

**FUTURES LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**Strategic Review of Liquidlogic Social Care Portals**

*Conducted by Futures and SHARE Consulting*

*Date: January 2026*

**FUTURES**





## Introduction

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This report has been developed, in conjunction with SHARE Consulting, following a series of engagements between Futures and multiple Local Authorities utilising the Liquidlogic Social Care Portals.

These discussions were led by a subject matter expert in Liquidlogic Portal solutions, with the objective of gaining a deeper understanding of how Local Authorities are leveraging these platforms. Through structured interviews, we explored usage patterns, identified best practices, and captured both success stories and familiar challenges. The insights gathered provide a comprehensive view of the current landscape and inform opportunities for improvement and innovation.

The intended audience of this report is for most levels within a Local Authority from Director of Adult/Children's Services through to System Leads and Application Support teams.

## Executive Summary

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Local Authorities (LAs) are leveraging Social Care Portals in diverse ways, from simple information intake to full two-way communication with service users. No two LAs use the Portals identically, resulting in significant variation in implementation.

## Key Successes

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- High-volume referral handling (thousands monthly), freeing admin and practitioner time for improved service delivery.
- Effective interaction with service users, fostering strong engagement through Portal interaction.
- Portals help absorb rising demand without increasing staff, which is a major operational benefit.

## Challenges

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- Limited in-house team knowledge and resources hinder optimal use of functionality.
- Resistance to technological change and concerns about shifting to digital information-sharing methods.
- Difficulty engaging external users, particularly when prior experiences have been negative.



- Provider responsiveness to provide information and guidance as well as resolve issues identified.

## About Futures & SHARE Consulting

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Futures help councils to review, procure, implement and maximise their investment in social care IT solutions.

Since 2005, we have enabled the safe implementation of every major solution on the market, providing the expertise to ensure the best outcomes and use of resources for local authorities.

We prioritise independence, value and knowledge sharing, having built a community of trusted professionals to provide advice and real-world knowledge to this critical sector.

Our partnerships with sector specialists are at the heart of what we do, and we are pleased to collaborate with Simon Hare in the production of this report.

Simon Hare, from SHARE Consulting, is a highly regarded expert within the Liquidlogic Portals realm. With over 18 years of experience working with Liquidlogic systems, his journey began at a Local Authority using the early Children's Services product (LCS) before joining Liquidlogic as a Product Analyst.

During his tenure, Simon spent several years within the Children's product team before specialising in Social Care Portal solutions. At the outset of this role, only a handful of Adults' Portals had been implemented. Simon played a pivotal role in expanding this footprint, overseeing numerous implementations and driving the development of both Children's and Delegation Portals. His leadership was instrumental in delivering these solutions at scale and pace.

In the latter part of his career at Liquidlogic, Simon advanced to the position of Product Owner for the entire Portals suite. In this role, he championed enhancements to usability, configurability, and accessibility, establishing the Portals team as one of the most successful product groups within System C.

Today, Simon brings his extensive expertise to consulting, with a particular focus on Liquidlogic Portals. He is recognised as one of the few specialists with deep technical and functional knowledge of the Portals, including advanced configuration and styling capabilities - enabling clients to maximise the value of their Portal solutions.

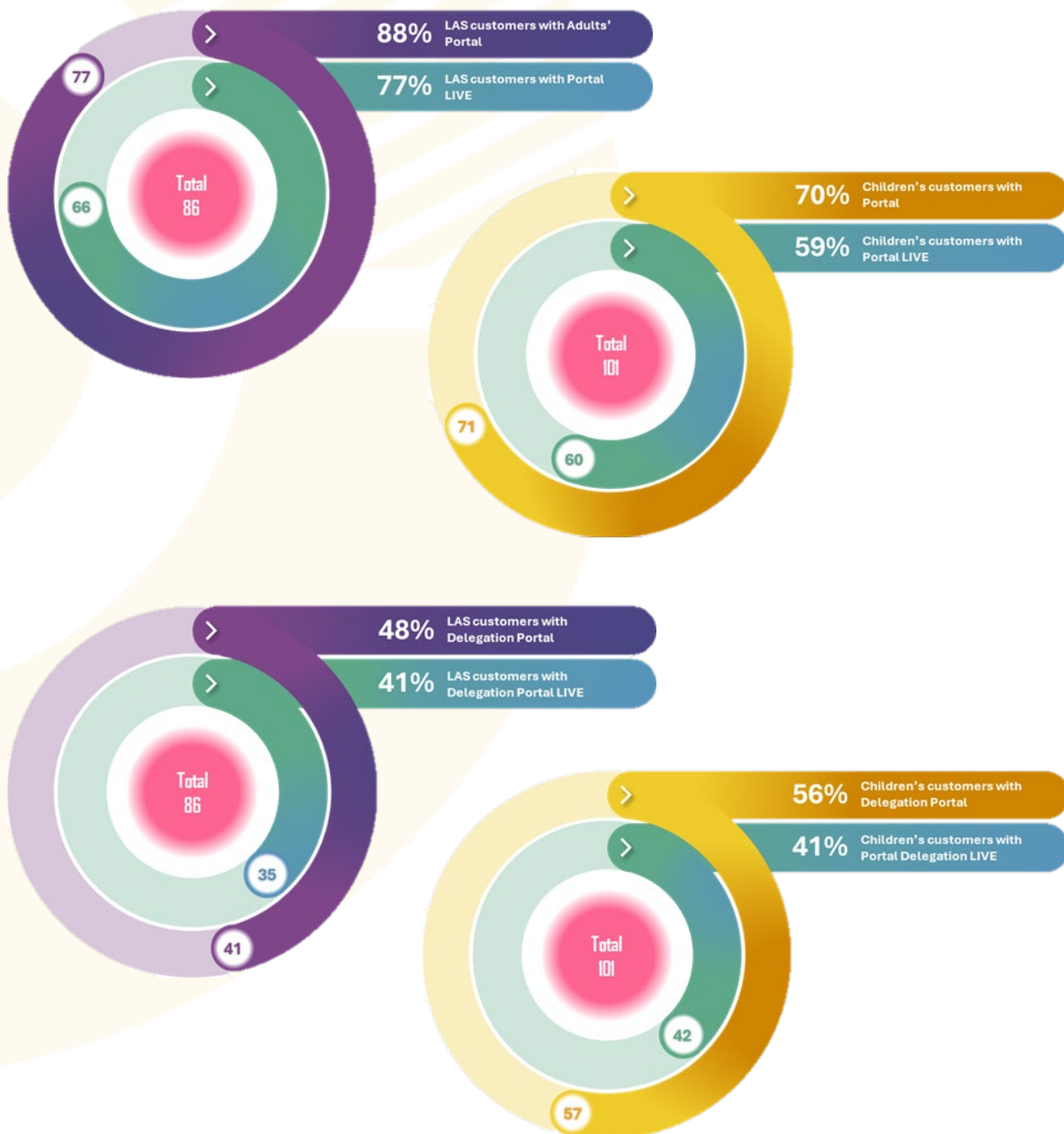
## Market Analysis

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While there are several competitor systems available to support citizen engagement, many alternatives may have greater end user interfaces but lack integration. Liquidlogic Portals offer a fully integrated solution that combines usability with robust capabilities tailored for social care.

Unlike competitor products, Liquidlogic's Social Care Portals are designed to work seamlessly with the core Case Management systems (LAS and LCS). This deep integration enables features that other systems simply cannot deliver, such as automatic submission of information directly into case records and the ability to utilise that data throughout the entire support journey. Information sharing between systems is effortless, ensuring continuity and accuracy. The result is a streamlined process for staff, reducing administrative burden and saving considerable time and effort.

System C are the market-leading deliverer of Social Care Case Management systems across both Adults' and Children's Social Care. The below infographics show the count of Local Authorities that have various Liquidlogic Social Care Portal products.



These infographics clearly indicate that there are variances in Local Authorities using the portals across Adults' Social Care and Children's Social Care. There are several factors influencing the difference:

- The Children's Portal was developed a few years after the Adults' Portal; therefore, this allowed for greater uptake in the Adults' Portal initially. However, the Children's Portal has quickly gathered momentum and is slowly growing
- There has historically been more self-service functionality embedded within the Adults' Portal such as contribution calculators and service directories. It is much more tailored to self-service. The now scrapped Care Cap also saw a large uptake of the Adults' Portal in preparation for it coming in
- With regards to the Delegation Portal, there are many more user cases for using it with the Children's Case Management Systems. These include MASH, PEP, EHCP processes. Whereas in the Adult's arena, the processes don't necessarily lean towards the use of the Delegation function as well.

## Business Case & Benefits

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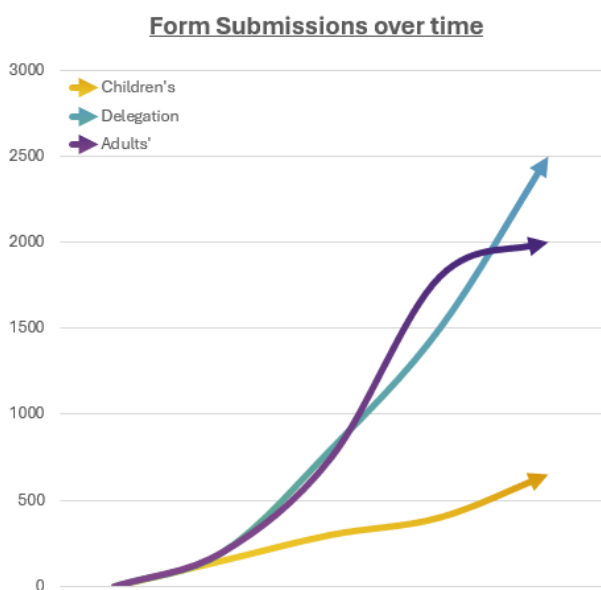
Each Portal has differing business cases and potential strategies towards implementing. However, several common themes emerge across all Portals, as outlined below:

- Submission of information
  - Self-Assessment and Carers Self-Assessment tools
  - Signposting to external agencies and self-support
  - Safeguarding Referrals (both Adults and Children's)
  - Enquiry forms – such as those for prospective Foster Carers
  - Professional Referrals
  - Financial documentation and forms
  - Feedback and complaint submission forms
- Verified account
  - Invoice processing
  - EHCP process for Parents
  - Direct messaging functionality
  - Secure sharing of information with citizens
  - Capture information from citizens directly into forms
- Delegation functionality
  - DoLS processes
  - EHCP Advice Gathering and Consultations
  - MASH Information Gathering from external agencies
  - Provider-led reviews
  - Complex case reviews
  - Multi-agency Chronology information gathering.

**Benefits of Portals:**

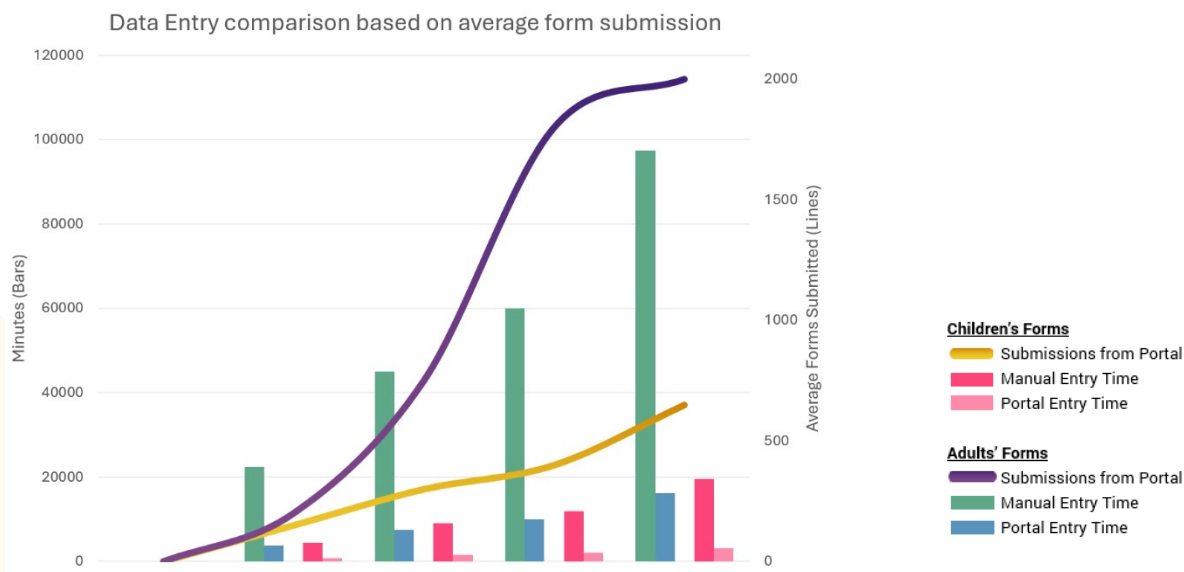
There are several benefits to the Liquidlogic Portals, with some of those highlighted below:

- End-User Engagement & Information Gathering**  
Public and professional access to systems enables Local Authorities to tailor forms by audience, ensuring relevant data collection from the outset. This improves information quality and supports timely, effective service delivery.
- Self-Service**  
The Portal filters low-level requests, allowing citizens to self-serve where possible. This reduces unnecessary demand on services and empowers users with tools and guidance to manage their own needs.
- Time Savings**  
Portal submissions auto-populate system fields, cutting data entry time by up to 80% compared to manual input (e.g., 30 minutes per email referral). At scale, this frees staff to focus on other tasks and improves service efficiency.
- Cost Savings**  
While direct cost savings are hard to quantify, reduced data entry time allows staff to redirect efforts to other priorities, avoiding the need for additional resources. One Local Authority reported time savings equivalent to one FTE annually within a single service area.
- Operational Efficiency**  
Portals primarily drive efficiency rather than cost reduction. They help Local Authorities meet budget pressures while enhancing service delivery—a critical outcome in the current climate.
- External Partner Engagement & Tracking**  
The Delegation Portal streamlines engagement and status tracking with external partners. Requests are managed within the system, reducing off-system handling and additional data entry, while improving visibility and accountability.



This chart presents the average monthly volume of form submissions, derived from data provided by the Local Authorities consulted. It should be noted that actual submission levels vary across authorities, with some reporting higher or lower figures than the average indicated.

The chart below illustrates a comparison between the number of forms submitted via the Adults' and Children's Portals and the corresponding data entry times. For this analysis, we have assumed that referrals submitted outside the Portal require approximately 30 minutes for data entry, whereas those submitted through the Portal take around 5 minutes. The results clearly demonstrate the considerable time savings achievable through increased utilisation of the Portal.



**Families First Partnership Programme:**

The Family First Partnership represents a key element of the Government's strategy and constitutes one of the most significant process reforms in recent years. Its vision is to establish a single, integrated system of Family Help and Multi-Agency Child Protection, spanning the full spectrum from Targeted Early Help through to Child in Need and Child Protection.

A successful implementation requires Local Authorities to review and strengthen their front-door processes. The Children's Portal and Delegation Portal can play an important role in achieving this.

The Children's Portal enables external agencies and members of the public to submit referrals or requests for Early Help support directly. Information received can be transferred seamlessly into workflows within the core Case Management system, reducing duplication and improving data quality.

Similarly, the Delegation Portal allows Local Authorities to request information from external partners as part of processes such as MASH. Responses can be automatically integrated into the Case Management system and reused throughout subsequent stages of the child's journey.

Together, these portals support a more streamlined, collaborative, and efficient approach to multi-agency working, in alignment with the Family First Partnership's aims.

## Practice Insights

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There are both success and challenging stories in the implementation of the Portal. This section will highlight what has been identified as a key driver for success from the LA's included in the interview process. The challenges to implementing and good ongoing engagement directly correlate to the successes together with several other crucial factors. But it is our belief that understanding these challenges enables better planning and resource management to ensure the Portals are a success.

### *Successes:*

There are numerous success stories that Local Authorities mentioned during the interviews. Some of these are highlighted below:

- Large volumes of form submissions, for certain service areas accounting for nearly 90% of all referrals of that type.
- Allows phone lines to remain available for higher priority concerns.
- Time saving benefits (as outlined in the charts). This extends into the Delegation Portal as well.
- Better tracking of tasks when delegating.
- Citizen engagement in certain areas, such as Fostering and EHCP have adopted use of the Portal on mass.
- Inspections - Local Authorities are subject to inspections by regulatory bodies such as Ofsted and the CQC, which include reviews of data held within Case Management Systems. When effectively utilised, portals can play a pivotal role in these inspections. They enable LAs to capture the Voice of the Child, as well as direct input from parents, carers, and adults requiring support. Collecting this information from key stakeholders is a critical success factor during inspections. Demonstrating this data within the Case Management System as authentic, direct input from those individuals significantly strengthens compliance and evidences best practice.

### *Challenges:*

As with any product, there are challenges involved. These were diverse across the Local Authorities interviewed but there are common themes.

## Challenges under LA Control

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Many challenges identified in the Portals can be addressed internally, or with the support of expert consultants. The below highlights key themes:

- Understanding the configuration – System C conduct workshops at the start of the project; it was found that LA's do not fully understand the configuration options they are being requested to confirm at such an early stage.
- Implementation of the Portal not involving the relevant individuals – it is believed for the Portals to become a success it is driven from the service with senior management accountability.

- Change Management – sometimes this is not considered from a wider perspective. This includes ensuring all relevant parties participate in not only the design of the Portal, but business processes and expectations.
- External partner engagement – it is possible to configure the Portal solely from an LA perspective. However, without external partner engagement, getting it fully utilised is a difficulty. Therefore, early, and in-depth engagement from external partners is key to driving the success.
- Design of the Portal– this is key to ensure the Portal is user friendly and accessible. However, the teams supporting the Portal do not usually contain the skillset required to undertake certain changes as it involves HTML and CSS knowledge, which is not readily available within the LA.
- Form content can sometimes be too complicated. It is key to ensure a fine balance between requesting adequate information to proceed and support without over complicating the forms.

## Challenges *outside* LA Control

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There are challenges which are outside of the control of LA's which include:

- Feature limitations.
- System support from supplier.
- End user digital literacy and device can vary hugely in the demographic of users accessing the Portals.

### *Suggestions:*

From the interviews, the below were key themes as suggestions for Local Authorities looking to implement or redesign the Portals:

- **Start small:** Begin with a single service area and ensure processes are fully embedded before expanding to additional areas.
- **Service Led Engagement:** Ensure there is strong buy-in from service leads to champion the benefits and encourage adoption of the Portal.
- **External Partners:** When involving external partners, develop a thorough understanding of their processes to ensure changes can be integrated effectively.
- **Co-design:** For certain content collaborate directly with the intended users. This approach provides valuable insight into how they will interact with the Portal and enables a more tailored design.
- **Form Design:** Ensure forms are clearly structured and capture sufficient information to progress and make decisions without becoming overly complex or onerous to complete.
- **Testing:** Conduct testing across several different devices or use emulators to validate functionality. As the Portal is responsive, it will display differently on mobile devices; therefore, testing on smaller screens is essential, with particular attention to styling and form content

- **Handover:** When external contractors are engaged for Portal implementation or configuration, ensure comprehensive and well documented handovers are completed to facilitate effective knowledge transfer.

### *Did you know?*

After conducting the interviews, several recurring themes emerged that present opportunities for quick improvements requiring minimal configuration or time investment. Key examples include:

- **Monitoring Live Portal Status** – Portals can be monitored to track their operational status, enabling notifications to be issued when the portal becomes unavailable outside of scheduled downtime. This can be achieved locally using third-party monitoring tools. These tools should be directed to the portal domain appended with `/web/portal/pages/canary`. Regular pings to this endpoint can detect when the portal is unresponsive and trigger an alert accordingly.
- **User Redirection During Downtime** - In addition to monitoring, local authorities can implement redirection pages to inform users when the portal is unavailable, whether due to expected or unexpected downtime. Many authorities have already adopted this approach. The redirect page is typically hosted on the main local authority website, which remains accessible even when the portal is down. Implementation will depend on the local network infrastructure and hosting arrangements. Where portals are hosted, System C may need to configure the redirect.
- **Use of Analytics Software** - Analytics tools, such as Google Analytics, can be integrated into the portals to provide insights into user behaviour and usage patterns. This data can support evidence-based configuration decisions. While System C may need to provide input during setup, no configuration release is required to enable this functionality.
- **Visibility of Outdated or Unused Pages** - Several authorities appear to have outdated or template default pages still visible to the public. It is advisable to review all pages from the perspective of a public user to ensure content remains current and relevant. The sitemap page is particularly useful for this purpose, as it displays all pages available under different user states (e.g., logged out, logged in).
- **Local Configuration of Portal Emails** - All portal-generated emails can be configured locally within either the portal itself or the associated Case Management System. This provides the opportunity to update and personalise email content, particularly where templates have not been revised since initial implementation. These adjustments are typically straightforward and can significantly improve communication quality.

## Available Services and Practical Roadmaps

### Services:

The following services are available with Futures, as well as tailoring a service package to individual needs. We have provided indicative duration and costs, and this is per portal (Adults' or Children's). As Delegation Portals are much smaller, tailored implementation plans can be provided based on a Local Authorities need with shorter durations than those outlined below.

**Note:** EHCP / carer portal will be additional to the below as well, and an individual plan can be tailored to LA requirements.

Rebranding and Styling Updates	
Estimated Duration	10 Days
Schedule	Full Time
This service provides expert consultation and implementation for visual and accessibility-related styling adjustments. It also includes full rebranding of the Portal to align with your organisation's requirements and brand guidelines.	

Minor Health Check	
Estimated Duration	20 Days
Schedule	Full Time
This service delivers a strategic assessment of the current Portal to evaluate usage patterns and overall performance. It includes engagement with key stakeholders within the Local Authority to review Portal utilisation, styling, and accessibility standards. The outcome will provide high-level recommendations on leveraging available configuration tools to optimise the Portal's functionality.	

Comprehensive Health Check	
Estimated Duration	30 Days
Schedule	Full Time
This service builds upon the Minor Health Check by delivering a deeper, more detailed analysis of the Portal. It includes advanced recommendations and tailored solutions to help the Local Authority configure the Portal for improved usability, efficiency, and user experience.	

Health Check and Configuration	
Estimated Duration	4 Months
Schedule	8 Weeks Full Time 8 Weeks Part Time (60 days total)
This service includes a comprehensive system health check followed by full configuration to meet operational requirements. The process incorporates two rounds of User Acceptance Testing (UAT) to ensure quality and functionality before deploying changes to the live environment.	



Full Implementation	
Estimated Duration	6 Months
Schedule	8 Weeks Full Time 16 Weeks Part Time (80 days total)
This service covers both new implementations and re-implementations of existing Portals as a comprehensive, end-to-end project. It includes requirements gathering, stakeholder engagement, two to three rounds of User Acceptance Testing (UAT), user training, and go live support to ensure a smooth and successful deployment.	

## Conclusion

Liquidlogic Social Care Portals have become a critical enabler for UK Local Authorities, delivering integrated citizen and partner engagement linked to LAS/LCS case management. Their key differentiator is deep system integration, which streamlines workflows, improves data quality, and reduces administrative burden. Authorities report significant efficiency gains, cutting data entry time and achieving high adoption in areas like referrals and EHCP processes.

### Core Benefits:

- Enhanced citizen engagement and self-service.
- Scalable time savings and operational efficiency.
- Improved external partner collaboration.

**Success Factors:** Service-led governance, early partner engagement, strong change management, accessible design, and simplified forms.

**Challenges:** Internal gaps in configuration knowledge and design skills, plus external constraints like feature limits and user digital literacy.

**Bottom Line:** When treated as a service transformation initiative Portals deliver measurable operational resilience and improved outcomes. With clear governance and expert support, councils can extend these benefits across the Adults' and Children's spaces.