

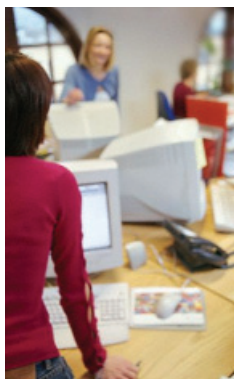
# London Borough of Barnet

## Saving time and increasing efficiency with 14 years' of Monarch use

**DATAWATCH**

Datawatch Europe Ltd,  
The Software Centre, East Way, Lee Mill,  
Ivybridge, Devon PL21 9GE, UK

Rob Graham, Product Manager  
Tel: 01962 835014  
rob.graham@datawatch-europe.com



The London Borough of Barnet is one of the 32 London Boroughs created in 1965. It was formed from the former districts of Chipping Barnet and East Barnet, the urban district of Friern Barnet and boroughs of Finchley and Hendon. Barnet now stands as a London suburb, with a population of 314,564, which has always been influenced by its proximity to London.

There are 13 Service areas within the council and the organisation employs in the region of 9,000 people. The Council focuses on the most important issues to local people and works together with different agencies

to achieve the aims of the community. Investment in the infrastructure, improved staff relations and training, updating of systems, constantly reviewing services and improving accountability are key targets.

Tony Sanda, Senior Accountant Financial Information & Cash Books Systems at the Borough Treasurers Office is responsible for producing the financial reports for all service areas, with areas of information ranging from school budgets to highway maintenance and payroll analysis. To assist with this demanding task, the council uses Monarch, business intelligence software published by Datawatch, a leading provider of business intelligence, enterprise and data transformation solutions. The most recent version 7 is claimed by Tony as "More versatile than any other utility of its kind" The limitations of many legacy mainframe systems still operated within the public sector do not allow easy extraction of data. Monarch is able to leverage any structured data from EG NT/XP/2000, Unix, OS/390, AS400, Oracle, MS SQL and SAP.

The association with Monarch and Barnet Council goes back nearly 14 years, when they purchased the DOS version of Monarch 2. At this time, reports were in the form of a print out which did not allow "what if" analysis, could not be put into spread sheets and was fraught with download and upload problems. Trying to use a product called Link & Load was limiting, as it was specific to a particular system. Monarch worked with all legacy systems and offered complete flexibility. Paul Buckley, Financial Information Systems Manager at Barnet had heard about Monarch through a direct mail campaign and when looking for a solution to their report mining quandary, did not even consider any other product.

Barnet's Ledger Accounting and Financial Information System (LAFIS) operates in a VME environment, using "Link & Load" a proprietary utility program with limited scope to facilitate PC upload and download of information to and from the mainframe. Monarch V2 instantly enhanced the ability to do this with great ease. Once filtered out, this information could be easily manipulated and processed. They were able to automate clearance of the "suspense account". This is incorrectly coded information, which is then corrected for re inputting into the system quickly, improving the true value of all financial information. Reports also give accurate statistics, so large value errors can be tracked. Barnet upgraded on a regular basis, commenting that V3 gave them improved data capture and the DataPump included in V6 allowed them to schedule reports.

*Monarch is a mid-range business intelligence software package, ideally suited to the requirements of small accountancy firms through to large corporate organisations like Barnet, with more demanding accountancy needs. Windows-based, the desktop software transforms existing reports into live data, which can be sorted, filtered, summarised and exported. Every auditing/accounting professional will recognise the scenario of trawling through printed computer reports: Ledgers, Journals, Ageing Reports, Disbursements and Cash Journals and Sales Reports. The information is always there, and as discovered by Barnet Council, the "easy way" to find it is with Monarch.*

This facility helped Barnet in automating report download during its monthly financial reporting circles which are scheduled at weekends making information available to managers the Monday following. They are now running Monarch V7 Pro with a 5 user concurrent access licence and 4 single users.

Tony Sanda summarises Monarch very concisely "If any organisation is experiencing data processing problems, get Monarch. We use the software to clear out errors, download and report onto spreadsheets, which are then corrected using batch update overnight." Paul Buckley comments that getting results quickly, means they are able to produce reports upon request, provide data for the "what if" scenarios and answers, and it represents a saving in staff resources "Monarch saves us time and makes us more efficient."

**BARNET**  
LONDON BOROUGH



Monarch can be applied to very different information, from accounts to logistical data. The information can be used in many scenarios, such as fraud detection/forensic accounting, internal and external auditing, management accounting/financial analysis or cost accounting.

Solutions like SAP and Oracle financials are becoming more widespread in the Public Sector, but are still on the "wish list" for many Local Councils. The theory is that these systems will deliver the information as required, straight into Excel. However, in practice there are two main problems. The data may not be exactly as desired or sorted the correct way. This means the report either needs to be changed in Oracle/SAP, which is time consuming and expensive, or the user has to adapt it each time they use it. Secondly, if 20 users want a slightly different report, then 20 report templates need to be created, taking up valuable space on the mainframe and slowing down the response time.

Monarch is designed for PC users, but delivers results concurrent with bespoke systems that had previously needed the skills of the IT department to implement. There is no need for manual entry of report data into a spreadsheet, reports are instantly accessible and users can open up multiple iterations of the same report in one session. Users can bring existing reports into Monarch, transform reports into live data and start discovering new business intelligence insights immediately.

Datawatch is a solutions driven company which works to truly understand its customers' businesses, solutions that promote synergy between the people, processes, and partnerships that make up every organisation.



Datawatch Europe Ltd,  
The Software Centre, East Way, Lee Mill,  
Ivybridge, Devon PL21 9GE, UK

Rob Graham, Product Manager  
Tel: 01962 835014  
rob.graham@datawatch-europe.com

*Datawatch is a solutions driven company which works to truly understand its customers' businesses, solutions that promote synergy between the people, processes, and partnerships that make up every organisation.*

*Currently being evaluated by Tony and the team at Barnet is Monarch DataPump. This server software is an extension to Monarch V7 Pro, which will allow an organisation to automate the process of producing reports and then distribute them. The process of building a report into Monarch from one or more data sources, merging, formatting and downloading into Access or Excel is very familiar to Tony. Daily, weekly and monthly reporting, once set up with DataPump Server Edition, becomes an automated process. Barnet users will be able to upload refreshed data from agreed sources, using the previously created template and then automatically distribute the information via email*

*As recognised by **Tony Sanda at Barnet Council** "Today's reporting systems are tomorrow's legacy systems, representing a huge investment for Government organisations, which will be around for many years. Within the Borough Treasurers Office, we need to be able to continue to achieve maximum efficiency, which means quickly identifying errors. Using Monarch has made this task simple. It is a cost effective investment for cash strapped departments which solved our problem simply."*

- London Borough of Barnet serves 314,564 people and employees 9,000
- Nearly 14 years ago it replaced its proprietary utility program for uploading and downloading information with Monarch. It has upgrade regularly ever since.
- Senior Accountant Tony Sanda uses Monarch to produce financial reports for all service areas
- Monarch facilitates "suspense account" clearance - improving the true value of financial information
- Reports are scheduled with the use of DataPump - saving valuable time
- Monarch produces reports quickly, on request for what-if analysis - saving time and increasing efficiency



**Monarch**