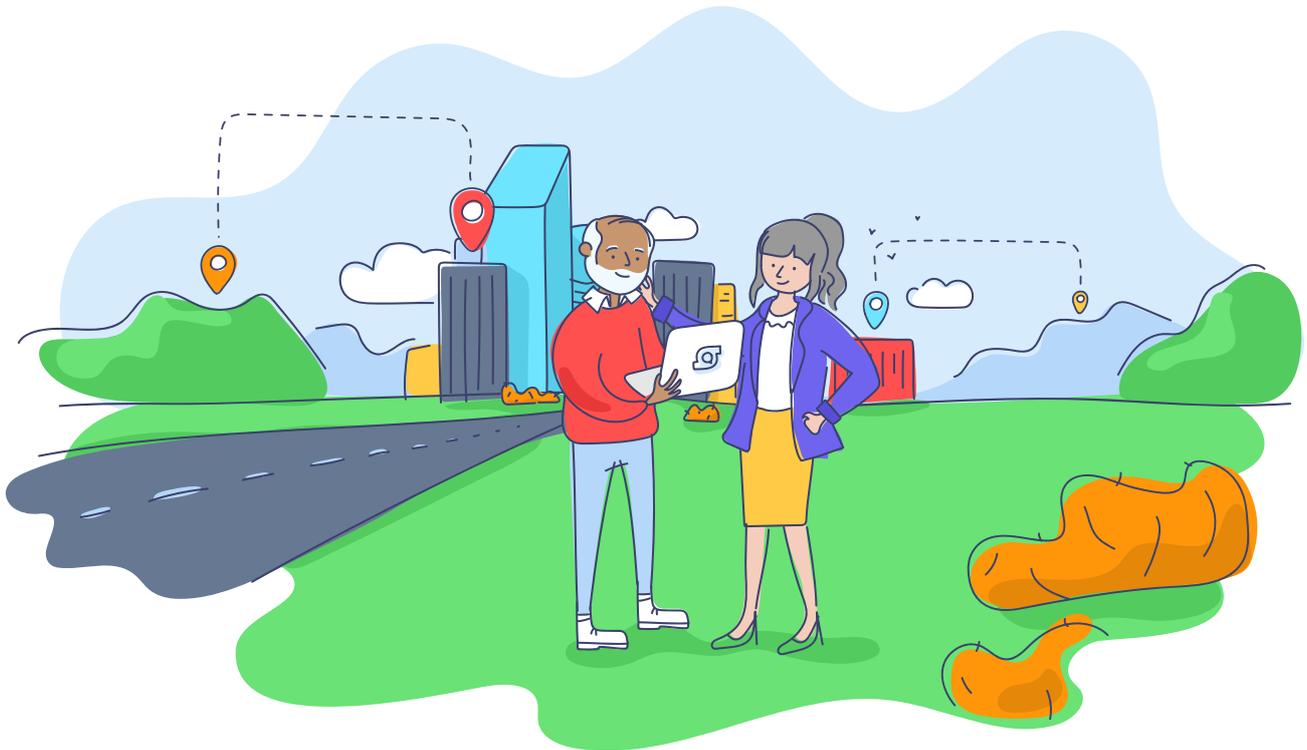


In **Our** View *Focus*



Published by Socitm | www.socitm.net

Issue 30 | April 2022



FEATURING COVERAGE OF



Share Scotland 2022, 23-24 March

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communities
and places

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PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Building on two years of Covid-19 response means regeneration, sustainability and connectivity

Our conference theme is all about the resilience of people, communities and places. Day one had a focus on people, talking about accessibility, inclusion and various other elements of resilience, while day two focuses on data and ethics.

Fundamentally, the resilience of our communities builds on the phenomenal response that we put together, as local government and the wider public sector, during the two years since the pandemic hit and part of the reason for this conference is to reflect on that. We saw step-changes happen over that time and we want to make sure that we can sustain those.

We want to harness the digital and look at cultures, capabilities, technologies and data. In day one we had discussions about culture as well as technology. We talked about hybrid working, for which data and access to it – how we control, manage, organise and give people confidence in this – is incredibly important. In day two we are talking about the importance of data and how to build on that, particularly to enhance resilience.

My presidential theme is 'regeneration, sustainability and connectivity'. It's had some different names over the time I have been President, because we didn't expect a pandemic. We have adapted the name, the theme and the thinking around it to respond to what has been happening around us. On regeneration, we look at how we can reset those ethical, social and economic foundations. On sustainability, it is so important that what we create can be sustained and that our communities are sustainable as well. And connectivity is critically important, particularly for inaccessible areas.

What we hope you will take away from this conference is insight into Scotland's digital strategy 'A changing nation – how Scotland will thrive in



a digital world'. This includes increasing digital participation by helping communities develop digital skills and confidence, improving the extent of the broadband network; and enabling change and innovation through the effective use of data. The last includes data linkages: how pockets or silos of data can be used more effectively to make a difference to our communities, in line with standards and assurances so that we know everything is being done appropriately and that our customers, the citizens, are happy with this.

We also need to talk about cyber resilience, because if we don't have security we don't have anything, and last but not least the supporting of digital transformation through delivering public services that fundamentally meet the needs of our public.

Sam Smith
Socitm President

This is an edited version of Sam's welcome to day two of Share Scotland on 23-24 March

Recording of day one: bit.ly/3tFWobJ

Recording of day two (Sam's welcome at start): bit.ly/3NsPsXa

Scottish Government's digital strategy: bit.ly/3uEDCjY

Scotland deploying fibre broadband to 15 islands

The Scottish Government has commissioned 16 subsea cables linking 15 islands as part of its work to offer all homes and businesses in the country superfast broadband, day one of Socitm's Share Scotland event heard.

Lot 1 (North) of the Reaching 100% (R100) contract, awarded to BT in December 2020 following a legal challenge, will provide full-fibre services in targeted areas across the north of Scotland. BT had previously won other contracts covering central and southern Scotland in December 2019, with total government funding of £600 million.

Duncan Nisbet, stakeholder engagement director for the programme, said the northern

contract will take the longest, with completion planned for 2027. "It does take a long time to deliver this infrastructure. It is mainly a civil engineering job, a lot of trenching, ducting and using existing infrastructure wherever possible including overhead," he said.

The 100% target was set by Scottish National Party in its 2016 manifesto, to be met by the end of 2021. In areas where there are no plans to introduce superfast broadband the government provides vouchers worth up to £5,000 to set up a permanent connection using standalone technologies. Nisbet said this includes satellite services, but these cost £500 for equipment then £90 a month, and the dishes have to track the positions of low-orbit satellites. An interim voucher scheme, designed to help pay for a short-term connection before new services went online, was due to close at the end of March.

Nisbet added that 5G wireless technology may in future help connect some properties, typically at the edge of cities, although there is also a trial taking place in Orkney. However, use of 5G may be restricted by lack of access to suitable radio spectrum.

At present, 95% of Scottish properties have access to superfast broadband. The R100 contracts and voucher schemes aim to establish or support services in areas where commercial provision is not viable. It co-exists with the UK government's Project Gigabit, launched in April 2021 to provide 85% of premises across the UK with access to gigabit-speed internet, and funding to upgrade connections to public-sector sites.



"It does take a long time to deliver this infrastructure. It is mainly a civil engineering job"

*Duncan Nisbet,
Scottish Government*

Microsoft licence hindered Scottish Parliament's record management

The Scottish Parliament found it could not manage records to the level it requires, including recording when documents are destroyed, with its E3 Microsoft licence when moving from an on-premise system to Microsoft 365, head of information management Gordon Hobbs told day two of the event. The parliament is also required to archive documents with National Records of Scotland: "Out of the box, Microsoft 365 doesn't give you the opportunity to do this," he added. Hobbs reports to the parliament's IT service, which he said helps ensure that records management is considered when technology is set up.

Socitm Advisory's director of innovation and insights Andrew Rogers is currently acting as the interim digital services director of Midlothian Council and helping to develop a five-year corporate strategy, he told the event. The consultancy, which has contributed £1.1 million to Socitm, is also working with clients including Glasgow City Council and South Ayrshire Council.

See more

Recording of day one: bit.ly/3tFWobJ

Scotland Superfast: scotlandsuperfast.com

Socitm Advisory: advisory.socitm.net

Don't sleepwalk back to pre-Covid ways says panel

Local government should retain some practices it adopted during the Covid-19 pandemic, including working outside offices and rapidly adapting to circumstances, panellists said on day one of the event.

"We can have a culture where it's OK to work away from a place. We can work really fast collaboratively to deliver new things without waiting for permission," said Jane Fowler, head of customer support services at Argyll and Bute Council. "I'd love to see that permission continue to be allowed."

She said that her council, which covers an area from the edge of Glasgow to rural peninsulas and islands, has for several years given staff tools such as laptops and collaboration

software to work remotely. Holding events such as this one online made it financially viable to attend, she added: "Please do not go back to just having in-person events."

However, Fowler added that it was important to remember that some areas of Argyll and Bute and elsewhere in Scotland have no mobile coverage and very poor internet services, meaning they will need connection alternatives when analogue telephony services are shut down in 2025.

"The danger is we sleepwalk back into what we have before," said Kevin White, head of digital accessibility and usability for the Scottish Government and a non-executive director of

Socitm. 'Hybrid' working, mixing the physical and virtual, has not been defined and its practices will need to be challenged. Responding to Socitm President Sam Smith, who said she recently attended a



"We can have a culture where it's OK to work away from a place"

*Jane Fowler,
Argyll and Bute Council*

Public sector should stay flexible to retain staff

Public sector organisations should offer flexible and hybrid working to retain technology staff, Steven Grier, who manages Microsoft's public sector business in Scotland, told the event. When the software supplier has considered requiring staff to work in an office two days a week, messaging system "Yammer lights up like a Christmas tree" with complaints, he said.

Many people do not want to go back to pre-Covid work patterns, and Microsoft took a misstep by running events named 'return to work' given people had been working hard



from home, he added: "We have always espoused a culture of inclusion and accessibility, but have we lived it?"

Lois Ratcliffe, internship manager for Inclusion Scotland, added that disability organisations had campaigned for flexible working options before the pandemic, but some employers had said implementing this was too expensive. "The ones who fared better were further along on their inclusivity journey," she said.

face-to-face meeting where one person attending remotely had to wave at the screen to get attention, he added: "We need to start rewriting the rules of etiquette."

Jason Tutin, digital inclusion manager for Leeds City Council and NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group, said there are better ways to define hybrid meetings, such as alternating in-person and virtual events or holding the latter in the winter when it is harder to travel. He said the key question should be who is excluded by how something is run, with some people lacking the ability or desire to use digital options: "Let's not rush back to normal, because normal excluded a lot of people," he said.

See more

Recording of day one:
bit.ly/3tFWobj

Inclusion Scotland:
inclusionScotland.org

Covid app used 'superfood salad' privacy approach

NHS Scotland used "data protection by design and default" in building its Protect Scotland Covid-19 proximity tracing app, Jenny Brotchie, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) regional manager for Scotland, told day two of the event.

She compared this with choosing what to cook for someone with high cholesterol. A cheeseburger and chips could be made a bit less unhealthy with low-fat oil or cheese, although this might also make it taste worse. "Or you could go for a superfood salad right off, which is much easier," she added, as it is a choice that is suitable as it is.

The equivalent is to consider data protection and privacy when designing a product or service, including by minimising the personal

information it processes. "An excellent example of the superfood salad approach is the Protect Scotland proximity-tracing app," said Brotchie. It anonymises data and deals with it in a decentralised fashion: "The result was an innovative app that worked, posed minimal risks to individuals and as a result was trusted and downloaded by a significant proportion of the population," she added.

Brotchie said that 'privacy by design' should start by identifying the problem the product or service is trying to solve, then considering options that would achieve this while protecting rights and reducing privacy risks. "Do you, for example, need to process biometric data to allow schoolchildren to get their lunch? The technology exists, but does it meet a data minimisation principle?" she asked. In October last year, nine schools in North Ayrshire paused use of facial recognition to charge for meals after this was questioned by the ICO, while a school in Ashton-under-Lyne in Greater Manchester dropped its use.

Data protection impact assessments are legally required for high-risk and novel types of processing, but Brotchie said that the ICO often sees documents which fail to cover what is required. She added that they can be used as working documents that help organisations identify and lessen risks. More broadly, organisations should aim to embed data protection into their culture. "Think about how to make sure that privacy-preserving features are built into every design specification and product," Brotchie said.



"The result was an innovative app that worked, posed minimal risks to individuals and as a result was trusted"

Jenny Brotchie, Information Commissioner's Office

Keeping data-sharing could benefit healthcare

Services including health and social care, which need to co-operate closely despite being run by different organisations, would benefit if they continue to share personal data as they have done during the pandemic, Tom McHugh, strategic partnerships lead for NHS National Services Scotland, told a panel session.

"Because of the pressures of the pandemic, some of those perceived barriers were knocked aside," he said of meetings with local authorities which led to agreements to share information and collaborate. "Attitudes have changed over the last two years." Use of NHS Scotland's Near Me online video system for healthcare professionals and patients, available across the country, rose from hundreds to 20,000 consultations a week during the pandemic.

He added that a Scottish Government consultation on its plans for a National Care Service found that 86% of 1,291 respondents said there should be integrated health and social care records, with information on individuals' needs shared across the services that support them.

See more

Recording of day two: bit.ly/3NsPsXa

Schools pause use of facial recognition: bbc.in/3qGNR6c

ICO information for organisations: bit.ly/3LmXr60

Near Me video consultations: nearme.scot



President's Conference

14-15 June 2022 | Cardiff, Wales

Join us for two days of peer networking and interaction with the leading voices across the public sector. Reuniting with each other during the conference, we aim to capture the revived spirit following the challenges of Covid-19, while creating important connections in this age of recovery.

Primary event partner



More information and booking:

socitm.net/events/presidents-conference-2022



Nations and regions news

Scotland

Scottish Borders Council is setting up an Apple-backed digital skills academy, following the technology giant awarding the council professional learning provider status for its Inspire Learning project.

bit.ly/3iNTqLT

Wales

Monmouthshire County Council will collect anonymous data on cyclists and pedestrians in its towns, having already installed sensors on a new contraflow cycle lane in Abergavenny.

bit.ly/3tPCFpL

Northern Ireland

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has moved from on-premise financial software used by its two predecessor councils to online services provided by TechnologyOne.

bit.ly/3tTgaAC

Republic of Ireland

Vacanthomes.ie, an online service run for the Republic's local authorities by **Mayo County Council**, will help find accommodation for refugees from Ukraine according to the council's director of services Tom Gilligan.

bit.ly/3IWUJm9

North-east England

Middlesbrough Council has published a digital inclusion strategy, which notes that despite a huge range of projects there are many gaps in provision of devices, connectivity and skills.

bit.ly/3iWue0i

Yorkshire and the Humber

Hull City Council and City Healthcare Partnership have opened a digital service aimed at offering support to unpaid carers in the city, including access to online training and support calls.

bit.ly/3Dqj8zm

North-west England

Salford Council and the **Greater Manchester Combined Authority** have started a pilot project that will help 40 young people leaving care avoid digital poverty by providing them with free devices, data and training.

bit.ly/3tOZPgc

West Midlands

West Midlands 5G, which is co-owned by the **West Midlands Combined Authority** and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, will set up a testbed for the technology in central Birmingham.

bit.ly/3iSVxsz

East of England

The ICT partnership of **Stevenage Borough Council** and **East Herts District Council** is moving the two councils' geographic information and web mapping to cloud-based services from Cadcorp.

bit.ly/374Cs9C

South-east England

Eastbourne Borough Council and **Lewes District Council**, both in East Sussex, have jointly chosen a revenue and benefits service from NEC Software Solutions that will allow residents to undertake more self-service online.

bit.ly/3uF4YXj

South-west England

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council has developed a smartphone app that provides information on how busy its recycling centres are, following a similar app for beaches.

bit.ly/3iLCWnB

London

Westminster City Council has launched a smartphone-based MyWestminster digital card, providing access to library services and discounts from local shops and venues.

bit.ly/3wQRBGo

Local and national event calendar

May-July 2022

MAY	Event	Location
4	Share Local - Yorkshire & Humber	Physical
11	Share Local - Northern Ireland	Virtual
20	Share Local - Scotland	Physical
26	Share Local - London & South-east	
27	Share Local - North-west	
JUN		
14-15	President's Conference 2022	Cardiff
17	Share Local - North-east	Hybrid
30	Share Local - East	
JUL		
7	Share Local - Midlands	Physical
8	Share Local - South-west	
13	Share Local - Yorkshire and the Humber	
15	Share Local - North-west	Hybrid



Full details of all our events can be found online at: socitm.net/events



Published by:



Socitm,
8a Basset Court,
Northampton,
NN4 5EZ

ISSN 2055-7892

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Step into another world.

Join Glasgow City Council, Midlothian
and South Ayrshire Council
and start your digital transformation
journey with us.

In the last 6 years, Socitm Advisory have provided £1.1m to our sister membership organisation: **Socitm**.

This has been re-invested into local government initiatives, training and development, and products and services.