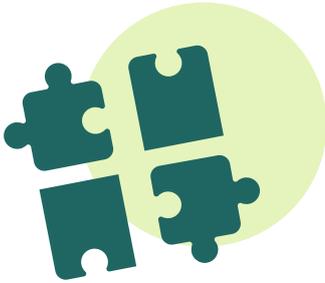




City of Horowhenua

See how Horowhenua District Council did more with less by accelerating their digital transformation and focusing on **digital first service delivery**.

The problem



Like many cities, most of Horowhenua's key services were hard for citizens to find and complete, or weren't available online at all. For most people, transacting with the city meant having to call or visit their customer service center during working hours, or print and mail requests.

More than just a frustration for customers, telephone calls and walk-ins are a big cost to the city. Research reveals the average cost to government agencies for to serve a

customer over the counter is AU\$16.90 per request. The same request served over the phone costs \$6.60, while the same request self-served online is only 40 cents. (Source: Deloitte Australia, 2015)

Horowhenua wanted a new website that did more to engage citizens and deliver online services, without the expense of external development agencies, or additional staff with specialist skills to build and maintain it.

The opportunity

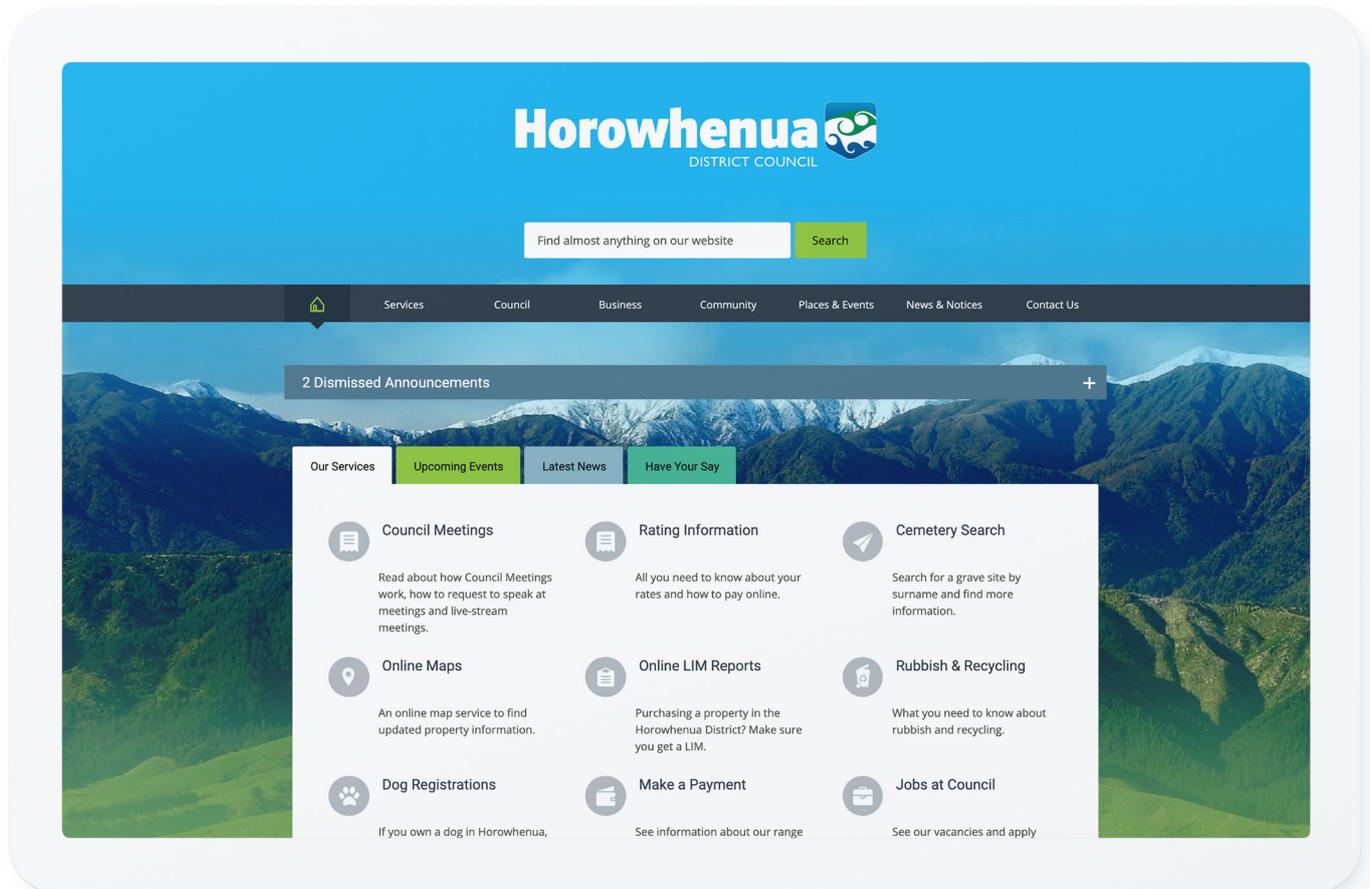


Partnering with OpenCities, Horowhenua's small 1.5 person digital team completely re-imagined their public website. The new approach put the needs of their customers at the centre of the digital experience, helping them complete their transactions as quickly as possible.

By leveraging the best practices baked in to OpenCities rather than creating their own, Horowhenua was able to launch an easy to use, service-oriented website within one month,

and immediately start transforming its customer experience.

Within the first month of launching its new website, Horowhenua saw an unprecedented shift from customer service calls to clicks. Online services like dog registrations, a high-touch request that residents needed help completing, saw almost 600 online renewals from customers, who served themselves at a time convenient for them, entirely unaided.



OpenCities' solution

OpenCities provided Horowhenua the technology and service design thinking needed to succeed with its digital transformation.

A task-focused homepage prioritizes popular services by both season and device to help citizens find exactly what they need. A predictive search intuitively connects people to the services and information they need as they are typing their query, even if they don't know the exact name of the service.

Using OpenForms™, non-technical subject matter experts and customer service agents can quickly and easily transform their PDF and paper-based processes, such as animal registrations, into simple online forms.

Unlike custom built websites that start to age within months of going live, OpenCities provides quarterly updates to ensure Horowhenua remains at the cutting edge of digital best practice, from both a skills and technology perspective.

The result

587

New digital advocates

Horowhenua received almost 600 online submissions for their animal registration service in one month, establishing a “digital first” mentality with their customers.

78%

Fast online submissions

Almost 80% of customers who transacted online for their animal registrations completed and paid for their renewal in 10 minutes or less, with half finishing in less than 6 minutes.

33%

After hours self-service

One out of every three customers renewed their dog registration online outside of business hours when face-to-face or telephone customer service was impossible.



“With a very small team of two part-time website officers we were able to get our main site up and running within a month. Since then, we’ve also launched four subsites. OpenCities makes things so easy, that in between maintaining the website and adding content, we’ve also been able to do other major projects over the last 18 months.”

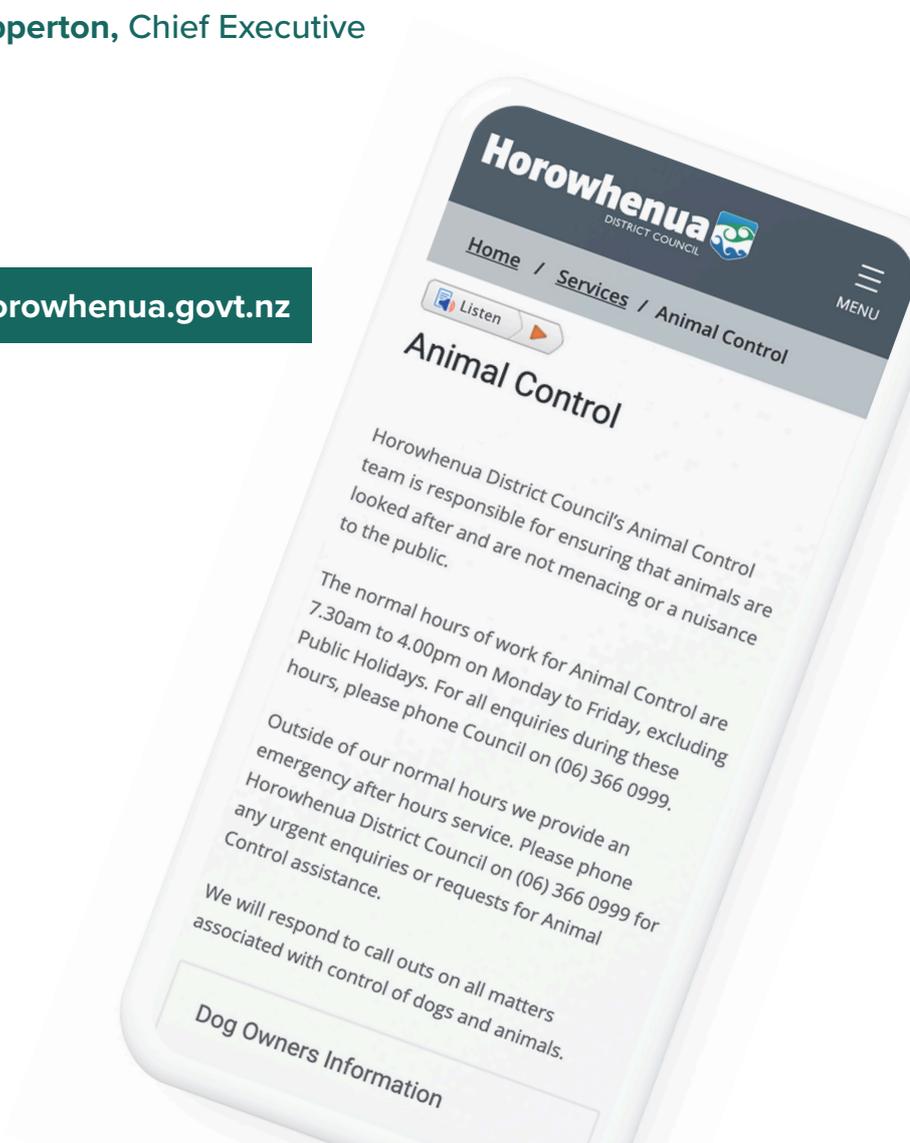
Jo Cooney, Website Officer



“We can’t wait for 12 or 18 months to change things or introduce new things on our website. The platform we now have through OpenCities is agile, and we can get in there and do things really quickly. We don’t have to think about what could be, we can actually just go and do it.”

David Clapperton, Chief Executive

 [Visit horowhenua.govt.nz](https://horowhenua.govt.nz)





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