

# Security Matters

January 2007

## 21 Boroughs Sign Up To The London Public Services Network



According to London Connects, 21 boroughs have now given a Letter of Intent to connect to the London Public Services Network (LPSN). Six of these boroughs, (including Brent, Greenwich, Havering, Newham and Redbridge) went live in October 2006 and already started proof of concept trials.



The LPSN will provide secure inter-borough connectivity for London together with the opportunity for onward links via approved gateways to services in both Central Government and Health. The system utilises the existing London Grid for Learning infrastructure but provides an initial 20Mbps bandwidth reserved and prioritised solely for Local Authority business use and the London Public Services Interconnect. Recently, London Connects announced approval for the gateway to N3 with live services planned to start on Monday 5th March 2007, and is currently in discussions with the Government Connect team with

a view to implementing a similar gateway service to GCSx.

London Public Services Interconnect can provide either a 'Standard' or 'Secure Community' model for inter-borough collaboration. The standard model delivers networking connectivity between participating boroughs for the transmission of non-sensitive data and access to core ISP services. The Secure Community model extends to the edge of the local authority network to enable a high level of security for the transmission of sensitive data.

Hytec is a trusted advisor to London Connects and through its experience of secure networks (including GCSx and N3) has been able to identify a range of security controls which must be in place to protect the information within the jurisdiction of



the various organisations that will use the LPSN.

"Now at the advanced draft stage, the LPSN Security Policy outlines the basic security requirements which must be in place for a local authority to connect to the LPSN," commented David Bryant, Managing Director of Hytec. "The policy supports the LPSN Code of Connection and it is recognised that further security controls will be required depending upon the services or organisations to which local authorities wish to connect, and the sensitivity of information to be communicated."

## Internet Café Solution Sets The Standard For Public Access Terminals

Hytec has just implemented an internet café solution for Stow-on-the-Wold Youth Club that allows Internet access with full management reporting and control on what can be accessed, to ensure that inappropriate sites are not accessible.

With no servers in the environment, the solution also provides maximum hardware security and will be of

major interest to local authorities planning to install terminals in libraries, information centres, kiosks, etc. to allow citizens to access the internet.

The thin client solution is based around a Cisco managed router with firewall, VPN capabilities and DHCP services for IP address allocation, and MessageLabs Internet proxy for total security.

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## Linking Social Care To The NHS



Throughout the public sector, there is a need for a great deal of cross-organisation information exchange. In order to achieve the Government's aim of delivering improved services through enhanced data sharing, Social Care functions within local authorities now need to link to the NHS.

Within London, the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) infrastructure group has already recognised that a single logical gateway between the 33 boroughs and the 74 health entities operating in London will deliver major benefits. The complexity of information exchange will be extensive but as the London Grid (LG) already provides network services for education, it has

been agreed that it could be a suitable vehicle for a gateway service to the NHS, and so has been enhanced and re-branded as the LPSN.

By using N3 to connect to the health entities, boroughs will significantly reduce complexity and will be able to exchange social care information without traversing the N3, effectively forming a social care Community Of Interest Network (COIN) for London.

Security of data, particularly Patient Identifiable Data (PID) is paramount and the Information Governance requirements of NHS Connecting for Health (CfH) have been used as a baseline for boroughs that intend to utilise the new system.

All Social Care workers that have a legitimate need to access systems and data via N3 will have to be strongly authenticated prior to being granted access to the N3 network.

Authentication tokens will be managed by formal change management procedures, with authorisation being granted by the LPSN N3 Gateway Information Governance team, which

will have representation by the Head of Social Care from all participating councils.

The LPSN will enable London boroughs to meet the Government's objectives of easier, more flexible, faster and cost effective IT systems deployment for joined up service delivery. But Hytec's Technical Director, Alan Hunt, anticipates that the overall concept will eventually be implemented across all local authorities in England having social care responsibility.

"Within the next two or three years we will see gateways enabling the transfer of social care data between local authorities throughout England," explained Alan. "Although local authorities already cooperate to some extent when sharing data, gateways are now being planned to allow local authorities outside of London to connect with the new national applications being deployed as part of the 'Connecting for Health' programme, and to access legacy applications within NHS."

## Underpinning Director Of Children's Services Functions



Inter-agency working and information sharing are core elements of the Government's social inclusion agenda and under the Every Child Matters strategy and the Children's Act, many councils are now appointing a Director of Children's Services.

The sharing of information and the availability of information referral and tracking systems for all agencies and personnel involved in children's services are crucial in early intervention to protect young people suffering from abuse or neglect and to prevent children from offending.

To a large degree, the success of these strategies in any single authority will depend upon the efficiency and security of information sharing systems deployed by the different agencies involved. As we all know, a number of high profile cases have raised concerns of the failure of agencies to disclose or share relevant information effectively and efficiently.

With comprehensive experience of secure, inter-agency network connectivity allied to a background in information governance, Hytec is well positioned to partner with local authorities, and has a strong track-record in advising on information sharing strategies and the information frameworks required to underpin the Children's Services functions.

For more information on Hytec's involvement in the pan-agency information sharing agenda, or to obtain a copy of the latest white paper: The Need for Information Sharing, contact Hytec on 01865 887 428, or visit our website: [www.hytec.co.uk](http://www.hytec.co.uk)



## GP Systems Of Choice

Health Minister Lord Warner recently announced further details of the scheme to give GPs across England access to a wider range of clinical IT systems. The new initiative, known as "GP Systems of Choice", aims to ensure progressive improvement of the functionality available to GPs and their patients.

Family doctors have the option of using systems provided by either their LSP or from approved GP system providers. Systems have to meet stringent standards to ensure that they will properly interwork with those installed under the National Programme for IT in the NHS.

The PCT now takes overall responsibility for the delivery of comprehensive services to GPs within its jurisdiction and, in order to provide a support and management service, suppliers require electronic access to the systems that reside within the GP practices via N3 (the New NHS Network). This is outlined within the DoH document "Modernising Information Management and Technology in General Practice" where the following statement is made: "In terms of Information Management & Technology (IM&T) a principal change is the transfer of ownership and responsibility for support from practices to the Primary Care Trust."

### The issue

N3 is an untrusted environment; even CfH notes that it is 'hostile' and should be treated accordingly.

A key concern is that of the security of Patient Identifiable Data (PID) - data that contains sufficient information to be able to identify the data as belonging to a specific patient. Current CfH guidelines dictate that PID "must not be transmitted in the clear across N3". Therefore, all access to PID or systems that contain PID via N3 needs to be adequately protected from the "hostile" N3 environment.

Currently, the technology and policies to provide this are not in place. N3 was designed to provide access from users to National and Strategic applications; these applications are designed to encrypt data to/from the clients, and strongly authenticate the users prior to them being granted access. Access to legacy applications or access for support purposes of local systems have not been catered for.

### The solution

The solution is to manage and audit all GP system access via secure, encrypted communications and secure links to provide the level of encryption and access control to protect the PID. Only PCT ICT teams will have control over access (including granting and



denying). To achieve this, a method of terminating encrypted data communications needs to be established. CfH/N3 SP does not allow VPNs to be formed between the trusts' firewalls and N3 SP managed devices (typically the GP N3 router), so the only viable option is to install a firewall in each GP site.

Hytec has been involved in detailed discussions with GP practices, PCTs, and CfH, regarding this issue. Following recent and successful pilot site tests with GPs in Kensington and Chelsea PCT, Hytec is now installing Microsoft ISA based solutions into 48 GP sites. A case study will be produced shortly.

## Better Connected 2007

Socitm Better Connected will publish a report this year on the level of protection afforded to local authority websites from external attack.

Every local authority website and Internet connection provides a potential gateway for an attack on critical information assets. With 468 local authority websites, each with IT servers connected to the Internet, the opportunities for misuse, either accidental or deliberate, continues to

grow at an alarming rate.

To understand and evaluate the risks involved, Socitm Insight has again commissioned Hytec to assess the vulnerability of council websites and their supporting systems. Hytec has conducted internet vulnerability assessment tests against 20 sites and has provided a detailed report back to each, detailing the findings of the tests along with recommendations for corrective actions, detailed technical



analysis and management summaries. Hytec has also provided this data in an anonymous form for the Better Connected report.





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*"Over the past six years Hytec have provided a consistently high standard of service to help develop and support Haringey Council's IT security infrastructure."*

Stephen Cornell  
 Information Security Manager  
 Haringey Council



## UK Leaders In Information Assurance

Hytec is an independent IT solutions company that works closely with public sector organisations in building appropriate infrastructures to enable information sharing – the cornerstone of Transformational Government.

With an impressive client base that includes the social services and IT departments of local authorities, housing associations, emergency services and NHS Trusts, Hytec specialises in the delivery of IT infrastructures that give clients total confidence in the suitability, security and compliance of their solution. Since its formation, Hytec has provided information security consultancy, infrastructure design and managed security services to local government, health authorities and commercial organisations, especially where connection to the NHS N3 network is required.

Hytec is one of the UK's leading providers of security consultancy and professional services, particularly in the areas of ISO 27001 (BS7799), the design of Information Security Management Systems, and the development of information security audits and Codes of Connection that enable local authorities and NHS Trusts to connect to third-party networks. Through its experience of secure networks (including GCSx and N3), Hytec is a trusted advisor to major public sector bodies, including London Connects, Socitm, ADSS and NHS CfH

## Recent Clients:

Kensington and Chelsea **NHS**  
 Primary Care Trust



SOFA WORKSHOP

Diagnostics 



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Redbridge now 

CAPITA

