

# Water Leak Location Services streamlines its field-based data collection with eviFile

## Executive summary

Water Leak Location Services (WLLS) worked with eviFile to streamline its field-based data collection and provide its water industry customers with more accurate and detailed information that could be delivered more quickly and consumed more easily. Access to real-time cloud-based reporting, plus the underlying data, accelerated customer decision-making regarding both site investigations and future remediation or improvement works. Paper and/or PDF-based reporting was reduced, with eviFile-held data capable of reuse for further analysis or to benchmark water network performance.

## The Business Challenges

Hampshire-based WLLS was formed in 2013 to support water services providers in tackling trunk main leakage and locating leaks in difficult site conditions. The business deploys sophisticated technologies to detect leaks within water networks from pipes of any diameter or made from any materials.

WLLS was being commissioned by water companies to undertake surveys, but was often given limited information (often just text-based) information about the nature and extent of reported problems. Inevitably, there was considerable potential for 'scope creep' as WLLS surveys would often identify multiple issues warranting further investigation, but it was difficult to provide the customer with timely, detailed and complete evidence to help agree and then prioritise any further work.

Reports were compiled using a combination of word-processing, spreadsheets, photographs and data logs. These were labour-intensive and time-consuming to produce and to communicate to WLLS's customers. Human error during transcription or interpretation of results also meant occasional transmission of incomplete or inaccurate data. Moreover, the reports were not easy to read or summarise, delaying decision-making about water network repairs and other mitigation measures.

WLLS wanted to streamline its field-based data collection and provide its customers with more accurate and detailed information that could be delivered more quickly and consumed more easily. Faster customer feedback and decision-making would then help WLLS support any further investigations, ensuring leaks were repaired more quickly, limiting water loss and consumer inconvenience.



### Benefits/achievements

- *Improved information quality, consistency and completeness*
- *Greater re-use of information*
- *Improved process compliance*
- *Improved management reporting, oversight and visibility of project progress*
- *Faster, more real-time reporting*
- *More faith in system to support decisions*
- *Better decision-making*
- *Reduced use of paper- and/or PDF-based reporting*
- *More accurate and rapid billing of surveys/investigations*

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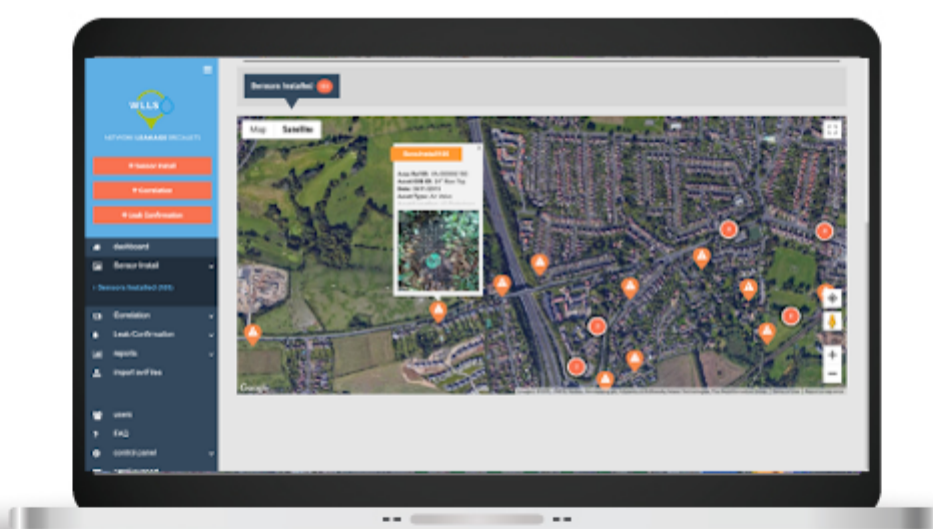




## The eviFile story

Through water industry contacts, WLLS's Andrew Mackenzie identified eviFile as a UK-based technology provider that might help it deliver its field data capture and reporting requirements (eviFile's mobile application had, for example, been deployed on a United Utilities project in northwest England, helping project teams capture detailed site information during construction of a major water pipeline).

eviFile offers a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) application that combines data capture by conventional mobile devices (smartphones or tablets) with secure cloud-based reporting tools. Depending upon customer needs, standard forms are created for field use, helping the operator to capture all relevant information (text, photographs, time/date, geolocation, sensor data, etc) about an issue in a consistent, complete and structured manner (and it works offline too – useful in remote or congested areas where telecommunications reach is poor). Each individual inspection or issue is accurately logged, and multiple records can be quickly explored through Google Map interfaces, or by drilling down from online summary reports.



Mackenzie commissioned eviFile to deliver a proof of concept that would allow WLLS to replace its conventional industry-standard spreadsheet-based reporting with access to its mobile and SaaS-based platform ('a single source of truth'). eviFile worked with WLLS to configure its mobile application so that it captured field data logically, consistently, completely, efficiently and securely.



The eviFile technology automatically time-and date-stamps all records along with their GPS coordinates, and for regulatory and compliance purposes, every site record is given a unique digital signature, helping maintain a secure audit trail of all work undertaken. For WLLS, this was invaluable, as it also helped the company provide its customers with a complete account of all records captured when and where, while also ensuring WLLS billing accuracy.

eviFile helped WLLS to provide a complete and coherent view of leakage issues at its customer sites, aggregating all field-captured data into detailed reports supported by databases of individual records. As this data could also be accessed by authorised client contacts through a cloud-based portal, information could be shared in real-time, dramatically accelerating decision-making. Any additional WLLS investigations could then be quickly authorised, efficiently conducted and reported upon. For customers, the data-driven eviFile platform also dramatically reduced the need for paper or PDF-based reporting; any further analysis could also be quickly managed using the stored data.

Data held on eviFile can potentially also be reused. For example, WLLS' customers may use the field-captured survey data to specify physical works on their water network assets. Geolocation data and other information in eviFile records can then be reused by designers and contractors to ensure location accuracy while providing benchmark data against which future network performance can be measured.



## Lessons learned

- Understand the field data capture process. Record everything that matters to the customer in an integrated form that they can easily consume.
- Accurate, real-time field reporting provides commercial confidence. Field teams can evidence what, when, where and how data was captured, helping accurate invoicing of survey work, and providing a clear basis for decision-making about further investigations.
- Build on the customer's data culture. Understand what (if any) data dashboards and reports it already uses, then look at how reporting and analytical capabilities might be improved.

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