Silverfort | BlueFort Security

CASE STUDY

Securing the frontline: How Lancashire County Council protects essential public services

BASED
Lancashire, UK

INDUSTRY
Local government

USERS
13,000+

ENVIRONMENT
Two Active Directory Forests
Separate Active Directory domain for public library services
Entra ID with conditional access

Lancashire County Council

Lancashire County Council supports communities across Lancashire by providing core public services, including education, social care, and public infrastructure. Its systems support the day-to-day delivery of services that residents and local organisations rely on, making operational continuity and resilience a priority for the council.

THE CHALLENGE:

Protect legacy infrastructure and mission critical business applications without disrupting public services

- Inability to enforce MFA protection for administrative and application access in Active Directory (AD)
- Limited visibility into legacy authentication protocols usage across business and public-facing applications
- Blind spots around service account activity, increasing the risk of misuse and lateral movement

THE SOLUTION:

Secured privileged access and achieved end-to-end visibility across legacy authentications within AD

- Enforced MFA protection for admin authentications to on-prem resources over RDP and SMB sessions, including critical business applications
- Gained complete visibility into legacy protocols usage to support reduction and policy enforcement
- Identified dormant and high-risk service account activity to apply virtual fencing policies, risk mitigation and safe clean-up process

The challenge: Identity security gaps across systems that underpin public services

Lancashire County Council is a large UK public institution, and it operates a complex on-prem AD environment that supports administrative access alongside a wide range of critical business and public-facing applications. While modern identity security controls were already in place across cloud environments, extending the same level of protection to on-prem resources proved significantly more challenging.

"We use on-prem Active Directory for our main identity platform, and all we were protecting those accounts with was a username and password. That's an aged insecure approach. We were looking for a second factor to close that gap."

— Andrew McKenzie,
Principal ICT Architect, Lancashire County Council

As the Council assessed its overall security posture and long-term roadmap, addressing this gap became increasingly critical. With legacy protocols in place, Lancashire County Council needed stronger identity security controls and greater visibility, without introducing operational friction or risking disruption to essential public services.

"It was already on our roadmap of things to do, but an external audit identified that this was something we should have in place, which pushed it higher up the priority list," – said Andrew

Finding the right identity security platform

With a clear requirement to strengthen on-prem identity security controls, Lancashire County Council began evaluating solutions that could enforce MFA protection for critical resources and business applications within AD without increasing risk in a large and complex council environment.

Silverfort stood out as a purpose-built platform designed to secure on-prem AD and legacy protocols authentications. To validate the approach in practice, Lancashire County Council worked closely with BlueFort Security, a Platinum partner, and trusted cybersecurity partner, to run a POC and confirm the solution could be deployed safely and at scale across its environment.

"BlueFort Security sent us the prerequisites and worked through them with us, and then we deployed the platform together over a series of calls. We're a large county council with a significant user base, so while the platform itself can be deployed quickly, introducing new controls at our scale has to be done carefully," – said Darrell Gouldthorpe, IT Engineer, Lancashire County Council

"We operate primarily within the Microsoft ecosystem, so we spoke to Microsoft first to understand what was available or on their roadmap. They didn't have anything that met the requirement, but they did suggest speaking to Silverfort, as they were having similar conversations with other customers."

— Andrew McKenzie,
Principal ICT Architect, Lancashire County Council

The solution: Enforcing MFA and securing legacy authentications across AD

Following a successful POC, BlueFort Security led the technical design, configuration, and implementation of Silverfort across Lancashire County Council's on-prem AD environment. The initial focus was securing administrative access to critical on-prem resources and business applications by enforcing MFA protection across key legacy authentication paths, including RDP and SMB. BlueFort partnered with Lancashire County Council's technical teams to deliver a controlled rollout, seamless integration with existing infrastructure, and minimal disruption to operations.

"We have eight MFA policies in place, covering scenarios such as RDP access to any device using an admin account, or connecting via SMB as an administrator. Anything that involves moving between devices will trigger MFA."

— Darrell Gouldthorpe,
IT Engineer, Lancashire County Council

In addition to enforcing MFA, the Council gained clear visibility into legacy authentication activity within their AD environment. This enabled the IT team to identify where older protocols were still in use across business and public-facing applications, and to determine where additional controls could be applied safely.

“The Authentication Logs gave us a much clearer picture of what was happening across the estate. In one case, we could see many failed authentications coming from Windows printing services, which helped us identify an issue and take it forward with Microsoft,” – said Darrell

Service accounts were another key focus of the deployment. With Silverfort, the Council gained deep insights into service account activity across AD, allowing its IT team to identify accounts with overprivileged access and those that no longer appeared to be actively required, and to apply more targeted controls without disrupting critical services.

> "The service account analysis helped us understand where accounts were actually being used, because that isn't always clear just from the account name. In some cases, we could see that a single account was being used far more broadly than originally intended, or that it no longer appeared to be required. That visibility let us take a more measured approach, tightening controls and addressing dormant accounts without breaking anything."
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> — Darrell Gouldthorpe,
> IT Engineer, Lancashire County Council

Delivering stronger on-prem identity security to protect public services

By enforcing MFA protection on administrative access, improving visibility into legacy authentication activity, and gaining insight into service account usage, Lancashire County Council has strengthened identity security controls across its on-prem environment. This has enabled the Council to better protect critical business and public-facing applications, while maintaining the reliability and continuity of the public services they support.

> “From a technology perspective, it’s been a great tool for protecting our on-prem Active Directory accounts. It delivers exactly what we needed. The support has been excellent – responsive, knowledgeable, and thorough. We’ve also had regular check-ins, clear communication, and consistent updates, which has made the overall experience very positive. ”
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> — Andrew McKenzie,
> Principal ICT Architect, Lancashire County Council

About Silverfort

Silverfort secures every dimension of identity. We deliver end-to-end identity security that is easy to deploy and won’t disrupt business operations, resulting in better security outcomes with less work. Discover every identity, analyse exposures, and enforce protection inline to stop lateral movement, ransomware, and other identity threats.

About BlueFort

BlueFort is the UK’s leading Security Solutions Provider (SSP), trusted since 2007 to help organisations operate securely in an increasingly complex digital world. BlueFort protects hundreds of organisations and millions of users through solutions aligned with globally recognised security and compliance frameworks — from NIST, ISO 27001, and Cyber Essentials Plus to CIS Controls, NIS2, SOC 2, DORA and the UK’s NCSC guidelines. Their expertise begins with robust identity & access management and advanced cloud security, then extends across the full landscape of cybersecurity, including operational technology (OT) security, data protection, threat detection and response, compliance, and the safe adoption of AI tools.

BlueFort Security is a trusted cybersecurity partner and a Crown Commercial Services and G-Cloud supplier.