



Civica Revenues & Benefits Supplement

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# A little change...

It's been quite a 12 months for change! The climate, political party coalition, use of the phrase 'spending review' in polite conversation, gambling irregularities within the gentleman's game of cricket and closer to home, the rising importance of issues surrounding shared and managed services – all have been significant drivers for change and some are having a direct impact on the landscape of the public sector as it evolves into its future shape.



Change is a difficult process for any team whether it is in business, government or even sport. The strong, close working relationships we have spent years building with our customers not only gives us a good appreciation of the issues and problems currently being faced by you and your colleagues, but also makes us ideally placed to help you re-model your business ready to meet the demands of the current climate.

#### Product stream with impact

As a software and services partner we also have to change, review the suitability of our software and service provision and ensure that we adapt to your requirements, objectives and budgets. We believe that the range of products and services we have coming on stream form the right foundations for the next 10 years, and by setting our solutions at realistic investment levels they can make a real impact for our customers and their population base. This confidence in our business strategy has been demonstrated throughout 2010, during which time we have been selected by six major customers to be their chosen back office software provider. In addition, Civica business solutions for managed services, mobile working, business automation, on-line forms capability and performance management have all been delivered to our customer base.

We have undertaken to develop and promote business solutions that are supported by solid business cases and will help you make key decisions and support your drivers for change and efficiency. Such a commitment extends throughout our software applications and

indeed through our service provision for expert business consultancy, managed services or where appropriate, business process outsourcing.

#### Experience and trust

2010 has been a difficult year and indicators show we may have to bunker down for a while! As a partner to our customers I'd like to think that the relationships we've developed, in some cases over 15 years, mean we've built up a level of trust and understanding. We appreciate that some of you are going through a tough time and that inevitable changes can be unsettling, but I also believe that we can help make the necessary transitions, either directly with our products and services, or indirectly with experienced advice and guidance.

#### ...can be a good thing!

Finally, let's finish on a positive note – there are teams and individuals achieving great things at the moment in terms of service improvements, future planning and in meeting demanding new budget targets, some of the stories behind these successes are highlighted in these pages – so it mustn't all be doom and gloom – we believe we can help you become one of those success stories.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this publication, I hope you find it useful and interesting, I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible over the coming months and wish everyone all the best in meeting your own unique 'challenges'!!

#### Bill Loughrey

Managing Director  
Civica Revenues and Benefits

## 'Milestone' achievement using a Civica shared service model

Earlier this year Thanet and Dover District Councils announced their intention to implement a Civica OPENRevenues shared service model. This is potentially the first stage of a wider project to form an East Kent shared service solution.

#### Requirement for 'immediate savings'

The decision to investigate a shared service solution came in response to the challenges being faced by several authorities in the region following the drive towards greater efficiencies, reduced costs and improved services.

The first group of shared services will include ICT, revenues and benefits and a customer service contact centre. Although the larger project is not scheduled for delivery until 2011, to allow them to benefit from 'immediate savings', Thanet and Dover Councils decided to switch to a merged system as quickly as possible. One of the key objectives for the project is to produce a minimum 10 per cent saving within a two year timescale without impacting on service delivery. Early into the project initial cost reductions and efficiencies have already been identified mainly through single software updates and single system back-ups – the model also allows for the option of multiple or single user sites.

Mark Emery of Thanet District Council said, "This first real shared service with a single server environment and a shared database represents a milestone for our two authorities. Positive can-do attitudes and personal attention have been crucial in successfully delivering the project."

#### OPENRevenues – originally designed for shared applications

Due to the high level of standardised transactional processing and legislative-driven work, many authorities considering a shared services collaboration see IT innovation and automation in their revenues and benefits departments as an ideal catalyst for service delivery transformation.

This potential to harmonise business processes was one reason why the original OPENRevenues software was designed to support the concept of collaborative working between different organisations, and merging multiple systems into one application. The unique single person and place database extends across all the authorities in the partnership, giving users a single view of each customer contact regardless of the council it relates to or where the individual user is based.

However, each authority retains its unique characteristics such as documents, parameters, and schemes within the system, and data integrity is maintained so to comply easily with Government returns. The flexibility of the system also simplifies the process of adding new partners to a collaboration, and increases the potential efficiency gains for each member of the scheme.

The early achievements with Thanet and Dover have helped further develop our expertise in the growing area of shared services. If you'd like to discuss this project in greater detail, or would like an initial meeting regarding your own shared or managed service solution, please contact our team by calling 01635 264200 or email [openrevenues@civica.co.uk](mailto:openrevenues@civica.co.uk)



## You've got mail – improve response rates, reduce costs

Over the summer, Civica OPENRevenues in association with our partners at Relay Station were pleased to announce the launch of the new OPENCommunication module for SMS and e-mail messages.

OPENCommunication enables emails and text messages to be sent to, and in some cases received from, customers for key transactions within the system. Not only could this solution reduce overall costs by over 85 per cent compared to standard postal mailings\*, and comply with your Green Agenda, but you may

also see vastly improved response rates with research showing that over 95 per cent of text messages are responded to within the first five minutes, potentially helping to improve workflow and processing time. The full audit trail functionality will also allow better reporting and benchmarking for future analysis.

#### The business case

We are already implementing the service into customer sites and will be in a position to show the results of early trials shortly. However, we wanted to demonstrate that our SMS and email messaging service stood up as a business case, so here is a very basic example of text versus postage costs:

**A benefits team sends 1,000 letters a month that could potentially be replaced by a text message.**

- > The current cost of sending these letters by postal mail is £9,600\* per annum
- > Replacing these letters with text messages would cost £1,200 per annum
- > Giving a saving of over 87 per cent on mailing costs!

To find out more about the OPENCommunication solution please email [marketing@civica.co.uk](mailto:marketing@civica.co.uk) or contact your Account Manager.



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We hope you enjoy reading the latest issue of Public Knowledge which aims to provide insights into the progress made by public organisations in achieving more efficient and responsive services for their communities.

# Time for new partnerships and commercial realities – interview with David Magor IRRV Chief Executive

With the Comprehensive Spending Review's cuts set to fundamentally alter local government funding, Public Knowledge asked David Magor, Chief Executive of the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation (IRRV), how this unprecedented situation is affecting local authorities and their service providers.

**The Government is asking for savings of £80 billion and suggesting that private sector specialists should take over public sector services. Do you agree?**

**David Magor:** Although the Coalition seems convinced the private sector can move into the gaps as the public sector is cut back, I have to say, I am not so sure. If a local authority is being asked to make 30 per cent savings and is hopelessly inefficient, the private sector suppliers could theoretically assume that they can deliver the service more effectively and at a profit.

However, in most cases, there is little scope for savings. A large proportion of local authorities have already subjected their services to rigorous system reviews. Councils may have already

forced through cost savings using redeployments or even labour reductions. Further cuts would cause service resilience and performance issues. In my experience, suppliers know this and think that the answer is much less clear cut than the Coalition's pronouncements suggest.

**What strategies are open to revenues and benefits departments that could enhance services while transforming their cost base?**

**David Magor:** This issue can't be viewed as a simple question of insourcing or outsourcing. Three areas need to be actively investigated to point the way forward. First, government needs to be smarter in using data analytics to better understand local needs. There is a need to eliminate duplication in their processes and reduce the staff resources attached

to them and then enter into effective partnerships with local government to deliver economies of scale.

Second, we need to educate the government of the day and citizens alike on the importance of data exchange for the common good. For example, the DWP, which processes benefits through its Job CentrePlus network for working age customers and delivers benefits and pension credits to those of pensionable age through the Pension Service, needs to recognise there is massive duplication. There is a wide overlap of processing in both these areas with local authorities. Instead of seeing claimants twice, they should be contacted once – rapidly and intelligently. As well as reducing waste, this could make all the difference for vulnerable individuals and families in maximising take up and reducing error.

*"...there is massive potential for success but it has to be based on new relationships between local government and its key suppliers."*

The third area is benefit fraud. This alone costs local government £30 billion annually – fraud experts reckoning this could be cut by 70 per cent if we integrated processes in the way that other European countries do. The Coalition should recognise the constraints placed on local authorities when dealing with different central Government departments is unacceptable. It should pressurise the Information Commissioner to allow statutory disclosure of information between different arms of government and local government to reduce fraud and error.

**Local authorities and suppliers have learned a great deal about partnering models in recent years, so will they be able to use these insights to meet the new Government's austerity agenda?**

**David Magor:** I think there is massive potential for innovative service delivery based on a new relationship between local government and its key suppliers. In the future, any local authority responsible for a 'core' customer facing services to their locality need to anticipate the demands of the customer. With people's expectations rising, authorities will be required to deliver a wider range of new services. Councils will need to partner with suppliers – on a trusted, longer term basis, to bring about the right results for the citizen.

Strategies such as shared services are becoming increasingly popular. To transform the cost of service delivery, local authorities need to get their key suppliers involved and jointly develop new models

with them from the start. We have seen promising shared services plans fail to deliver because the critical thinking on processes and delivery wasn't done at the outset.

**You seem to be suggesting that providers need more support as well?**

**David Magor:** There is still a lack of understanding from the centre of the way that services and contracts are procured. Under the current rules, any council and supplier that come up with a new, innovative, operating model, still have to formally procure it, which means the supplier clearly stands to lose much of that commercial advantage they've gained. The Government really needs to relax current procurement rules if it is to further incentivise suppliers to invest in innovative service partnerships with councils.

**Do you think such collaborations could make the difference for local government in the current climate?**

**David Magor:** Yes. It's easy to forget how much local government has improved the administration of customer facing services in recent years. With a continued commitment to innovation from councils and new approaches to risk from suppliers, there will be rapid progress on service development and the delivery of the necessary step changes that result in cost efficiencies.



Above: David Magor, Chief Executive, IRRV

**Three areas that could point the way forward:**

- > Smarter use of data analytics to understand local needs
- > Wider data exchange to reduce waste
- > Reduce benefits fraud with integrated cross departmental processes



## Re-engineering a benefits system with a Civica managed service

**London borough plans system overhaul through single software and support agreement**

Civica has been awarded a five-year contract worth £2.5m over five years by Enfield Council in London to provide a managed council tax and benefits administration system.

Enfield took a strategic decision to build a new state-of-the-art administration platform, based on hosted departmental applications and 24/7 system support. This will be provided by Civica as one integrated service. The new system will be implemented later this year.

Civica will deploy its OPENRevenues software system in the re-engineering and automation of existing departmental processes based on a new 'core' database and modular applications structure. This will drive system-wide efficiencies each year, support dynamic product development, ensure system resilience, and deliver rapid return on investment.

Through the programme, Enfield, which serves 280,000 residents, will also provide the foundations for regular service innovations in the future. These will include integration of new electronic claims forms with current systems, automated updates of electronic forms, and online self-service systems for customers.

**Providing ongoing efficiencies at a competitive price**

Civica's consultants will manage the programme using the company's outcome delivery model which provides a framework for Civica to work closely with the council's senior management team to assess current processes and manage change in line with corporate targets.

Lesli Gallivan, Head of Benefits and Divisional Service, Enfield Council, commented: "Civica's tender showed a strong grasp of benefits processes and how they can be streamlined to deliver ongoing efficiencies, with everything

delivered at a competitive price. We also wanted a single point of contact for system development and support."

"Their consultancy team has already been extremely proactive in the preparatory system assessments and data conversion work."

**Model for future benefits administration**

David Roots, Managing Director, Local Government and Regulated Markets at Civica, commented: "In an environment where organisations are under relentless pressure to balance savings with growing customer expectations, managed services provide assured and efficient service delivery, with reduced overall cost and risk. We see this programme as a model for future benefits administration; a managed service that transforms service outcomes and consistently drives costs down. We look forward to supporting Enfield's vision."

*"In an environment where organisations are under relentless pressure to balance savings with growing customer expectations, managed services provide assured and efficient service delivery, with reduced overall cost and risk..."*

# Civica AFD – The complete investigation tool...

Voted Socitm Number 1 product 7 years in a row!

Over the last decade the Civica Anti Fraud Detection (AFD) system has developed into one of the leading products for counter-fraud teams throughout the UK. However, with benefit fraud moving towards the top of the cost saving agenda we decided our customers needed even more from our solution.

#### Image, video and picture integration

Although we had been voted number 1 product for 7 consecutive years by Socitm, we believed there were still improvements that could be made by adding new features and performance to our latest release. The result is a new Civica AFD

solution with headline developments including full integration of image, video and picture imports plus additional flexibility of mobile functionality. These new features combine to give a product with fantastic capability not just from a surveillance aspect, but also from a reporting and administration standpoint by allowing users to link IUC's to specific investigations.

#### Unique modular capability

Unlike competing products Civica AFD is designed with modular add-on capability, giving greater functionality for those authorities with enhancement modules such as data warehousing, corporate and financial investigation, mobile working and shared service facilities. The flexibility to provide a wider solution will maximise cost effectiveness and help drive

prevention or detection of all types of fraud either attempted, or perpetrated against an authority.

#### Standard setting fraud investigation tool

Part of the consultation process during the design stage of the product highlighted ease of use functionality and integration of modern investigative techniques as key to building a successful platform for the next decade. Having successfully developed the current product and built the roadmap for future development we are confident that we have the standard setting fraud investigation tool for both revenues and benefits detection and wider corporate investigations.

For full details of Civica AFD please contact your Account Manager or email [marketing@civica.co.uk](mailto:marketing@civica.co.uk)



# Civica wins major 5 year County Durham contract

Civica OPENRevenues has been selected by one of the UK's newest and 4th largest unitary authority to provide integrated software solutions for the next 5 years. The £1m contract between Durham County Council and Civica focuses on the revenues and benefits service, plus cash receipting and income management. Alongside the revenues and benefits software Durham will be rolling out integrated EDMS and Fraud Case Management solutions allowing for potential long term cost savings.

Ian Ferguson Head of Revenues and Benefits for Durham County Council said "Two key objectives from the procurement process were to secure a partner who could not only provide best value software products, but also give us substantial longer term cost savings and service delivery improvements across the organisation. We believe the Civica solution will allow us to meet those objectives."

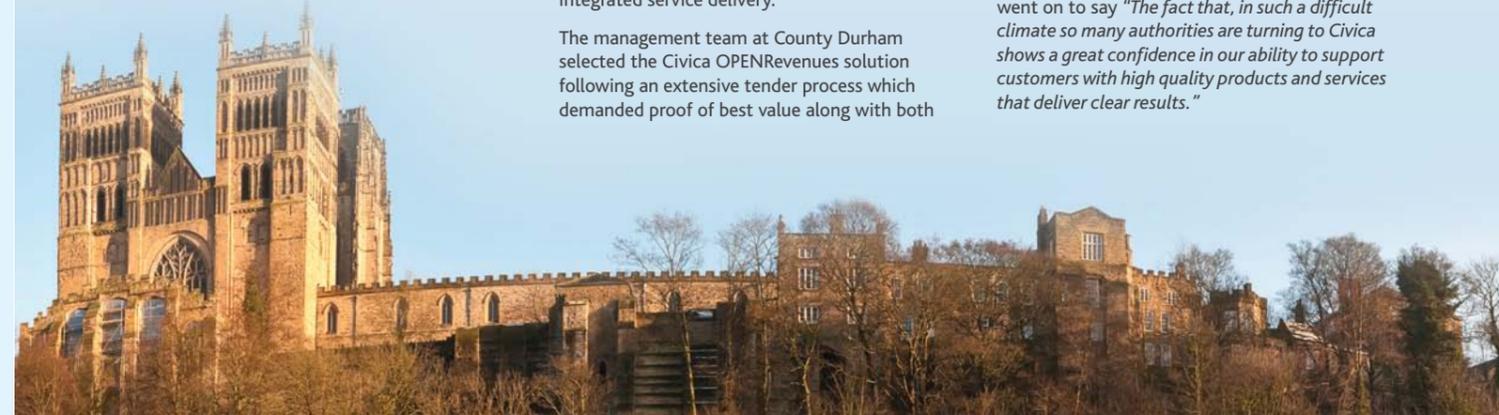
The Durham unitary council was set up in 2009 following Local Government Reorganisation when the seven district councils – Chester-le-Street, Derwentside, Easington, Sedgefield, Teesdale, Wear Valley and Durham City and the former County Council merged. The objective was to produce long term efficiency improvements for the area, and provide the population with more integrated service delivery.

The management team at County Durham selected the Civica OPENRevenues solution following an extensive tender process which demanded proof of best value along with both

short and long term cost saving benchmarks and service delivery objectives. Bill Loughrey, Managing Director of Civica Revenues and Benefits said, "We're delighted to have been selected by Durham County Council to be their software partner across these areas of their organisation. It is further evidence that Civica have the experience and expertise, to provide long term best value solutions for complex and large scale transformational IT projects."

#### Sixth major new 2010 deal

This is the sixth major contract won by Civica OPENRevenues in 2010, including managed and shared service solutions. New contracts have also been signed with the London Borough's of Enfield and Barnet, South Staffordshire Council, South Lakeland DC and Eden DC. Bill Loughrey went on to say "The fact that, in such a difficult climate so many authorities are turning to Civica shows a great confidence in our ability to support customers with high quality products and services that deliver clear results."



# UK council targets £5 million savings with Civica

Powys County Council continues its strategic alliance with Civica with the council-wide roll out of EDM and Workflow to streamline activities for up to 3,000 employees.

Mid-Wales unitary authority Powys County Council is to roll out electronic workflow and document management with Civica. The enterprise-wide programme aims to help the council save £5 million by streamlining processes over the next five years.

Powys selected Civica following successful deployment in its Revenues and Benefits department which resulted in a 19 per cent increase in productivity in only one year, based on Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Civica will now deliver the electronic document management (EDM) and Workflow technology for 3,000 employees across the whole of Powys County Council.

Andrew Durant, ICT Programmes and governance senior manager for Powys County Council, said: "With a community of approximately 120,000 people spread over 2,000 square miles, our geographical spread is a massive challenge for the services we provide and for our employees providing them.

"The main benefits Civica's EDM and Workflow gave us in revenues and benefits were improved management of services and employees through electronic rather than paper-based administration and better home working options.

"The technology helped us improve productivity KPIs across the department and achieve the highest collection rate for council tax in Wales for three years running. To expand these departmental benefits across the organisation through this corporate roll-out is a no-brainer."

Powys County Council's roll-out of Civica's EDM and Workflow will cover all council functions from social care and public protection to library services. The system has already been implemented in Development Control and Building Control and in the Pensions Department.

The corporate system will be implemented using a thin client configuration to maximise performance and ensure integrity of data on home-based and remote workers' devices.

Powys County Council Portfolio member for ICT, Councillor Russell George said: "Our Return on Investment (ROI) study has indicated savings in the region of £1.5 million per year through the corporate roll-out of Civica's technology plus another key benefit is the ability of the system to deliver seamless document management services for our mobile workers that have varying levels of network bandwidth performance.

"To provide home and mobile workers with EDM and Workflow that delivers at the same speed as their office connection is invaluable and we believe will result in more employees taking our homeworking option as a flexible working practice. This versatility will also help us continue to provide the high quality of services to citizens right across the authority."

# Driving down the cost of payments with Experian and Civica

Many of the savings required to meet cost reduction targets across all areas of government are expected to come from improved processes and increase efficiency.

Payments is a function due for an overhaul and can provide significant savings through automation, data quality and process improvement. Cost in the payments process come from three key areas; the manual processing of payments, handling payment errors and managing levels of fraud. What can you do to reduce these costs and demonstrate return on investment within the first 12 months?

#### Automate your payments process

By only using manual processes where human intervention is strictly necessary, you can reduce paper-chasing, free-up staff time and drive down the cost of administration overheads.

#### Validate your payments data

Ensuring that citizen's bank account details are correct at the start of the payments process, reduces costly payment errors and rejected

payments. In the UK, validating sort code and account number is mandatory for paperless Direct Debit sign-up and best practice for new originators.

#### Verify your payments data

Verifying the bank account details provided actually belong to your citizen, ensures the account you are making a payment to, or collecting from, is correct minimising the risk and associated cost of fraud.

#### Payments validation in action...

At Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Civica worked with Experian Payments to provide an integrated payment validation solution that combined Civica's knowledge and understanding of local government services with Experian Payments Bank Wizard's best-in-class bank account validation services. The specification covered all aspects of Civica's services, including housing benefit payments, council tax/non domestic/sundry debtors' direct debits and council tax/non domestic debtors' refunds by Bacs.

Bank Wizard easily embedded into the existing Civica revenue and benefits application and allowed validation checking of payments data

before it was submitted to Bacs. This resulted in a substantial decrease of returned Bacs payments for housing benefits. Returned direct debit payments also decreased by over a third, freeing up valuable staff resource. As a result of implementing validation at point of bank account data capture, the Council have now registered for Paperless direct debit. This will allow removal of paper from their payments processes in line with the Transformational Government Strategy and further improve customer experience by offering a direct debit option either over the telephone or via the Council's website.

Civica and Experian can help you drive down the cost of your payments by increasing the efficiency of your payments process. To find out further details about how we can help your organisation, please speak to your Account Manager or visit [www.experian.co.uk/payments](http://www.experian.co.uk/payments).

# Our first online benefit claim form with FREE customisation!

Just a few months after its initial launch, our new online benefit claim form is already being implemented across many of our customer sites. The concept behind the product was to provide our customers with an off the shelf solution with more efficient data entry and processing time, but also had complete flexibility to be fully customisable to fit individual authority or third party requirements.

The result is an online benefit application with a quick qualifier at its front end, supported by an application form with free customisation!

**A bespoke product for no extra cost!**

Jon Gibbs Pre-Sales Manager for Civica OPENRevenues explains the increase in popularity of online form solutions and the major strength of the Civica solution, "Awareness of the advantages of online forms has risen sharply over the last few years. Many customers already identify efficiencies from greater data accuracy and customer satisfaction improvements available through an 'anywhere anytime' service. But the key advantage of our

*solution is that the custom built nature of the application allows the form content and style to be adapted by an individual customer without incurring any additional development cost."*

**Easy to use with additional flexibility**

A simple editing programme allows users to add features quickly and easily without external assistance or expertise. The application will then automatically configure the pages of your form and once completed produces XML output in line with the national e-benefits schema. With unique built-in registration and authentication features users can also support additional e-forms at little extra cost. It is also possible to introduce wider platforms through citizen and third party access. Civica W2 users will additionally benefit from the in-built integration and single administration system which give an instantly recognisable look and feel.

**Online benefit claim form – the business case**

To help demonstrate the potential savings available from the Civica online benefit claim form (OBF), we have included a simple comparison showing how you can make up to 65 per cent saving in data entry processing time. The figures used for number of claims, and manual processing times are from an actual example in a mid-sized revenues and benefits department. These figures

do not take into account that there will be no transposition errors with automated data entry which will result in even greater time savings!

Number of claim forms processed annually	20,000
Manual form data entry processing time	7 minutes
New automated OBF processing time	2.5 minutes
Minutes saved using online benefit form	90,000
Processing hours saved	1,500
Annual processing days	187 or 37.5 weeks
Civica online benefit form data entry time saving	65%

To make find out more about the Civica online benefit claim form or other ways we can help maximise your productivity please either contact your Account Manager or email [marketing@civica.co.uk](mailto:marketing@civica.co.uk)

26 – 27 January 2011

## Your 2011 Civica Annual Conference

If you haven't been already you'll shortly be invited to join us for two days of great networking opportunities with fellow customers, partners and exhibitors at the 2011 Civica Annual Conference. You'll also have the opportunity to listen to industry leading speakers on the key issues facing public sector organisations. We hope you can come along and look forward to seeing you there!

Look out for further updates including the launch of our new online Conference Portal. In the meantime if you would like more information about the event please email: [AnnualConference@civica.co.uk](mailto:AnnualConference@civica.co.uk)

Add the event into your diary  
**Wednesday 26th - Thursday 27th January 2011**

## It's your conference

Public Knowledge is published by Civica Group Ltd. For more information on any of the projects or services mentioned in this magazine contact us at [marketing@civica.co.uk](mailto:marketing@civica.co.uk), visit our web site [www.civica.co.uk](http://www.civica.co.uk) or call us on:

London, UK  
 Tel: +44 (0) 20 7760 2800  
 2 Burston Road, London SW15 6AR

Leeds, UK  
 Tel: +44 (0) 113 244 1404  
 Vanguard House, Dewsbury Road, Leeds LS11 5DD

Newbury, UK  
 Tel: +44(0) 1635 264200  
 Fairfax House, 20-22 London Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 1JX

