GOVERNMENT
& PUBLIC SECTOR JOURNAL

Going Beyond SD-WAN For Big Government Data

GPSJ

Welcome to the Government and Public Sector Journal Spring/Summer 2019

One year on and 84% of UK consumers don't think GDPR has been effective

Three-fifths (59%) of consumers would feel more secure if their personal information was protected by their fingerprint

Despite the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May last year, research from IDEX Biometrics Asa has revealed UK consumers don't feel their personal information is any safer.

In fact, 84% of respondents don't think GDPR has been taken seriously enough by organisations who hold their data, and its security is still an issue.

This highlights the need for UK organisations, to make it clearer to their customers that they are prioritising GDPR compliance. Taking a security-first approach, by embracing innovations, including fingerprint biometric technology via smart cards, will

play a key role in retaining and growing customer trust in data compliance.

Current poor data security practices, such as using locally held PINs or passwords, can leave data easily vulnerable to breaches, and fully justifies the fears held by consumers about the safety of their information. Indeed, three quarters (75%) of consumers admit to being concerned about the security of their personal information, once it has been shared with a company.

However, consumer trust in personal data protection greatly differs depending on the market sector. Almost half (45%) would be most comfortable sharing their personal information with financial service organisations, yet only 15% would say the same about sharing it with hospitality companies (such as bars and restaurants). This suggests organisations that are historically

heavily regulated are typically more trusted by consumers.

Illustrating the even greater need for companies operating outside these sectors to demonstrate data protection policies are watertight. Only by doing so will they gain consumer confidence in their compliance processes.

Biometric solutions are an effective means to address these concerns. Recent advances in applying fingerprint biometric sensors to smart cards and devices mean authentication credentials are only held on the card itself, removing the need to store data in a central database which is vulnerable to breaches and a potential entry point for hackers.

"We are now one year into a post-GDPR world and our research clearly shows that consumers don't feel their data is safer for it," comments David

Orme, Senior Vice President at IDEX Biometrics. "Considering the level of trust consumers put in companies to protect their personal information, businesses across all sectors need to address the distinct lack of belief that personal information is more secure because of GDPR."

"Banks need to ensure they don't become complacent but continue to live up to consumer faith by remaining vigilant regarding data protection. No matter what the sector, companies need to be more transparent in their approach to data security and embrace fingerprint biometric authentication to improve compliance measures and drive consumer confidence. After all consumer trust and retention is key to creating a competitive edge for any business" adds Orme.

Shaun the Sheep helps children learn about road safety as charity Brake calls on support from emergency services

Shaun the Sheep will help children learn about road safety when he appears in a series of fun new resources being produced by charity Brake.

The famous character, created by award-winning studio Aardman, is supporting Brake's flagship project for children and primary schools, Brake's Kids Walk. The mischievous sheep and his flock will help children learn key road safety messages, while raising awareness among grown ups about protecting children on roads.

Brake's Kids Walk with Shaun the Sheep will take place on

Wednesday 26 June. The project, in partnership with Ocado Foundation, will see thousands of children aged 4-11 put their best feet forward when they take part in an organised walk to promote road safety and the health and planet-saving benefits of walking. The project is free to take part in and provides an opportunity for emergency services to partner with their local schools. All participants receive a resource pack that includes posters, activity sheets, colouring sheets, banners, certificates, stickers, assembly presentations and lesson plans featuring Shaun the Sheep.

Brake has been helping schools, nurseries and parents

talk to children about keeping safe near roads for almost 25 years. In 2018, more than 100,000 children are estimated to have taken part in Brake's Kids Walk as events took place across the UK with representatives from regional police and fire and rescue services.

On average, six children are killed or seriously injured on roads in Britain every day [1], and the World Health Organization says road crashes are the leading killer of children and young adults (aged 5–29) globally [2].

As part of the project children can fundraise to support Brake's work campaigning for safer roads and supporting people who have

been bereaved or seriously injured following a road crash.

Shaun the Sheep is a stop-motion animated character who leads an adventurous life as leader of his flock on Mossy Bottom Farm. Since first appearing in Wallace & Gromit's A Close Shave, Shaun has gone on to star in his own television series and a feature-length film. His second film Shaun the Sheep Movie: Farmageddon will be released later this year.

The new sheep-inspired road safety resources will be hosted on Brake's new website for children, teachers and families at **www.brakezebras.org**.

London borough budgets fall a fifth in eight years, with inner London hardest hit

New analysis by Centre for London shows that, despite a two per cent increase in the last year, London's local authority budgets have dropped by nearly a fifth (17 per cent) per head over the last eight years, with inner London boroughs hit the hardest.

The analysis looked at how local authority budgets and spending in the capital have changed since 2010/11. It found that all principal service areas, with the exception of children's social care, have seen budget reductions, with planning and development, highways and transport and cultural activity budgets facing the largest cuts.

Taking London's population growth into account, councils have seen an overall 17 per cent fall in their budgeted service expenditure per head, from £879 in 2010/11 to £729 in 2018/19 (excluding education, public health and police services). This reduction rises to almost 35 per cent when inflation is considered. Inner London boroughs have

seen the biggest cuts – with Westminster (-32 per cent), Newham (-30 per cent), Tower Hamlets (-29 per cent), Hackney (-28 per cent), Camden (-25 per cent) and Wandsworth (-25 per cent) all seeing cuts of 25 per cent per head or above. Just two councils, Barnet (+1 per cent) and Kensington and Chelsea (+10 per cent) have seen increases over the last eight years. Urban authorities – in London and beyond - have previously been more dependent on government grants but have borne the biggest brunt of cuts under austerity, which have been applied evenly across councils.

Despite this, Centre for London's analysis also suggests that councils are starting to see additional government funding and council tax for social services begin to feed through. Budgeted expenditure per head over the last year increased by 2 per cent across Greater London, from an average of £713 to £729. Meanwhile, 20 of London's 33 councils saw their budgets increase or stay the same.

Local authorities have needed to innovate when delivering services; directing scant resources to core statutory services, such as social services, to cope with reduced funding and rising demand from London's growing population.

Other service areas, such as planning and development budgets have been cut by 59 per cent since 2010/11, despite housing delivery targets more than

doubling from 25,000 to 43,000 units in 2015/16, and a new target of 65,000 homes being proposed in the draft London Plan.

Highways and transport budgets – which include road safety, traffic management and street lighting – have also been cut by 54 per cent, while cultural activities budgets – which include tourism, recreation and sport, and libraries – have dropped by 42 per cent.

Scottish planners' environment warning

The Scottish Government's proposed environmental watchdog must be strong enough to maintain high environmental standards after Brexit, the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Scotland has warned.

In its response to a Government consultation, RTPI Scotland also said that there is a need to embed

these environmental standards in new legislation and to police them to ensure that post-Brexit standards don't regress and the quality of the environment is maintained at the very least.

It also said that the standards should be included within the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework to ensure that they are embedded in national strategies including

Scottish Planning Policy and the National Planning Framework.

Julia Frost, Convenor of RTPI Scotland, said:

"Following the concerning findings from this week's UN report detailing a major reduction in global biodiversity there is now, more than ever, a need to ensure that Scotland meets the highest standards to improve the natural environment for people and wildlife.

"The relationship between planning and environmental policy is an important one. We look forward to working with the new watchdog when it is established to ensure planning is at the forefront of environmental protection and enhancement."

In its response, RTPI Scotland also called for the four UK governments to take a consistent approach to environmental standards by agreeing cross-border principles.

RTPI Scotland's call comes in response to a Scottish Government consultation on how Scotland can maintain effective environmental governance following an exit from the European Union.

It follows on from recently published research from the RTPI into environmental planning after Brexit, which explored ways of improving the relationship between current EU environmental legislation and planning.

Rise in mobile plant could pose compliance risk, warns Bureau Veritas

Following significant growth in the use of Mobile Plant equipment in the UK, Bureau Veritas is warning firms to be vigilant when it comes to achieving compliance.

It comes as the UK Mobile Elevated Working Platform (MEWP) rental market increased by 4% year-on-year, with demand outstripping the rest of Europe by two to one[1].

Under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998*, users of work equipment have a responsibility to ensure that the plant or asset is safe to use. Regulations state that regular inspections must be carried out by a competent person and documented. In some cases there are additional regulations to consider, such as the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998*, which covers all work equipment for lifting and lowering loads. According to Bureau Veritas, the rise of MEWP use and potential confusion around responsibility for the equipment could pose a compliance risk.

Shaezar Karim, Director for the Statutory Inspection division for Bureau Veritas UK, explains: "The growth in MEWPs has led to inevitable compliance challenges, stemming from contractors hiring assets and being able to transport them around the UK.

"Meeting statutory obligations for mobile plant and equipment can be a logistical nightmare - and that's if users are even aware of their obligations. Many mistakenly believe it is the sole duty of the hire company to undertake PUWER and LOLER inspections but it is the user who must ensure that thorough examinations and inspections are carried out in line with the regulations.

"Organisations that face difficulties in overcoming the logistical challenges of mobile equipment inspections and therefore meeting their obligations, are at risk of costly fines, so it's critical they ensure that the location of an asset does not affect their compliance."

Bureau Veritas has a dedicated Mobile Plant Unit to deliver on-hire inspections; helping clients meet the logistical challenges of meeting statutory obligations for Mobile Elevated Working Platform (MEWP), lifting and crane equipment when hired out to contractors. The unit enables Bureau Veritas industry-recognised specialists to meet the demands of clients across a wide range of sectors, including construction, insurance, aerospace, automotive and facilities management.

For further details about Bureau Veritas and services for Mobile Plant, call **0345 600 1828** or visit **www.bureauveritas.co.uk**

[1] https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/rental-booms-for-mobile-work-platforms

*1999 in Northern Ireland

Nottinghamshire's E-CINS attracts national coverage

A Nottinghamshire wide partnership programme is attracting national regard for the successful integration of multi-agency working practises.

There is growing interest in the county for shared case management system, known as ECINS (Empowering Communities Including Neighbourhoods System).

This system allows individual agencies to become aware of which other agencies are working with or connected to vulnerable and complex individuals or problematic locations.

As of December 2018, in Nottinghamshire ECINS contained 1,181 users, 17,420 data subjects (profiles), 17,049 cases, 53,936 reports (case data inputs) and had been used to record 126,568 actions, 37,365 activities had been logged and 14,123 tasks have been set by users.

Whilst initially conceived and funded by the Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) as a project to assist Community safety, a county wide programme has developed uniting over forty agencies including the unitary Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County council, all seven Borough Councils, the Police, Fire service, Probation services, Housing providers, Victim care, health partners and third sector care providers.

All of these agencies are linked through their involvement in caring for and managing issues connected to vulnerable and complex people in Nottinghamshire.

Under the leadership of a single programme manager who has developed the programme from coming in to to 'kill or cure' the existing project in Jan 2017, the 'ECINS Nottinghamshire Programme' now consists of a network of two types of mutually supporting projects.

A series of transition projects for existing cross organisational multi-agency business processes such as MARAC, Integrated Offender Management, Anti-Social Behaviour management and complex/vulnerable person conferencing on to the ECINS system resulting (in some cases) the processes becoming virtually based constant functions as opposed to being meeting based processes.

Fire Brigades Union demands sweeping reforms from next Labour government

The next Labour government must deliver an overhaul of fire and rescue services, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) has demanded. After years of cuts to services, the Labour-affiliated union's annual conference voted for sweeping changes to the fire and rescue service and a new regime of investment in fire safety. Firefighters voted today to demand that the next Labour government implement:

• UK-wide standards and structures, including minimum response times and a commitment to 5 firefighters on every fire engine
• Investment in a new generation of firefighters and fire safety officers, after the loss of 1 in 5 firefighter jobs and 1 in 4 fire safety officers since 2010
• A statutory duty for firefighters to respond to flooding in England, as in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales
• An end to Police and Crime Commissioner takeovers of fire and rescue services and the end to the privatisation of training facilities and control rooms

Union delegates voted for the measures today at its annual conference in Blackpool. Firefighters also called for sweeping changes to their working conditions, free cancer screenings, and a review of their pensions.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said:

"Tory governments have made firefighters' lives a misery for the last decade, not to mention the risk to public safety overseen by this government. That has to end when Jeremy Corbyn enters Downing Street.

"We have faith that the next Labour government will support our firefighters and deliver the change needed to keep the public safe. All that we ask for is a safer, fairer, well-resourced and accountable fire and rescue service. A service that is publicly owned and delivers for the many."

Defra launches financial wellbeing hub for 23,800 employees

Defra (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) is working with Neyber to pilot one of the first financial wellbeing hubs across the Civil Service for its 23,800 group employees.

The Hub will support employees' financial capabilities by providing personalised guidance based on specific interests and financial goals. Money basics, credit, budgeting, life events are included, along with calculators for budgeting, debt consolidation, savings and credit. Individuals can access webinars, podcasts and articles to plan and start their journey to better financial wellbeing.

In 2015, Defra group took part in the Money Advice Service funded "What Works" study. Specifically, the category was: 'How can we help working age adults to improve their financial capability, develop budgeting and tracking habits, build up a savings buffer to withstand financial shocks and/or set financial goals for key life events within the workplace (e.g. workplace savings schemes, financial capability interventions etc)'.

Speaking to their colleagues across the Defra group they asked them a full range of questions to obtain their feedback on how they felt about their financial wellbeing and current level of financial education. Seventy-five percent of those surveyed felt that Defra, as an employer, should be providing access to financial education and guidance for all employees.

Natalie Jutla, Employee Offer and Benefits Lead for the Defra group, said: "Defra is always looking to expand how we support our staff, not only on the job as they develop their careers, but also more widely in areas such as combating mental health problems or help with financial education and how to manage finances.

"Our work with the Money Advice Service showed there was strong demand for financial education and the new Hub will be an essential tool for Defra staff and a key part of our offer to our teams."

Monica Kalia, Co-Founder and Chief Strategy Officer of Neyber, said: "Natalie is extremely passionate about financial wellbeing and has been on a journey to engage Defra stakeholders to embed a programme to support financial education in the workplace. This first action offers inclusive and personalised financial education.

"In doing this, Defra will also be able to monitor user trends on The Hub. This identifies gaps in staff knowledge to feed into future content, webinars and onsite activity, aiming to support employees' financial capabilities, no matter what their current situation is."

Overcoming the barrier of inadequate training:

What Public Sector tech pros need to thrive

By: Sascha Giese, Head Geek, SolarWinds

A new study by SolarWinds suggests that U.K. public sector technology professionals are at an inflection point in their careers. They have one foot grounded in today's IT-focused realities, while also setting their sights on technology that's to come—often with some trepidation about their ability to manage it when it does arrive. SolarWinds' IT Trends Report 2019 [1] uncovers an ambitious and career-focused drive amongst the U.K.'s public sector tech pros. It suggests they have a growing desire to utilise their technology expertise and focus on their career-based learning in order to play a bigger, more influential role in their organisation's innovation and strategy. With an understanding of the skillset and career development landscape, it's important to note that not only is more training in these emerging areas needed—it's desired.

Training priorities

It's clear that tech pros have an appetite to prioritise career development on a weekly basis. When it comes to their primary sources for training, tech pros turn to industry events/trade shows (21%), vendor training sessions (20%), internal training and/or coworkers (13%), industry publications (13%) and online communities/forums (13%). However, each of these options are regularly hindered by factors like time and cost. Over a quarter say their day-to-day IT tasks extend into time earmarked for career development. This is concerning, considering tech pros tell us that they enjoy technology skills training, with 49% finding it informative, 44% saying it's engaging and interactive, and 20% reporting it's not long enough.

Given the time and resources pressure on training, in the year ahead tech pros should think about approaching skills development strategically and prioritise necessary learning based on the needs of daily operations and IT environments, as well as skills that translate to career growth. They should evaluate their current environments; for example, asking themselves which leading technologies from last year have actually made their way into today's IT environment.

The trajectory from emerging, buzzword-laden technology and its real-world implementation should act as a guide for which technologies are best suited for the focus of training.

When the time comes to implement new technology to create efficiencies, there's a steep learning curve that creates double the work. To combat this, tech pros should ask management to define the core competencies of the business as they relate to technology, and then monitor for gaps between importance and training. Is the organisation buying new technology purely for testing and experimentation or will it be business-critical? When there's a gap between core competencies and skills in IT management, it becomes much easier to have a conversation about necessary training.

Charting a career development path

It's possible that some of the country's public sector technical professionals may feel as though their current IT environment doesn't justify an investment in new skillsets. But tech pros on the fence about training should consider this: the less proactive the IT environment, the more proactive tech pros should be when it comes to personal development. To truly capitalise on the opportunities presented by emerging technologies—and to ultimately remain successful five years from now—tech pros must commit to the mindset of a lifelong learner by taking a more disciplined, proactive approach to skills and career development.

Learning the language of business

As technology becomes increasingly inseparable from business success, the IT department is more important than ever. There's often a misperception amongst tech pros that more work can be accomplished on a command line rather than in PowerPoint, but the opposite is actually true: tech pros and complete a training module become easier to overcome.

The most effective way to achieve this is to start small and set aside manageable, realistic amounts of time to invest in personal development. Learning can happen in short bursts of just five minutes; and five minutes twice a day adds up fast. By investing in learning as a lifestyle, common challenges such as finding time to sit down who can learn the language of business (and it is a language) will be able to successfully influence technology decisions and enhance their resumes.

The ability to translate the technological impact of a decision to business objectives will positively influence future innovation and decision-making. IT often gets asked to provide training, but they might need the training to provide training upfront. Tech pros should look for someone who can help teach them how to translate traditional IT jargon, whether it's a technologist who has experience in business, or a business manager who can share insights and recommendations.

This year's survey builds on the results of the SolarWinds IT Trends Report 2018: The Intersection of Hype and Performance, which revealed tech professionals' struggle to overcome the barrier of inadequate training, and echoing the convergence of IT roles from several years ago (de-siloing roles like SysAdmins, NetAdmins, DBAs, etc.). This year's survey continues to suggest that the lines between managed services—either by cloud providers or outsourced—and tools that were formerly considered cloud, DevOps, and traditional IT tools, respectively, are becoming increasingly blurred.

As a result, it's more important than ever for tech pros to embrace collaboration and feel empowered to work with other teams as needed. This holds true when it comes to knowledge sharing as well. A portion of tech pros around the world prefer to receive training primarily from colleagues, and so it's important to remember that knowledge gained could and should be knowledge shared with peers for the greater good.

Sascha Giese

1. The statistics quoted in this article are taken from SolarWinds' UK Tech Pro Survey, A Look at the IT Upskilling Needs of Tech Pros Today that Will Help Transition Them into the Tech Pros of Tomorrow. The survey was conducted in December 2018 by C White Consulting. It yielded responses from 61 technology practitioners, managers, and directors in the United Kingdom from public sector small, mid-size, and enterprise companies.

Local Authority training provider benefits from quality insight

Investment in online technology is enabling a local authority-training provider to enhance their quality improvement approach and be prepared for Ofsted.

Gateshead Council Learning & Skills, which provides community learning, apprenticeship and JobCentre Plus training, as well as family learning support and Skills 4 Life, helps more than 11,000 people a year to secure new job skills and achieve nationally recognised qualifications.

The organisation uses Mesma's insightQ subscription-based software to improve self-assessment and quality improvement planning; assuring progress across its operation, centralising co-ordination of actions and reporting and monitoring these more effectively as part of its quality strategy.

This includes oversight of key activities concerning quality of teaching, learning and assessment, safeguarding, CPD, communications planning, observation processes, accessibility and subcontractor quality arrangements.

The training provider's systems are in line with the Ofsted's Inspection Framework, specifically around monitoring the impact of quality improvement activities to ensure that they have a beneficial impact on learners.

Sonya Anderson, senior adult learning and skills manager sees the 'Evaluate' and 'Improve' modules of insightQ, which she and her colleagues, who include the principal, learning skills manager, curriculum managers and those with responsibility for business development, data and funding and safeguarding, use as 'extremely valuable tools'.

She recalls 2016, when Ofsted recognised during its inspection of Gateshead Council Learning & Skills' activities the value of insightQ as providing a real-time and cost-effective management resource - one actively improving

their approach to quality management.

She said: "We could show to Ofsted that our 'Good' status is supported through having the appropriate information readily to hand during inspection. We put this down to the value of having an effective self-assessment and improvement planning resource - insightQ - available, showing the evidence of a quality oversight throughout our journey.

"The technology, which has been integrated across our administrative and management processes over several years, is now very much part and parcel of our oversight and managerial operations. It centralises control of important information, allowing us to track priorities and record progress, so much easier than any other systems I have used.

"My colleagues also like using insightQ. It keeps them up-to-date about important actions as they track and record their own progress against agreed actions, again helping to improve overall quality levels and boost efficiency."

Mesma's insightQ is a versatile, collaborative and cost-effective online resource, which enables important areas of the self-assessment process

and associated improvement plan activities to be allocated to authorised people within any training environment. Its key purpose is to drive quality improvement in educational provision for learners.

Sonya Anderson says the technology's pivotal in evidencing improvements in data capture, background processes and demonstrable staff engagements and actions: "The system is undoubtedly a huge improvement over paper-based ones, adding value to our operations and considerably assisting in addressing and raising quality standards.

"The team benefit from shared ownership of the system, seeing the critical information about achievement and improvement across the entire operation. This makes for more informed decisions as we move forward to embrace a changing training landscape."

As she looks to the future she is currently integrating the new Observe module to allow her colleagues to schedule and capture centrally the outcomes of on-going learning observations.

She adds that the technology will play a strong role in helping

the team prepare to deliver the new apprenticeship standards to all learners in both levy and non-levy paying employers.

"As a training and skills provider, we are adapting to comply with changes, and new tools like the Observe module, will help us prepare for the new Ofsted inspection landscape which will be coming into effect from this September," says Sonya Anderson.

"For instance, we will see more rapid and effective reporting and feedback, helping us to quickly identify trends and direct resources to where they are most required, as the module goes live."

Mesma's insightQ is proving to be a shrewd investment for Gateshead Council Learning & Skills. Easy-to-use and well supported, it's driving through improvements in quality while transforming the measurement of progress into a more manageable, visible daily process.

insightQ users are already using the platform to make the switch in self-assessment reporting to the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework.

More at **www.mesma.co.uk**

Gateshead Council Learning & Skills' Sonya Anderson uses insightQ to improve quality levels

Videalert awarded enforcement contract for Bath's clean air zone

Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES Council) is extending its Videalert CCTV enforcement platform with the installation of additional cameras for an approved class C clean air zone (CAZ) that is expected to commence operation at the end of 2020. This scheme gives exemptions to private cars but charges higher polluting buses, coaches, HGVs, LGVs/vans, private hire vehicles and taxis.

Videalert was awarded the contract to ensure full and seamless integration with the council's existing hosted digital video platform which is already being used to enforce a wide range of restrictions including bus lanes, bus gates and permit parking.

B&NES Council was one of 28 councils directed by the government to prepare an action plan to urgently reduce high levels of nitrogen dioxide (caused by vehicle emissions) to within EU and national limits by 2021 at the latest. The authority had originally proposed a Class D CAZ, charging all higher emission vehicles, including cars, to drive in the city centre. However,

following further ongoing technical work and a public consultation in December - which garnered an unprecedented 8,421 responses - a class C option with additional traffic management, was agreed.

According to Chris Major, group manager for Transport and Parking at B&NES Council: "The new charging class C CAZ will achieve compliance by 2021 apart from a single exceedance caused by localised traffic issues. We believe this will be resolved by installing traffic signals at two junctions."

Videalert will be installing HD ANPR cameras to enforce the new CAZ scheme at key road junctions across the designated boundary. The hosted Videalert

platform will automate the management and enforcement of this new zone, providing real-time identification including vehicle make, model, colour and euro standard rating for pre-filtering and updating the whitelist of compliant vehicles held at the edge to minimise transmission costs. Information on non-compliant vehicles will then interface with the UK government's new national clean air zone database for vehicle validation and payment. The system will also provide detailed analytics and impact analysis highlighting the reduction in non-compliant vehicles entering the zone over time.

Tim Daniels, Sales and Marketing Director at Videalert,

added: "The award of this high profile contract confirms Videalert's ability to handle the evolving requirements of clean air and low emission zones. It also demonstrates how a single video data platform can support multiple applications, enabling councils to address the challenges of improving traffic congestion and air quality simultaneously."

The daily charge will be £9 for non-compliant taxis, private hire vehicles and light goods vehicles (the minimum standard being euro 6 for diesel and Euro 4 for petrol), and £100 for buses, coaches and HGVs (the minimum standard being euro 6).

For further information please visit **www.videalert.com**.

Survey shows the need to maintain flexibility to support social renters

Leading payment specialist allpay, has revealed the results of its annual survey designed to provide an insight into current payment methods for house-hold bills. Findings point to reduced confidence in paying regular bills, an ongoing reliance on cash payments and the need for flexibility of payment dates for rent collection to help tenants.

Luke Jones, Market Intelligence Executive, allpay confirms: "Earlier this year, we surveyed more than 2000 people across the UK. From the sample almost 300 people were social renters (292) with housing provided via their local housing association or council. We found that fewer social renters are now confident in paying their regular bills: 64.7% in 2019 compared with 65.1% in 2018. A possible factor for consideration

may be that many social renters are faced with the ongoing roll out of Universal Credit payments which has disrupted their paying schedules and available expenditure and budgeting.

"An important finding was the continued reliance on cash payments," continues Jones. "Some councils are looking at phasing-out cash. However, the statistics reveal an ongoing reliance on cash and the need to consider financial inclusion carefully, with 11.07% of social renters preferring to pay rent by cash and 11.1% paying for their Council tax with cash. The statistics actually demonstrate an increase in those preferring to use cash for rental payments compared with last year's survey (10.49%). The most popular payment type for rent remains as Direct Debit (35.97%) with a similar proportion (34.39%)

preferring to pay by Debit Card while cash is third. Respondents cited "Ease of Use, Security and Trust" as the most common reason when choosing their payment method.

Jones continues: "Social renters' preferred payment frequency for regular house-hold bills is monthly, 57.8% in 2019, with the highest proportion of favoured monthly payments being for Internet and Phone services followed by Council Tax. However, the variation between respondents also points to the need to employ flexibility on payment frequencies for social renters. This year, the majority preferred to pay rent on a weekly basis (22.1%) with 9.9% on a fortnightly basis and 7.6% four-weekly.

"Collecting automated rental payments on any working day of the month does offer

the opportunity for Housing Associations to improve the flexibility of rent collection for the benefit of residents. Collecting rental payments much closer to pay day, or the day Universal Credit is paid for example, can help service users with budgeting and means people are far less likely to fall into arrears and therefore their right to remain in their own homes is protected." Jones concludes: "Overall, the findings point to the need to maintain flexibility on payment methods and frequencies to ensure financial inclusion and security to support social renters who are becoming increasingly 'less confident' in being able to pay their regular house-hold bills."

For further information please visit: **www.allpay.net**

Promotion for Joe after exam success

A leading building surveyor has been promoted to head the building control team at Telford-based consultancy apT just weeks after gaining a prestigious new qualification.

Joe Strafford has been appointed to lead the seven-strong building control team at apT, the Midlands' first public sector commercial planning, development and environmental consultancy.

Joe's promotion comes just two months after he became the first surveyor in the county to be independently accredited by Local Authority Building Control (LABC) and the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) to offer advice on fire regulations for complex buildings over 18 metres high.

Joe passed a five-hour exam introduced in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower tragedy to become an associate member of the IFE. It means he can now advise on fire safety in tall and complex buildings anywhere in England and Wales and joins a select group of specialists with the qualification.

"I am delighted by the promotion and the chance to lead such a strong building control team at apT," said 36-year-old Joe.

"This is a really exciting time for apT. There is a huge amount of work going on around Telford as the town continues to develop in a really exciting way and we also now have the

opportunity to use our expertise further afield on a consultancy basis.

"There are plenty of opportunities for the team at apT – and some challenges as well – but we know that we have the expertise and experience here to meet all of them.

"And the fact that my promotion comes so soon after gaining the IFE qualification is the icing on the cake.

"The qualification shows that we have the knowledge and know-how within apT to deal with building issues of the most complex nature to ensure that our clients achieve compliance with all regulations.

"It is an independent recognition that we have the experience, depth and breadth of knowledge to deal with any project and also an indication that Local Authority Building Control teams can often offer a much more comprehensive service than private sector competitors."

apT, which is part of Telford & Wrekin Council, specialises in professional help and guidance for planning, highway design and building regulations.
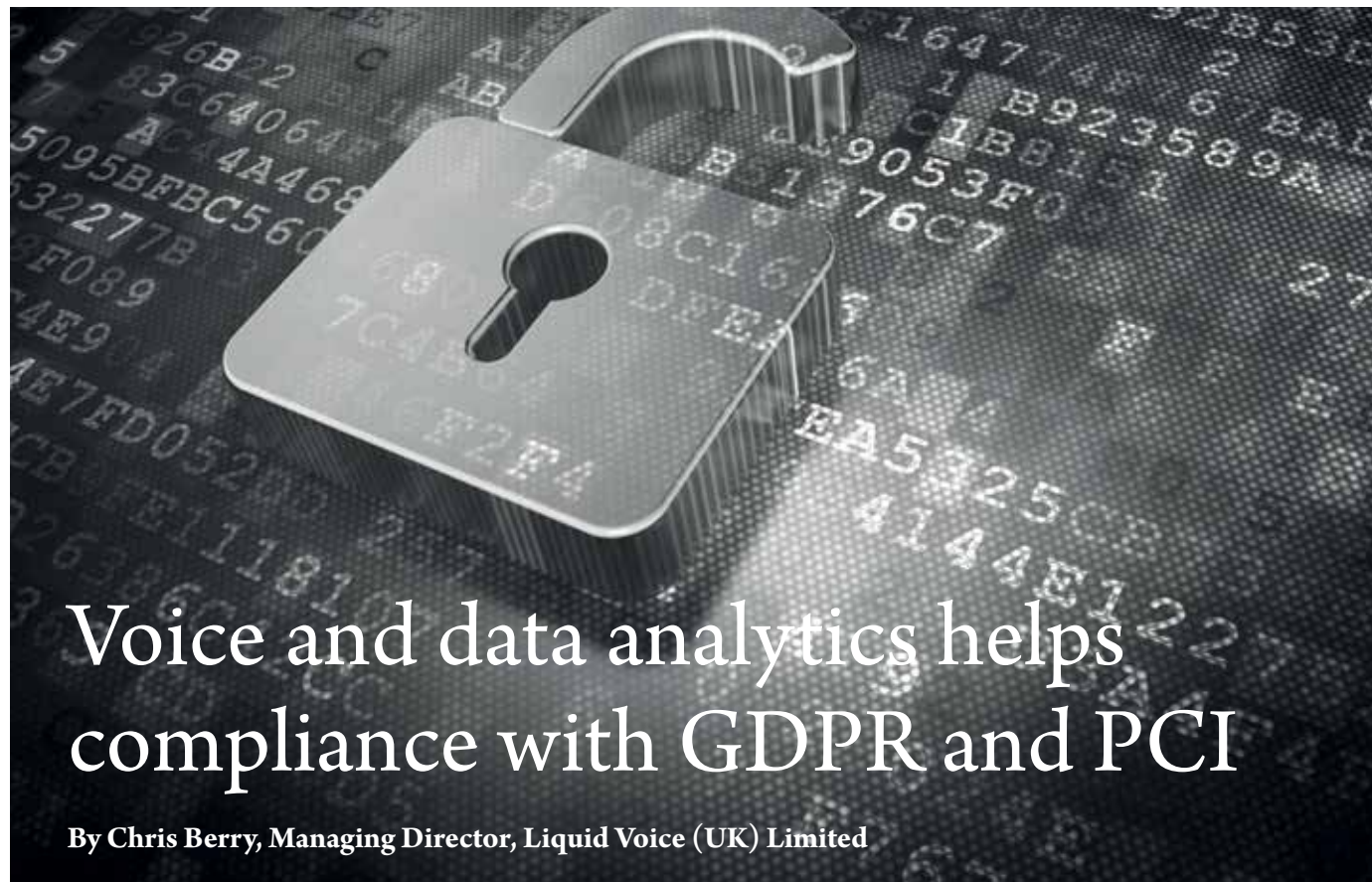
For further information on apT Group please visit: **http://www.apt-group.co.uk/** or follow **@apTgroupuk** on Twitter.
To contact telephone **01952 384555** or email: **contact@apt-group.co.uk**

Joe Strafford

Voice and data analytics helps compliance with GDPR and PCI

By Chris Berry, Managing Director, Liquid Voice (UK) Limited

Today's customers have much greater expectations and organisations are increasingly having to demonstrate that industry regulations are being met and appropriate systems are in place to manage and protect the way in which their personal information is stored. Local authorities have had to find practical and rapid ways to achieve these standards in this new regulatory era, whether they hold credit card data within historical recordings or need ways of dealing with subject access requests and the 'right to be forgotten' under GDPR.

In addition to implementing systems that allow sensitive personal information to be stored safely, this new regulatory environment, which includes GDPR and PCI DSS, gives customers the right to decide how their sensitive information is handled. Local authorities now have a legal obligation to be able to identify, access, provide and, if requested, delete any recordings or other interactions that contain captured personal information within a one month period. This can be a major challenge when having to search through historical records with only limited useful metadata, unstructured storage and disparate systems

Data Consolidation

The challenge of managing data is magnified for local authorities needing to maintain legacy call recording equipment or manage risk for systems that have reached end of life and are no longer supported by manufacturers and their solution providers. Historical recordings can be easily and effectively migrated from systems, including NICE, Verint, ASC, Red Box, Xarios, Oak and many others to a new and fully supported platform without the loss of any data.

Automated Speech Transcription

Automated Speech Transcription is an effective solution to helps manage these large volumes of unstructured data. Having transcribed the spoken word, it allows organisations to search stored recordings for names and other useful personal identifiers which are not normally stored within recording systems and displays the results in seconds as text summaries ranked by relevance. These searches can include customer name, address or reference number where that data would not ordinarily exist.

As well as rapidly locating specific recordings, Liquid Voice data consolidation solutions allow them to be easily deleted as required within the right to be forgotten. This process is fully audited with the relevant security to permit or deny this privilege.

Redaction

The same technology can be used to automatically find and redact PCI or other toxic and sensitive information, whether held in stored recordings or other technologies including email, SMS, web chat and video. Data redaction has become a key element of the ongoing compliance strategies of local authorities that want to meet their regulatory obligations and is particularly important for historical data that may not have been captured under the most recent compliance environments.

Importantly, this enables compliance processes to be implemented without having to suppress or delete entire recordings. After rapidly locating all predetermined personal identifiers in recorded interactions and datafiles using Automated Speech Transcription, the Liquid Voice solution isolates and overwrites it whilst white noise is inserted over recorded audio files. If required, compliance teams can access all data with advanced security controls protecting it against unauthorised users.

www.liquidvoice.com

SDS develops groundbreaking SuDS material to tackle highway metals pollution

A groundbreaking new sustainable drainage material is offering a simple and versatile solution to removing toxic heavy metals pollution from highways. Developed by the leading water infrastructure systems provider SDS Limited, SDS Aqua-XchangeTM is a flexible and highly-efficient granular material that captures copper and zinc in surface water runoff from motorways, trunk roads and other high-traffic areas.

SDS Aqua-XchangeTM is an engineered treatment media that can be used in regulatory-compliant Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). It has been proven in independent testing to achieve 99% removal of dissolved copper and zinc, toxic metals identified by Highways England as 'priority pollutants' and subject to strict regulatory controls.

Delivered to site in lightweight, one cubic metre bags, SDS Aqua-XchangeTM is now available for consulting engineers and infrastructure contractors to deploy as stormwater treatment in highways drainage, as well as on other higher risk locations such as retail car parks, freight and logistics hubs.

SDS worked with scientists at the University of Chester to perfect SDS Aqua-XchangeTM. A unique combination of naturally-occurring materials, it uses the processes of adsorption and ionic exchange to form unbreakable bonds with the heavy metals, including copper and zinc, capturing and retaining them even in heavy storms.

"We are excited to have created an affordable and truly versatile new SuDS material that can be used in both existing and new drainage schemes and requires minimal maintenance," said SDS Market Development Manager Jo Bradley, who led the development project.

"When a risk assessment, conducted according to Highways England's Design Manual for Roads & Bridges, identifies unacceptably high levels of soluble copper and zinc, then action must be taken to treat the pollution. In a situation like this, SDS Aqua-XchangeTM comes into its own, because it gives designers unprecedented flexibility to add the material to a range of SuDS components and boost their treatment performance.

"Because of its granular composition, SDS Aqua-XchangeTM has a large active surface area, enabling high-performance pollutant removal in a small space. As a result, it can be used to deliver pre-treatment as part of a vegetative SuDS scheme, enabling smaller SuDS ponds or wetlands to be de-signed where otherwise there would have been no room for them."

In a typical application, a layer of SDS Aqua-XchangeTM can be added as an additional component to a linear filter drain. Installed at a shallow depth, contractors avoid costly excavation or use of heavy cranes.

SDS Aqua-XchangeTM can also be combined effectively with other proprietary SuDS devices. As it can filter out finer silts and sediments, it can be deployed downstream of a hydrodynamic vortex separator such as SDS Aqua-SwirlTM that targets larger particles. It can also be combined with geocellular storage, such as SDS GEOlight®, when additional attenuation is needed as part of the roadside treatment system.

Compliant with guidelines in CIRIA C753 The SuDS Manual, SDS Aqua-XchangeTM can be included as a component in vegetative SuDS devices such as dry swales, raingardens or bio-remediation zones, so that robust retention of copper and zinc is completely assured while plants can continue to thrive as part of the landscaped design.

Jo Bradley continues: "Toxic metals carried in surface water runoff from roads and other heavy-traffic locations threaten the health of our rivers and streams through persistent and bio-accumulative pollution. Incapable of being broken down biologically, they become attached to silts and sediments and dissolve in the runoff washed off hard surfaces during heavy rain.

"This pollution is the result of tyre erosion, dust from brake and clutch pads, fuel and lubricants from engine wear and exhaust emissions. The pollutants attach to silts and sediments in surface water when it rains, and some are dissolved in the water.

As a result, persistent, toxic and bio-accumulative pollutants are carried into rivers, streams and groundwater. Copper and zinc are directly toxic, so can affect aquatic species as soon as they enter the watercourse.

"Not only has SDS Aqua-XchangeTM been proven to remove and capture 99% of the copper and zinc, but also to retain these metals even when applications of road salt were simulated.

Aqua-XchangeTM was tested to reflect a range of rainfall conditions under the observation of an independent representative from a UKAS-accredited laboratory in accordance with the British Water protocol 1.

For more information about SDS Aqua-XchangeTM contact **Joanna.Bradley@sdslimited.com** or visit **www.sdslimited.com**.
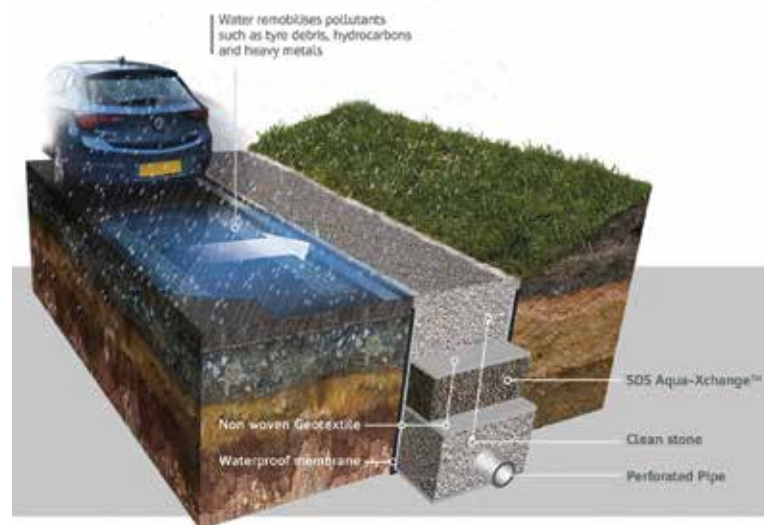
Above:
SDS Aqua-Xchange can be integrated to remove metals pollution as part of highways filter drainage

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Period poverty;
why we can't let down the next generation and why we're offering schools free sanitary vending machines

By Chris Brown, head of public sector at hygiene services provider phs Group

Period poverty is a term that more and more of us are becoming familiar with, referring to the inability to afford or access sanitary products.

We're not talking about luxury items here; these are essential items which everyone should have a right to access. They are so basic that it's almost unbelievable that period poverty exists in the middle of our communities and we have even heard people deny its existence.

However, new research by phs reveals that a third of teenage girls have been affected by period poverty, or know someone who has, in the last 12 months. The research went on to find that nearly half of girls believe period poverty prevents girls from doing well at school and a third even going so far to say it holds girls back from achieving their aspirations. Nearly one in 10 girls (8%) believe having to miss school due to the lack of access to sanitary products is the biggest barrier facing girls at school today.

With this in mind, it's no surprise to learn the report finding that half of girls believe period poverty hasn't been taken seriously enough with the same amount saying they feel let down by not enough being done to prevent period poverty.

The research discovered that more than half (52%) of girls have missed school due to their period, accounting for an average of three days of school each term. Of these, nearly one in 10 (7%) say this is a direct result of being unable to afford or access sanitary products – equivalent to one girl in an average class of 30. That's one too many.

The good news is that UK Government and Welsh Government have recently announced free sanitary provisions will be made available at all schools, with a similar directive already in place in Scotland. And while this pledge is on the horizon, it can't come into fruition fast enough. What we must focus on now is delivering a solution which is just that; a solution – not just a tick box exercise.

We know from experience that, despite excellent intentions, keeping sanitary provisions behind reception, with a teacher or school nurse doesn't always provide girls with the access they need. The majority (76%) of girls agree they should be able to access free sanitary products at school but nearly a quarter say they would be too embarrassed to ask a school nurse (21%) or at reception (23%). More than three quarters (77%) say they would be too embarrassed to ask a male teacher but even 27% say they wouldn't even be able to ask a female teacher. Toilets are the popular location to provide free products, chosen by 56% of girls. A similar number think girls should have access via a free vending machine in the toilets compared to just a third who suggested an open basket of products in the toilets.

This fits with our experience of developing period equity provisions in Scotland where we engaged with schools, local authorities and FM providers to create the right solution all round. This led to the launch of our coin-free sanitary vending machine which offers access to products without charge. Being located within washrooms means that girls access free products conveniently and discreetly, whenever they are needed. They also provide a more controlled distribution of products than an open basket which can also risk getting wet or spoiled.

Of course once you've provided the right facilities, you've got to ensure pupils know about it. While 6% of respondents in the study said they knew their school provided free sanitary products, they didn't know where. Therefore, we need to ensure pupils are engaged and informed about measures, otherwise it is a resource which is being wasted.

What's important about this research is that we haven't asked girls if period poverty has ever impacted them, it's based on experiences within the last 12 months. This means there is no denying that period poverty is a current issue in today's society. And if nine out of 10 girls say period poverty is a real issue, we should all be listening and inspired to act.

We firmly believe that sanitary products are a necessity, not a luxury, and no girl should have to suffer because of something so fundamental. This is why, as we launch the phs Period Poverty initiative, we are proud to announce we are offering schools our free-vend sanitary machines at no cost, in conjunction with local authorities, unitary authorities and government. It's all part of our commitment to do the right thing.

For more information on phs Period Poverty, including the new phs Period Poverty research report, visit **https://www.phs. co.uk/periodpoverty** or follow **@phsGroup** on Twitter and **phs Group** on LinkedIn.

Best value and lifetime peace of mind

An innovative approach to facilitating a long-term solution to people's need for care support has been launched by Closomat.

The Palma Life offering enables local authorities to achieve best value. It combines, in a one-off payment, supply and commissioning of a Closomat Palma Vita wash dry toilet, plus a total 10 years' service & maintenance[1].

It means the cost of the equipment, and its lifetime[2] servicing and maintenance is addressed in one, single cost, often as part of a Disabled Facilities Grant. This eliminates all the associated issues with funding and co-ordinating of future service and maintenance, with all the associated liaison with

client, and administrative time and paperwork. It gives clients peace of mind that their equipment is appropriately covered. It gives a full 'fit and forget' solution for dignified, independent toileting, reducing or even eliminating the need for care intervention- for less than £1/day[3].

"This is the first time that the concept of purchasing a piece of equipment, often as part of a Disabled Facilities Grant, with service & maintenance included in one price, has been available for a shower/ wash dry toilet," says Mark Sadler, Closomat Sales Manager.

"Initial reaction from social housing providers and local authorities is wholly positive. They appreciate that such equipment is life changing, but also essential to daily life, so needs to be serviced

& maintained. An offering such as Palma Life means the whole cost can be incorporated into the initial DFG. It gives peace of mind to provider and client, for years to come, especially as the service & maintenance is carried out by our own engineers, not contracted out to a third party."

Closomat's Palma Vita is already the most popular wash dry toilet to be installed to enable clients to go to the toilet on their own, with dignity. It is proven to offer the best wash and dry performance available.

Closomat WCs are also proven to be durable: there are many still in daily use 30 years' after being installed.

Closomat was the first company to introduce shower toilets into the UK, almost 60 years ago. Uniquely, it is the only shower

toilet company based in Britain, with British manufacture and full customer support before, during and after sales. Its uniqueness extends further: it is the only company in the sector to have its own, dedicated, nationwide team of service engineers, to commission every unit and deliver timely rectification of any issues (subject to the appropriate service agreement).

(1) Palma Life package = £4415 = purchase price of Palma Vita with standard free one year service & maintenance, plus a further nine years' service & maintenance.

(2) Lifetime = 10 years

(3) supply and commissioning of a Closomat Palma Vita wash dry toilet, plus a total 10 years' service & maintenance[2].

Toro hits the mark at Altcar Training Camp

The UK's premier facility for small arms marksmanship training, Altcar Training Camp in Merseyside, recently invested in a Toro Groundsmaster 7210 and LT-F3000 triple flail mower for their sports and residential grounds maintenance.

With a football and rugby pitch, general-purpose field and residential green areas, having robust and high-performance mowers to tackle a variety of jobs was essential for Altcar Training Camp. After a competitive demonstration process where Toro and multiple other brands were tested, Toro hit the mark and came out on top.

Mark Byrne, infrastructure resource manager, explains: "Our previous machines were on their way out and so we wanted to get the best possible replacements. That was when we got in touch with Cheshire Turf Machinery and set up a demonstration with

several brands.

"We wanted a zero-turn mower again because that suited our needs here perfectly. We were looking for something that would be simple to use and would be a seamless transition from our previous machine. With the triple flail mower, we wanted to get a robust alternative that would be more reliable."

With the help of Cheshire Turf Machinery a competitive demonstration was organised in order to trial several machines and find the perfect replacements for the camp.

"It became quite clear fairly soon that Toro was winning,"

says Mark. "The combination of performance and price was just what we were looking for, and with simple and easy to use operation, it meant we could get straight onto using the new machines when they arrived."

Having had the machines since September 2018, the GM7210 and the LT-F3000 have proved to be right on target. "They're both really good machines and doing everything we expect from them."

And with Toro impressing Mark, future investment is definitely on the cards. "We've had Toro before and been impressed and would definitely consider going with Toro again."

Below:
Mark Byrne, infrastructure resource manager at Altcar, left, shakes hands with Greg Cain from Cheshire Turf Machinery.

Chief executive officer at independent hedging advisory JCRA comments on Croydon Council's consideration to hedge the currency risk in its pension fund

Following the recent news that Croydon Council is considering hedging the currency risk in its pension fund, Jackie Bowie, chief executive officer at independent hedging advisory JCRA offers her view on optimal strategies to achieve the best outcome.

"All councils owning foreign assets in their pension funds are exposed to foreign currency risk. Given the demise of Sterling over the past three years, these assets are now worth more in Sterling terms. Since the Brexit referendum in June 2016 the US dollar and Euro are approximately 12% stronger. So, should councils now be locking in gains with currency hedges if they haven't done so already?

"Overall, funds should not make a currency hedging decision based solely around a single event, such as Brexit, and the decision should definitely not be driven by a market view. Macroeconomic events will always

crop up in different guises. Some, like Brexit, will be known events while others will take the market by surprise. Therefore, funds need to ask themselves whether they are willing to tolerate currency risks that can significantly impact the performance of the fund, or whether they will evaluate the full extent of the exposure and design a hedging strategy to manage it.

"When deciding whether to hedge your exposure, it is crucial to evaluate the cost of hedging against the risk, especially if the foreign assets are expected to be held for a long time. This is when interest rate differentials come into play. Currently, hedging Euro assets back into Sterling

benefits the value of the portfolio by approximately 1.3% per annum. Euro interest rates are in negative territory while UK rates are positive. However, if a council owns US dollar denominated assets, then hedging the FX risk of these investments will come at a cost as US interest rates are higher than those in the UK. Currently that cost is around 1.75% per annum.

"There are lots of stories about hedging programmes 'gone wrong', but currency hedging reduces risk back to the currency denomination of the pension fund, which allows the success of the fund to be dictated by the performance of the assets that

you have invested in, rather than unwanted risks.

"Hedging the FX risk of foreign-held assets requires considerable expertise. Independent and impartial advice is available to help you navigate all the options and to ensure that the right strategy is in place for your pension fund. After a thorough evaluation, the trustees of a council's pension fund may decide not to hedge; however, this will be an informed decision and ensure that the currency exposure to any future events will not come as a surprise."

JCRA

Armstrong Ceilings bring joy to young cancer patients

The refurbishment of a ward at Bristol children's hospital includes printed ceilings.

Hospital stays for children striving against cancer in the Bristol area are now more positive and stimulating, thanks to Armstrong Ceiling Solutions and its chosen charity Rays of Sunshine, a charity that brightens the lives of recovering children by granting their wishes and providing support in hospitals.

A refurbishment of the oncology day beds unit at Bristol Royal Hospital for Children, part of the University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust, includes acoustic ceilings featuring sky scenes and shoals of fish to reflect its new name as the Ocean Unit.

The ceiling systems donated by Armstrong, totalling almost 300m2, were installed for free as a part of a ward wish by specialist sub-contractor H + L ceilings- a member of Armstrong's approved national network of Omega contractors.

The BioGuard ceiling tiles that feature anti-bacterial benefits for healthcare environments were finished with a coating of sky scenes in the recovery bay for older children, a school of fish swimming down a river in the reception/waiting area corridor,

and a shoal of fish in a small treatment room.

They were installed by a team of three from H + L over two weekends, with the old tiles from the 10-bed ward being sent to Armstrong's factory in Gateshead for recycling and the company's streamlined TLS grid, which is up to 20% faster to install, replacing the existing suspension system.

Around 35% of the total tiles were white and screen-printed which Armstrong supplied with a number on the back so H+L could follow appropriate layout guidelines.

Armstrong became involved in the project after its chosen charity Rays of Sunshine identified the refurbishment of the ward, which had not been updated for 15 years, under its Hospital Ward Wish programme.

This works to, among other elements, decorate treatment rooms to transform sterile spaces into stimulating environments which provide a distraction and enable children to respond better to treatment.

The refurbishment of the Ocean Unit, which has two six-bed bays and four single rooms as

well as four consulting rooms, and looks after all oncology, haematology and bone marrow transplant children up to 19 years, also included new wall art and furniture.

H+L director Darren Hopkins said: "When Armstrong asked us to install the project we were more than happy to get involved. It was treated like any other job but the installation team volunteered themselves for the weekend work."

And of the tile numbering system he added: "We have never had to work that way before but it was pretty easy to install by following the instructions Armstrong gave us."

Jane Sharpe, CEO of Rays of Sunshine, said: "A very big thank you to everyone involved in making this happen. The ceiling makeover will make such a massive difference to the children visiting the ward for treatment. It will make their time there so much more bearable and will put lots of smiles on lots of faces."

Jane Thomas, donations co-ordinator for the children's services division of University Hospitals Bristol, thanked

Armstrong for their support in "transforming" the ceilings for the patients and their families.

She said: "The work completed by Armstrong Ceilings has made the area a brighter but still calm place for the children to be in, with the fish gently swimming through. Especially popular is the large bay under the tropical picture where the children can recover following treatment."

Isabel Blanco, Armstrong's marketing communications manager, said: "Our latest exercise for Rays of Sunshine was particularly rewarding as it was easy to see the difference the bright, fun ceilings made to the children."

BioGuard tiles are cleanable and perform to Sound Absorption Class C and Clean Room Classification ISO 5. They are also 85% light reflecting and 95% humidity resistant and manufactured from 42% recycled content.

More information is accessible via the Armstrong Ceilings website **https://www.armstrongceilings.com/commercial/en-gb/**.

Falkirk Council introduces VDI and IGEL to deliver workplace flexibility and mobility for over 2,000 staff

£250,000 per annum saved as a rolling desktop PC replacement programme isn't required

IGEL, a world leader in software-defined endpoint optimization and control solutions for the secure enterprise, today announced that Falkirk Council has implemented virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) to provide workplace flexibility and mobility for over 2,000 staff and to enable it to assess and rationalize its whole office estate to make better use of its building assets.

In addition, VDI is allowing the Council to meet its Public Service Network (PSN)[1] compliance obligations and shift away from a continuous desktop replacement programme which was costing around £250,000 every year.

Located in central Scotland within half an hour of Glasgow and Edinburgh, Falkirk Council provides a diverse and wide range of services to over 160,000 residents including bin collection, education, home care, planning application services, social housing, fostering and adoption services and roads maintenance. The council serves the largest towns in the area such as Falkirk, Bo'ness, Denny, Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Grangemouth - Scotland's premier port and home to its only major oil refinery.

Falkirk Council has deployed Citrix Workspace as its VDI, mobile device and application management solution, along with 600 IGEL multimedia UD3 and 100 powerful quad core UD6 endpoints in addition to 1,000 IGEL Universal Desktop Convertor (UDC) software licences. Supplied by I-KONIC, an IT solutions provider and IGEL partner based in Glasgow, this has put in place a flexible, easy-to-manage and cost-effective solution to support the future development of the organization.

Tommy Evans, Falkirk Council's project lead for mobile and flexible working, explains, "Although it might sound cliché, moving from traditional PCs to thin client technology has genuinely been a paradigm shift for us. Along with mobile devices and iPads, staff aren't now tied to a particular desk. They just login from any IGEL device and are presented with Microsoft Office and applications tailored to their specific job role. We're trying to change the mindset of employees to make work an activity, not just somewhere you go from 9-5. We're empowering our staff to work anytime anywhere, even from home so they benefit from a good work-life balance."

This is a huge cultural change for the Council and is allowing it to introduce flexible and remote working whilst ensuring availability of services to residents. Evans adds, "Even if there's a snowstorm and people can't get to an office, they can still login in and work as normal. VDI is also allowing us to review the buildings we currently have and exit old properties to lower our operational expenditure – helping towards making savings, which we hope will contribute to the approximately £60 million worth of savings which have to be made by 2023."

Re-using existing IT infrastructure 'sweats' assets longer and saves precious budget

After a series of proof of concept tests with all well-known thin client vendors, IGEL was selected. This was for a variety of reasons:

1. IGEL was the only supplier offering a software approach to managing desktops as opposed to selling hardware. IGEL's UDC software was particularly attractive as it has allowed Falkirk Council to turn its existing Windows-based HP PC desktops into IGEL Linux endpoints to not only facilitate easy management of them, but to extend the life of the actual hardware as well. Clearly this saves a huge amount of money given the hundreds of PCs involved.
2. IGEL's Universal Management Suite (UMS) means that the whole UD3, UD6 and UDC environment can be centrally managed with IT staff able to shadow desktops to offer fast helpdesk support.
3. Compared to PCs, the IGEL UD3 and UD6 endpoints are quiet, produce less heat and are energy efficient. They come with an auto shut down feature too and turn off when not in use.
4. Security has been maximized. The IGEL terminals are controlled by the UMS with the IGEL Linux OS 'read only'. This means staff themselves cannot make changes to the endpoints locally or introduce security vulnerabilities as the desktop environment is 'locked down.'

VDI simplifies desktop management across multiple locations

The use of Citrix Workspace means that the challenges and overhead of managing thousands of PCs across various buildings has been removed. Software updates are easily made as data and applications are all held centrally such that IT staff don't have to traipse around machines updating things individually. Changes made in the datacenter automatically populate the connected IGEL desktops

This is key as PSN compliance requires councils to carefully manage the release dates of all key applications in use such as Microsoft Office and only be two versions behind the latest.

In addition, startup is now super-fast and takes seconds rather than minutes as was the case when PCs were used. Clearly this boosts staff productivity and avoids people wasting time as they wait for their desktops to 'boot up.'

Furthermore, hardware maintenance has been drastically simplified as IGEL terminals have no moving parts such as hard drives and fans.

The Citrix Workspace solution is powered by HPE server infrastructure. The Citrix control layer is hosted on two HivelO hyperconverged clusters for availability, each consisting of four HP ProLiant DL360 servers with the Citrix XenServer hypervisor. All virtual desktop workloads run from HPE Enterprise Moonshot System which is populated with 90 server cartridges across two chassis to deliver optimised performance. In total the council has invested around £1.8 million to completely transition away from PCs and put in place a much more modern, flexible and easy to manage desktop solution which – in the long term – is more cost effective.

Sean Russell, I-KONIC's managing director, says, "As a Scottish-based IGEL partner and Citrix Gold Solution Advisor, it's tremendously exciting to support Falkirk Council as they embrace virtual desktop and workspace technologies to boost efficiency and increase productivity. Our longstanding partnership with Falkirk Council, IGEL and Citrix goes from strength to strength with this transformation project. The never-ending rolling replacement of PCs has become a thing of the past, and users are able to access their applications and information from virtually anywhere."

Moving forward, Falkirk Council is reviewing its office requirements. Evans concludes, "One thing that is particularly pleasing about the project is how the council has used technology to save money whilst giving staff tools to work more efficiently and effectively.

We're looking very carefully now at how we can release building assets through the use of Citrix and IGEL."

Andrew Gee, IGEL's VP Sales Northern Europe, says, "With all UK councils hit by budgets cuts, UDC is a smart way for them to save money and extend the life of any x86-based PC or laptop by converting them into an IGEL endpoint. It avoids perfectly good technology being thrown away. And it's quick and simple to do with the device then easy to manage using our UMS software."

For more information on IGEL, visit **www.igel.com**

1. https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/public-services-network

Bolton NHS Foundation Trust goes live with eObservations using Tap & Go technology from Imprivata implemented in just eight weeks

New solution accelerates path to digital maturity and enables clinicians to electronically record patient vital signs quickly and securely via shared mobile devices, improving quality of care and patient safety

Imprivata®, the healthcare IT security company, announced that Bolton NHS Foundation Trust has extended its deployment of Imprivata OneSign® with the addition of Imprivata Mobile Device Access™. The new solution gives clinicians fast, secure, and auditable access to eObservations, a system that records patient vital signs, via shared mobile devices with just the tap of a proximity badge. Imprivata Mobile Device Access enables care providers to record and store patient observations securely at the point of care. Armed with accurate and up to date information clinicians can improve outcomes by ensuring that patients receive the right level of attendance based on their current status and clinical

progression. By analysing patient observations, care givers can identify any signs of deterioration and make appropriate clinical judgements, significantly improving patient outcomes.

Phillipa Winter, Chief Informatics Officer, Bolton NHS Foundation Trust comments; "The primary objective of the eObservations project is to improve patient safety and quality of care, ensuring patients receive the best care to improve outcomes. Imprivata Mobile Device Access is an important factor in achieving this goal. When time is of the essence, every second counts; clinicians now have fast and secure access to the most up to date patient information to inform clinical decisions and patient care."

In line with the paperless vision outlined in the NHS Five Year Forward View, the Trust was ready to launch the eObservations solution on mobile devices. A sample trial was conducted on a

Bolton NHS FT already

uses Imprivata Authentication Management, Single Sign-On and Virtual Desktop Access for strong authentication and streamlined access to virtualised resources in the Trust's virtual desktop environment. The solution provides clinicians with fast and easy access to their applications and desktops on iGel thin-client terminals by tapping their identity badges onto terminals equipped with Imprivata OneSign proximity card readers. Bolton NHS FT were keen to build on this foundation and accelerate their digitisation journey.

Imprivata Mobile Device Access provided the answer, the solution extends the capabilities of Imprivata OneSign and the Imprivata identity and access management platform enabling fast, secure access to shared mobile devices and applications

ward with several devices shared between a number of clinical staff members. To access the solution users were required to manually enter their login credentials into three separate applications using the onscreen keyboard in order to record a patient's vital signs. The lengthy login times were proving unpopular in user trials and the IT team at Bolton NHS FT were keen to find a way of simplifying system access without weakening security processes or breaching audit requirements.

with the tap of a proximity badge.

Following successful testing and user trials, the solution was installed on 500 mobile devices which were deployed over 8 weeks as part of the eObservations project. As a result, Bolton NHS FT has been able to unlock the full potential of its devices, ensuring fast and efficient access to the eObservations system whilst maintaining security and auditability.

Brett Walmsley, Chief Technology Officer at Bolton NHS FT, explains; "The speed and responsiveness of the Imprivata team in understanding our requirements and the outcome we wanted to achieve was outstanding. They dovetailed into our existing deployment and training plans ensuring minimum disruption and no down time for staff, and worked tirelessly alongside our team to an aggressive timeline. Imprivata has been the critical component to the success of our mobile device project. We are excited about the future and about what we can achieve together. Imprivata is now

our go-to provider for anything to do with authentication. We view them as very much a part of our innovative development team."

The project has been a great success, more than 1,000 members of staff have access to the mobile devices which are located in banks of between seven and ten devices on wards across the Trust. The ease of accessing applications has reduced barriers to using the devices, because staff can quickly log in and out of the tablets with just a tap of their badge. All staff use their own proximity cards to access the device which ensures they are logged in using their own credentials, resulting in accurate audit trails on patient care. Observations are conducted regularly on patients according to their care plan and entered directly via the mobile device, removing the need for maintaining paper records. The solution has been a key element in helping improve staff confidence, and removing barriers to using technology and delivering tangible benefits to clinicians and their patients.

Dr Simon Irving, Chief Clinical Information Officer at Bolton NHS FT, comments; "The Imprivata solution has minimised the administration burden on healthcare professionals and delivered tangible benefits in the care of patients. The positive impact has driven us to review what other applications we can make accessible via mobile devices to staff on the move. We now have the potential to deliver more applications into the hands of clinicians and utilise technology to make a measurable difference in patient care without compromising information security."

The Imprivata solution has provided the Trust with a safe way of authenticating users, giving assurance to the safety of patient records and demonstrating compliance with audit processes, governance, and the General Data Protection Regulation.

Dr. Sean Kelly, Chief Medical Officer at Imprivata, comments; "Imprivata Mobile Device Access supports the mobility of clinical staff, bringing technology to the

bedside by improving the use of shared clinical mobile devices. This project has been a great example of customer and vendor working in harmony to bring required new clinical workflows into practice, not only benefiting Bolton NHS Foundation Trust but the NHS as a whole. The dramatic results achieved and quick deployment has made a vital difference to the delivery of healthcare and enabled the Trust to take a significant leap forward towards their vision of becoming paperless by 2020."

For more information please visit: **www.imprivata.co.uk**

Imprivata publishes new white paper on Digital Transformation in the NHS

Practical paper gives NHS Trusts insight into making Digital Transformation a reality from the Frontline to Leadership

Imprivata®, the healthcare digital identity and access management company, has published a new white paper entitled: Digitally transforming Health and Care in the NHS – A practical guide. The white paper outlines the benefits of Digital Transformation (DX) and gives practical demonstrations of how DX has helped Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust and the role of Global Digital Exemplars (GDEs), and closes with recommendations for planning, implementation and evaluation of DX in health care.

Author of the white paper,

Daniel Johnston MRes, RN, Clinical Workflow Specialist & Clinical Safety Officer at Imprivata said; "The NHS has arguably reached a crossroads where it is embarking on a paradigm shift in culture in order to deliver 21st century care to the population as described in the Topol Report and deemed necessary in Dr Watchner's report. Empowering clinicians and care-givers with technology is a major component in achieving this. When it comes to DX we have seen time and again that the most successful projects are those that are led

by the clinicians and care-givers, working in partnership with the technology vendors to ensure that the solutions delivered work for the NHS Trust, the workforce and, perhaps most importantly, for the patients."

Imprivata recently partnered with the GDE Nursing & Midwifery Learning Network and the Chief Nursing Information Officer (CNIO) Network which held its inaugural meeting in Cambridge on 20 March. The CNIO Network is a new initiative designed to provide a platform for the Nursing community to share experiences

and learn from each other, particularly around the practical aspects of digital transformation.

Johnson added; "The Nursing workforce is a huge and influential group within the NHS. If DX is to be fully realised and the merits of technology are to directly benefit patients, their families and frontline care providers, then nursing leadership require significant opportunities to invest in staff development and deployment of new technologies to successfully deliver innovation in the clinical setting."

BRIDGEWORKS

Public Sector Technology:
Be smart with WAN data acceleration

By Graham Jarvis, Freelance Business and Technology Journalist

Early in 2019 Brian Chidester, Senior Industry Lead for Public Sector at OpenText, wrote about the trends that will affect the public sector this year. In his blog for the company, it stated that '2019 technology trends driving IT modernisation in the Public Sector', he says that IT security is of paramount importance to the public sector, alongside the need to improve service delivery and achieving cost savings.

Referring to a Gartner report about understanding cloud adoption in government, he comments: "As governments continue to migrate to the cloud, organisations must ensure their shift to the cloud is both cost-effective and secure. This may mean reconsidering how to think about the cloud, improve security and leverage implementation options."

In the United States, this all amounts to a change in strategy from being Cloud First, to becoming Cloud Smart. "In 2019, shifting from a Cloud First to a Cloud Smart focus will help public sector organisations make sound decisions that will drive modernisation. While 'Cloud Smart' is a U.S. government initiative, it focuses on the integration of cloud security, procurement and workforce strategies — it's a logical next step for governments around the globe. Thinking through the details will help agencies create better and more flexible strategies for implementation, security and acquisition."

Think strategically

David Trossell, CEO and CTO of Bridgeworks, agrees that it's important to think strategically about what's required because the push towards digital government, through digital transformation, can still lead to mistakes being made. They can also be quite costly: the larger the project, the greater the cost and potential reputational damage. However, by being smarter and more flexible, it should be possible to avoid these consequences.

Cloud computing is, therefore, the backbone of this digital agenda because it's seen as a way to reduce capital expenditure in favour of operational expenditure. Government and public sector organisations have also learnt to accept cloud computing, despite past concerns over security. While bodies, such as the DVLA and even the NHS, are still prone to hacking attacks and data breaches, the fears of cloud computing have largely gone away as the fears of the unknown have dissipated. Nevertheless, this doesn't mean that the threat has gone away whatsoever.

He adds: "Security is not the responsibility of the cloud provider because that still resides with the user. Seeding data is a big problem for large data sets. Many are still using the cloud as another storage level; or using it to provide that back-up and an offsite disaster recovery facility." There's also the problem that may mean government and public sector organisations could find themselves locked in by some of their cloud service providers – despite the need for flexibility.

Broader perspectives

Deloitte also comments in its article, 'Tech Trends 2019: UK Government and Public Services Perspective', that the government and public sector IT perspectives are growing broader and more complex to the point that IT leaders in the sector are under pressure to use the latest technological advances, while also learning from the past decades. It says cloud, analytics and the creation of a digital experience have become the new normal with potential to still be leveraged with the sector.

The article comments: "The importance of technology to the business continues to increase. "Teams should evolve their capabilities and practices to take advantage of the mechanisms to improve delivery, transforming their core as well as the public-facing services, adopting agility across the enterprise."

It also cites the role that artificial intelligence is playing in the public sector, referring to how it is being used in the UK's National Health Service: "The NHS is using AI and robotics to help put doctors back on the front line, instead of performing back office administrative duties. Hospitals have begun by exploring how to automate parts of referral administration, speed up triage processes and to calculate reimbursement. Initial proofs of concept are already producing strong results, suggesting AI has a key role to play in the future of the NHS."

Reflecting on the push for digital transformation, it adds: "To make the most of technology adoption, public bodies are finding useful lessons in the private sector — and vice versa. Cashierless stores could serve as models for care exchanges. The NHS can use AI-enabled verification of eligibility that is now becoming common in the insurance sector. Public bodies could use AI and other digital techniques to screen recruits like the private sector is increasingly doing."

Increasing data ingestion

The Internet of Things will also play an increasing role, which the OpenText believes will inevitably lead to increasing data ingestion management requirements: "Governments embracing IoT isn't just about making life better for citizens, it also opens new opportunities for cities. For example, London was recently listed as the top smart city government in the world by the Eden Strategy Institute for their ability to gather, process and act upon data and information. Once cities start ingesting data in a "smart" way, they can continually improve processes and further extend tax revenues — giving citizens more for their money."

Yet, behind all of this is the need to have a fast, efficient and reliable wide area network. WAN optimization and SD-WANs are usually seen as the answer to mitigating the impact of latency, packet loss and jitter. However, they quite often don't live up to the promises made by their vendors.

SD-WAN limitations

Trossell comments: "SD-WANs are the new kid on the block. They are a great tool, and in the right place they are a great asset, but they don't fix all the network issues when working with the cloud and datacentres. SD-WAN has many advantages over traditional, dedicated network links, as it has the ability to combine low-cost broadband and non-MPLS WAN connections. This includes broadband links that many cities have of 100 Mb/s or greater broadband connectivity. SD-WAN can also segregate different traffic down the most economic connection path; or combine many to increase bandwidth." MPLS is expensive in comparison. This is a key factor when, government and public sector IT departments are still expected to produce technology that'll do more for less cost. He therefore comments:

He adds: "Nevertheless, SD-WAN does not fix the two biggest factors affecting WAN performance: Latency and packet loss (especially if SD-WAN utilises broadband connections). Many think WAN optimisation, which is often part of many SD-WAN products, will solve these issues."

"However, this can only work with compressible data – any data that is already compressed, deduped, or encrypted-which should be the default for all public service, cannot be passed through WAN optimisation. So, for most organisations WAN optimisation will have no effect in reality because it masks the effect of latency and packet loss by caching the data locally. The only answer to poor WAN performance is to layer WAN data acceleration over the top of SD-WAN."

New approach

"WAN data acceleration approaches the problem from a completely different angle", claims Trossell, before commenting: "Rather than trying to squish the data down to give the illusion of faster WAN, it tackles the issue of latency and packet loss and leaves the data alone. Latency is governed by the speed of light, and nobody can change that; the way to improve performance, is to make the best use of your pipe."

He then explains that if you fill a pipe, a network, with large amounts of data using parallelisation you still have the same latency, while gaining better data throughput of 98%. Packet loss is minimised and handled by using artificial intelligence to address the packet size and number of parallel connections. Government and public sector organisations should therefore support their digital transformation projects, particularly as data volumes are ever-increasing, with WAN data acceleration. This doesn't mean that they have to buy new infrastructure because much can be achieved with what they already have – including with their SD-WANs by creating a WAN data acceleration overlay.

SME innovation

Yet there is still a tendency to go for the large trusted OEMs. Trossell cites the old adage that says nobody got fired for buying IBM solutions. He questions whether this still rings true these days because there are many smaller vendors that are creating the technology innovation that is required by private, government and public sector organisations.

The UK government is, to a degree, recognising the potential of the smaller IT vendors by pushing for 25% of government procurement to go to SMEs. "Much of the innovation around networks, WAN and other areas is coming from the smaller nimbler companies that can enter a market segment with innovative products that large OEMs would not see as cost effective to enter", explains Trossell. Bridgeworks is one of those innovative companies, and it can help government and public sector organisations to become smarter with WAN data acceleration.

Disaster Recovery Tips

David Trossell, CEO and CTO of Bridgeworks, finds that the quicker you can move data, the more options you have: "Cloud back-up is a cost-effective method of providing that offsite data security. However, the SLA for cloud providers is not guaranteed and so you need to play the cost-game against them. It's cheap to put data into the cloud so seed your initial data to at least 3 different cloud providers."

He also advises that, while storage costs are relatively low, pulling data out of the cloud is expensive. So, this should be the exception. By using 3 different cloud providers you gain flexibility to the point that if one suffers an outage, it should be possible to restore from another provider that's acting as a disaster recovery site. WAN data acceleration broadens the opportunity to place data in different disaster recovery locations that are situated miles apart. The traditional way to tackle latency is to place disaster recovery sites relatively near to each other – within the same circles of disruption.

PoliceBox and Quvo available on the new Data & Application Solutions (DAS) Framework

- Coeus Software joins as a supplier on the latest DAS Framework by the Crown Commercial Service
- DAS provides a direct route for emergency services, health and other public sector customers to procure cloud software, hardware and professional services all in one procurement
- Coeus Software listed in lots 1b (Workflow & Case Management Solutions) and 4a (Bluelight Operations)

POLICEBOX
Mobilise your workforce

QUVO
Mobilise your workforce

Coeus Software the leading provider of cloud-based, mobile workforce solutions for the public and private sectors, has successfully launched on the new Data & Application Solutions (DAS) Framework.

The DAS framework was launched by the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) on 22nd February 2019. It allows public sector organisations to buy, implement, test and deliver a broad range of software solutions, as well as essential hardware and professional services, in one simple procurement.

The DAS framework is split into five lots covering the following areas:
1. Enterprise applications
2. Local government
3. Health and social care
4. Police and emergency services
5. Education

The following mobile working solutions by Coeus Software are listed on the following two lots:
- Lot 1b - Workflow & Case Management Solutions: Quvo®, a mobile working platform for compliance-based private and public organisations. Quvo takes the same industry-leading security, customisability and integration capabilities of PoliceBox, but broadens its capabilities for those in the wider Public Sector, Corporate and SME marketplace who

operate in heavily regulated or compliance-based environments. Quvo is appropriate for any organisation with high compliance-based needs e.g. Councils, housing departments/associations, social services, healthcare etc.
- Lot 4a – Blue light operations: PoliceBox®, the UK's only secure and fully customisable mobile working platform for the Police. PoliceBox helps officers deliver truly modern, 21st century digital policing, with much broader functionality and at a fraction of the cost of the more established rival platforms. Forces that use PoliceBox can quickly modernise their business processes to achieve genuinely cloud-first, mobile-first policing for the first time. PoliceBox provides a way for officers to access all the data they need in real-time, in the palm of their hand. In particular this means providing mobile access to the Police National Database (PND) and any other regional/national data services that they need. This is not just read only access. With PoliceBox they can also input data to these databases in real-time.

According to Ben Paynter, Crown Commercial Services Category Director – Digital Future, "This is the first framework by

CCS that gives customers the choice to buy cloud and on-premise software or a combination of both under one agreement. It also allows customers to buy software alongside necessary hardware and professional services, in one procurement."

"Data and Application Solutions builds on the legacy of the Local Authority Software Applications and Corporate Software Solutions agreements, whilst also allowing the Crown Commercial Service to serve new customers in Health, Blue Light and Education. The agreement has been designed following extensive engagement with both customers and suppliers."

Simon Hall, CEO, Coeus Software, comments "We are delighted to join the DAS framework, as it will provide a more seamless route for the police and other public sector

organisations to take advantage of our innovative mobile working platforms so they can quickly and easily mobilise their business processes."

In addition to the DAS framework, PoliceBox and Quvo remain available on the G Cloud marketplace and directly from www.policebox365.com.

Coeus Software Ltd. develops cloud-based, mobile workforce services for the police, health, social care and wider public and private sectors. Their services have been specifically designed around the day-to-day needs of its customers. From frontline police officers to nurses and social workers, its products support and enhance the way its customers already like to work. This ensures they fit seamlessly into their work day to deliver tangible benefits from day one.

Simon Hall

New tool helps planners and policy makers ensure global infrastructure development is sustainable

By Miriam Mendes, Programme Manager of ITRC, based at The Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford

Miriam Mendes

A new tool from the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and University of Oxford-led Infrastructure Transitions Research Consortium (ITRC) has been launched to ensure that infrastructure is developed to support achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SDGs were adopted in 2015 and agreed by 193 countries from developing and emerging nations to developed countries. They were designed to create a better and more sustainable future for people worldwide.

A recent study published in the prestigious journal Nature Sustainability has found that fulfilment of the majority of SDG targets will depend on infrastructure systems.

Sustainable infrastructure is better-designed and will save money in the long-term, explains co-author and Professor of Climate and Environmental Risks at the University of Oxford, Jim Hall: "Global spend on infrastructure investment is set to reach $97 trillion by 2040[i] but this money could be spent more wisely, creating infrastructure that works with nature to serve the needs of the people, keeping us on track to bring carbon emission to zero, and that is designed to be resilient to climatic extremes and other shocks."

The new tool, SustainABLE, has been to designed to harness this fundamental research – providing development practitioners with real-world practical actions to ensure that their infrastructure project supports achievement of

the different targets of the SDGs.

Scott Thacker, Senior Analyst at the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), explains, "We've created SustainABLE as an easy to follow online tool available to anyone who wants to ensure the SDGs are at the heart of their infrastructure projects. This is the first time that the SDGs have been captured in this way, providing a very clear walkthrough and step-by-step guide to understand the influence of infrastructure on each target and provide tangible actions for ensuring that influence is realised."

SustainABLE demonstrates how infrastructure systems from energy to water, waste, transport, digital communications, education, healthcare and other social infrastructure can help to ensure progress is made towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Jim Hall comments, "Infrastructure investment is at an all-time high globally. An ever-increasing number of decisions are being made now that will lock-in patterns of development for future generations. It's critical that policy makers establish long term visions for sustainable national infrastructure systems, informed by the SDGs, and develop adaptable plans that can demonstrably deliver their vision. The new SustainABLE tool will be a central plank in establishing how infrastructure can help satisfy the SDGs."

Scott Thacker of UNOPS adds, "With $2.3 trillion[ii] being spent per year on global capital infrastructure investment, funding is at an all time high. However,

in some areas of the world there is still a lack of the most basic infrastructure, infrastructure that's designed to satisfy future population growth, or to protect society from the harmful impacts of climate change."

SustainABLE's first module is now available for users to map the gender-related SDG targets of women's empowerment and infrastructure against areas including energy, transport, water, solid waste, ICT, health, education, government and housing. Specific subsectors can also be targeted such as air transport, surface water management, or emergency response.

Modules scheduled to be launched include risk and reliance, climate mitigation, environmental protection, with others in development.

SustainABLE will help infrastructure decision-makers from international development bodies, development banks and governments to embed sustainability in infrastructure projects in developing and emerging nations and first world economies to make better use of their budget.

Jim Hall adds, "Built well, infrastructure can demonstrably and positively contribute to areas from economic prosperity and employment to health and education and the safeguarding of the planet's natural resources. However, costly infrastructure is not always planned properly for the long-term, in consideration of the impact of one infrastructure on another, to take into account vulnerability to natural or manmade hazards, or in line with

the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by 193 countries in 2015."

The paper published in Nature Sustainability focuses on the interplay between the physical and societal aspects of infrastructure systems, such as how long-lived assets shape future patterns of behaviour and development.

It classifies direct and indirect influences of infrastructure services on SDG goals and target outcomes. It also identifies functions where the infrastructure provides a unique contribution to the SDG target, and those where a pair or more than one infrastructure provides a shared contribution to the SDG target.

The new SustainABLE tool and the paper published in Nature Sustainability will be of interest to policy makers in government, investment banks, NGOs, developers involved in infrastructure projects, as well as researchers and academics.

Website:
www.itrc.org.uk
www.unops.org
Try SustainABLE for yourself:
https://sustainable.unops.org/

i.Global Infrastructure Outlook forecast estimates as at April 5 2019 https://outlook.gihub.org/

ii. [CD: add reference 17 from paper]

Relying on reliability:
East Devon District Council invests in third Toro machine

East Devon District Council has recently invested in a third Toro Groundsmaster 360 after its previous two models purchased in 2015, have proved to be a huge success with the Council's groundscare department.

Dan Haydon, from the groundscare department, says that there were a lot of boxes for these machines to tick with reliability at the fore and the Groundsmaster 360 has ticked them all.

"We have so many different kinds of grounds to maintain, from communal gardens and children's play areas to sports pitches and cemeteries," says Dan. "Having a robust, reliable

machine that can adapt is vital and the Groundsmaster 360 does just that.

"Our machines need to be in use every day for eight and a half hours from spring until November; it's a big task. With the two GM360s we've been using for four years, we've never had a problem, so it wasn't a hard decision to purchase another one."

The Council had been using triple cylinder mowers before purchasing the new GM360 rotary mowers. Due to government cuts, the frequency of cutting areas had to be reduced and its previous mowers weren't able to keep the grass short for long enough, which is why the department opted to trial the GM360 zero-turn mower.

The quad-steer all-wheel drive steering of the GM360 provides maximum productivity even in undulating terrain. Able to climb hills without slipping and make 180 degree turns without tearing turf, Dan couldn't be happier with the machine.

"Whatever the weather or type of terrain – it performs across the board. We've seen a real improvement, and so have our other teams. We currently have eight teams across Devon, three of which have Toro machines, but now everyone is noticing the difference with Toro and there is definite potential in the future for Toro to pushed out across all the teams."

Below:
The Toro Groundsmaster combines the agility of a zero-turn riding mower with the flexibility of an out-front rotary mower, perfect for children's play areas, as seen here in use for East Devon District Council.

Greg Stuttle, GJD's Business Development Manager successfully completed the Herts 60 mile ride for the Willow Foundation

Greg Stuttle, GJD's Business Development Manager successfully completed the Herts 60 mile bike ride on Sunday 5th May 2019. Greg completed the ride to raise money for the Willow Foundation, which is the only national charity working with seriously ill young adults aged 16 to 40 to fulfil uplifting and unforgettable Special Days.

The fantastic 60-mile ride through Hertfordshire's countryside had a mix of challenging climbs (total of 3,100 feet) and sweeping roads through pretty villages.

Greg Stuttle, GJD's Business Development Manager commented: "The Herts 60 mile ride was a great way for me to get back up to speed and welcome in the spring, while helping the Willow Foundation raise vital funds

for them to provide uplifting and unforgettable Special Days for seriously ill 16-40 year olds". Willow was founded in 1999 by former Arsenal goalkeeper and TV presenter, Bob Wilson and his wife, Megs, as a lasting memorial to their daughter, Anna, who died of cancer aged 31.

Since 1999 Willow has fulfilled more than 15,000 Special Days for young adults living with life-threatening conditions such as cancer, motor neurone disease, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy and Huntington's disease.

The Herts 60-mile bike ride was a great start to Greg's cycling challenges for 2019.

Greg is doing a number of rides this year, the main ones include: Ride London, which is a 100 mile ride, on closed roads using the route from the 2012 Olympic road race. He will be one of 25,000

riders starting at the Olympic Park in Stratford and then after heading out into Surrey and taking on Box and Leith Hill we will then finish on The Mall in front of Buckingham Palace.

Greg will be raising funds for Mencap on this occasion and in September he will take part in the Essex100, another 100 mile route. For this event he will be raising funds for the charity Kidscan which is GJD's charity of the year.

IDC MarketScape names Konica Minolta as a Leader in Smart MFP

IDC, a premier global provider of market intelligence, has named Konica Minolta as a Leader in its "IDC MarketScape: Western Europe Smart Multifunction Peripheral 2018 Vendor Assessment" (doc #EMEA44808019, February 2019). According to the report, Konica Minolta has demonstrated the strength of both its strategy and capabilities and is "recognised globally as a leading smart MFP provider of note."

The report noted to consider Konica Minolta as it "can offer any size of customer a full-suite of print hardware, software and associated workflow

solutions. In addition, it has a worthy track record of serving large, multiregional, and global customers. The vendor has a clear vision of where the market is headed and the workplace of the future, and it can articulate this to clients. With continual innovation, Konica Minolta remains at the forefront of the print and print-related market."

The IDC MarketScape report assessed key vendors in the smart MFP space by evaluating the scope of their product and service offerings, the effectiveness of channel strategy and by interviews with each vendor and with their customers. The IDC MarketScape noted that Konica Minolta had sustained

product innovation through 2018, expanding its strong product line with new models across a range of segments, with features that foster mobility, security and productivity. Looking into 2019, the IDC MarketScape highlighted Konica's Minolta's commitment to further enhance sustainability.

The IDC MarketScape said, "Konica Minolta has implemented a well-conceived transformational strategy that is shifting into 3rd Platform and Innovation Accelerator technologies to maintain future market relevance."

The report also noted that "Konica Minolta's presence is being increasingly felt in the marketplace, and the competitive market assessment with other

vendors identified Konica Minolta as the second most competitive vendor in the scope of this research effort."

"At Konica Minolta we put the customers and their needs in the centre of our business. Hence, we anticipate that office printing and IT services are converging organically in daily work life. We are very proud that through our various products and services from the field of smart MFPs we are recognised as a key player in this industry among our customers and peers," concludes Olaf Lorenz, General Manager, International Marketing Division, Konica Minolta Business Solutions Europe GmbH.

The first truly AI-driven solution that brings wired and wireless under one unified umbrella

By: Keith Cahoon, Business Development Director UK, Mist Systems

Enterprise wireless technology has taken another leap forwards with the acquisition of Mist Systems by Juniper Networks in April 2019.

Partner at Lightspeed Venture Partners, Arif Janmohamed, who seeded Mist Systems in its early days in 2014, explains the how the founders of Mist Systems left Cisco and created forward-thinking solutions which would enable organisations to take a great leap forwards in their wireless use. "Like many great ideas, their key insight was sitting in plain view. Specifically, no one had attempted to build a modern, cloud-first enterprise wireless system since 2005."

Juniper is known for its wired LAN, SD-WAN and security solutions and by combining with Mist's next generation wireless LAN (WLAN) platform, Mist and Juniper will be able to serve enterprises end-to-end and leverage the AI-driven approach across the stack.

An attractive acquisition target, Mist will expand Juniper's presence in the rapidly growing cloud-managed segment of the wireless networking market. 2 of the Fortune 10 and 20 of the Fortune 500 companies trust Mist to run their networks and they made CRN's 2018 Emerging Vendors list.

The Mist team will remain a separate operating unit within Juniper and will be no changes to the way the brands manage partners in the short term.

Rami Rahim, CEO of Juniper Networks, has commented that both brands "believe in the Software-Defined Enterprise" and a "core belief that we need to simplify operations and improve

customer experience while lowering costs".

Sujai Hajela, Co-Founder, President and CEO of Mist Systems, explains the impact that Mist will have on the $20 billion networking industry as part of Juniper Networks : "The competition is currently not innovating at a fast pace, and we believe we can leapfrog them with the first truly AI-driven solution born in the cloud that brings wired and wireless under one unified umbrella."

"The wind is at our backs as the IT industry is looking for a transition to AI-driven products managed in the cloud."

The demand for fast, predictable and reliable Wi-Fi is increasing with growing reliance on access through 'Bring Your Own Devices' for work and personal use and demand for access to Wi-Fi provided by employers, education establishments and others such as hospitals, conference centres and cultural venues.

It has been hard to satisfy this demand and to provide a consistently good experience across iPads, Chromebooks, Smartphones and other devices. US-company Mist Systems has arrived in the UK to address this challenge. Leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the cloud, Mist makes wireless more predictable, reliable and measurable, and adds more value to the wireless network via scalable location services that personalise the mobile experience.

With the Mist Learning WLAN,

time-consuming manual IT tasks are replaced with AI-driven proactive automation and self-healing, lowering Wi-Fi operational costs and saving substantial time and money. Automated event correlation identifies the root cause of problems quickly; dynamic packet capture (dPCAP) eliminates truck rolls for troubleshooting; an AI-driven assistant enables IT administrators to get complex answers using simple questions, like "What was wrong with Bob's Wi-Fi last Tuesday?"

Mist also brings enterprise-grade Wi-Fi, Bluetooth® LE and IoT together so businesses can increase the value of their wireless networks through personalised location services, such as wayfinding, proximity notifications, and asset location. With Mist's patented virtual BLE (vBLE) technology, no battery beacons or manual calibration are required.

All operations are managed via Mist's open and programmable microservices cloud architecture. This delivers maximum scalability and performance while also bringing DevOps agility to wireless networking and location services.

Companies worldwide are switching to an AI-driven WLAN in the cloud to give them more agility and scalability that cannot be provided with traditional on-premises solutions; more assurance for business-critical applications, with visibility into the user experience; and the ability to increase the value of the wireless network with location-

based services that enhance the experience for wireless guests, employees, and customers. Below are some qualifying questions to determine if the move to an AI-driven WLAN is for you:

- We have an aging wireless infrastructure requiring a lot of IT time investment
- We'd like to reduce Wi-FI demands on our small IT team
- Our current wireless infrastructure can't keep up with growing demand
- We are constantly firefighting and troubleshooting wireless problems
- We can't map wireless usage to identify demand from user groups, locations, days or times
- We rely heavily on video calls and streaming but can't get the speed or reliability we need
- We want to move to a wireless infrastructure that can cope with future demands

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Keith Cahoon

New Kentec addressable fire panel protects new air ambulance HQ

Staff and air ambulance helicopters at Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance headquarters in Chatham are being protected from the risk of fire by a fire safety solution that centres around the new Taktis addressable fire panel from Kentec.

The HQ main office building is monitored by the Taktis panel and hard-wired Hochiki detectors, with wireless versions specified to cover the helicopter hangar.

Alvin Lewis, Operations Manager at CSG Fire and Security, the company that installed the system, says the customer has been impressed by the new panel: "We have worked with Kentec panels exclusively for about 15 years and the latest version is the best one we have installed yet.

"From our point of view, it's very easy to install – our engineers very rarely have any issues with

it. From a customer perspective the new touch screen has made it even easier to use."

Kevin Swann Managing Director of Kentec says the new addressable panel is providing a new level of convenience and functionality: "The evolution of the Taktis family brings us into a new era of product excellence – providing the utmost flexibility for system's design, ease of installation and genuine multi-protocol ability."

Initially configured as a fire detection and alarm system, the flexibility of Taktis is such that it

can be re-configured to realise many other control and indication applications, with direct integration into intelligent buildings.

Available in four and eight slot variants, Taktis fire control panels have up to 16 detection loops. It is capable of networking up to 128 panels, making it ideal for the largest sites including schools, hospitals, multi-site retail/supermarkets, critical infrastructure and major commercial and industrial facilities.

Hudson Energy goes smart with Lowri Beck and Calvin Capital

Lowri Beck is delighted to announce that following its exciting new alliance with Calvin Capital, an exclusive agreement has been reached with Green Star Energy covering the procurement and installation of their entire SMETS2 smart meter programme.

The agreement forms part of the Calvin Capital and Lowri Beck new joint offering that provides UK energy suppliers with a complete end to end SMETS2 solution, including smart meter funding, installation and ongoing maintenance services.

"This is a fantastic milestone for the new Lowri Beck and Calvin Capital alliance in developing what the parties believe is a truly market leading proposition to meet the smart metering needs of UK energy suppliers both large and small. We are very excited to be partnering exclusively with Hudson Energy, a fast growing, independent energy supplier and look forward to supporting them in bringing the benefits of smart metering to their customers" said Jon Parr, Lowri Beck's Managing Director.

Chris Ronketti, Head of Residential Operations for Hudson Energy said: "We are very pleased to be working with Lowri Beck and Calvin Capital on our SMETS 2 programme. We look forward to extending the relationship to cover additional asset types, designed to deliver additional benefits to our customers as part of our smart meter rollout."

Lowri Beck, based in Wigan, is one of the leading metering services business providing energy suppliers with national meter installation, meter reading, data collection and contact centre services.

Calvin Capital is based in Manchester and is one of the UK's leading owners and financiers of domestic gas and electricity meters and has been successfully providing support for energy suppliers' metering deployments since 2002. Calvin Capital is owned by funds managed by Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, a global investments firm which manages over $195bn of assets across multiple sectors.

Green Star Energy is Hudson Energy Supply UK Limited's residential trading arm and part of the Just Energy Group (NYSE:JE, TSX:JE), a leading energy retailer and supplier of renewable energy serving 1.6 million customers across North America. Green Star Energy's customers enjoy exclusive benefits that go beyond the supply of gas and electricity. Find out more at MyGreenStarEnergy.com.
*Source: Ofgem Annual Report 2017-18

www.lowribeck.co.uk

Jon Parr, Managing Director, Lowri Beck

Growth sees Reesink Turfcare invest in fleet of vans to expand customer service offering

Reesink Turfcare, the UK distributor for top turfcare brands including Toro, TYM Tractors and Otterbine lake and pond aeration, has invested in six new service vehicles for its mobile technicians.

With the up-to-date and extended fleet, Reesink is now more equipped than ever to provide customers with an effective and dependable service, says Reesink's operations manager David Jackman.

"By investing in this new fleet of vans, we have more reliable and efficient equipment, which means we can provide an improved service to our customers," says David. "We take maintenance of our products seriously and this fleet of vans is essential to deliver back up if and when it's needed. We pride ourselves on providing excellence and that doesn't just begin and end with the sale of the product."

Three of the vans will be at Reesink's Sheffield Park service branch in East Sussex, one at the branch in Livingston, Scotland and two at the East Anglian service branch based at the company's headquarters in St Neots.

David continued: "We have a particular focus on customer service, ensuring it expands in line with the company's growth and we want to build on our relationship with our customers within our direct areas. This investment is the next step in strengthening that relationship."

The six vans all come fully racked which includes a work bench and shelving kit solution, and can easily transport all the tools and parts needed for on-site service visits and breakdowns.

David concludes: "We're completely committed to delivering exceptional service and these vehicles guarantee we have the right equipment for the job. We're looking forward to seeing the new fleet in action and supporting our customers."

Below:
Reesink Turfcare has invested in a fleet of six new service vehicles to expand its customer service offering.

Genmed appoints Ruth Billen as finance director

Genmed, a specialist provider of vendor neutral managed services to the NHS, today announces the appointment of Ruth Billen as finance director.

She will be responsible for ensuring that Genmed's financial controls are robust, the business is ready to scale and the appropriate internal and IT systems are in place to support this growth. Based at the company's Welsh office in Cwmbran, she will also manage a finance team of four overseeing all accounting, budgeting, financial reporting and investment functions.

Since 2014, Genmed's revenues have increased 275% - a reflection of the popularity and adoption of managed services in the NHS - with revenues of £38.6 million posted in its last financial year ending March 31, 2018. Genmed now works for over 40 NHS Trusts and Health Boards throughout the United Kingdom managing over 220 contracts worth in excess of £510 million.

A Chartered Accountant who gained eight years' experience at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) as an audit manager, Ruth Billen then worked in the aerospace and defence sector before moving into the IT industry.

Prior to joining Genmed, she was financial controller at Adapt, a private equity backed IT managed services provider, who was subsequently acquired twice, firstly by Datapipe in 2016 where she became finance director, and then in 2017 by Rackspace, a leading IT as a Service cloud company. At Rackspace, she was appointed director of accounting leading the integration of the numerous financial workstreams associated with the Datapipe business.

Commenting on her appointment, Ruth Billen says, "I wanted to be part of a smaller

business again where I can be hands on and part of a team where I can make a difference. Joining Genmed is a real opportunity to be involved in an organisation that is growing quickly and has a very exciting future ahead."

Robin Modak, Genmed's chief executive officer, says, "Ruth was the candidate who shone in relation to an ability to see the financial implications of a fast moving business like ours.

Not only does she have rigorous analytical skills and understands the complexities of different financial and funding models, but she can think laterally and intuitively too – skills we will need to capitalise on as we work to solidify Genmed's position as the premier managed service provider to the NHS and look for opportunities to develop the business internationally."

Genmed is headquartered in Weybridge, Surrey.

For further information, please visit **www.genmed.eu**

Ruth Billen

SWARCO Traffic helps Powys Council warn drivers of floods

SWARCO Traffic Ltd has installed an intelligent flood warning system to divert drivers away from a busy, low-lying section of a road near Aberystwyth, Powys that is affected by flooding.

The A44 Trunk Road to the east of Aberystwyth is prone to flooding several times a year, both as a result of adverse weather conditions and its close proximity to the Afon Rheidol river.

Working closely with Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy (YGC) Gwynedd Council's engineering consultancy

and in conjunction with both the Welsh Government (Client) and the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent (NMWTRA), SWARCO has designed, supplied and installed a set of four warning signs on the approach roads advising drivers of the flooded road ahead and subsequent diversion route.

The solution is based around SWARCO's bespoke hazard warning signs and an intelligent flood sensor which sends warning messages directly to NMWTRA's traffic monitoring centre in Conwy, informing them when the system

has activated and warn the appropriate teams as soon as water levels have risen above a normal level.

John Lister, Senior Project Engineer for YGC, says the new system has significant benefits: "The previous 'bad weather' procedure of regular inspections and then manually erecting warning signs was far too time consuming. Automated warning signage provides an immediate response to a flood situation.

"From a NMWTRA perspective, engineers can allocate their time more effectively. They can concentrate on other areas,

knowing the automated system will activate as soon as there is a flood situation. Once informed, they can inspect and then erect the appropriate traffic management more efficiently."

Derek Williamson, Head of Sales at SWARCO Traffic, says: "Our range of hazard solutions are helping protect drivers in adverse conditions such as high winds and ice, and we have used our proven expertise to design this bespoke system for flood warning environments."

GREEN TRANSPORT FEATURE

Think tank report on ULEZ and congestion charge: the time has come to bring road user charging into the digital age

A report calls for London's patchwork of road charges to be replaced with a more sophisticated scheme to bring London's transport system into the digital age.

Drivers in London are having to navigate an increasingly complicated patchwork of road charges, according to a new report by Centre for London. The report, Green Light: Next Generation of Road User Charging for a Healthier, More Liveable London, highlights an urgent need to consolidate and simplify existing and planned schemes – including the Congestion Charge, the new Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) and proposed charges for the new Blackwall and Silvertown tunnel.

By 2025, London could have at least five separate road user charging schemes each featuring different vehicle standards, hours of operation, charge amounts and payment arrangements. The report argues that the Mayor of London should replace existing and planned schemes with a single system, which would be much simpler for drivers to navigate.

The scheme, which the report calls City Move, would charge drivers per mile and apply in areas of high demand and poor air quality. Rates would vary by vehicle emissions, local levels of congestion and pollution and availability of public transport

alternatives – but would be set before the journey begins.

The report argues that City Move would be fairer than the Congestion Charge and ULEZ, because it would reflect the true level of vehicle usage and its contribution to congestion and pollution in the capital, rather than charging drivers a flat daily rate regardless of how much they drive in the zone. City Move would consider the impact of individual journeys in terms of road surface damage, economic costs and environmental damage.

But City Move would not just be another new road user charging scheme. The report sets out radical plans for a multimodal platform integrated with the rest of the capital's transport system. Available as an app and website, it would allow customers to compare, plan and pay for journeys using the full range of travel options on offer in the capital. Using the latest technology, the platform would compare the relative costs and impacts of taking the bus, tube, train, car-sharing, taxi hailing, bike hire, cycling or walking to help users make informed travel choices.

The scheme would encourage more efficient ride sharing and promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling. The report outlines a number of benefits of City Move:

- Tackle city-wide air pollution – charging drivers on the most congested roads the equivalent of a cup of coffee or a bus ticket could reduce total emissions and air pollution levels across the whole of London by up to a fifth (over and above the anticipated impact of the current ULEZ).
- Better experience on the roads – the scheme would reduce congestion and allow investment in roads maintenance, creating a better journey for all road users.
- Better for business – the scheme could reduce traffic overall, thereby reducing delays and helping business to make efficiency savings.

The technology exists and the Mayor of London has powers required to implement such a

scheme. The report therefore calls on the Mayor to lead on the development of a smarter, fairer and healthier transport system – one with a new approach to road user charging at its heart.

It recommends that the Mayor of London should ask Transport for London to develop options for a new approach to road user charging, with a view to introducing the first version of a scheme by the end of the 2020-2024 Mayoral term. This would include developing a customer platform, upgrading the required GPS and mobile network capacity, and a trial to test the technology.

Silviya Barrett, Research Manager at Centre for London said:

"The Congestion Charge was pioneering when it was introduced 16 years ago, and the ULEZ is desperately needed to address a growing air quality crisis. But they are both relatively blunt systems. "Embracing new technology can help create a simpler and smarter system, one which is fairer for drivers and better for the city overall.

"The scheme could be designed to reduce car usage and improve air quality as well as encouraging Londoners to lead more active lifestyles.

"London's streets would be more pleasant and inviting places where people want to play and socialise. This would help create a healthier, more liveable city."

Steve Gooding, Director of the RAC Foundation, said:

"As this report rightly highlights, to have any chance of working smoothly and attracting public support rules and regulations need to be simple to understand and easy to plan for.

"One wonders whether this is the case in London – and increasingly in other towns and cities across the country – where drivers are confronted with an array of charges designed to do different things across different geographical areas. Many could be forgiven for confusing their CCs, CAZs and ULEZs.

"No one would challenge the urgent need to tackle congestion and reduce emissions so the easier things are made for drivers

to comply the quicker change will be accepted."

Will Judge, Vice President of Urban Mobility at Mastercard, said:

"By 2050, more than 70 per cent of the world's population will live in urban areas, yet partly due to congestion, cities already account for this same percentage of global CO2 emissions. So the recommended creation of an integrated transport charging model is a sustainable and efficient way to for London to tackle its challenge of moving millions of people around the city.

"Helping residents and visitors plan, book, buy their journeys through one digital platform, would reduce complexity but also aid peoples understanding of the environmental impact of their travel."

Richard Dilks, Transport Director, London First, said:

"London paved the way for congestion charging 16 years ago and, as charging for road use becomes more commonplace in big cities across the world, we need to plan to stay one step ahead.

"With the city now boasting various charges designed to tackle congestion and emissions, more than 6 in 10 (63%) of Londoners support a simpler combination of these charges in future.

"In order to keep London an attractive place to visit, live and work we need to modernise

and cohere our charges as part of a package of measures to effectively tackle congestion and air quality."

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, Liberal Democrat Assembly Member, said:

"An intelligent use of our crowded roads must involve moving to a system of charging per mile for trips made in areas of high demand and poor air quality.

"We need a radical overhaul of the growing number of road user charges and instead move to a single comprehensive system that directly tackles congestion and air pollution wherever it occurs in the capital."

Robert Molteno, Vice-Chairman, London Living Streets, said:

"This report details the principles on which any road user charging scheme for London should be based. Its proposal for a single, multi-modal London transport platform (smartphone app and website) will make it possible for Londoners to choose for the first time the best way they want to make each particular journey.

"All candidates standing to be Mayor of London next year need to have the courage to commit to develop a single, distance-based road user charging scheme. It is the only effective way of making a real difference to London's transport challenges."

Silviya Barrett, Research Manager at Centre for London

London's green bus revolution helps improve air quality

UK Power Networks and Transport for London are working together to turn London's red buses green, before the new Ultra Low Emission Zone starts in April.

Holloway bus garage is the latest to house part of the capital's growing fleet of electric buses, with 23 new electric buses replacing diesels on route 46 out of the north London garage. Holloway is also the ninth London bus garage to install electric charging. This means there are now 155 electric buses operating across the city, and by the summer of 2019 London will have one of the largest electric bus fleets in Europe.

The news follows London Mayor Sadiq Khan's support for electric buses during a national radio interview last week.

UK Power Networks partnered with TfL to assess the work required to electrify bus routes and design the most cost effective way of delivering the electrical capacity needed. This holistic approach ensures that TfL get the smoothest, most cost effective solution every time a route from one of London's bus garages is electrified.

Claire Mann, director of Bus Operations at TfL, said: "Buses play a crucial role in cleaning up London's toxic air by providing an efficient, reliable and affordable alternative to driving. We want to make them even cleaner so that they have an even greater impact on improving the health of Londoners, which is why we're replacing older, polluting engines with modern, cleaner alternatives.

"We can't do this without having the right infrastructure in place, which is why UK Power Networks' work to electrify several of London's bus garages is so important to help us to ensure that our whole bus fleet is zero emission as quickly as possible."

Transport produces 20 per cent of London's emissions. UK Power Networks converted the UK's first all-electric bus garage at Waterloo back in 2016 saving 700 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions a year. The company has been working closely with TfL since then to help realise their ambitions to have the entire 9,000 strong bus fleet electrified, supporting the Mayor's plan to improve the city's air quality. Waterloo was followed by electrified routes from bus garages at Camberwell, Croydon, Northumberland Park, Shepherds Bush, Willesden, Hounslow, New Cross and now Holloway.

"Running electric buses isn't as simple as installing a few more electrical sockets," said Neil Madgwick, head of service delivery at UK Power Networks.

"By carefully assessing the requirements we were able to significantly reduce the amount of power that was needed and introduce timed connections. For example; Holloway bus garage uses smart charging, drawing its maximum power between 11pm and 6am when local electricity demand is very low. This can help improve the city's air quality in a cost-efficient way."

UK Power Networks, which is a member of the Mayor of London's EV Taskforce and OLEV's Electric Vehicle Energy Taskforce, is also gearing up to connect an estimated 4.1 million electric vehicles to its networks across London, the South East and East of England by 2030. Nearly a third of EVs already sold in the UK connect onto UK Power Networks' system. The network operator has been at the forefront of pioneering smart grid technology that is enabling decarbonisation of transport in buses, taxis, on-street, home and fleet operations.

The company also established a dedicated team to help TfL deliver rapid chargers open to the public, and are on target to make sure they hit their goal of 300 public rapid chargers by 2020. It's been achieved by streamlining the processes and guiding the deployment of chargers to the most cost-effective locations.

Zenobe Energy launches up to £120 million of funding to accelerate the rollout of electric buses

The UK's leading independent owner and operator of battery storage has raised capital of up to £120 million to accelerate the rollout of electric vehicle fleets, such as buses, and the supporting infrastructure. Local councils, bus and fleet operators are being invited to partner with Zenobe on electric vehicle projects across the UK.

The government's £48 million Ultra-Low Emission Bus scheme (ULEB), announced in February this year, highlighted a demand from local authorities and bus and fleet operators to transition to electric vehicles. This is the first time a private company has helped to fill this funding gap, with an aim to help eliminate pollution in our cities, towns and rural areas. With council funding for buses almost halving since 2010, this scheme will significantly reduce the upfront cost for operators which is associated with electric buses. The scheme will be critical in helping to plug the gap, connect communities and improve air quality.

Steven Meersman, co-founder of Zenobe Energy, said of the initiative: "We're thrilled to announce the Zenobe comprehensive funding solution which helps local councils and commercial fleet operators bring forward the rollout of zero-emission vehicles by several years.

"Using our solution, we can enable local authorities and operators to access a faster, cheaper and lower-risk way to transition to EVs. We're calling on organisations to work with us and provide the public with emission-free transport and last-mile deliveries now."

The launch of the initiative comes at a time when the transport sector is the largest contributor of CO2 and NOx emissions. Zenobe's initiative is expected to speed up the process of bringing zero-emission vehicles onto roads, with the potential to double the number of electric buses in the UK. This will make a significant impact in improving air quality and meeting our legally binding carbon reduction targets.

Zenobe can provide the batteries in the depot, the smart charging infrastructure and the batteries on the vehicles, giving recipients of the scheme the option of an end-to-end, one-stop solution in exchange for a pence per-mile service fee or a fixed monthly charge.

Zenobe's solution will not only make the upfront price of the vehicles similar to diesel buses but will also lower the total lifecycle cost by as much as 30% in some cases. Zenobe Energy will work with the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership to ensure all projects are zero emission and are compatible with the standards set in the government's recent ULEB scheme.

Newport Transport, which is owned by Newport Council, was also announced last week as the first operator to partner with Zenobe on an EV project of 15 buses. They were successful in a bid for ULEB funding and will use this additional capital from Zenobe to finalise the electrification of their bus fleet.

Councillor Debbie Wilcox, Leader of Newport City Council, said: "This is excellent news especially as Newport Transport will be at the forefront of a revolution in public transport in Wales. Clean, efficient, zero-emission electric buses will significantly improve air quality across the city for the benefit of all those who live and work in Newport."

To achieve net zero by 2050, the electric vehicle market needs to be ready

Joachim Brandt, Head of Electric Vehicles, Gemserv

Joachim Brandt

As global temperatures continue to rise, so does the pressure on policy makers to take more radical action. It's widely agreed that the UK is failing to reach existing climate change and air quality obligations, but there is a call for government to commit to even bolder, more stringent policies.

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) recently recommended the government sets a target to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050. The current target is emissions reduction of 80% of 1990 levels by 2050, so the new recommendation is a major step-up in commitment.

If we are to have any chance of ending the country's contribution to global warming within 30 years, we need to transition to low-carbon transport in the next 10 years. CCC recommend the complete switchover to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles by 2030. This is 10 years ahead of current ambitions of 2040.

Not acting fast enough will mean missing the existing climate change targets, never mind the CCC's bolder recommended net-zero target. Also, the UK will miss the opportunity to reach its potential of developing a world-leading electric vehicle (EV) and smart energy market.

EV uptake remains slow, and there are currently no policy measures in place to achieve government ambitions . Uncertainty remains around technology choices and viable business models, and consumer acceptance and trust is low.

These are representative challenges that must be resolved in a timely manner. There is no time for "let's wait and see the market will sort it out eventually" – this is no longer an acceptable position for the UK.

Policy that delivers a long-term, coordinated market is key. Policy must tackle issues including interoperability, data and digital

integration, and data accessibility and ownership. It must also provide clarity on future fiscal measures to improve and secure investor certainty.

Where this policy is not being currently implemented, it is important that strategic oversight and governance is provided in another capacity. A systematic and clear path of transition toward EVs can still be achieved without prescriptive policy intervention today – noting that there remains a strong case for policy intervention in the long run.

To gain consumer confidence and trust, and ensure new products and services are being brought to market at the quality and price consumers are happy with, there needs to be coordination across the market. This is why Gemserv is proposing an industry-led, sustainable EV governance framework (EVGF) that will help provide accountability and assurance across the market, facilitating coordination.

The framework will deliver a digital platform of knowledge for the market. It will be created by industry, for industry. It will provide a forum for joined-up thinking and cross-sector collaboration that also facilitates a deeper insight into the market, e.g. aggregated up, market-level analysis.

An affordable, digitally accessible platform will comprise of existing standards, rules, regulations, and codes of practice. It will provide evidence and clarity for investment choices that scale and deliver against government targets and consumer needs providing a

viable path of transition for all market participants. This will help support innovation, delivering new products and services which have been easily tested for compliance against existing rules.

The platform will be overseen by a forum that facilitates coordination and may identify gaps in existing rules, pushing forward best practice and driving up minimum standards. This forum will allow industry to lead best practice, deliver more products and services, and provide investor certainty, which in turn scales up business opportunities.

A key principle of the framework is providing a mechanism for ensuring that consumers are offered quality products and services that are safe, ethical, reliable, and resilient to cyber-attacks, abuse and misuse, while also safeguarding the most vulnerable in society.

The CCC's recommendation calls for urgency, in order to have a positive impact on climate change and air quality, and achieve existing obligations, the UK must transition to low-carbon transport, and this transition relies on a mass scale-up of EVs. There is a window of opportunity

for industry to shape the future of the EV market through a coordinated approach. As an individual company, this opportunity may translate to the successful scale-up of products and services due to investor certainty and interoperable infrastructure being in place.

These opportunities can only be progressed through a coordinated approach. Policy development is not progressing as fast as the market needs to achieve the mass EV scale-up for transition to a low-carbon economy. The EV governance framework can facilitate this outcome and help the market realise the full benefits of the forthcoming EV revolution.

The EVGF is currently out for consultation, closing 31st May 2019. The consultation will inform an evidence-based, cross-sector approach for developing the initial industry-led framework. Next steps will involve the creation of a forum in summer 2019 to define the scope of the EVGF. If you are interested in participating in the forum to help shape the coordination of the EV market and drive the mass scale-up of the EV market, please contact Gemserv at **strategy@gemserv.com**

Photo: Marco Verch

LEVC selects Oxford Direct Services for servicing of the world's first purpose-built electric black cab

Oxford Direct Services (ODS) has been approved as an authorised service dealer for the world's first purpose built electric taxi - the TX.

Under a three-year agreement, ODS will join a network of LEVC dealers outside London servicing TX black cabs, carrying out warranty work, supplying parts, responding to any breakdowns and undertaking body repairs in its insurance approved body repair centre. Its wide geographic catchment area will span from Bristol, south of Birmingham to west London.

Four ODS technicians will be trained and LEVC certified, with ODS investing in the appropriate diagnostic and specialist insulated tools required to keep electric taxis on the road.

The TX meets the government's Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle standard for taxis (ULEV). It is capable of at least 80 miles of zero emissions driving on battery power only and produces less than 50g/km of CO2 emissions.

The new exhaust standards are aimed at reducing toxic nitrogen dioxide levels in the air which

contribute to a variety of illnesses like cancer, asthma and heart disease and cause an estimated 40,000 deaths in the UK every year.

Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council have recently published updated proposals for a Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ)in Oxford city centre. The updated proposals follow 15 months of listening to businesses, residents, transport operators and health experts in Oxfordshire and set a journey to zero transport emissions in Oxford by 2035.

Under the new scheme, Hackney taxis will have to phase to zero-emission between 2020 and 2025, with drivers only able to get a licence in 2025 if they have a zero-emission cab.

The aim of the ZEZ is to tackle Oxford's toxic air pollution and protect the health of everyone who lives in, works in and visits the city. It is also expected that the ZEZ will improve air pollution levels across Oxfordshire because the buses and taxis that serve Oxford also serve towns and villages across the county.

Oxford City Council is investing £500,000 to install 19 rapid and

fast electric vehicle charging points to support taxi drivers who switch to ultra-low emission vehicles. The City Council won £370,000 of funding from the Government's Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) for the project and the aim is to seek the remaining funding from private investment. The first chargers will be installed in Spring 2019 and the project will run until Spring 2020.

This is part of a £3.25 million investment from various funding sources, including OLEV, UK Innovate and ERDF, to help local businesses and residents prepare for the Zero Emission Zone which includes fixed and pop up street chargers and ultra-low emission buses.

Councillor Tom Hayes, Executive Board Member for A Safer and Greener Environment, said, "Our Black Cab drivers are an absolute credit to the city of Oxford. Not only do Hackney carriage drivers move people around the city safely, they want to make the Zero Emission Zone a success. Together we're determined to have a green and clean Black Cab fleet with the

iconic London look.

"But, taxi drivers need the council's support to clean our air and still earn a living. When taxi drivers aren't on the road, they aren't earning, so I'm thrilled that the City Council's commercial operation will begin servicing electric taxis. Drivers will save time and money by having Cowley Marsh repair facility on their doorstep. No longer would drivers have to take long trips away from Oxford to get their cars repaired, meaning we can speed up our Black Cab fleet's journey from 0% zero-emission capable to 100% by 2025."

Simon Howick, Oxford Direct Services' managing director, said,"ODS has considerable expertise servicing all types of fully electric vehicles given we currently maintain a fleet for Oxford City Council. Adding the TX taxi to this extends our portfolio and was based on thorough audit process which involved LEVC reviewing our Cowley Marsh facility and assessing the technical skill set of our staff."

Glasdon® UK lead the way to a cleaner, safer and more sustainable environment

With the environmental product landscape constantly developing and growing, the government and public sector strive to stay one step ahead of the crowd. Safety, practicality, longevity and style are key elements to look for when purchasing new waste management solutions or updating existing street furniture.
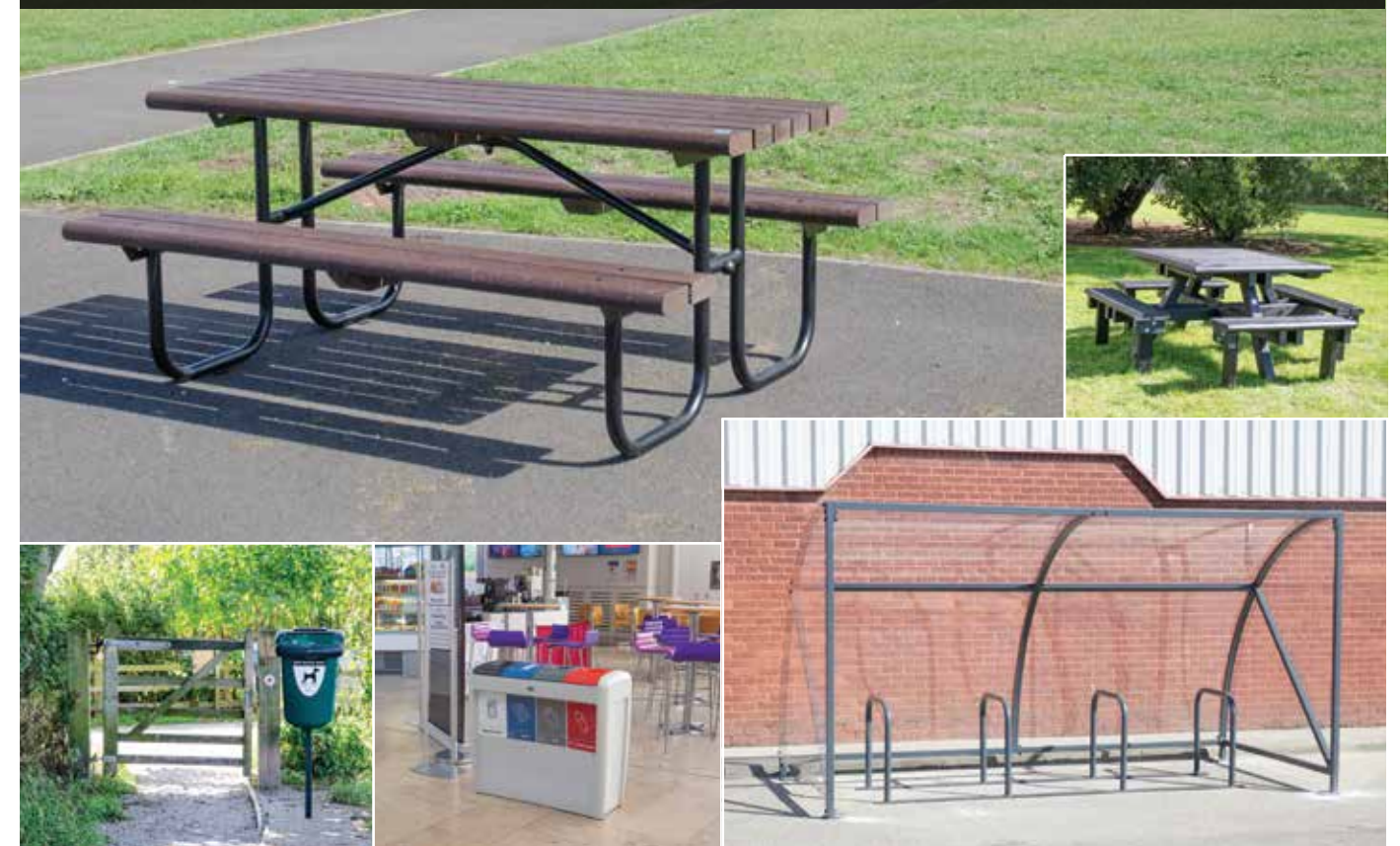
With 60 years' experience in the design, manufacture and supply of environmental and safety products, Glasdon UK are able to assist their customers with effectively managing their waste, developing new and easy ways to encourage recycling and correct waste disposal. They provide long- lasting, sturdy and attractive street furniture and road safety products; fully tested to withstand heavy usage levels experienced in the urban environment.

2019 sees Glasdon add to its market-leading range, with the launch of a number of new,

exciting and innovative products including:

- The Echelon™; a flexible purpose shelter for cycling, waiting and smoking. Delivered fully assembled ready for installation, the Echelon is built to resist strong winds and harsh weather.
- A mix of contemporary and traditional seating options in the form of Bowland™ and Pembridge™.

The Bowland Picnic Table combines a curved Armortec® coated steel frame with a choice

of seven different coloured, environmentally-friendly material slats, offering strength, style and sustainability. Manufactured using 100% recycled material; the attractive Pembridge Picnic Table is traditionally designed, durable and sustainable. Both weatherproof benches offer easy seating access, and accommodate up to 8 people in most environments, with wheelchair-friendly models also available.

The Glasdon website is the ultimate 'one-stop-shop' for on- street essentials, from dog waste bins to road safety

bollards, litter collection units and boundary signage. Customers can even choose to personalise their purchases for specific purposes. The Glasdon design team is always ready to create or customise specialty signage.

With technical expertise on hand at every stage of purchase, and an easy to use live chat option on the website, customer satisfaction is at the centre of Glasdon's aims. To view the full range of high quality, durable and sustainable products, visit: www. glasdon.com today, or talk to the team on **(01253) 600410**.

Energy Assets' local network operations power ahead

Energy Assets' independent local network businesses are powering ahead, with more than 50,000 electricity and gas supply points taken into ownership or contracted since launch just over a year ago.

Energy Assets Networks (electricity) and Energy Assets Pipelines (gas) have grown their asset management portfolio rapidly thanks to partnerships with contractors, house builders and developers across Britain.

As a leading independent asset management business, Energy Assets took the strategic decision to move into local energy network

ownership in 2018 to capitalise on its in-house multi-utility design and construction expertise.

Since launch, the network companies have won contracts with numerous independent connection providers and developers, thanks to innovations in asset-based finance and a flexible approach to asset type adoption in house building and in industrial and commercial markets.

"Britain's housebuilding programme is accelerating, so our focus is on helping house builders and contractors speed up network design and approvals to deliver projects in the shortest possible

timescale," says John McLuskey of EAP. "At the same time, we are also engaging with the industrial and commercial sector to add value to developers involved in building schemes that range from retail units to data centres.

"By partnering with us, developers can realise the inherent value in utility asset rebating to offset network construction costs, while receiving expert support in areas such as certification and compliance, making the whole process as efficient as possible."

www.energyassetsnetworks.co.uk
www.energyassetspipelines.co.uk

Oxford Direct Services assists Persimmon Homes with Highways Adoption at seven development sites across Oxfordshire

Seamless Identity and Access Management key to user adoption for Digital Transformation projects in the NHS

Direct experience of working with the Highways Authority speeds process for the developer

Oxford Direct Services (ODS) has assisted Persimmon Homes, one of the UK's most successful housebuilders, with Highways Adoption at seven of its development sites around Oxfordshire over the past 18 months. The experience of ODS's Highways team as contractors for the Oxfordshire County Council Highways Authority helps the developer bring the roads and footpaths of its new estates up to standard quickly, speeding the adoption process.

ODS has carried out remedial works for Persimmon Homes at sites including Tilbury Fields, Cumnor Hill, Cranbrook House, Northcourt Mews, Quakers Court, Priory Park and Medhurst Way.

Under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980, developers can ask the Highway Authority to adopt new roads that have been constructed as part of the development. Adoption means the highway authority agrees to maintain the road at the public expense. Before the agreement,

the developer must complete any works specified by the Highway Authority to bring the road up to standard. There is also often a requirement for the developer to deposit a returnable bond to cover the Highway Authority in case the developer is unable to complete the works, for example, as a result of insolvency.

Oliver Hearn, Highways Manager at ODS, said, "Our team has more than 20 years' experience working for the local Highways Authority looking after roads and footpaths in and around Oxford. That in-depth knowledge of the standards required for Highways Adoption and our experience of working with the Highways Authority enables us to carry out the work efficiently and effectively for developers."

Tom Freeman, Assistant Engineer in the Technical Department at Persimmon Homes North London, said, "We continue to use ODS for our remedial works for Highways Adoption at our developments in Oxfordshire

because they are easy to deal with and understand exactly what is required to meet the local authority's standards. The process is smooth, efficient and makes commercial sense."

In April 2018, Oxford City Council transformed its direct services operations into a wholly-owned company, ODS, which operates like a social enterprise. Over 700 staff were transferred to the new organisation. ODS delivers a wide-range of services to over 150,000 residents, businesses and organisations in the Oxford area including highways and engineering, waste and recycling, street cleaning, construction, property and grounds maintenance. The new structure allows ODS to offer its services to other commercial customers with all profits generated being reinvested back into the community, via the city council.

For further information, please visit **www.oxforddirectservices. co.uk**

Leading analyst firm concurs that information security will play a key role in the digital transformation of the Healthcare sector

Imprivata®, the healthcare IT security company, has today stated that Identity and Access Management (IAM) is key to the success of many digital transformation projects in healthcare.

Daniel Johnston MRes, RN, and Clinical Workflow Specialist at Imprivata commented; "At Imprivata we have seen time and again that the key to achieving success in any IT project is to involve clinicians early. Only with end-user adoption will the digital transformation of the NHS be realised. Easy, and yet secure, access to clinical applications is a key component to a good user experience for clinicians, that will fuel the enthusiasm required to deliver truly transformational patient care."

A recent IDC Technology Spotlight, sponsored by Imprivata entitled 'Security at Scale: How Security Changes with Healthcare Digital Transformation, May 2019' explores the relationship between security and IAM and the role that it plays in developing digital transformation landscape in healthcare across Europe. "However, according to a recent survey by IDC," continued Johnston, "68% of European healthcare organisations still consider their approach to digital transformation siloed, and even when digital and enterprise goals are aligned, they are too focused on the short term. There is still clearly a long way to go, and the relatively quick win that healthcare organisations can achieve by streamlining secure access to

clinical applications is a good first step, and proof of concept."

With this in mind, Imprivata recently announced that it will unlock the power of the cloud for clinical users by creating the first end-to-end IAM Cloud Platform for healthcare in collaboration with Microsoft. The first phase of the collaboration, Healthcare Seamless SSO, launched by Imprivata in April, eliminates the need for clinical and non-clinical Microsoft users to repeatedly type usernames and passwords to access any programs and applications. Leveraging Imprivata OneSign®, Healthcare Seamless SSO can be used with all types of applications, saving care providers 45 minutes every shift, improving satisfaction levels, and driving EMR adoption.

Digital Transformation was one of the headline topics at the inaugural Nursing and Midwifery GDE Network symposium, with discussions on where nursing practices meet algorithms, highlighting the extent of work to meet the growing challenges in NHS clinical settings.

For a copy of the IDC Technology Spotlight. Security at Scale: How Security Changes with Healthcare Digital Transformation, visit: https://security.imprivata. com/idc-transforming-health-in-nhs-wp.html?chnl=3rdPty&sfdcid =7012M000001iMy0

For more information please visit: **www.imprivata.co.uk**

Gloucestershire Hospitals to deliver EPR with Allscripts

NHS Foundation Trust will retain its PAS and use the 'clinical wrap' approach to deploy Allscripts Sunrise™, with an ambition to achieve HIMSS EMRAM level seven within five-years.

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is moving to a 'clinical wrap' strategy to deliver an electronic patient record (EPR) and achieve the highest levels of digital maturity within five-years.

The trust, which delivers a wide range of hospital services from Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, Cheltenham General Hospital and Stroud Maternity Hospital, will implement Allscripts Sunrise Acute Care integrating with the existing patient administration system.

Mark Hutchinson, the trust's chief digital and information officer, said the approach would enable it to work collaboratively with its suppliers to deliver new, digital services for clinicians and patients: starting with nursing documentation, paperless outpatients, order communications and e-prescribing.

The trust's ambition is to reach level six on the HIMSS EMRAM digital maturity model within two-years, and level seven within five-years. "In doing that, we have the intent to make a really significant improvement in terms of releasing time to care," Hutchinson said.

"For clinicians, that will mean less time with a pen and paper in their hands, and more time working with information at their fingertips. And for patients, that will mean an improvement in the quality of the care that they receive. This is not an IT project: it is a reliability of care and safety project."

Allscripts Sunrise Acute Care is an integrated EPR that can be deployed as a series of highly configurable modules to meet trusts' needs.

It is already in use at high-profile NHS organisations, including Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust, a global digital exemplar, and Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust, which is leading development of the clinical wrap approach.

Hutchinson said the system's UK reference sites along with its flexibility and configurability had been key to his trust's decision to deploy the system. "When this trust started its digital journey, the promise was that it would have an EPR," he said.

"Deploying Sunrise Acute Care will deliver on that promise, because the Allscripts clinical wrap approach allows you to get straight into improving the safety and quality of care, by improving processes and removing cumbersome, potentially unsafe paper."

Another factor in the decision was Allscripts' open architecture and the ease with which Sunrise can interoperate with other systems.

This will enable the Gloucestershire Hospitals to feed information into Gloucestershire's JUYI (Joining Up Your Information) portal, and to give clinicians secure access to the information it holds via a tab in the EPR; in line with the national imperative to develop IT to support joined-up, integrated care.

"We believe Sunrise is the right EPR to support the trust to deliver agile digital maturity and to deliver outstanding staff and patient experience," said Deborah Lee, chief executive of Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

"Along with improvements in patient outcomes and operational performance, we're confident that our investment in the Allscripts solution, alongside our existing partnership with InterSystems who supply the Trust's Patient Administration System, will rapidly improve the trust's digital maturity and support our strategic ambitions"

Allscripts offers a patient administration system, the Sunrise EPR, and the dbMotion shared care record/population health management system to the UK, where nine trusts are using or deploying the EPR.

Richard Strong, Allscripts UK managing director, said: "Implementing EPRs that are open and interoperable is critical to efficient sharing of information between Gloucestershire's main hospitals.

"Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's decision to select the Sunrise solution will position the trust to communicate effectively, improve health outcomes and drive efficiencies."

Synectics to Complete Multi-site Surveillance Upgrade as Part of Private Prisons Contract

Surveillance solutions provider Synectics is in the final stages of a project to upgrade a national network of privately operated custodial sites, to improve security and enhance safety for staff, inmates, and detainees.

Won as part of a competitive tender, the contract will see Synectics' command and control software platform, Synergy 3, deployed across a number of facilities including prisons, a special-offender unit, and a high-profile immigration center. At maximum capacity, the sites are equipped to secure over 4,500 individuals.

Field-proven in the tightly regulated custodial sector and high-security markets where surveillance is operationally critical, Synergy 3's open-architecture design allows users to integrate, monitor, and manage data from a wide range of third-party technologies and devices. This capability, together with the company's sector expertise and technological credentials, resulted in Synectics being awarded the contract across all sites up for tender.

In addition to enabling facility surveillance teams to monitor and manage footage from a mix of fixed/PTZ analog and IP cameras – over 1,700 across all sites – the end-to-end solutions developed by Synectics for each location also support tailored interoperability with a range of sub-systems. These include perimeter intrusion detection, access control, intercom access, audio help point, and the operator's proprietary 'general alarm' system.

Brett Longley, Technical Sales Manager at Synectics, said: "Pairing video footage with data inputs from these and other third-party systems delivers a comprehensive alarm monitoring and alert solution that flags any issue and immediately prioritizes relevant camera feeds, ensuring surveillance operators can rapidly verify and investigate. It provides each team with complete situational awareness across their specific facility and the means to action appropriate response."

Each fully-IP solution has also been designed to reflect dramatically different needs across the mix of sites. Greg Alcorn, Divisional Director – Transport & Infrastructure at Synectics, commented: "With the immigration center, for example, it's not about securing and closely monitoring dangerous criminals. The facility is designed to offer a safe and secure environment for individuals and families while they await immigration clearance. Balancing a feeling of free movement with necessary levels of restriction in such locations is helped dramatically by the right use of technology, and that was a key focus for us in how we could support this particular private operator.

"For instance, by integrating video footage from across the facility with data from door/entry systems and access permissions (whether based on specific individuals or simply the time of day), surveillance operators can quickly and easily view detainee movements on Synergy 3's map-centric display – eliminating the need for unnecessary guard presence or confinement measures."

This recent project is the latest in a series of high-profile public infrastructure contracts secured by Synectics, reflecting the strength of its high-security credentials and flexibility of its Synergy 3 command and control platform.

For further information on Synectics' range of surveillance solutions for high-security locations, visit **www.synecticsglobal.com**.

West Yorkshire's yournextbus service users urged to 'love the live'

- Around 1.2 million connections from mobile devices each month.
- Significant savings can be made by using the online or QR code / NFC tag service
- Easy-scan tags at all of West Yorkshire's 14,000 stops and shelters.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority is encouraging people who use its yournextbus real-time service to take advantage of its live, online mode and to leave the text version behind.

yournextbus is the service that provides West Yorkshire's bus passengers with a live, online countdown advising when their bus will arrive. When yournextbus was launched in 2005, using the service meant sending a text and then receiving a reply, at a cost, that gave a snapshot of how many minutes away the bus was. Subsequent improvements to web technology, mobile devices and the service itself mean that yournextbus now provides the live, online countdown, which is updated every 60 seconds.

Passengers wanting to make the most of their time and minimise how long they spend at the stop, connect to the online service from mobile devices around 1.2 million times each month.

To use the service, passengers can simply use their smartphone to find live arrivals information for their stop online via www. wymetro.com/ynb. There, they can enter the eight-digit stop number beginning '450' displayed at each stop, the bus service number or a postcode, to check their times before they set off and avoid waiting at the stop.

Alternatively, passengers can scan the QR (Quick Response) code or NFC (Near Field Communication) tags, which the Combined Authority has installed at each of the county's 14,000 bus stops and shelters. Doing this opens up a unique, online link providing the live information for that stop. Once you have loaded

the countdown page for your stop to your phone, you can save it in your favourites allowing you to check your bus arrival times, anytime, anywhere.

QR and NFC tags, which are located at the bottom left of timetable displays, have been scanned over 2.3 million times.

Despite the updates, over 1,000,000 yournextbus texts were sent over the past 12 months. However, the 98,000 texts sent in April 2018 had dropped to 69,000 by March 2019.

In 2018, the five stops for which the most text messages were sent were all in Leeds. They were Headingley Arndale, Barleyhill Road, Garforth, Albion Street, Forest Bank, Gildersome and Coronation Parade, Halton Moor. The stop outside Leeds where the highest number of texts were requested was Whitehall Road East, Birkenshaw, in the Bradford district.

Cllr Kim Groves, Chair of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Transport Committee, said:
"We believe there are still a number of people across West Yorkshire who are using the text-based version of our yournextbus service. This means they are not getting the best from the service because they only receive a snapshot of what's going on and it can cost them as much as 12 pence per use instead of a fraction of their data package.

"Now that most mobiles are smartphones, we are urging all those using yournextbus who can to switch to the live online service saving time and money.

"We do appreciate that not all customers have access to

smartphones and will continue to provide the text service but we don't want our customers using up their text allowance or incurring unnecessary costs when the information is available free of charge"

Julian Presley, who regularly catches the bus between Horsforth and Leeds, said:
"Thanks to yournextbus, I can time my trip to the bus stop for when the bus is going to arrive and I can spend more time doing what I enjoy."

This week, the Combined Authority is launching a new publicity campaign to remind people how they can get more accurate, more up-to-date information for a lower cost.

The yournextbus service is enhanced by real-time display screens at 1,000 of West

Yorkshire's busiest stops. Work is currently underway to increase that number, bringing the total to 1,750 new and enhanced screens. One thousand are being installed at stops across Leeds, funded by the £270 million Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme. Existing, blue monitor screens with clearer LED screens are being fitted at 750 stops across the rest of West Yorkshire.

With MCard smartcard tickets being used for up to 400,000 journeys a week and over 650,000 timetables being downloaded from the Combined Authority's Metro transport information website every month, bus travel in West Yorkshire is increasingly digital, reflecting changes in consumer habits and technology developments. Timetable and ticket details can be found at **www.wymetro.com**.
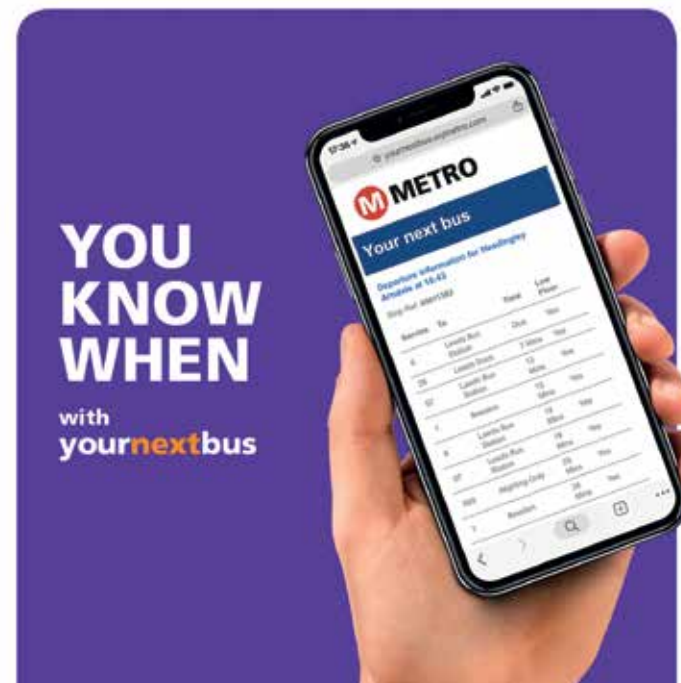
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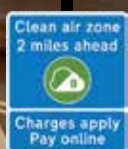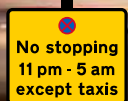
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