

iShare NEWS



36 live sites 56 systems integrated

ISSUE TWELVE - SUMMER 2011

Welcome to iShare News

There's lots to talk about in this issue.

Recently I took the opportunity to go and see my first installation of iShare GIS at Vale of Glamorgan Council and was pleased to find that they now have more than 550 users. You can find out

more and read about their interesting Google Street View feature in this issue.

We have also focused on our 36th iShare deployment at Huntingdonshire District Council, and our fifth Open Enterprise Agreement with Bolton Council who have also taken on

iShare GIS.

As we head into the holiday period there's still lots going on so look out for the next newsletter in September. Enjoy your summer!

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iShare GIS in the spotlight

Getting the lowdown on the Streets

Vale of Glamorgan Council has the usual My House, My Maps and My Nearest deployment for its public facing website to encourage greater access to services via the web channel. Perhaps more interesting is the fact that it has the largest deployment of iShare GIS with over 550 users.

Historically the Council had more than 50 MapInfo Professional seats and over 400 users of a MapInfo viewing tool which had to be installed and maintained on each and every user's PC. Moving to a web based GIS made sense. All the maps and data layers are now held and updated centrally courtesy of iShare and served up over the Council's Intranet. This has led to a huge saving in time spent configuring PCs and updating data.

In its current configuration iShare GIS provides access to over 100 different layers of information including a complete range of OS Maps and two recent aerial surveys. In the first instance the task was to get users on board.

"iShare GIS is a fantastic tool, it provides access to masses of data and it gets hit pretty hard because people just

seem to want to use it. It has required little or no training. We looked at several alternatives but this was the most easy on the eye, the easiest to use and linked up with what we were doing with iShare for our 'Channel Shift' priorities," said Anthony Tarrant, GIS Officer for Vale of Glamorgan Council.

A lot of calls to the contact centre are made to report incidents such as abandoned cars, graffiti or street lamps that have failed. Staff in the Contact Centre use the Oracle eBusiness to log such incidents. Each incident is associated with the person reporting the incident and the place where they live. Each of these incidents is geo-referenced, via the LLPG's UPRN. On a daily basis a file of the previous day's incidents is shared through iShare making them visible within iShare GIS. Councillors in particular like this feature because they can scan their own wards for incidents to see what is going on. Clicking on the map will

make all the incident details available to the viewer.

The most popular feature has been the ability to access Google Street View from within iShare GIS. Within iShare GIS there is a layer of over 50,000 points that are located at 25m intervals along the streets.

Each of these links to a distinct Google Street View URL. (see Tips & Tricks to see how this was achieved) Why might this be useful? Imagine a call to the contact centre to report a broken street light. It is easy to locate the caller's property but the street light might be some distance away so by clicking on one of the points nearest the property you are taken to Google Street View. It is then much easier to locate and describe the exact position of the faulty street lamp; very useful for the contractors who will be tasked with fixing it. The same goes for almost any incident, planning application or even decisions about whether a property is suitable for a 'wheelie bin'.

"iShare GIS is really responsive and we have had no complaints about performance, in fact the opposite. The address search is absolutely brilliant and provides just what our users need," continued Anthony Tarrant.

NEWS SNIPPETS

Five OEAs and counting...

We have just signed our fifth Open Enterprise Agreement with Bolton Council.

Open Enterprise Agreements are our new way of supporting iShare deployments across the enterprise. To find out more read the article on the back page of this issue.

My Huntingdonshire

Huntingdonshire District Council has just gone live with iShare with some unique new features we are sure a lot of our existing customers will be interested to see. Check out the article on the back page and view the site here:

<http://my.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/>

We're on Twitter

We have been meaning to tweet for sometime, had the account set up but somehow never got around to it. Now we will be tweeting more and hope to have Twitter integrated into our website soon. In case you are a Twitter fan you can follow us - Astun Technology - @isharemaps. Mike Saunt also tweets on occasion and you can follow him @skepticmike.

ZenDesk update

Some of you will know that we are now using ZenDesk for our customer support and we will be using it for much more besides in the coming months, and we hope that our customers will start to use it more too. Use the link below or go to our support area on the website to access the release notes on iShare 4.4, details and guidance on the new EU Cookie Directive and also to access our fabulous new online collection of help documents.

<http://astun.zendesk.com/home>

iShare User Survey

We are carrying out an online survey for existing iShare users regarding the setting up of an iShare user group and assessing your training needs. Please take a few minutes to let us know your thoughts...there will be a prize, we will just do a random pick of people who respond, it's just that we haven't worked out what it will be yet! You can access the survey here:

<http://svy.mk/oJ0o31>

In the spotlight 

Ta-da! featuring 'myHuntingdonshire'

'myHuntingdonshire' went live on the 29th June. For us here at Astun it is the latest embodiment of the iShare platform with some nice new features and some great interface tweaks.

One of the challenges with My House is displaying all the data that is available without cluttering the page and avoiding lots of scrolling. Enter stage left some nice Javascript which introduces drop down boxes. Move the mouse over one of the drop down arrows to the right hand side of any of the boxes displayed and a drop shadow appears, useful feedback, and then click on the arrow to open the box. Over on the top right there is another tab

place. iShare facilitates this by making it location based but in this deployment we have at Huntingdonshire's request taken things a little further. There's information pulled from NHS Choices, which we have done before but there's also a GeoRSS feed that pulls event data from Cambridgeshire.net. Click on the link and the event location is shown on a map - simple. But as always there's 'one more thing'!

If you take a look at 'myHuntingdonshire', you will see three boxes which by rights shouldn't be there - 'View nearest 2 County Council planning applications', 'County Councillors' and 'Schools and



The new drop down boxes in action, on the left the boxes closed, on the right the top box expanded. Note drop shadow to indicate state.

where you can select the services that you want to display, so that when you go back to the page it only displays the information you actually want to see.

Take a look here: <http://bit.ly/nBG7OJ>

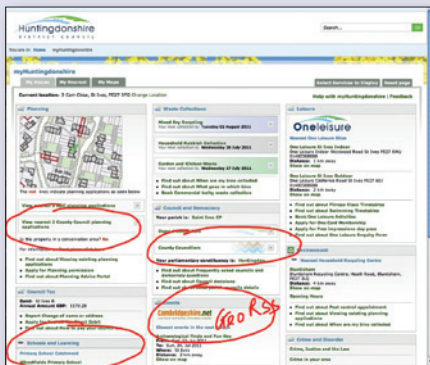
Like most iShare deployments the business case is 'channel shift', encouraging people to use the less expensive (than phone and face-to-face) web channel. Part of the challenge here is to provide a wide range of useful information in one

Learning'. Why's that? You might ask - well this data is from Cambridgeshire County Council and is served by WFS (Web Feature Service) directly into 'myHuntingdonshire'. iShare to iShare if you like. Now that's something completely new and opens the way to all sorts of new opportunities.

"We have pushed the envelope on this site so that it adds a much richer experience for our users from citizens to Parish, District and

County Councillors right through to MPs," said Tracie Hiscocks, Project Manager at Huntingdonshire District Council.

For the more technically minded Huntingdonshire uses Microsoft SharePoint to drive its website and manage much of its service area information, providing us with yet another platform to integrate with.



Information pulled from Huntingdonshire County Council via WFS and from Cambridgeshire.net via GeoRSS

Life's too short...

#4



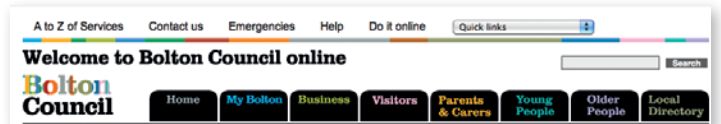
Tips & Tricks Street View!

If you read the article about Vale of Glamorgan you might be wondering how to access Google Street View from within iShare GIS. Here's how. Using the 'Add Nodes' facility in Routeware's MapInfo Toolbox you can populate Local Street Gazetteer data into a layer in your GIS. Based on a requirement for a node every 25m the total created for the streets in the Vale of

Glamorgan amounted to more than 50,000 nodes. Each of these nodes is blank but it is possible to calculate a longitude and latitude value for each and every one within the GIS. Then it's a simple matter of constructing a single Google Streetview URL for each node and hey presto!

Routeware's MapInfo Toolbox can be downloaded for free from here: <http://bit.ly/oBpwRW>

Peace of Mind at Bolton Council



The Astun Technology Open Enterprise Agreement has been designed to provide organisations with a cost effective way to protect their investment in iShare, provide the opportunity for an upgrade, make the most of the software and provide peace of mind in terms of maintenance and support.

An Agreement provides many key benefits including flexible deployment of software, fixed annual payments, centralised management, consultancy services and support, and access to the most current versions of Astun software. Open Enterprise Agreements run for 3 years, so customers can rest assured that their software will be fully supported over the term of the agreement. Support is provided online through the support portal and through dedicated staff. In addition a Service Level Agreement provides up to 5 days consultancy per

year to help the customer exploit any future technology changes and respond to changing business requirements.

Setting up an OEA provides an opportunity to go for an uplift and further buy-in to the iShare platform at very reasonable cost. In this case Bolton Council were able to upgrade to a corporate solution by the addition My Alerts and iShare GIS at a fraction of the normal cost and benefit from the maintenance, services and training offered by the OEA.

The OEA was particularly attractive as it has enabled Bolton Council to take a serious look at its GIS provision. The Council will be able to reduce the number of desktop GIS licenses and at the same time broaden access to mapping and information to almost anyone in any department across the Council's intranet.



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