# Practical Guide: AI in Local Government

The use of AI within local government has been [steadily increasing](#) over the last few years – from [Westminster City Council](#) tackling fly tipping, [Cheshire West & Chester Council](#) automating most common services, it is no surprise that artificial Intelligence has transformed [conveyancing](#) processes in the local government by streamlining operations, improving efficiency, and enhancing citizen experiences.

This practical guide seeks to provide local government conveyancing professionals with guidance on successfully utilising AI in conveyancing. The guide discusses training needs, the use of electronic signatures, GDPR compliance as well as ethical and legal considerations when implementing an AI system. Artificial intelligence has the capability to streamline the conveyancing processes, enhance efficiency and accuracy, reduce administrative burden, improve compliance, and risk management, and enhance the citizen experience, but where does one begin?

## 1. Where, how, and why?

If you are considering implementing an AI solution within your council, you must first identify the specific areas within conveyancing transactions and/or processes where AI can add value. For example, consider which elements of the process could benefit from a reduced administrative burden or automation. Automated property searches, extracting relevant information from documents, or streamlining due diligence checks are key considerations for many. Evaluate the current processes and identify areas which could benefit from [AI automation](#) to improve efficiency and reduce administrative burdens.

## 2. Finding a suitable AI Solution

Research and explore AI solutions specifically designed for local government. Consideration of the system's integration, scalability, compatibility with existing systems, and the ability to handle and comply with local regulations and requirements will be key. Choosing the correct AI system for each local authority requires cautious consideration of the respective factors:

### 2.1. Your objectives

Clearly and concisely outline the council's requirements and strategic objectives. Determine the exact challenges you would like to address with AI. For example, this may involve improving efficiency, enhancing security, or streamlining the departments document management. This will enable you to narrow down the choices and focus on an ideal solution which aligns with your council's strategic objectives.

### 2.2. AI research

Conduct research to identify AI solutions that are purposely designed for conveyancing processes. Look for reputable AI system providers that have a track record of successful implementations in the industry, such as DocuSign, discussed later in the guide. Consider the system's features, functionality, scalability, and compatibility with existing systems and programs used by the local authority.

### 2.3. Features

Seek out features which may aid in the conveyancing processes, such as when researching a potential AI system, consider features such as ID verification, document analysis, language processing, and predictive analytics which may assist in the conveyancing processes. Consider how these competencies align with the council's specific needs and how they can improve the local authority's conveyancing processes.

### 2.4. Integration and compatibility

Consider and evaluate how an AI solution could integrate with the council's currently used systems, programs and workflows. This might be tricky if the council is currently using older or outdated systems. Contemplate the system's compatibility with the document management systems, electronic signature platforms, and other relevant tools. This will make the integration process smoother thus minimising disruptions to the council's current processes.

### 2.5. Data compliance and security

Security and compliance are further critical considerations when choosing the most appropriate system. Ensure that the chosen AI system adheres to standards and regulations, such as data privacy and protection requirements. Look for certifications or security measures implemented by the AI system providers to safeguard sensitive information.

### 2.6. Continuous support and training

Consider the level of support and training provided by the AI system providers. Evaluate their responsiveness, availability, and inclination to assist with implementation, training, and ongoing support. A reliable provider should offer comprehensive training resources and responsive customer support to ensure a successful implementation of the chosen AI solution.

### 2.7. Feedback

Reach out and contact other organisations who have implemented the AI solutions you are considering. Do not be afraid to ask for feedback and insights on the system's performance, usability, and overall

satisfaction. References provide invaluable insights which may help you make an informed decision, or alternatively, lead you to alternative system providers.

Following the above steps, you will be able to make an informed choice and select the AI solution that best suits the council's needs, aligns with strategic objectives, and improves the conveyancing processes.

3. **Examples of AI System Providers**

3.1. **Luminance** is an AI-powered platform that uses machine learning algorithms to analyse and extract information from legal documents, including those involved in conveyancing. Their system helps identify key clauses, risks, and anomalies, which enhances the streamlining of the due diligence processes.

3.2. **ThoughtRiver** provides an AI-driven contract analysis platform that can be used in conveyancing. Their system uses natural language processing and machine learning to review and assess contracts, flagging potential risks and providing insights to conveyancers.

3.3. **Kira Systems** offers an AI-powered contract analysis software that can be used in conveyancing. Their system uses machine learning to extract and analyse information from contracts, helping conveyancers review and assess legal documents more efficiently.

3.4. **eBrevia** offers an AI-powered contract analysis platform that can be applied to conveyancing. Their system uses natural language processing and machine learning to extract and analyse data from contracts, helping conveyancers streamline the review process.

3.5. **Leverton** provides an AI-powered data extraction and analysis platform for real estate documents, including those involved in conveyancing. Leverton uses machine learning to extract relevant information from documents, improving efficiency and accuracy in the conveyancing process.

3.6. **DocuSign** can be beneficial in the conveyancing process by providing electronic signature capabilities and streamlining document management. DocuSign allows all parties involved in a conveyancing transaction, including buyers, sellers, conveyancers, and lenders, to electronically sign documents. DocuSign's verification solution uses advanced algorithms which analyse identification documents and match them with the signatory's biometric data. DocuSign enhances the security and reliability of electronic signatures thus reducing the risk of fraudulent activities.

The above examples discussed above are specifically designed to assist conveyancers in diverse aspects of the conveyancing process, such as document analysis, contract review, automation, risk assessment and more. Choose a system provider based on the council's specific requirements, compatibility with existing systems and workflows as well as the needs and objectives of the council.

## 4. Training Needs for AI Adoption

To effectively use AI in conveyancing, staff members will require continuing, specific training to ensure they can use AI system tools effectively. The training should cover the undermentioned areas:

### 4.1. Understanding of AI technology
Staff members should receive an overview of AI systems, including their capabilities, limitations, and potential applications in conveyancing. Legal professionals must understand the basics of artificial intelligence and its relevance to their particular area of practice.

### 4.2. Understanding of AI system tools
Training should focus on providing hands-on experience with the AI tools being implemented in the conveyancing process. Training should be provided regularly to ensure best utility of the system which will allow the authority to maximise the benefits of the system.

### 4.3. Data management
Artificial intelligence relies on quality, up to date data for accurate results. Staff should be proficient in data management, including data collection, best practices, cleaning, and data validation. Legal professionals must understand the importance of maintaining data integrity and privacy when utilising AI systems.

### 4.4. Collaboration
Staff must learn how to collaborate with AI systems effectively. This includes understanding how to input data, interpret AI-generated insights, and make informed decisions based on AI recommendations.

### 4.5. Ethical and legal considerations
In local government, ethical and legal considerations surrounding the use of AI hold particular significance. During the period of implementation, it is vital that the council addresses potential issues such as bias, transparency, and adherence to ethical standards on a continuous basis. Ensuring the

responsible and fair use of AI not only maintains public trust but also maintains the values of justice and equity that are central to local governance.

### 4.6. Continuous learning approach

AI technology advances rapidly thus staff should be continually encouraged to engage in continuous learning and stay updated on the latest advancements in AI. This will allow them to adapt to innovative tools and techniques as they emerge. Consideration must be given to the time and financial input such training requires.

It is recommended to collaborate with AI system providers to develop customised training programs tailored directly to the specific AI tools and processes being implemented in the local government's legal department. This will guarantee that staff members are equipped with the required knowledge and skills to use AI effectively and drive successful outcomes.

## 5. Ethics and bias

In local government legal contexts, the possibility of bias in AI systems requires careful attention. AI system models are trained on historical data, which can inadvertently perpetuate existing biases. It is crucial to educate staff about the significance of detecting and mitigating potential bias within the AI system. This is particularly critical in local government settings, where decisions can impact diverse communities.  Legal professionals should be sensitised to situations where AI systems may inadvertently reinforce discriminatory practices or unbalanced outcomes. For example, if an artificial intelligence system is assisting in selecting candidates for public programs or participation, it should be closely monitored to ensure equal representation and fairness amongst the candidates.

### 5.1. Transparency and accountability

Decisions driven by AI must be transparent and understandable. Training must emphasise the significance of AI models providing clear explanations for their conclusions. This is especially crucial in legal matters where comprehensible decision-making is essential for building trust and confidence. Transparent AI systems empower local government legal professionals to explain to residents how AI-generated insights were reached. A high level of accountability is vital because it demonstrates alignment with the commitment to serving and upholding public interest.

### 5.2. Official Guidance

Familiarity with relevant policy documents which outline ethical AI practices is vital. Within the UK context, the White Paper on Artificial Intelligence serves as a guiding document for AI ethics and regulations. While not legally binding at present, the White Paper will in time, and with amendment, become law, as such, the principles laid out in the White Paper offer a roadmap for ethical AI

implementation. Similarly, the EU Parliament's recommendations and proposed bills on AI ethics provide valuable insights into responsible AI system use. These documents assist local government legal departments with understanding of best practices and help align their AI initiatives with broader ethical considerations.

### 5.3. Cross-Border Implications

As local government legal departments navigate cross-border legal matters, understanding the ethical and legal magnitudes of AI becomes even more essential. Though non-binding, documents like the UK White Paper and EU Parliament bills can play a role in guiding ethical AI practices, especially in cross-border scenarios. Local government legal professionals ought to be aware of these documents and the ethical principles they advocate. This awareness can aid in maintaining ethical AI practices even in complex, cross-border legal situations.

Educating local government legal professionals about ethical and legal aspects of AI, particularly in the context of bias mitigation, transparency, and policy references, enables these departments to lead the way in responsible AI integration. By maintaining and upholding ethical standards and ensuring such technologies align with local community values, local government legal departments demonstrate their commitment to developing unbiased and equitable communities.

## 6. Electronic Signatures & Seals

Electronic signatures have become a vital part of modernising conveyancing processes, offering convenience, efficiency, and security. To improve the reliability and security of electronic signatures, it is worth exploring AI-based ID verification solutions. Such solutions use AI algorithms to verify the identity of signatories, ensuring that the signatures are authentic and legally binding.

One example of AI-based ID verification is offered by DocuSign, aforementioned provider of electronic signature solutions. When electronic signatures are implemented into the existing conveyancing workflows, it is crucial to ensure that legal professionals have been familiarised with the legal framework surrounding electronic signatures in their jurisdiction; it is vital to be aware of the specific regulations and requirements for electronic signatures to be legally valid. Ensure that the electronic signature solution you choose complies with these regulations to ensure the legality and enforceability of the signed documents.

In addition to electronic signatures, implementing electronic sealing solutions can further modernise and streamline document management and improve efficiency during conveyancing processes. DocuSign, for example, offers electronic sealing solutions that enable local councils and government

agencies to securely seal and manage documents electronically. This eliminates the requirement of physical seals and reduces the administrative burden associated with traditional sealing processes.

By utilising AI-based ID verification and electronic sealing solutions, local governments can enhance the security, efficiency, reliability, and effectiveness of their conveyancing processes. These technologies not only streamline document management but contribute to a sustainable and environmentally friendly approach through the reduction of paper usage.

As an example, Hull City Council has successfully implemented DocuSign's electronic signature solution to streamline their conveyancing processes. By adopting electronic signatures and AI-based ID verification, they have improved efficiency, reduced administrative burdens, and enhanced the overall customer experience. Furthermore, the use of electronic sealing solutions has further streamlined document management and ensured the security of important conveyancing documents. This successful implementation showcases the benefits of AI-powered technologies.

## 7.  GDPR Considerations

When implementing AI in conveyancing, it is crucial to prioritise GDPR compliance to protect the privacy and rights of individuals. The *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)* sets strict guidelines for the processing and handling of personal data. Here are some key considerations to ensure GDPR compliance when using AI in conveyancing:

### 7.1. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)
Conduct a DPIA to assess the potential risks and impacts of using AI in conveyancing on individuals' privacy rights. This assessment helps identify and mitigate any potential privacy risks associated with the AI solution.

### 7.2. Data processing
Ensure that you have a lawful basis for processing personal data under the GDPR. This, for example, may could include obtaining explicit consent from individuals, fulfilling a contractual obligation, or complying with legal obligations. Document the lawful basis for processing and ensure that it aligns with the specific purposes for which the AI solution is being used.

### 7.3. Data collection
Apply the principle of data minimisation when using AI in conveyancing. Only collect and process personal data that is necessary for the specific purpose of the AI solution. Avoid unnecessary or excessive data collection to minimise privacy risks.

### 7.4. Transparency and fairness

Those requesting information in relation to the system use should be provided with clear and concise information about the processing of their personal data by the AI system. This includes informing them about the purpose, legal basis, and any automated decision-making involved. Ensure that individuals have the right to access, rectify, and erase their personal data as required by the GDPR.

### 7.5. Security measures

Implement appropriate technical and organisational security measures to protect personal data processed by the AI system. This includes encryption, access controls, regular data backups, and ongoing monitoring to detect and respond to any data breaches or security incidents.

### 7.6. Data sharing and third-party processors

If personal data is shared with third-party processors or service providers as part of the AI solution, ensure that appropriate data processing agreements are in place. Such agreements must outline the responsibilities, obligations, and safeguards currently in place which enable the protection of personal data in accordance with the GDPR.

### 7.7. Retention and data removal

Establish clear retention periods for personal data processed by the AI system. Ensure that data is not kept for longer than necessary and is securely disposed of when no longer needed.

By considering these GDPR considerations, you can ensure that the deployment of AI system in conveyancing aligns with the values of data protection, consent, and transparency mandated by the GDPR. Such measures build trust with residents and demonstrates the council's commitment to safeguarding citizen privacy rights.

### 8. Risk Management

Although the use of AI technology can enhance and improve efficiency of local government legal teams, and in particular, the conveyancing processes, it also presents numerous risks that need to be managed effectively. Several potential risks have already been discussed above, however, to efficiently manage risks, a well-organised risk management system is required. Where possible, form a multidisciplinary team comprising legal, IT, data protection, and policy specialists/lawyers to oversee the risk management process. The team can be granted responsibility for identifying, assessing, and mitigating AI-related risks. The team can regularly perform a comprehensive risk assessment to identify potential risks and consider factors such as data privacy, bias, security breaches, legal compliance, and public perception which in turn will enable the council to meet its strategy objective through utilisation of AI

systems.Based on the identified risks, develop policies to mitigate any arising risks effectively. Key strategies may include:

### 8.1. Data governance
Establish robust data governance policies and procedures to ensure data quality, security, and compliance with relevant regulations. Implement measures to protect sensitive data and prevent unauthorised access.

### 8.2. Ethical AI framework
Develop an ethical framework for AI use, ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability. Consider the impact of AI on vulnerable groups and ensure that decision-making algorithms are unbiased and explainable.

### 8.3. Regulatory compliance
Continually stay up to date with legal developments and regulations related to artificial intelligence. Ensure the legal team's continuous compliance with data protection laws, intellectual property rights, and any other relevant legislation.

### 8.4. Public engagement
Engage with the public and local community residents to address concerns and build trust. Communicate the benefits and risks of AI implementation transparently and seek public input in the decision-making processes.

### 8.5. Monitoring
Regularly monitor the effectiveness of risk mitigation strategies and adapt them as needed. Stay informed about emerging AI threats and technological advancements to proactively manage risks.

### 8.6. Collaboration
Collaboration and engagement with other local authorities, industry associations, and regulatory bodies to share best practices and lessons learned is key in the continuous development of best practices and guidance relating to AI utility. Collaborate on developing industry standards and guidelines for AI risk management.

The implementation of AI in conveyancing transactions by local authorities offers substantial benefits in terms of efficiency, accuracy, and citizen service delivery. By considering practical aspects such as specific use cases, tailored AI tools, data quality, staff training, integration, performance monitoring,

data security, and transparent communication with citizens, local government authorities can effectively implement AI and optimise its impact on their conveyancing processes.

*Disclaimer: In respect of examples of AI providers at paragraph 3, LLG in no way endorses or recommends said providers but merely lists them as examples currently providing services within the market.*

**Further Reading:**

1. "Six Ways Artificial Intelligence (AI) is Transforming Law Practice" - LexisNexis

2. "UK Legal Industry Faces AI Disruption" - Verdict

3. "Transforming Legal Practice with AI" - In-House Community

4. "Six Ways the Legal Sector is Using AI" - Law Society

5. "AI in Law: Legal Practice & Current Applications" - Emerj

6. "Generative AI in Legal" - AI Multiple

7. "LawGPT: How AI is Reshaping the Legal Profession" - LSE Impact of Social Sciences

8. "AI in the Legal Department: Can Artificial Intelligence Transform Your Legal Operations?" - Wolters Kluwer

9. "Why AI Could Hold the Key to Revolutionising Legal Work on UK Property Transactions" - Legal Futures

10. "AI Advances Lead to Improvements in E-Signatures" - Smart Data Collective

11. "AI-Based ID Verification" - DocuSign

12. "Digital Transformation in Local and Central Government" - DocuSign

13. "Local Councils Are Using Electronic Sealing for More Efficiency" - DocuSign

14. "Hull City Council Elects DocuSign" - DocuSign

15. "Luminance Launches AI Tool Designed to Transform In-House Legal Work" - Cambridge Network

16. "Using Digital Document Sealing in Your Business" - Contractbook

17. "AI in Conveyancing: Risks and Information" - In Case

18. "GDPR and AI: The Rise of the Machines" - Local Government Lawyer

19. "AI in Local Government: Success Stories" - NDL