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## From The Chair

Dear Shared Learning Group Activists

Welcome to the winter '08 edition of the SLG newsletter. A lot has happened in the past 3 months including the start of a number of new initiatives that the group are taking forward. These include the initiation of a software compatibility assurance group, which Jason Burton is leading with support from a number of SLG members. Nigel Tilley is launching a Windows Live workstream and we are considering starting up a Deskless Workers initiative. There has also been a number of interesting one-off workshops (FastSearch and LGCS/Moss) and we continue to make great progress with some of our exiting workstreams, most notably ID Management and Technology in the Home.

For me the highlight is of course the recent study trip to North America. It was a really enlightening trip as well as being hard work but good fun at the same time. The newsletter talks about our visit to Microsoft's Home of the Future showcase in Redmond and much more will be shared at the December QRM.

Looking forward to seeing most of you in Manchester on December 10th/11th and enjoy the read!

## Brand New!

As the old logo didn't conform to Microsoft's branding guidelines, the next favourite choice amongst the SLG members was chosen. It's hoped that the new branding will help to raise the profile of the group as we look to build up our external presence.



## Wakefield scoops award for Mobile and Flexible working

Wakefield Council (lead for the Shared Learning Group's Flexible Working workstream) has won the Local

Government IT Excellence Award 2008 in the Mobile & Flexible Working category. The entry focussed on how e-Services developed and implemented models of mobile and flexible working in its own area, and how it is supporting the implementation of flexible working in other services such as Housing Benefits.

These are the premier awards for public sector ICT, and are a collaborative venture between Socitm (the Society of IT Managers), SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) and Intellect (an organisation that represents the UK technology industry).

There were only three categories this year, and selection was via a formal entry followed by a presentation to, and challenge from, a panel of six that included experts from Socitm, SOLACE, the IDeA, Computing magazine and Intellect.

The SLG Portal contains some of the documents relating to Wakefield's 'Worksmart' transformation programme, which is underpinned by solutions and an infrastructure geared to support flexible and mobile working.

## Isle of Man Government SharePoint 2007 Deployment

6 Months on...

The Isle of Man Government, through Treasury Information Systems Division is coming to the end of a first stage deployment of SharePoint ahead of a wider rollout to other Government departments.

The first stage objectives were to "move out" of the Shared and Personal Drives on the network and fully migrate to the SharePoint portal based on the functional areas of our working Division within the Treasury Department. The challenge presented itself in motivating ourselves to embrace the business change brought about by the new collaborative toolset, and what could be achieved directly with the SharePoint product without enhancement.

Overall the move to SharePoint has provided:

- The ability to share information within and outside the Division is now considerably easier and the benefits of

that are already being reaped.

- Visibility of information is greatly improved and external departments engaged in technology projects now have the capability to view, add and amend documents related to their projects and review statuses, issues and risks.
- Business resources are now forming a more integral part of the project team rather than projects being technology led.

Like all deployments there are of course a number of lessons learned:

- Using SharePoint 2007 represents a new way of interacting with our colleagues and partners and this in turn requires a new way of thinking and some new business rules.
- Some of the standard functionality originally hoped for has not materialised in the manner we expected, where possible we have worked around any shortfalls using business changes rather than additional technical deployments and generally users are comfortable with these adaptations

Any initial uncertainty about the effectiveness of Sharepoint as a collaboration platform has quickly been followed by an appreciation that this technology is starting to deliver improve efficiency and communication

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## ■ Workstream Update

### Technology in the home

Work on the Assistive Technology workstream continues apace. Freshly inspired by the study tour, and working with Microsoft architects and designers, we have identified a number of personas and built scenarios around them to help articulate how the new world of assistive technology would benefit those with Long Term Conditions. We have built a storyboard with wireframes (that's just diagrams to you and me!) around the first of the scenarios which will be reviewed, along with several others being produced as we speak, at the first formal 2 day workshop on the 2nd and 3rd December.

Once that is out of the way we will be ramping up for a major round of consultation and review with many different stakeholders, users, carers, expert

practitioners and third sector experts, to ensure that our ideas stand scrutiny before we work on the detailed specification and then coding starts in February to produce the demonstrator software.

We have huge support from the Assistive technology industry in the form of the DAP (Digital Access Provision) forum, who are keen to get involved and await our output with bated breath.

The next few months will be exciting, if challenging, and we hope to have a finished product to show you all by April next year.

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## ■ Kent CC is the first winner of Innovate08

Microsoft and LGC, with the support of SOCITM and the IDEa, were proud to launch Innovate08. LGC and Microsoft were requesting local government to submit ideas for Innovate08, a new competition that not only showcases, but develops ground-breaking ideas in local government.

It was a search for creative solutions that harness technology to tackle social and economic problems. Four councils were shortlisted to compete in the final stage of Innovate08, LGC and Microsoft's joint technology challenge.

In the final dragon's den-style event, Kent went head-to-head with fellow finalists Lewisham LBC, Charnwood BC, and South Tyneside MBC. In a tough competition, the imagination, innovation and potential impact of Kent's entry gave the county the edge. The entry, dubbed 'Pic'n'Mix' by its team of six, proposes using social networking and Web 2.0 technology to allow residents to personalise service information as well as swap ideas and submit new ones through wikis and forums. The team said its scheme would be easy to use and was designed to "open residents' eyes to information and services", turning them into interactive consumers.

The judging panel — Richard Steel, president of the Society of Information Technology Management; John Hayes, director of services at the Improvement & Development Agency; Jerry Fishenden, national technology officer at Microsoft, and LGC editor Karen

Day — felt that Kent's entry tapped into emerging technology.

They also felt it could easily be replicated across the rest of local government. The team will now work with Microsoft to develop the platform. LGC will be tracking the progress of the winners and finalists over the next year.

## ■ Redmond Trip

### Visit to Redmond MS Home of the Future

In November, some members of the Shared Learning Group visited the Microsoft Home in Redmond to see how technology could be integrated into homes of the future. There was a strong 'home' feeling it didn't feel like an office environment, there were no computers on show, interfaces were friendly and intuitive, kit was hidden behind fairly ordinary everyday technology (like the doorbell!)

#### Some Specific bits of kit

**The speech interface** - allowed the householder to communicate informally with 'Grace' the house computer at any time, and anywhere within the house.

For our purposes:

- This would be a perfect interface for a technophobe (or a technophile for that matter!)
- certainly no stigma
- Could enable a series of FAQ answers like 'Have I taken my medicine this morning?'
- could deliver timed and intelligent instructions like 'Joan, its time to take your medicine now', or 'don't forget your doctors appointment at 10:30, you need to leave in 15 mins'

**The Cork Board** - in the show house took two forms. The first was a photo display, activated by placing an object on the shelf in the centre of the display - when a model of the Eiffel Tower was put on the shelf holiday pictures of France were displayed. The photos were automatically selected from the family camera by software which could identify a picture. The second was used largely to display photos and receive messages, a kind of text interface. Touch the photo, it

turns round and displays the associated message.

But for us it could act as a visual hub for the other technology around the home:

- It could display those doorbell photos with time and date on the back
- It could interface to medicine supplies and confirm the date and time at which they were removed from the cupboard, and request a repeat prescription if supplies run low
- It could allow the service user to communicate with friends, family and practitioner by opening up a VC portal
- If people could turn over their doorbell photo and 'write' on the back of the photo, any sort of message could be left, informal, medical, or personal, for the service user or carer, or other practitioners. Using some intelligence, the notes could be emailed to carers or other service users, added to patient records, or simply left for the carer or as a reminder to the service user
- Could provide an equivalent to instant messaging between all those involved in looking after the patient, in addition to the rather more formal patient records.
- It could allow anyone to communicate by text without having to use keyboard or phone

**Action on Exit** - this facility turned off the lights and set back the heating.

For our purposes:

- All appliances/devices that should be off when the house is empty are turned off (irons, taps, kettles)
- All lights except security lights are turned off
- Heating is set back, but will be turned back on prior to the service user's return (see mobile devises)
- Security systems are activated
- Door locks only if user has their keys and specified other items, otherwise home warns the user

**Useful stuff on TV** - in the home of the future, software decided on TV programmes that would interest the user (obviously in addition to the usual TV channels), suggested DVDs, etc.

For our purposes:

- This could be an extension of information prescriptions, drawing on a stock of video covering different conditions, relevant to different age groups and tailored for differing cognitive abilities, and

triggered by additional, or changes to existing conditions as reported in the health and social care practitioners notes and support plans, or by behaviours displayed by the user (if they keep forgetting to take medication then maybe they should watch the one about how the medication helps, supported by additional prompts from mobile and home). The user is prompted to choose from a selection of video appropriate to their condition.

- Could be related to the people in the house, or in the room. For example there may be a piece of video that the care practitioner would like them to watch with their carer present.
- Obvious use for exercise videos and memory building games etc.

## **Rotherham's SOA vision for Local Government**

The integration workstream allowed Rotherham MBC's strategic partner RBT Connect Ltd and Newham to develop common standards for integration, and has provided a starting point for the work with Microsoft BizTalk.

Although Rotherham MBC's integration journey started with relatively simple aspirations they are now accelerating towards the adoption of Service Orientated Architecture (SOA) applications which will bring improvements and efficiency gains to both their front and back office services.

At a recent Enterprise Architect SOA and BPM session at Microsoft's Reading offices RBT showcased their approach to SOA with their latest project to provide a single seamless service to citizens using the Revenues and Benefits service.

Through the use of technology RBT are creating a re-usable service orientated infrastructure that will provide an adaptive and evolutionary business processes and services platform.

This is being undertaken using a MS BizTalk Server platform as the Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) utilising services created with Microsoft Windows Communication Foundation which exposes reusable back office Revenues services.

Ultimately the journey will lead to the transformation of

all services involving both the business and technology teams working closely together.

Rotherham MBC and RBT will be leading on a new enterprise architect forum with both Microsoft and SLG members to share knowledge in this area and identify potential solutions to other areas of local government.

## **Noticeboard**

### Dates for the diary

Here is a list of the meetings coming up in the next few months. If you have not already declared your interest, but would like to attend one of them, please contact Matt/Reema in the Programme Office or the workstream lead direct.

- **Deskless Workers Meeting**  
2nd December, 3 Waterhouse Square, 138-142 Holborn, London EC1N 2HG - Room 6 (Organiser Reema)
- **December QRM**  
10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> December, Manchester (Organiser Reema)
- **March QRM**  
18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> March, Sunderland
- **June QRM**  
9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> June, Isle of Man

### REMINDERS!

**If you need accommodation for the December QRM in Manchester – We have 3 rooms spare on the 9<sup>th</sup> December.**

Contact Reema: [reema.kumar@mouchel.com](mailto:reema.kumar@mouchel.com)  
[07778023890](tel:07778023890)

**If you need accommodation for the June QRM in Isle of Man – Please contact Reema ASAP – as the event is during TT week the rooms will run out soon.**

Contact Reema: [reema.kumar@mouchel.com](mailto:reema.kumar@mouchel.com)  
[07778023890](tel:07778023890)

**Reema has recently been on a SharePoint course, and therefore is open to any suggestion on how to improve the SSN site so that it facilitates the group's needs.**

Contact Reema: [reema.kumar@mouchel.com](mailto:reema.kumar@mouchel.com)  
[07778023890](tel:07778023890)