

NEIGHBOURHOOD ALERT DEV BOARD UPDATE: 20

RE: December Alert updates and news

FAO: Samantha Humphries
Organisation: West Midlands Police
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You are receiving this email circular because you are listed as a key contact involved with your organisation's Neighbourhood Alert system, including senior administrators and members of the Practitioner's Group. If you feel you should not be on this list, please contact support@neighbourhoodalert.co.uk and I will remove you.

Dear Samantha,

Hello from the busy offices of VISAV and sorry (again) for the long email. This does contain some useful information so do please find a moment to have a scan through as we don't want you to miss any useful information about updates to your system. To assist, I will **highlight any actions you should consider in yellow**.

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Performance Issues



You may have detected a disturbance in the force over the last few days where the speed of the main Alert admin has not been as fast as usual?

We have been impacted by several outside issues and our resilience systems were activated on Tuesday evening. This means to protect the systems we instantly relocate the hosting to a backup system on a different connection to the outside world. Services have been maintained but the system has been running on the lower capacity back up servers and bandwidth.

Support engineers from VISAV and at the data centre in Manchester have been monitoring everything and applying patches to ward off the latest attacks. While out of use, we took the opportunity to upgrade the main systems to higher specification switches that we planned to install over the Christmas period. All systems will be swapped back to the main servers and bandwidth by the end of this week.

The upgrade did involve updating some DNS settings for some sites which in most cases happened instantly. If you have any administrators or public stating that they cannot find your site, please ask them to refresh the web page which should resolve the problem. Failing this, [refreshing the cache](#) will resolve it.

This was a superb test of the resilience of the Alert system and I am delighted that our disaster plans worked as planned, all sites remained active and messages were sent. **No data was lost and no attack managed to penetrate any of our systems.** We have also learned that we need to upgrade our back up provision to run quicker when called upon.

I apologise for any delay and frustration that you may have experienced. Social Sense and Rapport were not affected but reports, mapping and site updates in Alert will have been painful this week. The good news is that our new, fabulously powerful switches are installed so Christmas has come early from a speed perspective as we swap back to the main servers and connection.



Data Sharing (Opt Out) update

As mentioned in last month's update, www.signalert.co.uk is now live SGN are a new Information Provider on the Alert network. They sent their first message last week to a few homes in Guildford to advise them that their gas had been cut off due to an emergency in the close proximity.

We did have the process of sharing 150,000 users as an opt out challenged by one Information Provider so we asked the ICO to double check the procedure we followed.

We had a very prompt response from them stating *"The steps you have taken would appear to be in line with the guidance we provide on our website and the guidance Damien provided on the helpline does appear to satisfy the requirements of the DPA."*

This has been a great test of our platform and our understanding regarding the opt-in/out approach. However, to remove any ambiguity from the website terms we have revised the web terms to a new version 6.4 which makes the position regarding potential new Information providers a little clearer.

Please take a moment to review the [updated V6.4 web terms here](#). These are live across all sites for new registrations and I will notify all existing users about the update as part of the Christmas System Administrator update.

I have a face to face meeting with our policy officer at the Information Commissioners Office at the end of January so if you have **any queries or issues you would like me to address or raise, please contact me directly.**

Devon & Cornwall Goes Live



We are happy to announce that the latest Alert site for Devon & Cornwall police has now gone live, note the pretty cool police.uk domain: <https://alerts.dc.police.uk>.

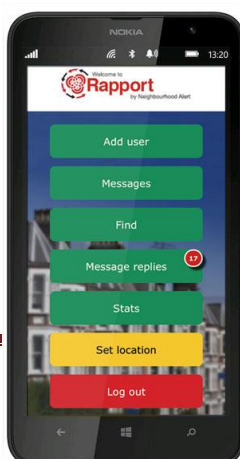
Alert numbers jumped quite a bit with this launch as we imported over twenty thousand users. D&C administrators are working through the lovely job of sorting their Comms Issues now, I am sure you all empathise with them.

Please note, we now have 471,824 registered members across the Alert platform, we may well throw a party (or at least do a press release) when we hit half a million!

Rapport Updates

As notified on update 19, we have done some work to improve the accessibility of the Rapport system. This includes a text password reminder service so **please ask your administrators to load their mobile number into the system** when prompted (so we have a verified number to text a pin to).

Request an account process



We have been developing an effective method for administrators who want an admin account to request one via an online form. This system saves your super-users a lot of time in authorising accounts as most of the fields are completed by the applying administrator. You can view this form in action here: <https://mobile.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/172/CreateAccount>



If you would like this service activating on your system, please email me directly.

If you would like to re-introduce your Neighbourhood Teams to Rapport then a lot of work has been done to make this process easier. We have prepared a short presentation which you are welcome to update and use to send to anyone who should be using Rapport:

[Download the Rapport Introduction presentation](#)

[PDF version](#)

[PowerPoint Version](#)

You can download the PowerPoint version and view other videos on this page:

<https://www.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/pages/2977/1/Rapport.html>

“How Are We Doing” National Survey Results

Just a quick reminder in case you missed it, we have a large national survey that you can quote that basically says that you are all doing an amazing job!

The summary report is available for you to download on the link below and some of the results include:

- **87%** of respondents find it easier to spot a scam since being on Alert
- **74%** state that being a member of Alert motivated them to be more active in crime prevention and community safety
- **7236 people** state that they have received a message which has **directly helped protect them** and others because they were better informed!

[Download the summary, survey report here:](#)

https://www.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/images/site_images/25540_HowAreWeDoingSurveyResultsSummary_July16.pdf

If you have a Community View (Survey) licence we can produce the stats to just include your area, please contact me if you need assistance with this.

Thank you once again for all your fantastic support and patience. All the staff and the Board here at VISAV wish you a brilliant Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need to talk about any issues raised here or in dealing with us.

Best regards

Mike Douglas

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