

CASE STUDY

# NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL STRENGTHENS CYBER DEFENCES WITH BULLWALL RANSOMWARE CONTAINMENT



**Industry**  
Government



**Location**  
England



**BullWall Champion**  
Mark Bleazard, Digital Services  
Manager, Newport

**150K**

Newport residents

**69%**

of state and local  
government organizations  
reported being targeted  
by ransomware

**90%**

of these attacks  
resulted in data encryption

*The State of Ransomware in State  
and Local Government 2024*

*Sophos*

## OVERVIEW

With ransomware threats on the rise—and the associated risks of financial loss, service disruption, and reputational damage—Newport City Council, in partnership with shared services provider SRS Wales, has taken a proactive step by deploying BullWall’s Ransomware Containment solution. The implementation adds a critical final layer of protection, offering peace of mind and excellent value for money.

## A CITY OF GROWTH AND RESPONSIBILITY

Located in South Wales, Newport is a university city undergoing significant regeneration, including major investments that are transforming the region and attracting new business opportunities. It is home to the £100 million International Convention Centre Wales at the Celtic Manor, which has hosted high-profile global events such as The Ryder Cup and the NATO summit.

Newport City Council is a unitary authority responsible for delivering a wide range of essential services—including education, social services, planning, waste management, and highways—to over 150,000 residents. As the eighth-largest council in Wales, it manages extensive volumes of sensitive data across diverse IT systems, making data protection a top priority.

Unlike private-sector organisations, where data is often directly tied to financial value, the data held by local authorities like Newport is vital for service delivery. This makes it an attractive target for cybercriminals using increasingly sophisticated ransomware to encrypt data and extort payments.

## RESPONDING TO A GROWING THREAT

The council already had a robust suite of cybersecurity systems and policies in place, jointly managed with SRS Wales. However, the threat landscape has evolved. Mark Bleazard, Digital Services Manager at Newport City Council, explains:

*“The threat landscape has risen a couple of notches over the last few years. As a local authority we haven’t thought of ourselves as a major target. But there’s probably a perception that we have lesser defences than private or central government organisations. There have been several attacks on councils costing millions in time, money, service continuity and damage to reputation. The impact of services not being available is huge.”*

Cybersecurity now ranks among the top risks on the council’s corporate risk register—alongside other significant issues such as finance and Brexit.

## DISCOVERING BULLWALL

The decision to deploy BullWall’s Ransomware Containment solution was reinforced after discussions with another local council that had successfully implemented it.

*“Our initial reaction was a bit dismissive, but we were impressed when we saw a demonstration of the solution. It refocused us to the huge impact of ransomware and that those attacks were getting a lot nastier and more significant than in the past. Also, the investment was relatively modest in terms of what we were getting in return.”*

The council conducted rigorous testing with BullWall to validate the solution’s compatibility with its IT environment. This included an impact assessment to evaluate potential service downtime and staffing costs, helping quantify the value of the investment.

## REAL-TIME RANSOMWARE PROTECTION

Now successfully deployed, BullWall’s Ransomware Containment actively monitors data activity in real time across SAN/NAS file shares, virtual machines, domain



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Digital Services Manager  
Newport City Council



controllers, database servers, and application servers—both on-premises and in the cloud.

If ransomware activity is detected, the solution automatically isolates affected users and devices, halts abnormal encryption activity, and deploys built-in scripts to prevent file encryption and data exfiltration—all within seconds.



Currently, the solution protects shared data on the council's file servers. The next phase will see its rollout to applications such as Microsoft SharePoint and OneDrive as these platforms are adopted by council staff.

The implementation was carried out with support from BullWall's partner, Ricoh, and procured via a managed services framework agreement through Procurement Services.

## TANGIBLE BENEFITS AND PEACE OF MIND

One of the key advantages of BullWall's solution is its low-maintenance operation. It runs quietly in the background, only stepping in if a ransomware threat bypasses existing security layers. For Newport City Council, this provides a crucial safety net.

*"You cannot afford to be complacent - other incidents in the news have shown us the consequences if one of these things were to hit us. BullWall Ransomware Containment is good value for money and it gives us greater confidence. Newport CC, working with SRS Wales, has lots of security systems and fundamentally they do a good job. But, as with any*



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Newport City Council



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## ABOUT BULLWALL

BullWall is the pioneer in ransomware resilience, providing robust defenses against the relentless threat of ransomware. Our focus on the latest ransomware tactics uniquely addresses critical gaps left by other security solutions. By delivering server-based protection without an endpoint agent, BullWall keeps critical IT infrastructure secure and operational during the core stages of an attack – before, during and after.

Learn more at [www.bullwall.com](http://www.bullwall.com).

