

Case Study

Telford & Wrekin Council protects data on laptops and tablets using Becrypt DISK Protect

Telford & Wrekin Council enables secure mobile working for employees and meets government legislation for data protection with centrally managed encryption solution.

Telford & Wrekin Council is a unitary authority responsible for delivering over 700 services to its local residents, including education, social services and environmental services.

Like many councils, Telford & Wrekin Council promotes remote and mobile working among its workforce, supporting the Government's flexible working legislation. This helps officers work away from the office, for example visiting customers in their own homes and completing new claims for benefits alongside them. This has helped reduce the time a customer waits for their benefit to be calculated and also gives the customer peace of mind.

The Council has over one thousand mobile computing devices, laptops and tablets that are used on and off-site by employees. To protect the data on these machines, the Council has recently invested in a full disk encryption solution from Becrypt.

Protecting data

Laptops and tablets are in use by staff across the Council and the borough, including revenue and benefits, children's services and social services. The sensitivity of the data accessed, which can include personal details of clients, is marked at Impact level 3 (IL3), and requires protection.

The Council must use a solution that conforms to CESG (the UK Government's National Technical Authority for IA) guidelines for products, policies and procedures for Information Security. It must also adhere to the Code of Connection, a document that defines the minimum standards and processes that an authority

must comply with before being able to connect to GCSX, (Government Connect Secure Extranet), the secure private Wide-Area Network (WAN) that enables secure interactions between connected local authorities and organisations.

Ease of use

After carrying out extensive research on the security products available on the market that could help it to meet these guidelines, Telford & Wrekin Council selected Becrypt's solution for its ease of use and functionality.

According to Paul Woodhouse, ICT Infrastructure Design & Support, "The decision to employ a full disk encryption solution was brought about by the requirements dictated by the Government Connect Code of Connection. We researched the market and narrowed the choice down to two possibilities, one of which was Becrypt's solution."

The IT team also had to follow guidelines for securing remote access to IT systems outlined in the published CESG Memo 35. For restricted IL3 data, the guidelines state that a cryptography product evaluated to FIPS 140-2 standard and CCTM requirements must be used. Also, additional controls need to be in place such as an evaluated firewall. Becrypt's DISK Protect has certification for both standards.

Straightforward implementation

The IT team initially installed two shortlisted products in a test environment to get a feel for the end user experience as well as for the service desk.

Paul said: "As the technician responsible for the whole process, I felt that Becrypt's DISK Protect solution offered us both the ease of use for our end users and the usability for the service desk team to manage on a day to day basis.

Becrypt help Telford & Wrekin Council to:

- Protect sensitive data on staff computers
- Centrally manage their encryption estate
- Reduce time and administration resource
- Adhere to regulatory compliance

“Compared with other products available, the installation was extremely easy and the documentation was very professional.”

Becrypt’s DISK Protect solution transparently encrypts the hard drive with no impact on performance and prevents unauthorised access by strong user authentication. Even if the laptop or tablet is disposed of, and specialist recovery tools are used to recover the data, full disk encryption makes sure that the data remains safe.

The Council’s IT team implemented centralised management, using the Becrypt Enterprise Manager, to control all disk encryption protected machines, with no disruption to users. The disk encryption happens in the background transparently and with no noticeable performance changes to users when they log on to their laptop or tablet.

The data is encrypted automatically so that users do not have to remember to enable disk encryption; nor do they have to wait for encryption to complete before closing down their machine. In addition, all data is protected when the machine goes into hibernation.

For Telford & Wrekin Council, the ease with which the team has been able to administer and manage the software has been of real benefit.

Paul explained: “Included with the cost of the licences that we procured was two days on-site engineering. Usually this is used to perform the live installation and set up the relevant group policies for software deployment and testing.

“Due to the ease of installation and the comprehensive documentation, prior to our first visit by Becrypt I had already installed the product in the live environment and rolled out the product to fifty machines. We have found the whole solution very easy to manage centrally and all of our technical staff found the tools for data recovery easy to use.”

The Council now has Becrypt’s solution on over three hundred machines, with the intention to roll out to all of the 1000 currently in use. Should they need a higher grade product to secure more sensitive data, Becrypt is able to offer CESSG approved products.

Finally Paul added: “Having researched the market, Becrypt’s DISK Protect and Enterprise Manager is definitely the best solution for centrally managed hard disk encryption. We don’t have many instances when laptops go astray.

“But now we are assured that the data is secure in the event that this does happen.”

For more information please call 0845 838 2050 or +44 (0) 20 3145 1050, or visit www.becrypt.com

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