

BREAKTHROUGHS

2012 was a very good year for Empowering-Communities. E-CINS is now live in 8 counties and over 20 local council districts with many more planning to come on board this year, making 2013 better still. E-CINS is not the only product that is performing well for us and it's users, our Secure Incident Reporting & Community-engagement System - SIRCS is also breaking new ground in Neighbourhood and Stolen Property Management.



Inspiring a New Generation - Social Action Networks

More and more public sector bodies and community groups are talking about how they can link up several organisations and empower new and existing schemes to meet local needs. Establishing a way to get community and voluntary groups and even the general public involved in wider activities can make the world of difference to the success of a partnership, scheme or event. The problem however has always been about access – just how do you get everyone accessing the same information?

Schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch could be greatly enhanced if they were able to integrate and communicate better with the wider community.

Empowering-Communities' community engagement system Neighbourhood-SIRCS (Secure Incident Reporting & Community engagement System) which, like E-CINS, is a secure-cloud based system, acts as a social action network that motivates and empowers victims, communities, individuals, partnerships and organisations.

Neighbourhood SIRCS allows users within a specified geographical area (district) to take an active part in reassuring the public, reducing crime and disorder, tackling environmental issues and in making communities safer. It complements and joins up existing local projects such as Crime Reduction Partnerships, Speed Watch, Street Pastors and Neighbourhood Watch and dramatically improves information sharing.

Because SIRCS, like E-CINS, is accessed via a secure server there are no limits on how many people can join in and users set

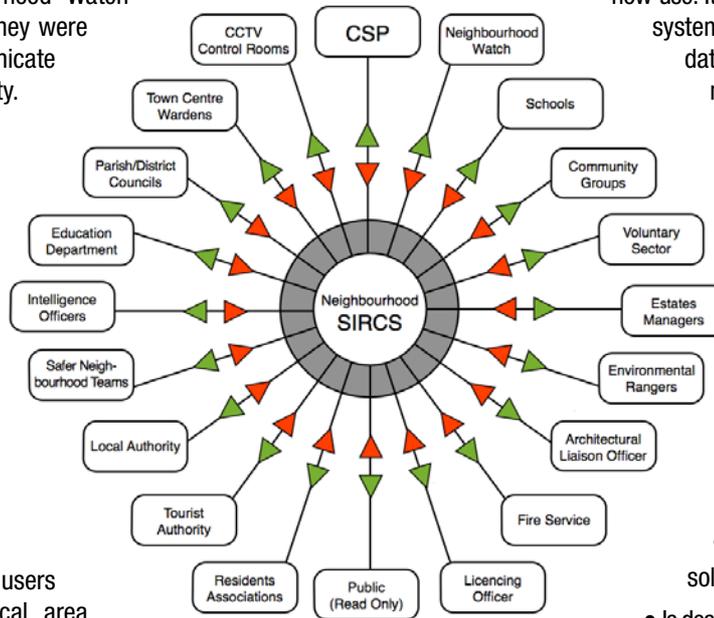
their own access permissions so they are in control of who they grant access to.

Commenting on the launch of Neighbourhood SIRCS it's architect Gary Pettengell said 'We are working on a public access module that will give local administrators the option of allowing the general public to have restricted, 'read only' access to community and crime information. Neighbourhood SIRCS will complement and enhance

social media messaging that several organisations now use. It is better than simple messaging systems because users can search the database for historic reports and messages. My vision is that this 'hi-tech' approach to Neighbourhood Watch will inspire a new generation of Neighbourhood Watch coordinators and I would love to see schools and colleges getting involved in this project.'

SIRCS is an effective communication and community engagement system that:

- Maximises participation to solve community problems
- Is designed to have a positive impact on people's lives
- Motivates and empowers victims, communities, individuals, partnerships and organisations to help themselves and others
- Inspires social action and social responsibility
- Can be used by all age groups and we hope it will inspire a new generation of Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators.
- Reassures the public by helping to reduce crime and disorder



- Tackles environmental issues, such as graffiti and fly tipping
- Makes communities safer and reduces the fear of crime
- Is a secure, encrypted system that dramatically improves information sharing 24/7
- Is a quick and easy system for Local Councils or Safer Neighbourhood Teams to introduce
- Increases community intelligence
- Allows community groups and local service providers to promote and showcase their work and events

As with all of Empowering-Communities systems there are no individual user licenses, no limits on the number of users or organisations that can access the system and no limit on the amount of data that can be uploaded.

Neighbourhood-SIRCS features include:

- Missing persons profiles, alerts and reports
- Environmental section where images and information about graffiti, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles can be detailed and mapped
- Neighbourhood reports section that will link up and enhance existing Neighbourhood Watch schemes
- ASB reports and profiles gallery
- Built in intelligence briefing and messaging system that enables more effective information sharing between users
- Ability to upload CCTV footage
- News and Downloads section for posters, leaflets, flyers to help promote local initiatives, organisations and events
- Crime and neighbourhood incident mapping
- Comprehensive search capability



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- Access permissions that restrict access to information, allowing several community and Neighbourhood Watch schemes to operate on the same system
- Free help desk service
- One to one telephone walk throughs
- On line learning Hub for users
- Free training for Neighbourhood-SIRCS Champions
- Securely accessible via mobile phones

Contact Empowering-Communities for more information on info@empowering-communities.org



Suffolk ASB Team Win Award for their work with Troubled Families Partnerships

E-CINS user and ASB Co-ordinator for Waveney District Council, Rachel Tucker (far left) and her colleague Kathryn Charlesworth (left) were recently recognised in Waveney District Council & Suffolk Coastal District Council's Annual Staff Awards receiving their award in the Adapt and Innovate category.

Active Communities Manager, Richard Best, heralded Rachel and Kathryn's work with troubled families in his nomination return saying "The Anti Social Behaviour Team is leading the way in Suffolk in terms of designing and adopting a new and very different approach working with and addressing some of the most troubled families in Lowestoft, to make a real step change difference to their lives and on society as a whole. The team has pioneered a new approach by placing the family at the centre of the intervention work and support to be designed, agreed and provided. The approach ensures that the ASB team work with the WHOLE family to understand and address the root underlying causes of particular demonstrated behaviour. The lead officer identifies and agrees with each family member a bespoke package of measures and support provided by partner organisations to resolve and address issues and move the family positively forward in a sustainable, self-sufficient manner.

The team is working with some of the most dysfunctional and chaotic families in Lowestoft and the approaches adopted are being held up as best practice models to other partners across Suffolk, with particular interest expressed by Government Adviser Louise Casey, at

a recent meeting in Ipswich. The team are regularly requested to present their approach and positive outcomes at a number of key county meetings, to share their model and best practice approach with other frontline partner organisations. The commitment demonstrated by Rachel and Kathryn is exemplary, often working and receiving calls over weekends from the family members, to provide a 7day week support service during the initial phase of intensive support, to ensure positive and progressive interaction and direction of travel.”

Rachel said “Kathryn and I were delighted for the recognition of our work and how successful it has been in such a short time span. We started the project in July 2012 and E-CINS has played an important part in the work around troubled families due to the up to date live data which other agencies are aware of as soon as the information is recorded. Sharing of information with agencies is paramount to effective working and we've found in the ASBU that E-CINS has helped us save time and to reduce duplication of our efforts too”.

New Act Will Reform Public Sector Procurement

With a new Public Services (Social Value) Act coming into force at the end of this month organisations will be reviewing the way they buy goods and services.

For the first time, by law, the Act will require all public bodies in England and Wales to consider the wider social or economic benefit to an area of any contract they are awarding. This applies to any contract over the value of £113,000 for central government departments and £173,000 for all other public bodies.

The new act spells good news for Social Enterprises who have been campaigning for some time for increased social value in public sector procurement. Social Enterprise UK said “Many commissioners have told us that the Act finally gives them the justification to commission in ways that they have previously wanted to, but could not. Any company, large or small, can create social value and therefore offer good value for taxpayers’ money. Whether they can do this while taking very large profits and paying the lowest wages is another matter. Social enterprises, charities and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with an encompassing interest in their locality might all, in this new environment, stand a better chance of bidding and winning on their own terms.”

Gary Pettengell of Empowering-Communities said “the new act could see a significant cultural shift in the way people do business. Right from the start we set up Empowering-Communities as a Social Enterprise because it's our belief that all organisations should consider the wider social impact of the work they do and look to maximise opportunities for people and communities. We all have a responsibility to do the best we can and to help improve peoples lives, this is particularly important for the public sector who are charged with much of the social impact work across the UK.”

Social Enterprise UK think the new act will make a big difference to social enterprises.

“We hope the Act will result in social enterprises delivering more public services. It will ask that public bodies, including councils, commission services from providers that are committed to doing more than simply making money from a contract. Commissioners and procurement officers will be requested to seek out organisations that deliver above and beyond, charging a fair price while supporting the boroughs and communities in which



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Social Enterprise UK

they operate. Social enterprises are well practiced at this across many sectors including health, education, housing and transport”.

Here's some top tips to help you prepare for the Social Value Act

Under the Public Services (Social Value) Act, which takes effect from this month, commissioners will have to factor in social value when they buy services. By law, providers will have to look at the social benefits of what they and their commercial partners are trying to achieve.

Do your homework now

The Act comes into play on the 31st January 2013. Why not look into the social businesses operating in your area now, and find out how they evidence their social impact. You can find out more about this by joining a social enterprise association, such as Social Enterprise UK. There are more than 68,000 social enterprises in the UK, employing almost a million people and contributing around £24bn to the national economy.

Look ahead

Decide what social impact you'd like to achieve and set this out clearly in your tenders so prospective suppliers know what your expectations are. For example, this could be an intention to create more local employment, training or apprenticeships.

Challenge your organisation

Take the opportunity to scrutinise your business culture and social impact. Don't just consider whether you are offering social benefits, look at how you are maximising the value of your spend. Once you are happy with your own approach, take it a step further and challenge your suppliers, partners and associates to follow your lead.

Reach for the Sky!

Why not go beyond the Act's requirements? You could establish or support a social enterprise of your own that challenges the

commercial way of doing business. Public Sector bodies have a unique insight into the lives of typical people in their local communities. Who could be better placed to take the lead on social issues and make real changes to people's lives?

Don't settle for less

Finally, developing a social ethos does not mean you need to compromise on business efficiency or profitability. Just as social enterprises have to succeed in a commercial marketplace, so other businesses need to recognise they have an important role in society – whether they wish it or not.

Going Live in January

We are delighted to welcome Mid Sussex, Ashfield and Chichester to the E-CINS family this month with schemes going live in each region.



Pam Bushby, Senior Community Safety Officer at Chichester District Council said:
"Chichester Community Partnership are pleased to be going live with E-CINS (ASB case management system) on the 15th January 2013. Having ECINS will ensure

effective and efficient case management of Anti-social Behaviour cases. It will encourage better information sharing amongst partners and allow case officers an opportunity to collate all information in one place. We will look to extend the use of E-CINS to other areas of work later in the year."



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Current E-CINS Users

Below are just some of the organisations accessing and sharing information on E-CINS. There are more joining all the time.

