NEIGHBOURHOOD ALERT DEV BOARD UPDATE: 47

Date: 20th January 2020

Note: 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 Practitioners' Group. If you feel you should not be on this list, please reply to feedback@neighbourhoodalert.co.uk and I will remove you.

View an archive of previous updates here

Welcome to 2020, Happy New Year and all that and Wow are we already two thirds of the way through January? I have not been in touch for ages with these updates but rest assured we have all been working hard here at VISAV. This is the first of a new format for the Dev Board updates, please excuse the length of this one, I have even included a contents section as I need to cover so many things.

The main highlights for you speed readers:

- I have a new crew to help with the V4 development and in keeping you informed.
- We will be sending these updates every week for a few months until V4 is sorted
- We have phased the launch of V4 so you can test it and launch it when you are happy
- I need you to nominate some of your admins to do the V4 testing
- We have a new national Information Provider that you need to check out.

We have lots more to cover over the coming weeks but this is a good start. I know you are busy so just save this email for when you have a minute and want to double check where we are at.

Many thanks
Mike

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More Regular Updates

As you are hopefully aware the development of Neighbourhood Alert Version 4 (V4) is well underway. In order to keep you updated I have recruited a new Project Delivery Team (more on these below) and we plan to increase our communication with you over the coming months regarding V4 progress, testing and planned launch dates. We will make these emails weekly (assuming that we have something to let you know about). Please let me know by emailing feedback@neighbourhoodalert.co.uk if you find this useful or just annoying and too regular.

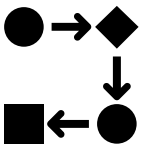
Project Delivery Team

As part of our commitment to make the transition from V3 to V4 as painless as possible we have recognised the need to have some dedicated project management support throughout the transition. I am therefore delighted to welcome Sue Sambells (sue@visav.co.uk) and Chris Davis (chris@visav.co.uk) to the team. Both with strong project management backgrounds and a great eye for detail, Sue & Chris will be responsible for ensuring the project is delivered with a co-ordinated and strategic approach.

Sue Sambells

Chris Davis

V4 Progress Update

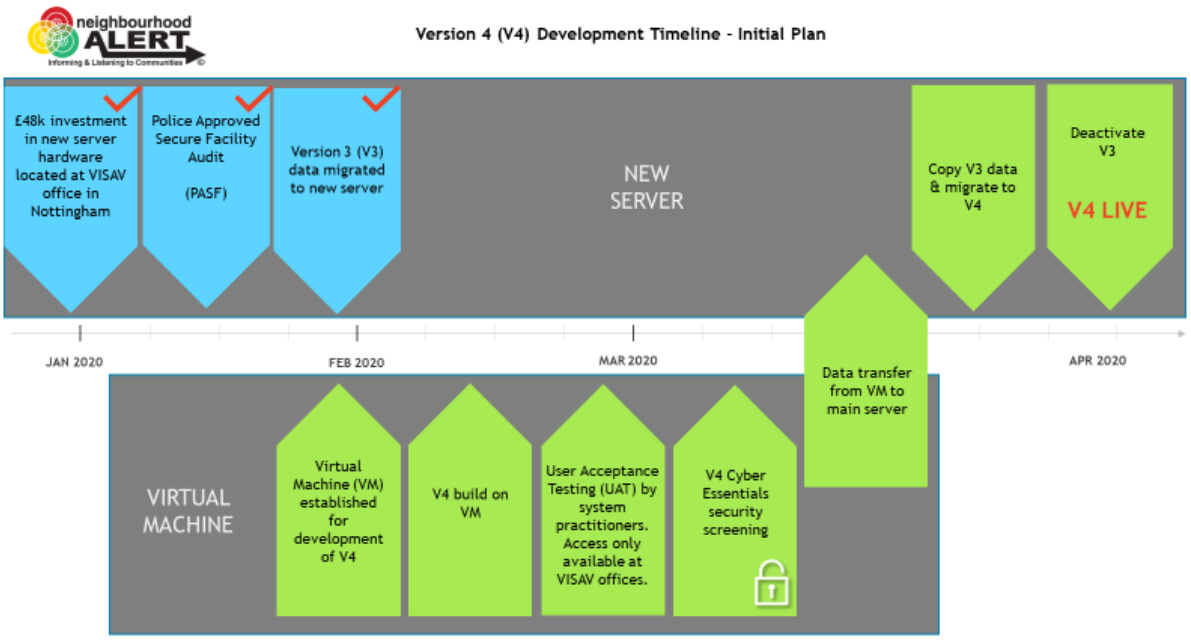


We have made the decision to enhance our initial development plan in order to deliver a more robust system, a more rigorous user acceptance testing process and a seamless transition from Version 3 (V3) to V4 for all users. Below you will find a plan detailing the fundamental enhancements we have made to the development plan.

Please note: the decision to upgrade our development plans will not in any way impact the overall project timeline.

Initial Development Plan:

Our original plan was to move V3 onto the new server array, newly located in Nottingham, arrange a period of selective user acceptance testing (UAT) and on the agreed date migrate the entire database over from V3 to V4.



Key Points:

- £50k investment in a new server hosted at VISAV offices in Nottingham.
- V4 was to be developed on a virtual machine using a segmented section of the new servers capacity.
- Once coding was complete, system testing would have been limited to the security of VISAV offices in Nottingham, limiting the number of testers and therefore the potential for bug fixes and enhancements prior to launch.

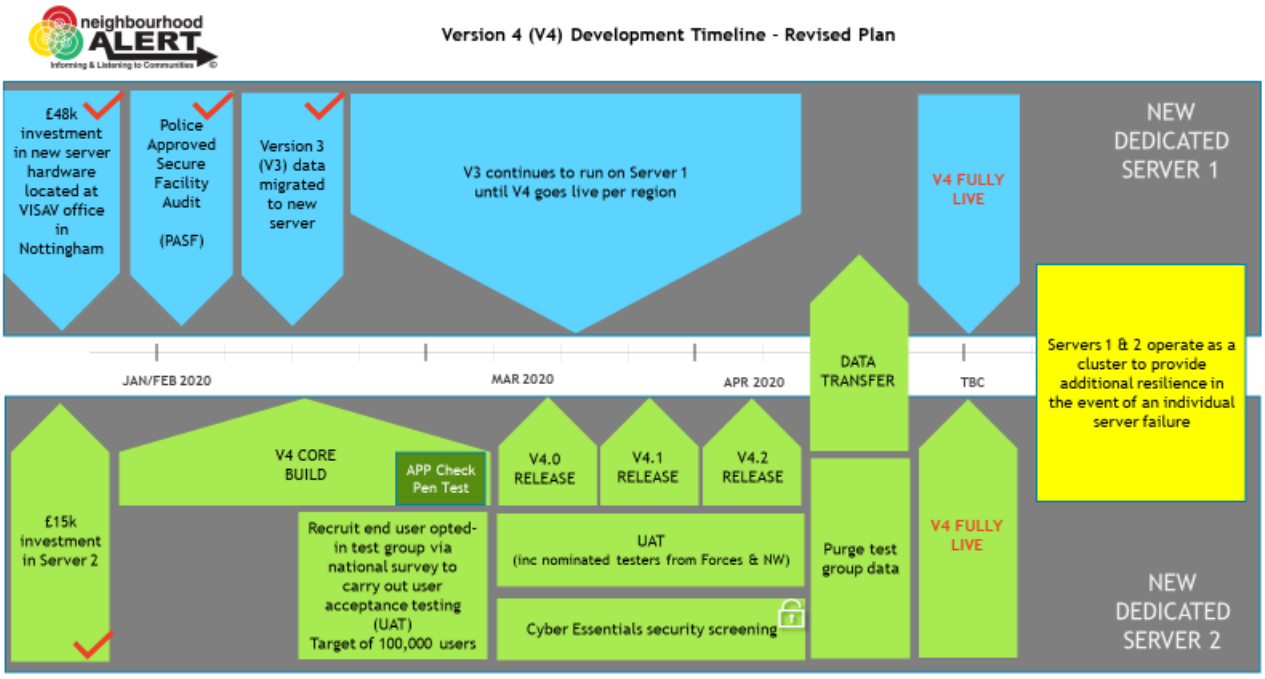
Revised & Improved Development Plan:

After ten years of bespoke development up to V3, we are sure that the current system is riddled with over complex processes, screens and reports. Part of the V4 upgrade process is to simplify the system and strip away unnecessary elements, what we don't want to do is take away things that are important to practitioners. After further reflection and conversations with current administrators and the superb IT-Group within national Neighbourhood Watch we are aware that aiming to simply remove V3 after a single go-live would be "problematic" without providing the opportunity for those that require it to have an elongated UAT period.

We have therefore elected to further invest in additional hardware and to coordinate a dedicated test environment with "real" opted-in test end-users in order to ensure that your practitioners have the opportunity to comprehensively test the new system, send actual messages and take their time to explore the new interface.

We now aim to have three release dates, the first one as planned before the end of March for those that are happy with the core functionality that V4.0 will provide. More advanced features will be phased into V4.1

and V4.2 over the next few months, a fully detailed project plan showing which features will be available within each phased launch will be coming out soon. The good news is that you will be able to select the most appropriate time for your area to move over to V4. You will also have plenty of time for several of your practitioners to test the system and highlight any further developments of anything we may have missed.



Key Points/Advantages:

- Additional £15k investment in Server 2. V4 can now be developed in a separate, highly resourced area.
- V3 will continue to be available on Server 1 until you have migrated to V4.
- An enhanced user acceptance testing process can now take place using 'actual' data. We will be able to migrate each Force area seperately and ensure that we meet all requirements before moving each area over.
- An opted-in user test group will be recruited via our February national survey where we will be asking existing end users to volunteer to joing a test group, receive messages, report issues, reply, rate etc and provide valuable feedback.
- Once live V4 will run in a cluster format on Servers 1 & 2, thus providing double resilience in a disaster situation, uninterrupted system uptime and negating the need for physical intervention in the event that one server fails.

V4 Practitioner Group Nominations

We now need you to nominate some of your administrators to be part of the V4 user acceptance testing process. Ideally this would include people at different levels of your organisation that use the system for different things (e.g. In a Police service include Corp Comms, Neighbourhood Police, volunteer admin and any other level of user). To nominate testers from your organisation please email feedback@neighbourhoodalert.co.uk ideally by 7th February.

New Information Provider

We have partned with Get Safe Online, experts at providing factual, easy to understand information on online safety. We are sure their advice and campaigns will complement your messages and will serve to fill the gap left by our existing relationship with Action Fraud. Please click here to visit the Get Safe Online Alert website for full information on the services they provide. Our main contact is Sarah Martinez, Communications Director, (sarah.martinez@getsafeonline.org) she is available to contact if you require any further details regarding the messages they propose to send.

This is advance notification that, unless we receive any objections from Dev Board members, we will be advising the national database that Get Safe online is available to opt-in to as a new Information Provider. We will make get Safe Online appear as an option within your registration system (web and Rapport) but not as a default option. The Action Fraud service is due to expire by May 2020 so unless we hear anything different from them we will remove them from your list of available Providers and purge that database soonafter. This will not impact your database in any way. We hope you welcome the provision of this service from Get Safe online, we are delighted that they are coming on board and feel confident that their superb campaigns, videos and information will enhance the service that all users receive, if however you do not want Get Safe Online to appear as an option on your system, please let me know ASAP.

What to look out for in future updates…

In next weeks communication we will provide you with an up to date V4 development schedule detailing progess in each of the core development segments within the overall project.

We will also be including some best practice advice in order to assit you with your message sending. This will include examples of what we consider to be the best communications in terms of content and public engagement. This will ultimately result in the provision of a best practice document that will be shared with all our partners to be used as a working document by Alert administrators.

That's it for this week other than to say thanks again for your continued support.

Best regards

Mike Douglas
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