

## Environment Agency

Simplifying systems and improving efficiency for Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE) evidence reporting

Businesses that place electrical and electronic equipment on the UK market are responsible for financing the treatment (reuse, recycling, recovery and environmentally sound disposal) of WEEE under the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment regulations.

The Environment Agency (EA) manages the digital services used by organisations, such as treatment site operators and compliance schemes, that facilitate and undertake the treatment of WEEE. These operators use the systems to comply with some of their regulatory obligations. One such system is used to provide evidence that the treatment of an appropriate amount of WEEE has taken place. When the digital application used for submitting evidence notes was deemed no longer fit for purpose, and after an options appraisal exercise, the EA asked Civica to step in.

The WEEE Settlement Centre was a service run by the EA. It allowed waste treatment facilities to provide evidence that electrical equipment had been treated properly. But it was a standalone service running on outdated technology, and maintenance costs were rising to unsustainable levels. A replacement was required, and the EA had to find out what users needed and how to move forward with the service.

All four regulators in the UK (EA, NIEA, NRW, SEPA), and every organisation submitting and receiving WEEE evidence notes, needs to use the Settlement Centre. The replacement system had to be efficient and intuitive so that the whole process works smoothly. Any changes to the service had to happen before the next compliance year, to allow a smooth transition between the old and new services at year end.



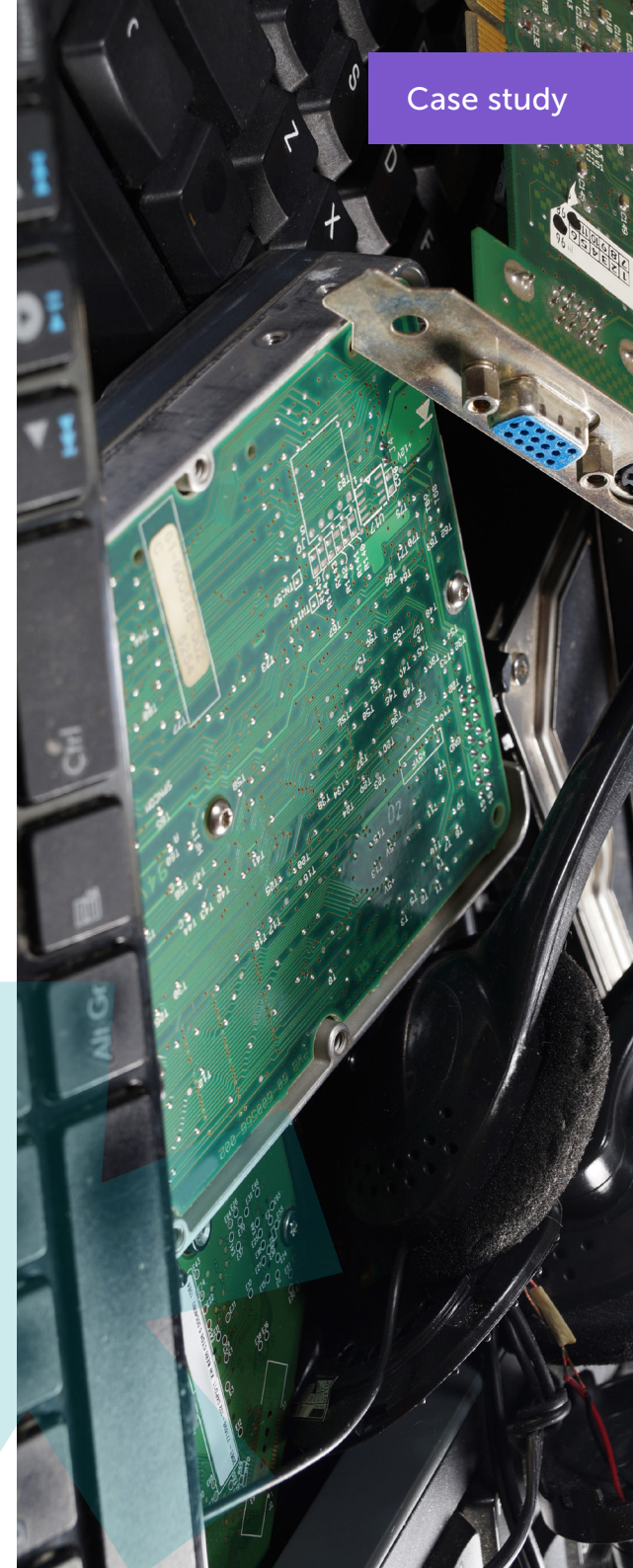
Around **180** organisations rely on the service



**10,000** evidence notes and evidence transfer transactions expected each year



**5-fold** potential improvement in evidence transfer efficiency now that evidence note transfers no longer have to happen individually



## A quick but thorough discovery

The EA didn't have time for a long period of research and testing. Working within the timings required by EA, we discussed the options and agreed on an analysis of the existing system along with some user research focusing on what they needed from it.

We previously worked with the EA to develop their WEEE Online Service. It has been very popular with users, and it already contained much of the WEEE regulatory data as well as user organisation, site, contact information and user account details. Our research confirmed that building evidence notes into the WEEE Online Service would be the best replacement for Settlement Centre, the standalone legacy system.

## Small, reactive and adaptable

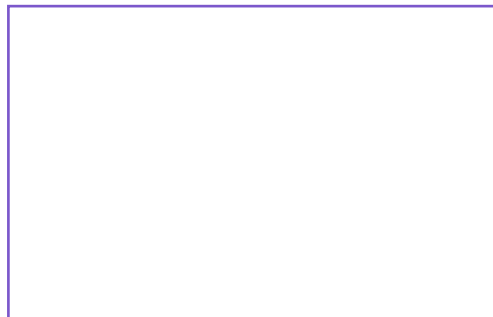
The collaboration of Civica's project team throughout the alpha and beta phases meant that they weren't mutually exclusive. Researchers working on discovery continued providing insights throughout alpha and beta phases, from interviews and user testing, and the software developers could input early on before their coding began. This flexibility suited the EA's need for quick turnarounds and shifting priorities, based on new insights that came to light. With this reactive and agile process, the project took just 14 months from discovery to final release.

As Civica previously completed the initial launch for the WEEE Online Service and regularly work to add new features, the team had a good understanding of the EA and its client organisations. That relationship ensured easy communication, as well as the ability to pre-empt what the organisation needed.

## Making the most of an opportunity

Simply making a legacy application work better would be a missed opportunity. Redesigning the whole system meant that we could fundamentally improve the way the process worked.

Integrating the Settlement Centre features into the WEEE Online Service has reduced the complexity of the IT estate – great for both internal and external users. It brought the evidence notes submission process into an open, secure and efficient system. It gave senior leaders the tighter compliance and increased security they need to safeguard the organisation. And it provided new analysis and reporting capabilities that weren't possible before.



## WEEE system benefits

- Completing the project on time meant the **legacy system** wasn't needed for the 2023 compliance period and **could be decommissioned**
- **Consolidated data improves reporting** capabilities and makes it **easier to comply with regulations**
- Less of a learning curve for regulators and external users now that **multiple services are covered in one system, now with a single log-in**
- New features **improved ways of working**, for example, the ability to transfer multiple evidence notes rather than one at a time.

// We really appreciated the open mindedness with which Civica approached the project. They didn't push an agenda, they simply wanted to help us work out the best solution for our user's needs. We built good relationships with the project team and felt like we could approach them at any time. //

**David Auty,**  
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