

## **Appendix 6 – Customer Feedback on The Gateway being Closed.**

The Customer Service and Housing team have reported that they have had few customers comment about The Gateway not being open fully, although there have been some. When customers have utilised the direct dial telephone or intercom, they have been very accepting of the signposting offered. However, we have had a small number of customers who have expressed their dissatisfaction of The Gateway not being open fully but these have been very few.

Some taxi drivers who previously attended The Gateway for renewals were more than happy with the online solution. Customers wanting to make homelessness applications were happy to be triaged over the telephone and a small number of customers wanting proof of life verification have been signposted to the DWP and other partners.

The Customer Service team provide customers who contact us via email and also via telephone the opportunity of completing an online customer feedback survey. This survey is also available on our website and those that use the My Gloucester forms are also asked to provide feedback. From February 2021 until February 2023 (inclusive), a total of 3890 of these surveys were returned by customers and 7 of these mentioned the fact that The Gateway is closed or being unable to access face to face services. (Appendix 6)

Staff have been asked to recount if they have received comments from the public about The Gateway not providing a face-to-face service and the Customer Service team have confirmed these numbers have been low.

The Housing and Homelessness team have provided some feedback that they are aware of incidents where customers have been sent to The Gateway by Shire Hall or via outdated Housing Benefit letters and have been known to knock on the door. In addition, there have been some visitors to the Eastgate offices. They have offered assistance where possible or signposted to access services differently. Some of the Housing team have suggested an option where there may need to be a presence, at least for their service, for drop ins at some times during the week.

The revenues and benefits team have provided some feedback regarding a presence at The Gateway after their attendance at a DWP event. They have said that having no presence impacts somewhat on those with language barriers, learning difficulties, elderly, those with a lack of internet access and no family and friends able to help. However, the number of contacts using the direct dial telephone seems to show that the vast majority of people have found alternatives, be that family, friends, using the library or other support agencies.

GAP (Gloucester Advice Partnership) were asked if they had received any comments from their customers in regard to The Gateway not having a walk-in face to face service. Feedback was received from the MP's office, and they advised they had received no feedback in regard to this, positive or negative. In addition, Citizen's Advice Bureau were asked the same question

and advised they would pass the request through to supervisors to feed back to us. No feedback was received. None of the other Gloucester Advice Partnership organisations responded to the request.

Gloucestershire County Council did provide feedback and there were concerns about the number of customers accessing their reception area that were for a City function. Regular meetings are now held between Gloucestershire County Council and City Council to monitor this, and the availability of the direct dial telephone has supported them in signposting customers to the correct organisation.