

## Specialist Consultancy

Since 1995 Haycock Associates have built an enviable reputation as a leading specialist consultancy in river, soil and landscape management. The company draws together hydrology, geomorphology, water quality, engineering and soils expertise with state-of-the-art modelling, GIS and computer aided design.

They are particularly well regarded for their work on areas that have special conservation, historic or landscape value. With this in mind, it is no wonder that they have built up a long list of well-known clients, such as the RSPB, Natural England, the Environment Agency and The National Trust.

The company's clients also include commercial organisations, such as builders Redrow, Bryant and Taylor Woodrow, who they worked with on a groundbreaking project at Sinderland Brook that marries environmental principals and flood prevention strategies with modern housing development.

## The National Trust

"Technology innovation is core to our success", said Mark Haycock, IT Manager, Haycock Associates. "And computer systems are at the forefront. Using information technology like this sets us apart from other service providers."

In working with The National Trust on a range of projects it became apparent that there was an opportunity to develop a central asset management and compliance system that would help the Trust identify, manage and maintain key environmental assets more efficiently and effectively.

"We suggested that we develop a compliance database for them and they agreed," continued Mark. "With our unique knowledge we were able to build the database very quickly and get the data collection phase up and running without needing changes in the Trust's internal IT systems."

The compliance system was built using Apple's FileMaker database environment. It allows the Trust to capture the location and status of water sources, waste water systems, oil storage tanks and so on. This is done by surveyors, each using a field computer with built-in GPS.

Uniquely, the FileMaker database has been integrated with a specialist plug-in that allows mobile versions of the database to be synchronised with the central database, which is hosted by RapidHost. Over 40 mobile users have been 'syncing' data, enabling The National Trust head office to have real-time information on the status of critical assets and also enabling mobile users to have complete datasets while doing site inspections.

## Reducing The Management Hassle

"We had decided early in the project that we didn't want the hassle of managing the server hardware," said Mark. "We wanted to maintain our focus on working closely with the Trust without the complexity and resource-drain of worrying about operating systems, connectivity, configurations and so on."

Haycock Associates identified RapidHost as the UK's leading supplier of managed FileMaker hosting services and made contact.

"We felt comfortable with RapidHost straight away," added Mark. "They clearly knew the FileMaker environment well and set things up for us very quickly. There was an early problem with the firewall settings at the Trust but that was soon rectified and things have worked extremely well ever since."

The data collection phase of the compliance project has now been completed, and focus has moved to the maintenance and monitoring phase.

"I am very pleased with the progress that we've made in this project," continued Mark. "With RapidHost's support we've been able to focus on The National Trust's needs and make things happen quicker than they otherwise would. It's great to know that RapidHost have got the server management professionally covered."

Looking to the future of the environmental compliance system Haycock Associates are bullish. They are already looking into expanding the range of assets that the system records and at where else they can use the solution.

"The functionality that we have developed for the Trust is equally applicable to other organisations that face similar problems," concluded Mark. "We are already talking to potential clients and the relationship with RapidHost will allow us to offer the system as a fully managed service. This makes a lot of commercial sense for both ourselves and our clients."