

## Contractor Portal case study

# The National Trust saves 300 man-hours in six weeks

By allowing contractors and staff to self-serve OS and internal data



## Background

The National Trust is the UK's largest not-for-profit land heritage organisation, with conservation and sustainability responsibility over 709 miles of coastline, 255,000 hectares of countryside and more than 350 historic houses, gardens and parks, ancient monuments and nature reserves.

## The challenge

Against this monumental backdrop, the National Trust uses the services of hundreds of contractors and subcontractors; thousands of map users who need access to internal and OS data to carry out a diverse range of projects - everything from basic grounds maintenance through to complex sustainability studies, biomass heating projects and public event management.

With its own team of some 100 MapInfo Professional users and an internal web based GIS, the National Trust was battling to ensure that OS and other datasets were up-to-date, whilst serving the access needs of vast numbers of contractors.

*"Manually servicing our contractor data access requirement had become a major challenge in terms of resource to support the escalating contractor network, whilst also having a knock-on effect in slowing up progress on proactive Trust directives,"* said Mike Renow-Clarke, the National Trust's Senior Land and Property Data Officer.

*"We needed to extend access to OS data and NT datasets to internal and external users to more cost effectively manage our portfolio of projects, but also serve the flux of tenders and small projects whilst delivering on key new directives such as our target of a 50% shift from fossil fuels to renewables by 2020."*

The National Trust's Land and Property Data department clearly recognised the need to implement a self-serve data system to accommodate its burgeoning access requirements, but as a not-for-profit organisation, any solution had to be a low-cost, low-resource system which maintained data security and optimised data management.

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Dotted Eyes Ltd • Hanbury Court • Harris Business Park • Stoke Prior • Bromsgrove • B60 4JJ

Tel: 01527 556920 • Email: [info@dottedeyes.com](mailto:info@dottedeyes.com)

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## Project outline

The National Trust needed a cost- and resource-efficient way of managing OS and internal data access requirements for its vast network of contractors and its staff.

Dotted Eyes' Contractor Portal provided a complete, self-serve system for facilitating all data access whilst managing compliance and audit trail requirements.

## Solution

Contractor Portal, incorporating FME Server.

## Benefits

- Eliminates manual data access procedures by enabling a self-serve data extraction procedure for authorised users
- Significantly reduces administration time by automating data licence management and managing licence audit trails
- Frees up internal staff resources
- Reduces time billed by contractors/subcontractors
- Facilitates an increased number of users and multiple data formats



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## The solution

Contractor Portal simplifies automating and integrating the sharing of data with contractors, partners and staff. It enables users to access an organisation's own data, and third party data, such as that licensed under Collective Purchase Agreements, from Ordnance Survey and other data suppliers.

An established software and data licence customer of Dotted Eyes, the National Trust was quick to realise the potential of Contractor Portal and became one of the early adopters in the summer of 2010.

Within the first six weeks of deployment, the National Trust calculated that Contractor Portal had saved it over 300 man-hours in serving contractor data needs. All users now have the capability to easily extract vector and raster mapping and NT specific datasets for their area(s) of interest simply equipped with a user login and a web browser.

## Return on investment

As a hosted system, Contractor Portal is served and supported externally, further reducing the National Trust's IT and data management resource requirements, whilst ensuring that datasets are completely up-to-date. Full deployment was completed on time and on budget, and Dotted Eyes now maintains support and consultancy services for the Trust.

With minimal outlay, the return on investment for Contractor Portal is considerable. The system, which is powered by FME Server, the leading spatial data transformation software from Safe Software, addresses several key needs for the National Trust in a single solution: increasing user numbers, minimising data licence management, freeing-up internal resources, facilitating multiple data formats, significantly reducing IT support needs and delivering a critical audit trail.

## Recognition of success

Within 12 weeks of deployment, the National Trust reported uptake of Contractor Portal by 43 external contractor organisations, accounting for some 230 downloads across more than 60 individual projects.

Dotted Eyes is proud to be a technology partner to the National Trust; helping it to serve its public and its goals. Contractor Portal is assisting this prolific organisation to better manage its land and properties, renewable energy targets, events and community engagement directives, whilst directly providing its staff and contractors with easier and more reliable data access at the point of need.

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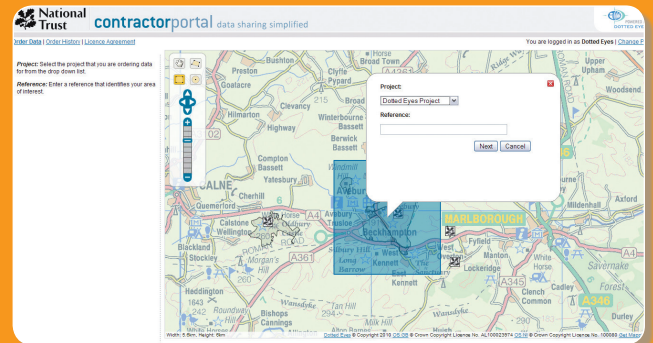
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## The user experience

Established contractors, such as Lorien Engineering Services (LES) were quick to reap the benefits of self-served data. Undertaking multiple projects at a time for the National Trust, LES provides a raft of services including asset location, bridge surveys, water and sewerage treatment, sustainability studies, low-carbon solutions and conservation/biomass heating systems for new or existing properties.

Before Contractor Portal, LES engineers would have to physically go to the nearest National Trust office to gain secure access to its Intranet for the required datasets. Now the National Trust benefits from reduced project time billing whilst enabling LES and similar contractors to get on with the job.



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*"Contractor Portal is a simple and effective data solution which is easy to use at all levels of our business. It has enabled LES engineers to have direct access to critical data, bypassing traditional data management processes and delivering a helpful level of autonomy which allows us to be more efficient with our time on all the National Trust projects in our portfolio."*

**Tom Jordan**

Senior Engineer, Lorien Engineering Service

*"Contractor Portal has given us a low-cost, time-saving solution for delivering effective, efficient and accurate location information to the huge number of subcontractors with which we work every day. Critically, it ensures that our internal MapInfo users and all contractors are accessing the most up-to-date datasets."*

**Mike Renow-Clarke**

Senior Land and Property Data Officer  
The National Trust

