaved people from 2015 and beyond and introduced the idea of sharing a verified 'fact of death' from one central point to numerous government services. Following the Varney Report of 2006 DWP was commissioned to deliver a modern bereavement service and I was again asked to take the lead on the strategic design.



Who thought of the Tell Us Once name?

The name itself came about via a workshop held in Glasgow. Numerous names were considered and in the end 'Tell Us' was the favourite, but by wanting to have a service that did what it said on the tin we added the 'Once' and Tell Us Once was born!

From your perspective, what are the top 3 things that have made TUO a success?

1. We asked over 3,000 people what they had expected and actually experienced when reporting a death to government.
2. We handed the majority of the design and development of the service over to those who would deliver it – local authorities. A fundamental principle in Agile today but a very new approach in 2007.
3. It works. It was designed for customers and with significant input from partners across government. Customers using the service have asked 'Is that it?'. That's the best possible feedback.

Is it true that the TUO model has inspired other countries to emulate it?

Yes, there has been considerable international interest. Over time I have worked with officials from France and Australia. We also know that the TUO model has been adopted for various services in Jersey, Malta, New Zealand, Singapore and Canada has legislated to run a bereavement service there. India referred to TUO principles in its 'Intelligent Cities' initiative and I presented our experience of how TUO can enable business benefits to representatives from the Kazakhstan government at the OECD in Paris.

Any birthday wishes for TUO?

Happy 5th Birthday TUO. There were times when I thought we'd never get there but we did and just look at you now!

Tell Us Once customer satisfaction surveys

A small survey was performed on the Tell Us Once (TUO) Birth and Bereavement services. Results of the survey were used to measure customer satisfaction levels and to identify how the TUO team might improve or expand the existing service.

Both the birth and bereavement surveys produced extremely positive results. Headline results were as follows:

98% of people felt that their overall experience of the Bereavement Service was good and 98% were willing to recommend the service to others.

99% of people using the face to face or telephone Bereavement Service felt that the staff were both helpful and showed a good understanding of their situation. 100% of those using the online service found it easy to use.

98% of people using the Bereavement Service had confidence in the way that their personal details were handled and 95% were confident that the service has acted on the information given.

96% of people felt that their overall experience of the Birth Service was good and 96% were willing to recommend the service to others.

97% of people using birth service felt that the staff were both helpful and showed a good understanding of their situation. The Birth Service is not online at present.

95% of people using the Bereavement Service had confidence in the way that their personal details were handled and 97% were confident that the service has acted on the information given.

A new Partner joined the Tell Us Once family...

Feedback from citizens included questions around why they were able to use the Tell Us Once (TUU), service in order to stop a state pension but they couldn't stop payments from a Public Sector Pension Scheme (PSPS). In the eyes of the citizen, both types of pension came from the public purse therefore why should they be treated differently.

Tell Us Once approached a number of PSPS to understand more about the problems they faced and the value TUO could potentially add to their service. It was established that there were problems around payments being made to deceased scheme members. The average time between the date of death and the Pension Scheme being informed was 15 days, causing overpayments and additional distress to the customer at a very emotional time.

Following a very successful data sharing trial in which TUO notifications were received on average 8 days after the date of death, the PSPS group decided that joining the TUO service would bring significant efficiencies to pension schemes, whilst putting the needs of customers at the heart of their business design.

On 3 March 2016, the TUO service welcomed Public Sector Pensions and Armed Forces Pension Schemes into the service offering.

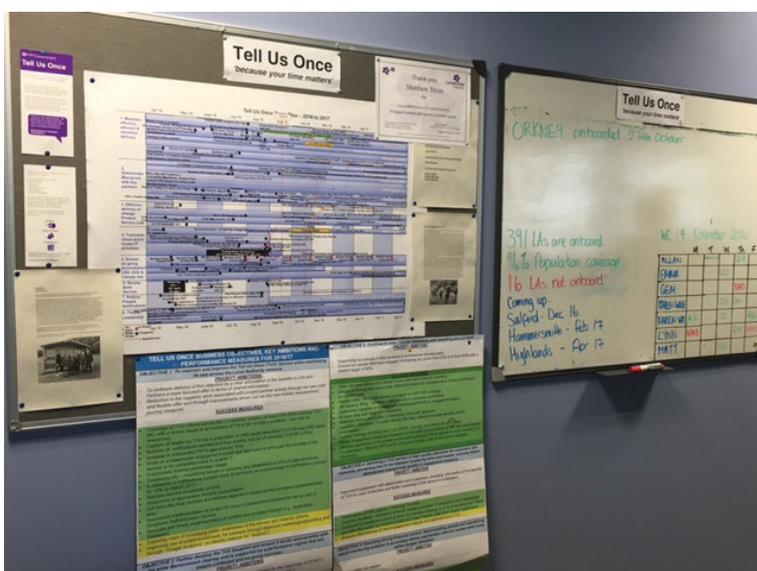
Citizens can now choose to inform:

- Local Government Pensions Scheme
- My Civil Service Pensions
- NHS Pensions
- Scottish Public Pensions Agency: NHS & Teachers and Police & Fire Service
- Veterans UK

TUO also designed a new, innovative way of securely delivering the Tell Us Once data to our new set of partners using G-cloud technology, by introducing Canopy Digital Connect (CDC). This allowed us to create a 'NINO look up' table to help identify Local Government Pension Schemes and also allowed the TUO team to introduce a new two factor authentication service.

The secure messaging service has delivered over 20,000 messages to our Public Sector Pension Partner Providers since go-live.

We would like to thank all of our partners for their support with this new initiative.



This is an example of the TUO Planning board



Lewisham interview

Hi Lisa, can you tell us a little about your role at Lewisham?

I was appointed as Nationality and Citizenship Manager in May 2015. Previous to this I had been a registration officer registering births & deaths for 14 years. We became involved in Tell Us Once, TUO in 2011 and I am still heavily involved in providing the service.

What are your memories of the early days of TUO especially leading up to rollout in 2011?

I took over the TUO project when the person who was leading the rollout was seconded elsewhere at short notice. It was decided that someone with registration experience should have an input as it became obvious pretty quickly that the registration service would not only be providing TUO to the customers but we would also be responsible for the behind the scenes work too (EAS registration). I guess you could say right time right place for me (and TUO) I quickly found myself in a world of meetings, tele conferences and IT compatibility problems. I had (and still do thanks to our Partnership Account Manager, Michael Murphy) amazing support from day one and was warmly welcomed into the TUO family. I worked with our comms team to provide publicity across the borough and met with other stakeholders to increase awareness of the service prior to go live. By chance the second person to use TUO on day one was a councillor who couldn't praise the initiative enough; she quickly fed back the benefits of the service to her constituents and colleagues. I couldn't have paid for better publicity, news of the new bereavement service spread like wildfire in the community and we haven't looked back since....

What do you see as the benefits of the service to customers and to Lewisham, how does the service make a difference?

It's a no brainer - someone offering to inform multiple government agencies about a death on your behalf, all at once at a time when you least feel like doing it - in one appointment, for free.. Simple! From a local authority point of view the information shared with our service providers is much more accurate, relevant and it is received at a much earlier stage than experienced in the past. It reduces contact with the bereaved, overpayments, ensures that records are kept up to date and keeps costs down.

Have you got some customer feedback that you could share with our readers?

Lots! Here are some examples....

"I was very lucky to be able to take advantage of the Tell Us Once service on the first day. Lisa was very knowledgeable about the process and it was handy having someone from the DWP there too. I can't imagine how much time you have saved me not having to call these departments individually - Thank you, thank you, thank you"

"Thank you for assisting my mother with the Tell Us Once service. Living overseas meant I was unable to help her with my late father's estate as much as I would have liked but the Tell Us Once service made the process much easier for her."

"Please thank the registrar for her patience (and tissues) at a very difficult and overwhelming time for me. I was in no state to complete the Tell Us Once service during the appointment but am so grateful that she took the time to explain the service and ensured that I had the correct information to complete the process myself at home."

Thank you Lisa – you are a TUO star

Knowledge Hub for local authority partners - so we won't need to Tell You Twice!

Do you want to have the latest TUO updates and news? A chance to share your thoughts on any aspect of the service or seek advice or tips for best practice from other local authorities? Don't wait to be told twice - **The KNOWLEDGE HUB** is the place for you. Get all these benefits in one place!

Latest guidance and support materials

Never have an out of date document again – in our library we make sure the latest version of all our guidance is uploaded and obsolete materials are removed

An opportunity to give us feedback on our materials and make them better

Each document allows you to comment on them, suggest an improvement or offer a compliment – that way we know we are giving you what you want

A Forum for advice and ideas

A chance to discuss issues and get advice from other partners delivering the service in our Forum or the Ideas section of our site – continuous improvement made easy

Monthly blogs from YOUR Partnership Management Team

Every month one of the TUO Partnership Account managers will blog about all the news, tips for success and what they've been up to in supporting local authorities and making things easier

New Members - To become a member of the Knowledge Hub is easy, click here- and then apply to join the 'Tell Us Once Community' by clicking here: <https://khub.net/group/tellusonce>

Existing members - click here and see what improvements we've made to your TUO community

"As a Registrar I am proud to be able to provide a service that assists the bereaved at a very difficult time of their lives"

**Zoe Hocking, Registrar,
Surrey County Council**

"Tell Us Once is a great service to be able to offer bereaved customers. Registration staff feel that they are reducing the burden on customers who are much relieved at not having to contact many different Government and Council departments. It is a very valuable addition to the service we provide."

**Debbie Coveney, Superintendent
Registrar, Royal Borough of Greenwich**

"Tell Us Once offers a helpful service to our customers, reducing the number of people they have to contact, at a particularly difficult time when they register a death."

**Tracey Fottrell, Registration and Nationality Manager,
Surrey County Council**

Tell Us Once - Virtualisation - Embracing the Digital Agenda

TUO provides a service used by almost half a million people every year thus it's support requires a robust, reliable and secure system.

As the physical IT platform which supported delivery of the service was reaching the end of its life, the TUO business in partnership with Technology colleagues decided to virtualise it and host the service within the cloud – a bold step that placed TUO at the forefront of new technology provision in government services.

The virtual team consisting of a range of disciplines within DWP planned, developed and managed all aspects and successfully implemented the transition, providing a fantastic example of collaborative working to deliver a valuable service for customers and reduced costs for the taxpayer.

The TUO Service is now delivered from a cloud-based environment and is also now managed In-House by DWP IT colleagues. This was a trail-blazing initiative and TUO were the first live DWP Service to accomplish this.

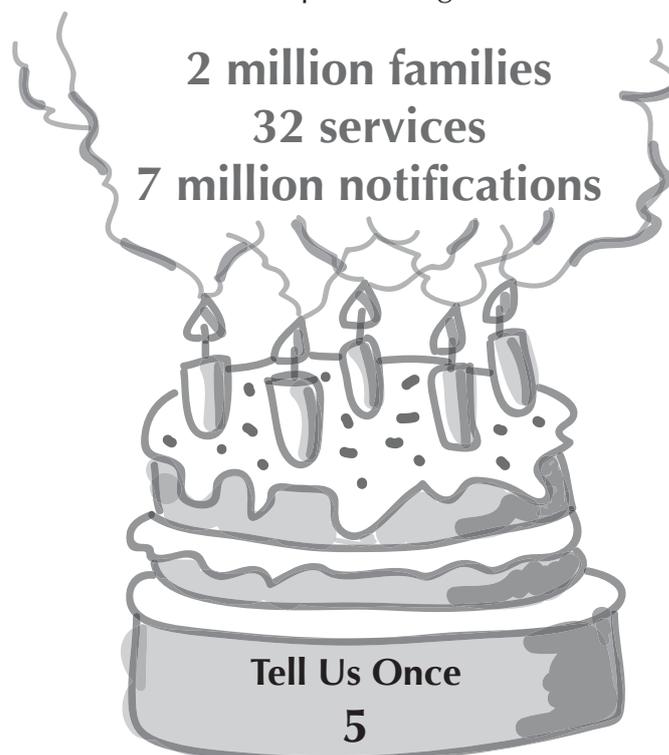
As TUO shares sensitive customer data, its security level is very high and needed rigorous requirements to be delivered in order to migrate to the cloud. Maintaining the support and confidence of the Pan Government Security Accreditor throughout the process has been a major achievement for the team.

Benefits

Timescales for future developments/enhancements will reduce.

Significant reductions in the costs associated with operating, maintaining and managing the system.
More cohesive and responsive links/relationships as the system is managed In-House by DWP staff.

If it were possible to identify that one single 'behaviour' that made this achievement such a success it would be that TUO business and its Technology colleagues were ever conscious that the bereaved customers who rely on Tell Us Once and our partner organisations who deliver it, are at the heart of the service.



Tell Us Once would like to say a big thank you, for your support throughout the last five years. Your time and investment really does matter as it enables **all** of us to deliver a fantastic service for Citizens.