

DOWN TO EARTH. SKY HIGH.

John Ruskin was down to earth. He said "It's unwise to pay too much, but it's worse to pay too little". Inside Postcode News, find out how this applies to address validation - and why your choice of AFD Software delivers. Literally delivers!

In late 2023, AFD announced the donation of a robust light plane to Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). Delivered to Papua New Guinea in June last year, it serves isolated jungle communities. A small team of Postcode People from the Isle of Man made the long journey to PNG to fly "sky-high" in the plane, and to experience first-hand how it is a lifeline for remote communities.

[Read more inside >>](#)

When “Cheap” Address Data Costs More Than You Think

Most organisations assume their rapid address entry solution is “good enough”. In reality, cheaper solutions often miss millions of valid addresses without anyone realising it. Particularly flats, new builds, rural properties, and specialist address types. Others are simply wrong.

These blind spots are common in address validation services built on crowd-sourced, scraped, or incomplete datasets. The failure is rarely immediately obvious. When customers can't find their address, they improvise, or choose the nearest match, which isn't correct. Data degrades quietly. Costs surface elsewhere.

Address data rarely fails loudly. It fails expensively – and invisibly. In this article, gain expert insight into why the source and completeness of address data matter, where hidden costs arise, and why authoritative address validation is foundational infrastructure rather than a technical nice-to-have.

The Hidden Costs Lurking in Everyday Operations

Poor-quality address data introduces risk at the earliest possible point: data capture. Once errors enter a system, they propagate.

Common consequences include:

- Failed, delayed, or misdirected deliveries
- Increased returns, rework, and customer service costs
- Duplicate records and inconsistent address formats
- Inability to reliably link address data with other datasets
- Poor reporting, analysis, and decision-making

Each issue carries a direct operational cost. Together, they affect customer experience, reputation, compliance, and retention – often without being traced back to the original address validation choice.

How Cheerful Is Cheap?

Organisations that trial cheaper alternatives frequently discover the impact only after problems escalate. Many then turn to specialist providers like AFD to repair address data and prevent recurrence – to have their cheer restored!

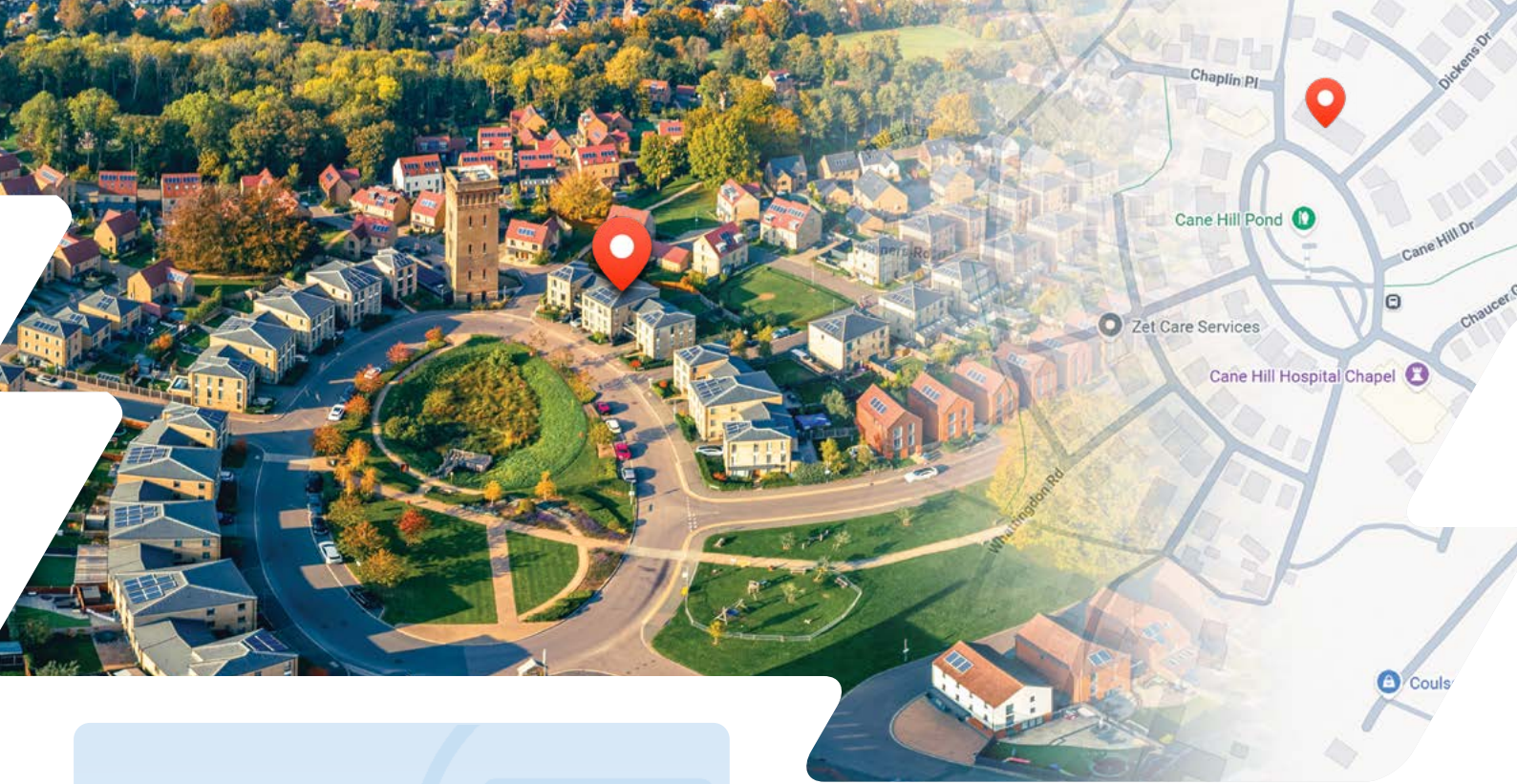
Why the Source of Address Data Matters

Address validation is only as reliable as the reference data behind it.

AFD Software licenses, maintains, and validates address data exclusively from authoritative sources. For Great Britain and Northern Ireland, AFD use Royal Mail and Ordnance Survey data. These two definitive sources together provide around 32 million uniquely referenced addresses.

International address data is sourced only from verifiable, tested providers, never scraped or crowd-sourced.

Crucially, this data is actively maintained. Royal Mail's postal workforce feeds back address changes encountered on delivery routes, supported by customer feedback and failed-delivery reports from major retailers. New addresses are added, errors corrected, and obsolete records removed. Authoritative data is not static. It evolves daily.



Completeness Is Not Optional

Many non-specialist services rely on partial datasets. When an address does not exist in the dataset, validation cannot occur. Users are forced into free-text entry, increasing errors and creating exactly the downstream costs professional address validation is designed to prevent.

AFD provides access to approximately 900,000 additional valid UK address records beyond the standard Royal Mail Postcode Address File (PAF), including flats, unit numbers, and recently built properties that are otherwise unavailable.

If an address cannot be found, it cannot be validated - no matter how polished the interface appears.

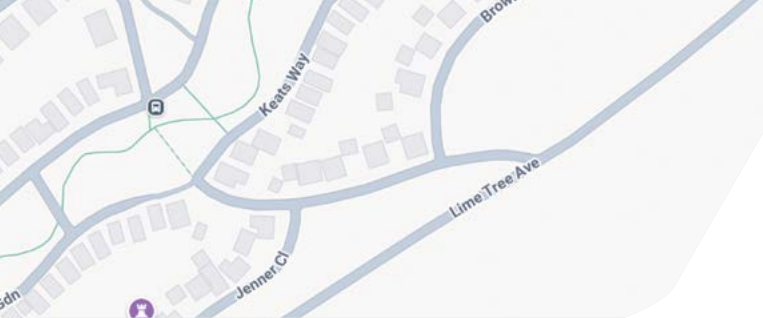
Structure, Precision, and Long-Term Usability

Trustworthy address data depends on consistent structure.

AFD solutions return addresses in a standardised, predictable format, enabling:

- Reliable validation at point of entry
- Accurate de-duplication
- Effective cleansing of legacy data
- Interoperability between systems
- Easy appending of geocodes and sector-specific datasets

Without recognised UK and international postal standards, passing address data between systems and linking it to external sources such as credit reference agencies becomes difficult or impossible.



Validation Alone Is Not Enough

Many organisations already hold years of flawed address data. AFD cleans it.

AFD's cleansing engine corrects errors in legacy and incoming datasets, producing the cleanest possible address record while ensuring all new entries conform to the same structure. This reduces ambiguity, prevents false positives, and lowers the long-term cost of maintaining data quality. Address Validation prevents new problems; cleansing fixes existing ones. Both are essential.

www.afd.co.uk/cleansing

Why Mapping-Led Alternatives Fall Short

Many online services are designed primarily to place points on a map. They may look effective, but they do not provide definitive postal addresses.

Without complete, authoritative datasets, they often:

- Validate incorrect addresses
- Miss legitimate addresses
- Return inconsistent formats
- Create duplicates
- Prevent reliable matching and enrichment

For example, a UK address such as Orchard House, HD3 3LL, is found immediately by AFD's solution, even when entered imperfectly. Many non-PAF options do not recognise it at all.

The question is not whether an address looks right, but whether it can be trusted operationally.

Across many sectors, address accuracy has material consequences:

✓ Education	Lost enrolments, funding risks
✓ Banking & Finance	Failed payments, compliance exposure
✓ Charities	Lost donations, failed Gift Aid claims
✓ Logistics	Missed deliveries, wasted fuel
✓ Health	Missed appointments, safeguarding risks
✓ Legal & Insurance	Invalid cover, disputes

In some cases, the impact extends far beyond a single transaction.

www.afd.co.uk/sectors

Where Accurate Address Data Matters Most

Customer perspectives

Judge for Yourself. Warners Did.

Warners Group Publications plc recently compared AFD with a lower-cost, non-PAF alternative. The alternative could locate organisations and points of interest, but residential address data was often incomplete or outdated. As customer onboarding, call centre operations, and downstream processing all depend on accurate address data, Warners chose to stay with AFD.

They also cited knowledgeable, fast responses from the AFD Postcode People's UK-based support, predictable pricing, and long-term product stability as decisive factors. The alternative had changing service models and lacked fast access to deep expertise. AFD provided clarity, continuity, and control.

Mint Velvet use AFD Shopify Plugin. Why?

Around 200,000 UK stores use the Shopify platform, but did you know that the default Shopify address lookup doesn't use definitive Royal Mail or Ordnance Survey address data? The result is significant address data gaps and inaccuracies. Flats, new builds, rural properties, and specialist address types cannot be validated with certainty. The consequences are rarely visible at checkout. They become all too obvious later as deliveries fail, returns increase and correction costs rise.

That's why AFD created the Shopify Plugin. Our goal is to ensure that you can avoid simple costly service errors that prevent or delay delivery – and damage reputation and revenue. Built on Royal Mail and Ordnance Survey data – the user types a postcode and selects the address or just starts to type their address and AFD quickly narrows to a single valid, deliverable address.

Relaxed glamour brand Mint Velvet is one of the largest Shopify platform users, with millions of online shoppers. After implementing the AFD Shopify Plugin to their checkout, Technical Development Lead Jon Ashcroft testified: "The implementation of the AFD Shopify Plugin has made a significant improvement to our whole checkout process, with better accuracy and reliability for both the customer journey and Mint Velvet's operations."



Consistent address data accuracy flows downstream through your organisation and its systems. It reduces failures, rework, and customer service queries in the UK and internationally. Cutting overheads – increasing margins.

www.afd.co.uk/shopify

www.afd.co.uk/mintvelvet



Accurate Address Data Is Foundational

AFD Software has specialised exclusively in address, location, and contact data for over 40 years. Our solutions return a single, unambiguous address – or a short, clear pick list when clarification is required. This happens even when the input is incomplete or inaccurate. Our cleansing tools deliver consistently high-quality results.

Accurate address data is not an optional extra. It is infrastructure. When the underlying data is incomplete or unreliable, the costs surface everywhere else – persistently, expensively and reputationally.

Need clean legacy address data & lower downstream costs?

For precision address data accuracy, speak to one of our experts today on **0333 433 0711** or email postcode@afd.co.uk



Access is Everything

Last December, Aifric O'Shea, AFD Web Designer & IT Technician, and four other AFD Postcode People, travelled to one of earth's most inaccessible regions to see our partnership with Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) in action. This mission – supported by an aircraft donated by AFD, named, appropriately, P2-AFD, witnessed firsthand how vital links are maintained where the environment is most unforgiving. This is Aifric's story:



Aifric O'Shea
Web Designer &
IT Technician

Lessons from the Edge of the World

“As our small aircraft flew over the Papua New Guinea highlands, the village of Yomneki appeared – a tiny defiance against the wilderness. Touching down on a narrow grass strip carved into the mountainside, the isolation was immediate. There are no roads leading here, only jagged, jungle-clad peaks in every direction.

Stepping off the plane, we weren't met by silence, but by a large, expectant crowd. Some lived right on the edge of the airstrip; others had walked for hours through the mountains just to meet us. As P2-AFD took off and disappeared away over the ridge, reality set in – we were entirely cut off, and our stay was now at the mercy of the elements.

From the Ground Up

Yomneki follows a rhythm dictated by the sun and the community. It was striking to see villagers carrying mobile phones, yet without network or internet, they only provide basic functions. Back home, we are 'always on' but often distracted; here, attention is fully on the people around you.

The villagers were eager to share their stories, seeing us as a rare bridge to the outside world. Their hospitality was humbling. While their diet consists primarily of what they grow – fruit and vegetables shared generously with us – meat is a rare luxury.

Their struggles were most evident in their local economy. Coffee grows well here, but without a reliable route to market, crops often spoil. While MAF aircraft are a lifeline, their priority is rightfully medical evacuations and essential supplies. As a result, villagers' hard work doesn't always translate to income and community development.

The airstrip itself is a monument to their determination. Built entirely by hand over 18 years, it stands as a testament to the persistence required to create a single doorway to the world.



Yomneki Village and Airstrip high in the
Papua New Guinea Mountains



When Flying isn't an Option

But building the strip is only part of the challenge. Back at the MAF base we had met the team that keeps these planes in the air through a massive logistical effort: training, maintenance, fuelling, and complex scheduling. Yet even with all this in place, the environment often has the final word.

We saw firsthand how poor conditions can quickly make landing impossible. Our own landing was a bumpy reminder of this fragility as we unexpectedly skid through the mud. With no guarantee of a return flight, the reality was stark: the only option would be days of walking through treacherous terrain.

Invisible Connections

Back home on the Isle of Man, we're no strangers to disruption - ferries can be cancelled and flights grounded - yet we're rarely truly isolated. Our networks continue quietly in the background, largely unnoticed because they simply work. In Yomneki, there is one known, trusted point of arrival. If that path becomes uncertain, everything stops.

That contrast has stayed with us. Connection depends not on constant visibility, but on reliability - on knowing exactly where something can arrive and trusting the route will hold. When certainty disappears, the consequences are felt immediately.

Yomneki's challenges were extreme, but the lesson is universal. Dependable connections don't happen by chance. They're built, maintained, and trusted over time. Ensuring they are reliable is work worth doing. "



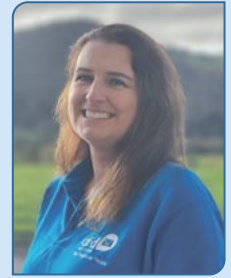
AFD Data News Q.2/26

Between January and March 2026 there were significant updates to data on PAF. These included 10 new localities; 6,969 new postcodes; 112,688 new delivery points; and 19,784 delivery point amendments.

Postcode	Double Dependent Locality	Dependent Locality	Post Town
BT35 8		DRUMINTEE	NEWRY
CV8 3	SEGRO PARK	BAGINTON	COVENTRY
DL1 3	FORREST PARK	COATHAM MUNDEVILLE	DARLINGTON
LL57 3	HEN BENTRE PWYLAIDD	PENRHOS	PWLLHELI
M15 5		DEANS GATE	MANCHESTER
PE30 1		AUSTIN FIELDS	KING'S LYNN
S74 9		BLACKER HILL	BARNLEY
TD9 7		ROBERTON	HAWICK
WS13 2		FRADLEY	LICHFIELD
YO62 4	CAWTON HEIGHTS	CAWTON	YORK

The most up-to-date PAF data is available now in our latest Q.2/26 update. You can order updates for any AFD Software solution by calling **0333 433 0711** or email **postcode@afd.co.uk**

Katy Craig Finance Assistant



Katy joined AFD in 2022 from Isle of Man Bank, and has since become a valued and trusted member of the Finance Team, supporting all AFD Group companies. Her role spans the full range of practical finance, from banking and invoicing to reconciliation, credit control and even VAT returns – which Katy genuinely enjoys.

"I like the variety of tasks and the sense of achievement that comes from strong credit control results," she says. "What really motivates me is seeing how AFD uses its profits creatively to relieve suffering, improve society and further the Christian gospel. It adds real purpose to my work and makes it heartwarming as well as rewarding."

Katy is known for her helpfulness and bright outlook, and her natural positive approach builds relationships that help things run smoothly and get results.

A Sicilian–Manx Story

Family sits firmly at the heart of Katy's life. She has three adult children working across music, banking and sustainability, and she treasures time spent with family and close friends. With a Sicilian father and Manx mother, Katy grew up immersed in two cultures, regularly spending time with non-English-speaking grandparents and extended family.

This upbringing sparked a lifelong love of Italy and Sicily, from the people and language to the cuisine, architecture and rich history. "The culture, landscapes and natural beauty still hold a very special place in my heart," she says.

Island Life and Recharging

A keen walker, Katy loves exploring the Isle of Man's hills, glens and coastal paths, and has completed the famously tough 85-mile Parish Walk twice. She also enjoys creative cooking, has a strong interest in nutrition and wellbeing, and values travel as a way to recharge. Living on a small island, Katy values the chance to travel and experience new places. Her adventures have taken her as far as New Zealand, Singapore and the Caribbean, with many European favourites along the way. A trip to New York is next on the list – her first taste of America.

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