



Widening access; reducing access to harmful content

As a local authority committed to widening access to the internet, Manchester City Council also takes seriously the responsibilities that come with delivering this type of service.

Providing internet access for children in care, youth centres and homeless hostels also means protecting web-users from unsuitable content as well as IT hardware from abuse and damage.

The council realised it needed a robust system that could deliver on all counts and turned its attention to Netintelligence's Ni Enterprise Manager.

Mark Thorne, security analyst with Manchester City Council, who deals with IT used in social care settings, said: "We'd been providing internet access at youth centres and homeless centres for a while but needed a better system for filtering content and monitoring usage.

"Previously we had relied on staff on site monitoring users but this wasn't sufficient. As you might expect we'd been experiencing issues with the type of content being accessed so we started using Enterprise Manager a few years ago to centrally control web filters.

"We started off using it in the homeless shelters and it

proved effective so it was rolled out to youth centres and children's homes. The children were satisfied that the system was there to protect them and it was actually more effective at filtering sites with harmful content but allowing sites which are educational but deal with serious topics.

"Now we can manage all the computers centrally and monitor how individuals use the computers.

"Managers in the centres or homes can also monitor which sites the children are visiting and their instant messenger content, though they can't change the settings locally. They can request to have certain sites blocked or other ones allowed - it's really very flexible.

"We also have around 187 laptops which are used by children with foster families which are protected by Enterprise Manager. We're even using Enterprise Manager on computers in our mobile libraries which access the internet over the 3G network."

Mark added: "Enterprise Manager is certainly an excellence piece of software. The centrality of the control is central to this as well as its flexibility and it comes with Kaspersky virus protection. We'll be expanding the number of licences we have shortly as more laptops are delivered."

Netintelligence channel manager Marc Kelly said "We are delighted to be working with Manchester City Council which has been putting our Netintelligence Enterprise Manager to good effect, enabling them to roll out access to the internet to a growing group of people who previously did not have easy access, whilst also protecting them from harmful content.

"Netintelligence will continue to provide a very high level of service to its partners and is looking to ensure that the customer satisfaction and the ability to solve problems continue through its 'Simply Delivering Your Services' promise."

In the region of 1800 children in the Durham area have benefitted from a Government programme to improve their access to computers at home.

The Home Access project provides children and with laptops which are protected with security software provided by Netintelligence, the internet security and safety arm of iomart Group plc.



Durham County Council has been working with Netintelligence for three years during which time 1800 laptops and portable notebooks were provided to children through schools and care organisations. Many of the children who benefitted came from challenging environments as well as from the transient communities in the north east.

Bill Pattison, project leader for ICT services at Durham County Council said: "Internet security was a key issue for us because if you give a child a laptop to take home then the responsibility does not end when that child walks out of the school gates. Working with Netintelligence meant we could lock-down access to certain social networking sites like Facebook for younger children and we could easily track what sites were being looked at through each machine. Internet usage was frequent but Net Intelligence was very successful in helping prevent access to inappropriate sites.

All the approved suppliers for the Home Access programme use Netintelligence's e-safety software. The Glasgow-based company's flexible e-safety solution includes a complete set of internet security tools which ensures that every laptop sent out under the scheme offers maximum protection from internet threats.

Marc Kelly, channel manager of Netintelligence, said: "We created Netintelligence from the perspective of parents, to give them peace of mind knowing that their children are as safe as possible when they are online. Being involved in such an important initiative shows the advantages our solution can offer."

The Home Access project in the Durham County Council area is now coming to an end. One primary school has already asked to continue the using Net Intelligence, though they'll now have to buy the security software instead of being able to access it through grant aid. It's hoped that other organisations will follow suit.

Bill Pattison explained: "Many of the children involved in this project exist in challenging and mobile environments and one of the objectives was to engage not only with them, but with their parents. In the end we found that whole families were using the laptops. This was evident in the sites visited, which were listed in Net Intelligence, these showed content more related to the family activities such as estate agent sites and services typical of family usage. It's been a real success."

