

How **Allerdale** simplifies **processes** with the digital workplace



 **Workspace365**
Everything simplified



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Allerdale Borough Council is a district council with 300 employees in West Cumbria, United Kingdom. The location has presented Allerdale with unique IT challenges due to multiple 'storms'. Workspace 365 has helped them to solve these challenges.



The rise of remote working changed their strategy."

We spoke with Keith Hollins, Innovation and Transformation Manager at Allerdale Borough Council. You can read all about their choice of digital workplace, key features and tips for other information managers. Find out how Allerdale has ensured that their employees can work wherever and whenever they want using the digital workplace and simplify processes.

The start of the search: more than an access portal

After a storm a few years ago, it became clear to Allerdale that they needed to mobilise a significant number of employees. The storm caused flooding, extreme winds and major infrastructure damage. The rise of remote working and moving away from on-premises equipment changed their strategy. They started looking for an access portal, which would allow employees to easily access their applications from home, so that in the event of another storm, employees could continue to work.

From a heavy storm to a pandemic

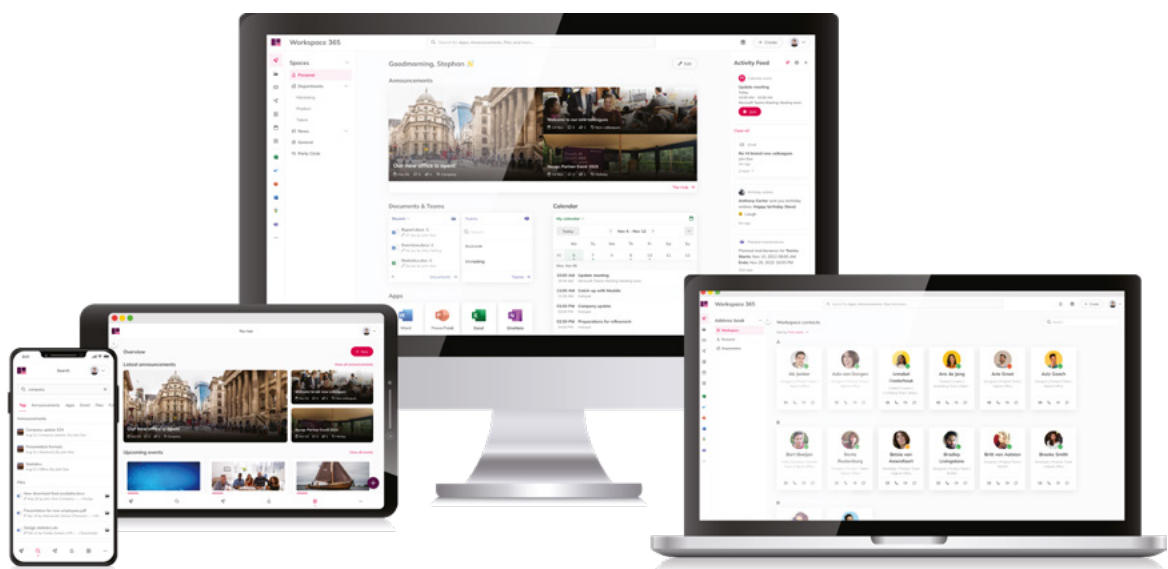
Unfortunately there was just too little time. The next storm came, but in the form of a COVID pandemic. The pressure got even higher and it quickly became clear that an access portal alone was not enough. Employees needed to be able to do their jobs in a different and even easier way.

Fortunately, Keith Hollins acted quickly and compared several digital workplace providers, including Citrix and Workspace 365. When choosing the digital workplace, it's very important to focus on the users. "You can have the most amazing technology, but if the users can't easily adapt to it, then it will fail.", said Keith Hollins. Allerdale ultimately chose Workspace 365 because of its user-friendly interface and the ability to combine all the necessary functionalities into the digital workplace.

One starting point of the working day for Allerdale

It was essential for Allerdale's employees to have easy access to the different applications. The digital workplace ensures that they now have access from one portal, instead of the 7 systems they had to access before. For instance, Allerdale was using online applications, a Citrix environment and a separate intranet.

Thanks to the implementation of Single Sign-On, they can now access all applications with one click from the digital workplace, without having to log in again. In addition, the workplace automatically adapts to the user, so they only see applications that are relevant to them.



All information combined

For a long time, Allerdale used different systems like SharePoint and OneDrive for storing documents. By bundling all information in the digital workplace, users now spend less time searching for information they need at a given time.

Information is presented in a simplified way in the documents app that has a familiar look and feel. Everything is displayed in a by Keith called: 'traditional way', My Documents and Shared Folders. "Users understand this better than all the different applications," said Keith Hollins.

Internal communications simplified

To simplify internal communications, Allerdale has integrated two forms of communication. First, they use the Announcements tile where they can post information and announcements in several categories, straight from the digital workplace.

Additionally, they show feeds from Yammer and SharePoint in the digital workplace using RSS. For example information for specific groups. This way, Allerdale ensures that all internal information is gathered in the digital workplace and users no longer have to go to SharePoint to read the announcements.

Information is presented in a simplified way in the documents app that has a familiar look and feel.

How Allerdale rolled out the digital workplace

After the trial with Workspace 365, Allerdale started to work on further development. During the testing phase, it quickly became clear that the test group was positively surprised, "Why haven't we had this for years?"

According to Keith, one of the most important points of Workspace 365 is its ease of use. "That (the ease of use, ed.) on top of the adoption process, has made the digital workplace a success at Allerdale."

The digital workplace is very intuitive, which has allowed employees of all ages and with different digital skills to get started easily and quickly with the digital workplace. The only training is going through the different tabs and buttons in the digital workplace and an explanation of how to set up the personal page.

"It didn't take long for me to get the kind of feedback I'd never had before. Normally when we introduce something we get a lot of kickback, what I got here was: why haven't we had this for years?" – Keith Hollins

Simplifying Microsoft 365

By integrating Workspace 365 with Microsoft 365 (Office 365) elements, it makes the digital workplace even more valuable. This way, Allerdale is able to unlock the functionalities of Microsoft 365 and show them to the user in a simple way. Everything comes together and provides a great user experience for employees.

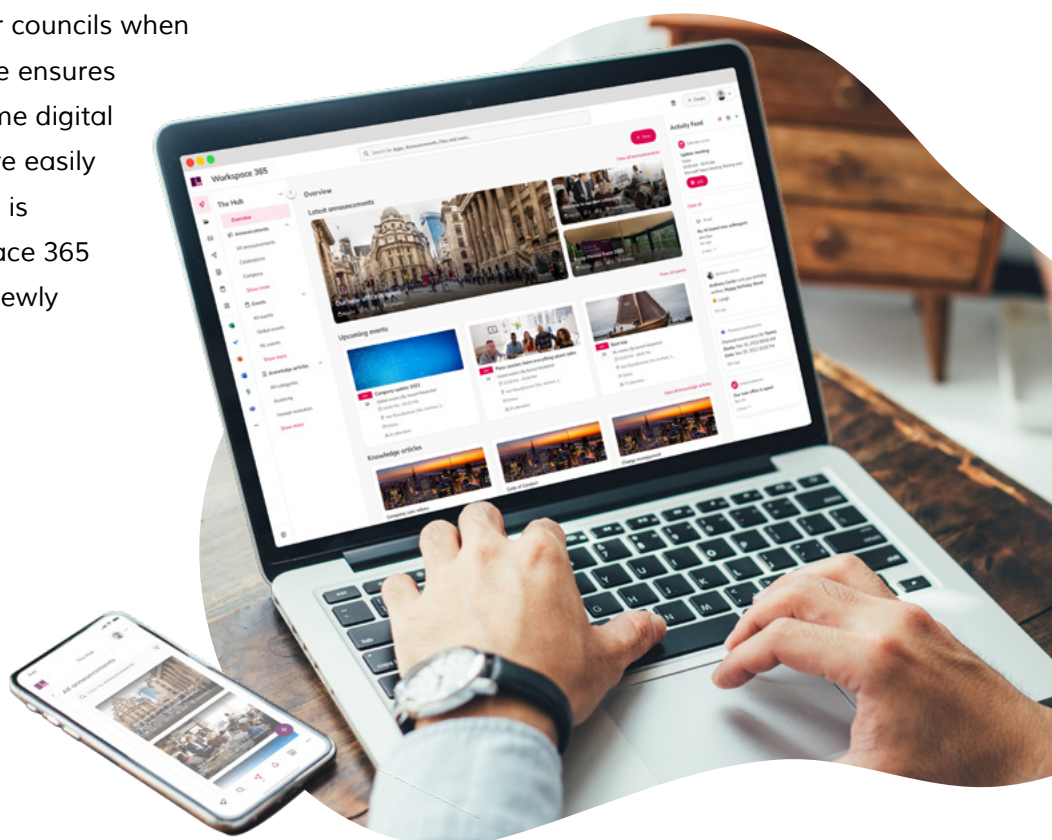
Next steps for Allerdale

A local reorganisation is on the agenda for Allerdale. The seven councils in this area will be converted into two. Workspace 365 will have an important role in this. The digital workplace provides easy access to different applications and thus also to those of other councils when they merge. This way, Allerdale ensures that everyone works in the same digital workplace and can switch more easily to other applications. Allerdale is committed to making Workspace 365 the desktop of choice for the newly formed council.

The complexity normally associated with mergers or creating new organisations in terms of IT is now removed by deploying Workspace 365. The tool can be deployed so that employees can access the information and applications they need anytime, anywhere. Regardless of which council they come from.

"The support provided by Workspace 365 has been excellent in assisting in getting us up and running. A great product, combined with a friendly, knowledgeable and responsive team."

– Keith Hollins, Innovation and Transformation Manager at Allerdale Borough Council.





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