

North Somerset Council's Co-Development of the Agilisys EHCP Tool

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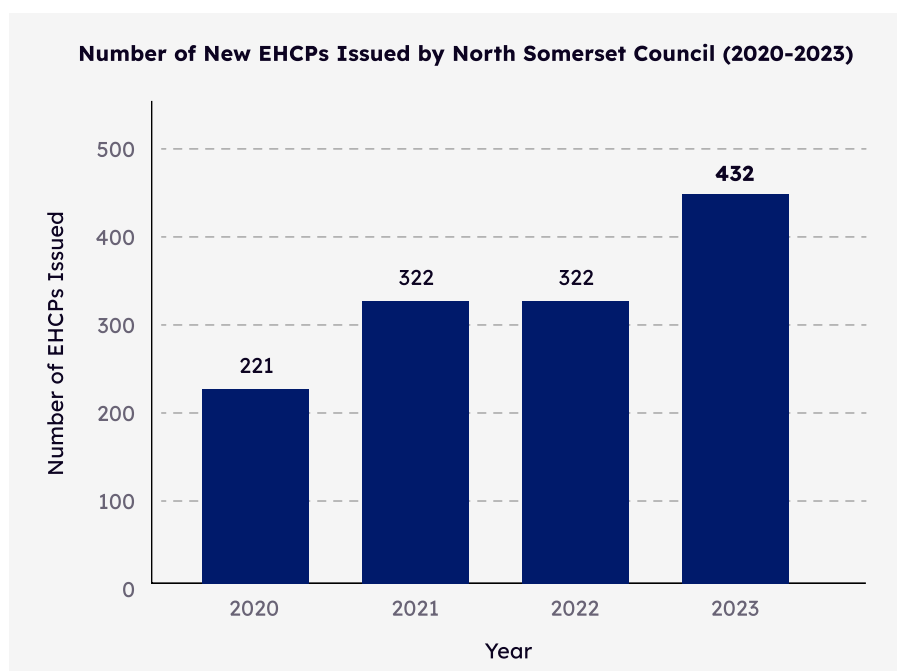
| Overview

North Somerset Council (NSC) has been at the forefront of innovation in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services, working in partnership with Agilisys to co-develop the Agilisys EHCP drafting tool. This AI-powered tool was designed to empower SEND teams to improve the speed, quality, and consistency of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs), ensuring that children and young people receive the support they need within statutory timeframes.

Through a collaborative process including working closely with SEND caseworkers the Agilisys EHCP tool has been developed as a purpose-built solution that integrates seamlessly into caseworkers' day-to-day work. This partnership has demonstrated how technology can support SEND caseworkers by reducing the burden of manual drafting, allowing them to focus on improving the quality of plans and spending more time working with families to ensure SEND children get the right support at the right time. By working closely with NSC, the Agilisys team has ensured the tool is built by SEND caseworkers, for SEND caseworkers. The Agilisys EHCP tool reduces the time spent drafting the initial plan, helping councils meet statutory deadlines and, more importantly, giving caseworkers more time to support families and improve outcomes for children.

| The Challenge

North Somerset Council has seen a significant rise in demand for EHCPs, mirroring the national trend of growing SEND needs.



95%

EHCP Growth Over 4 Years
(2020 to 2023)

+34%

Year-on-Year Growth
(2022 - 2023)

Source: [Department for Education – Education, Health and Care Plans](#)

The increased demand for EHCPs has placed considerable pressure on NSC's SEND teams. In 2022, **38.2%** of EHCPs were completed within the 20-week statutory timeframe, meaning that more than half of the children and families who required support were waiting longer than the 20 week timeframe.²

North Somerset Council recognised the urgent need to adopt a new approach to meet rising SEND demand, enabling caseworkers to complete high-quality EHCPs more efficiently, ensure statutory compliance, and, most importantly, provide earlier support for children and families.

| The Co-Development Approach

Testing with Frontline Teams

To ensure the Agilisys EHCP tool met the needs of frontline staff, it was developed through rapid, iterative cycles. During these cycles, SEND caseworkers provided weekly feedback, helping shape how the tool processed information to produce a first draft of an EHCP.

This hands-on testing phase allowed caseworkers to evaluate how well the tool integrated into their day-to-day practice and whether plans created by the Agilisys EHCP tool met professional standards.

Key refinements focused on the structure of EHCP outputs, the ability to tailor drafts to council-specific requirements, and identifying where AI should stop and caseworker expertise should take over to finalise the plan.

Ultimately, the Agilisys EHCP tool proved to be more than a technical solution, it was a practical, caseworker-led innovation that empowered teams to produce high-quality EHCPs while upholding the highest standards of accuracy, care, and personalisation.

| The Impact

The introduction of the Agilisys EHCP tool has delivered tangible improvements in how North Somerset Council creates and manages EHCPs:



Cost Savings:

By reducing the time spent manually drafting EHCPs, caseworkers can focus more on direct engagement with children and families. This has led to more efficient use of resources, helping to alleviate financial pressures on the High Needs Block of the Designated School Grant.



Improved Quality & Consistency:

The Agilisys EHCP tool has standardised the way plans are written, reduced variability in how information is presented and enabled caseworkers to spend less time drafting and more time to quality assuring plans. This has resulted in higher-quality plans that better reflect the needs of children and young people.



Earlier Delivery of Services:

By leveraging the Agilisys EHCP tool drafting tool, NSC has been able to reduce delays, ensuring the appropriate provision is put in place at the right time to enable children to achieve their full academic potential.



Staff wellbeing:

Teams using the Agilisys EHCP tool have reported that by significantly reducing their administrative burden, the tool has not only allowed them to dedicate more time to supporting families but has also improved their mental wellbeing. The Agilisys EHCP tool helps alleviate teams' heavy caseloads, helping to address the pressures of the growing demand for EHCPs.

| What's Next?

Following the success of the rollout, North Somerset Council committed to fully embedding the Agilisys EHCP tool across all plan writers. The ambition is that no EHCP will be written without the tool, ensuring that every plan benefits from the speed, quality, and consistency improvements it provides.

Beyond this, NSC and Agilisys will continue to explore how AI can support SEND teams further. The next phase of development will focus on working directly with caseworkers to identify additional opportunities for improving SEND services, ensuring that technology is used to help professionals deliver the very best level of care and support to children and families.

Finally, NSC aims to share best practices with other council to help them improve their EHCP processes. By demonstrating the impact of the Agilisys EHCP tool, the council hopes to support wider adoption of AI-powered solutions in SEND services, ensuring that local authorities across the country can benefit from the lessons learned in this co-development process.

| Final Thoughts

North Somerset Council's partnership with Agilisys has shown how AI can be used to support caseworkers, improve service quality, and ensure that children and young people receive the help they need at the right time. By co-developing the Agilisys EHCP tool, NSC has set a new standard for how local authorities can harness technology to enhance SEND services while keeping practitioners at the heart of decision-making.

This collaboration has demonstrated that AI is not about replacing professional expertise but about empowering caseworkers to deliver better outcomes for families. With the Agilisys EHCP tool now an integral part of NSC's SEND service, the council is leading the way in using technology to transform EHCP provision for the better.

References

- 1 [North Somerset Council - SEND Strategy and EHCP Data](#)
- 2 [MNR Journal - EHCP Delays at North Somerset](#)
- 3 [North Somerset Council - Financial Strategy & DSG](#)



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 www.linkedin.com/company/agilisys/

visit our website at

 www.agilisys.co.uk

get in touch directly at

 info@agilisys.co.uk