



INFALLIBLE CLOUD? BEYOND THE MYTH

Last October, a major U.S. cloud outage took down online systems for many household names – websites froze, banking stalled, and entire services vanished. It raises a vital question: what if AWS or Azure went down closer to home – in London or across Europe?

With 75% of AFD customers relying on our hosted services – and millions depending on those calls – resilience isn't optional. In this edition of Postcode News, AFD CTO Leon Henery reveals how our "resilience-first" infrastructure strategy keeps your critical services running, even when major cloud platforms fail.

With over 40 years of continuous innovation and independence, The Postcode People remain dedicated to helping you achieve address, contact and bank data quality excellence. We love serving customers. But there's more! In November we were able to celebrate giving £1.8 million to 80+ charities, who each make the world a better place.

We ended 2025 with gratitude and we start 2026 with hope and expectation. We hope you do too. From all of us at AFD – Happy New Year!

[Read more inside >>](#)

When the Cloud Falls: How AFD Keeps Customers Online

From the desk of Leon Henery, CTO, AFD Software

When outages strike, continuity counts

October's cloud failures were a masterclass in fragility. A major Amazon Web Services (AWS) region collapsed from a Domain Name System (DNS - the system that translates website names into the actual servers they run on) defect. Azure's Content Delivery Network (CDN - a system that helps deliver online content quickly) misconfiguration followed nine days later. Between them, they knocked thousands of organisations offline.

The UK escaped relatively unscathed, but that's cold comfort. The technical failures that crippled Virginia could just as easily strike London tomorrow. At AFD Software, we've never designed our architecture around hope.

Beyond the Myth of the Infallible Cloud

The AWS outage on 20th October started with a latent defect in US-EAST-1's DNS infrastructure. With no way to translate a website URL to the IP address, within minutes, applications couldn't resolve service endpoints, triggering cascading failures. Major brands lost access to critical systems for hours.

We've never accepted the assumption that cloud giants are infallible. Our approach has been consistent: every system can fail, so design for resilience. That principle drives the architecture behind our Evolution Platform, the engine that powers all our services.

Built for Continuity

For more than a decade, AFD has operated two independent, production-grade environments: one in AWS, providing a high-performance cloud platform across multiple availability zones; the other in our own Tier 3-equivalent data centre at our Isle of Man head office, with independent power, connectivity, and physical security.

These aren't just backups, both are live, always ready to take 100% of customer load. This active-active design means zero-downtime maintenance, real geographic diversity, and no single point of failure. On a product level, calls that fail in AWS are automatically routed to our own data centre, and if problems persist, all traffic can be redirected in under 60 seconds.





Unique: Extended Resilience

We extend this resilience to our customers. Beyond our hosted solution, AFD offers on-premises deployment giving organisations complete control. Windows installers or Docker images are available to be installed on your site and can operate standalone or as part of a hybrid architecture. This hybrid approach provides control where you need it, with the option to failover to AFD's hosted infrastructure when your systems face unexpected disruption. Whether fully hosted, on-prem, or hybrid, AFD ensures your services remain available.

Measured in Minutes, Proven in Years

Numbers tell the story best. Over the past four years, AFD has maintained uptime exceeding 99.99% across our hosted platforms, surpassing even our own internal targets. In practice, that represents only seconds of potential downtime each year, with no full-service interruptions across our combined Tier 3 Data Centre at our Mountain View HQ and AWS environments.

That level of reliability doesn't happen by accident. It's the result of continuous investment and a culture that treats uptime not as a statistic, but as a promise.



99.99%

Team and Technology

At the heart of every resilient system is a resilient team. Our DevOps team continually refines our infrastructure for security, speed, and efficiency. They ensure that AWS Shield defends against Distributed Denial of Service attacks, our Web Application Firewall filters malicious traffic, and our load balancers direct requests intelligently to healthy nodes.

If any single environment is compromised, we are ready. In the extreme event that both environments were simultaneously compromised it takes just 45 minutes to create and deploy a completely new healthy production environment. That is one benefit of our truly agnostic, fully automated architecture. But our greatest strength isn't automation, it's our attitude. We don't accept outages. We engineer around them.

Eyes on the Horizon

Cloud computing remains indispensable; its scale and elasticity make it hard to ignore. But October's failures proved that even giants aren't infallible.

The question isn't whether to use the cloud, but whether you can rely on it alone. At AFD, we give customers architectural choice without compromise: deploy our products in your data centre, use our dual-region hosted environment, or build a hybrid solution that fails over seamlessly between your systems and ours.

Every address lookup, every payment, every moment of trust matters. We care about your business, your growth, your success. That's why at AFD, reliability isn't just claimed - it's built.

Talk to The Postcode People

To discuss how AFD Software can help strengthen your organisation's resilience strategy, contact our team on **0333 433 0711**, email **joel.miller@afd.co.uk**, or visit **www.afd.co.uk**.

Faith, Adventure & Impact

In November at AFD's annual charity event, the AFD Directors, staff team and charity representatives gathered to celebrate £1.8 Million being donated to support the work of over 80 organisations. Alison Dorricott, Director, explained why the event is the highlight of the year for her and many of the staff team:

"We enjoy leading AFD as an expression of our Christian faith. As a strong independent business, blessed with an experienced and highly skilled team, we succeed in generating profits. We can then support charities making real change happen on the Isle of Man, in the UK and across the world. For us, our business is a faith adventure which delivers excellence in contact data to thousands of organisations, AND impacts tens of thousands of lives through the charities we get to support. At our annual charity celebration, we are privileged to hear some amazing stories of hope and transformation."

During the event last November, three charities shared how their passion is making a difference:



Alison Dorricott
Director

Rebecca House

Specialist Respite and Palliative Care for Children

Based on the Isle of Man, Rebecca House Hospice create wonderful environments for children suffering life-limiting or life-threatening conditions. Vanessa Naude, Corporate Donor Engagement Lead, paid tribute to the skilled and loving professional specialists who make it possible for parents to get a break from intensive daily care routines. Families are incredibly thankful that specialist home care and psychological and bereavement support are all available in their child's and their own most difficult seasons of life.

www.hospice.org.im



Care for the Family

Strengthening Family Life

Care for the Family is a UK national charity focused on strengthening family life and supporting families through tough times. Adrian Youings, Head of Engagement, shared how they are supporting dads in prisons across the UK, couples through a new podcast, and parents guiding children through the pressures and dangers of digital technology. He highlighted how parents who are widowed young, and parents of children with additional needs are supported.

www.cff.org.uk



Starfish Asia

Enabling an Escape from Poverty

Starfish Asia is helping local leaders in Pakistan change the destinies of their Christian minority communities in the city slums, rural villages and brick kilns. Starfish supports the education of over 9,000 children through over 40 local schools. Rob Bavington (CEO) explained how families are escaping the cycle of extreme poverty and bonded labour as their educated children become teachers, join the police or become engineers, nurses and doctors.

www.starfishasia.com

All the charity organisations the Postcode People have partnered with in 2025 by means of a donation, and the incredible work they do, can be seen at: www.afd.co.uk/charity

AFD Data News Q.1/26

Between October and December 2025 there were significant updates to data on PAF. These included 11 new localities; 6,366 new postcodes; 96,333 new delivery points; and 20,374 delivery point amendments.

Postcode	Double Dependent Locality	Dependent Locality	Post Town
BA2 3		OLDFIELD PARK	BATH
BA2 3		WESTMORELAND	BATH
BH21 4	BAILIE GATE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE	STURMINSTER MARSHALL	WIMBORNE
CM6 5		WHITE RODING	DUNMOW
CW9 5		WITTON	NORTHWICH
IP28 1		WORLINGTON	BURY ST. EDMUNDS
OX12 9		GROVE BUSINESS PARK	WANTAGE
PL24 2	DOUBLETREES	ST. BLAZEY	PAR
RG2 1		ARBORFIELD	READING
TR9 6	MOORLAND VIEW RESIDENTIAL PARK	INDIAN QUEENS	ST. COLUMB
WS13 2		CURBOROUGH	LICHFIELD

The most up-to-date PAF data is available now in our latest Q.1/26 update. You can order updates for any AFD Software solution by calling **0333 433 0711** or email postcode@afd.co.uk

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Peter Denton

Senior Executive,
Product & Business Development



Peter started programming at 4 years old – just two years out of nappies! – on a ZX Spectrum. During his teens he set up, managed and wired the first full computer network at his high school and provisioned whole school internet access – in the days when most people didn't know what the internet was! He then wrote and managed the school security software. Security software salespeople didn't get a look-in for years after he left!

Despite his prodigious skills, in the middle of a degree in software engineering in Bradford, Peter's search for a summer job was unsuccessful. Faith is central to Peter's life so he prayed about this dilemma. A friend from Peter's church who worked at AFD – but unaware he was looking for a job – asked him if he would stay in Bradford for a few weeks and write some bespoke code using an AFD API. Peter obliged, impressed everyone with the results, and has brought his skills into AFD product research and development ever since!

Peter thinks fast, deeply and creatively – then acts energetically. He loves being within a skilled, motivated and productive team – a team that maintains a passion for excellence. He also values working with Directors who try to live out their faith in the workplace, modelling a strong work ethic, honesty and integrity – using resources to do great things in the workplace and beyond.

Peter is prolific in many ways. Rapid coding is one – his family of 8 children is another! Now in his 27th year at AFD, for the past 5 years Peter and his family have been based in the USA, though, like all Postcode People, Peter enjoys getting together in person with all his colleagues twice a year at our Isle of Man HQ.

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