

Managing water where it matters

**Russell Wood,
Managing Director
at Infographics,
explores how
the Prevent +
Protect platform
streamlines
hydrant
management**

Last year, Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service (DFRS) adopted the Prevent + Protect platform from Infographics, bringing new efficiencies to hydrant management across the county. The project streamlines inspections, repairs and tracking through Infographics' cloud-based Software as a Service (SaaS) model, enhancing resource planning and job management.

Since merging with LearnPro Group, Infographics now operates within a broader network, expanding

its reach and solutions. This includes Prevent + Protect, with its Hydrant Management module in high demand, as well as other technologies supporting fire and rescue services.

In this interview, Russell Wood, Managing Director at Infographics and representatives from DFRS share insights into the platform's workings, the aims of the Derbyshire project and how this solution could enhance digital capabilities in the fire and rescue sector.

For readers new to Infographics, could you give a brief overview of the company and its main areas of expertise?

Russell: Infographics are a specialist software manufacturer and Microsoft technology expert focused on blue light and professional services. Our largest user base is in fire and rescue and our two key products in this space are Prevent + Protect (Hydrant Management is a key module) and our specialist ERP solution, FireWatch.

Bringing these products and our expertise together within the wider LearnPro Group is a giant step towards us becoming a powerhouse across blue light and other aligned sectors in the UK, Europe and internationally. We can offer a broader, more extensive product range tailored to UK Fire & Rescue sector needs and shaped in partnership with our extended user network, which now includes close to 100% of UK Fire & Rescue Services

Our expanded solutions now include the Prevent + Protect, FireWatch, learnPro LMS, pdrPro competency management, XVR Simulation solutions and, as of very recently, RedKite Systems. This combination is unique and allows us to strengthen investment in our specialist software solutions to support FRS capability, compliance and effectiveness.

We will use our joint innovation resource pool to invest in new and exciting technologies to build a comprehensive ecosystem of management tools that maximise automation, AI and deliver real time data and reporting to drive FRS operations, whilst meeting emerging needs around risk prevention.

What is the Prevent + Protect platform and what made Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service select it for their hydrant management needs?

Russell: Prevent + Protect is our workflow-enabled case, CRM and task management software for prevention and protection. It provides a central, connected data repository for premises, contacts, organisations, hydrants, operational risk and prevention and protection. Users access the system, hosted on Microsoft Azure and provided via a SAAS model via our Web client or Mobile/Tablet App.

The App enables (among many other things) the completion of hydrant, prevention and protection jobs using

smartphones, tablets, or other suitable devices and integrates with technologies such as online/offline working, optimised route planning, cameras and GPS location.

“Hydrant inspections, repairs – or any other job – can be scheduled, allocated, recorded and reported on using our workflow-enabled case, CRM and task management solution.”

DFRS: We conducted a requirements analysis process and the resulting list of requirements was shared with prospective suppliers. Demonstrations were invited and prospective solutions were scored against our requirements and other evaluation criteria. The hydrants module of Prevent + Protect could meet our requirements and scored most highly of the products evaluated.

What advantages does the platform's Software as a Service model offer to fire and rescue services compared to traditional systems?

Russell: Our SaaS model means we can run and manage our mission-critical software solutions – like Prevent + Protect – as a secure service on the Microsoft Azure Cloud platform, reducing complexity, storage and maintenance overhead and making upgrades faster and easier. Blue light services also need to be able to work from anywhere and at any time – and our SaaS model supports this essential requirement.

What issues were present in Derbyshire's previous hydrant management system and how does the Prevent + Protect platform address them?

DFRS: Our previous on-premise hydrant management system was going end-of-life, so this was the reason for us moving to a new solution. ▶

The key goal for us was to successfully migrate our existing hydrant data to Prevent + Protect and be able to continue to operate core service processes relating to hydrant management, whilst also allowing us the scope to introduce new ways of working with the mobile app for recording hydrant inspections out in the field in the future.

“Single sign-on via Microsoft Entra ID is a key enabler for ease of use and increased security.”

What practical tools and features within the platform assist with hydrant inspections, repairs and job tracking?

Russell: Hydrant inspections, repairs – or any other job – can be scheduled, allocated, recorded and reported

on using our workflow-enabled case, CRM and task management solution. The mobile app makes this functionality easily accessible and usable when teams are ‘on the move’ out in the field, with location mapping, data at their fingertips and easy recording of use, inspection and testing of hydrants. You can also plan and manage efficient hydrant inspection campaigns based on repeat periods and other attributes.

How does the integration with Microsoft Azure and Entra ID enhance security and accessibility for users?

Russell: Single sign-on via Microsoft Entra ID is a key enabler for ease of use and increased security, preventing users from logging in across multiple systems with multiple passwords. If they are already logged into their FRS Microsoft account via solutions like Outlook, they are taken straight into the system without any login requirement. If not, they can use those existing FRS credentials and security policies, including Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) which are managed by the FRS.

By integrating with Microsoft Azure and Entra, we can offer a secure, cloud-hosted service to promote



anytime/anywhere access with high levels of availability and resilience of data (we can go to a backup of data in any minute of time in the last 30 days). It also reduces maintenance overhead and allows us to complete upgrades using automated pipelines, making the whole process faster and easier.

Looking forward, what role could the Prevent + Protect platform play in future digital initiatives within the fire and rescue sector?

Russell: Prevent + Protect offers a huge opportunity to positively impact the digital future of fire and rescue, where the focus on prevention, protection and operational risk is greater than ever. One workflow-enabled case, CRM and task management solution that connects these areas and data offers significant benefits – delivering a true picture of operational risk, highlighting requirements/gaps and tracking performance across prevention and protection workstreams.

The integrated data can also link with and provide Mobile Data Terminals with accurate information when attending an incident on hydrant locations, including status as well as wider Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI).

It empowers mobile workers to operate from anywhere without losing access to their key work platform to complete jobs ‘in the field’. Additionally, our Prevent + Protect solution integrates with FireWatch, allowing users to connect their preventative work with response planning and management and see a holistic picture across all FRS areas. ■

