Delivering more intelligence for less money
South Yorkshire Police

The Challenge

- Help community police officers work more effectively
- Deliver more intelligence for less money

The Benefits

- More accessible police intelligence
- Cost savings in excess of more than £1 million per year

The Customer

South Yorkshire Police operates in the county boroughs of Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster and covers an area of 1,554km^2. It serves a population of 1.2 million with around 3,400 police officers and 200 support staff.

The Challenge

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) had already been used successfully at South Yorkshire Police by crime analysts delivering intelligence informing police strategies. These specialists highlight crime hot spots, measure repeat victimisation and carry out comparative analysis between different streets and types of offences. The force wanted to look at ways to extend its use. It recognised that GIS had the potential to help its community police officers work more effectively by providing them with better information about the communities they served. *"GIS is such a powerful tool that we wanted to make it available to everyone, not just our specialist analysts,"* explains Mark Hamilton, GIS manager at South Yorkshire Police.

As a consequence of public sector cuts, South Yorkshire Police was also under pressure to improve efficiency, with a goal to deliver more intelligence, for less money.

The Solution

South Yorkshire Police already used Esri UK's Crime Analyst Extension - a tool developed to meet the needs of the police. South Yorkshire Police asked Esri UK to help it develop a web-based solution that would be easy for all its police officers to use. Hamilton says: *"From the start, Esri UK worked closely with us, understood our goals and developed an excellent solution."*

Initially, South Yorkshire Police and Esri UK deployed a prototype system that delivered the results of Crime Analyst in a range of interactive reports over the force's secure intranet. *"One of the biggest indicators of the success of the prototype was the reaction from police officers,"* explains Hamilton. *"Many officers didn't realise that this kind of information was even available at this level of detail. They started to use the system to inform their activities – and of course they wanted more!"* The response to the prototype was so positive that South Yorkshire Police made plans for the development of a full-featured system - the Intranet Mapping Solution (IMS).

Esri UK designed and developed IMS using ArcGIS Server technology. The solution was delivered in just five months - on time and under budget. Within months of going live, 4,500 people were using IMS, and at peak times up to 800 concurrent users. *"There has been such a big uptake of this solution, because it delivers precisely what police officers asked for and need,"* says Detective Inspector Gary Williams.
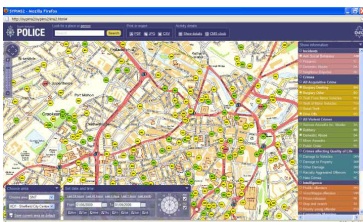
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" Based on conservative estimates and our calculations to date, we expect to make savings in excess of £1 million per year. "

Detective Inspector Gary Williams
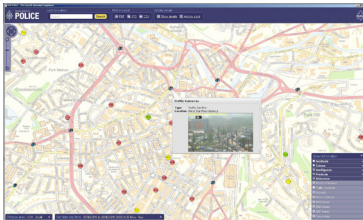
IMS gives South Yorkshire Police fast access to new content, such as live CCTV feeds.

IMS empowers officers to filter and view specific types of incidents and crime.

Benefits

Using IMS, police officers can now quickly access up-to-date intelligence. This frees up specialist crime analysts to work on more complex projects and leads to substantial time and cost savings. It used to take a GIS expert up to four hours to pull together demographic and ethnicity data on a specific area or community, that data can be accessed on the intranet in less than two minutes. Ad hoc mapping enquiries, which used to take at least 40minutes, can be dealt with in two minutes.

"*Based on conservative estimates and our calculations to date, we expect to make savings in excess of £1 million per year,*" says Williams. The development of IMS has transformed the way that police intelligence is used throughout the force. Superintendent Peter McGuinness explains: "*Intelligence is one of our most important assets in the fight against crime. But if that intelligence remains locked within departments, it is of little value. Our intranet-based GIS allows us to get up-to-date information about crime and anti-social behaviour out to the police officers in the community who can really use it to reduce crime.*"

McGuinness believes that the use of distributed GIS solutions will become best practice for all police forces nationwide. He says: "*We believe that we are a beacon force for GIS in the country. The government has set high expectations for crime reduction, and we believe that GIS is a valuable tool for helping forces achieve their targets.*"

With the development and deployment of IMS, South Yorkshire Police has reinforced its reputation for innovation. IMS was the first system of its type in the UK to graphically display crime instances and intelligence together and display correlations between different data sets in an accessible format.

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