# Abloy UK supplies access control solution to the SafePod Network

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**Project**
**Company:** SafePod Network
**Type:** Research facilities
**Location:** Universities across the UK, including St Andrews, Scotland
**ASSA ABLOY brand:** ASSA ABLOY ARX
**Year of installation:** 2021

**Challenge**
Securing research facilities located at universities across the UK with simple, reliable, and easily controlled access, and high communication security for data transfer.

The SafePod Network is a world first service to provide standardised safe settings across the UK for data that requires secure access for research. The network was launched in September 2021.

SafePods include the ARX access control solution to provide secure access to researchers, as well as CCTV, an area for dataset analysis, and an IT cupboard for the storage of services.

To provide a safe and robust environment for researchers, SafePods required a security solution that could offer a simple access system while ensuring it was kept physically secure.

**Solution**
Several access control system options were considered during the SafePod prototype and specification phase. A fingerprint reader was tested, but it did not meet the requirements in terms of reliability and ease of use.



ASSA ABLOY Pando™
Mini – reader

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Subsequently, ASSA ABLOY ARX was successfully trialled, proving to be a simple, reliable and secure solution for controlled access to a SafePod. Researchers are supplied with a pre-programmed door card that can be swiped over the reader on the SafePod door to gain access and begin their research.

Installation of the ARX solution was managed by JCI, who also provide services at other Universities operating the ARX platform.
ASSA ABLOY ARX is not only an access control system but a security system with combined access control and burglar alarm, with administration control via a single interface.

ARX is built with very high communication security through industry standards for communication technology (Java / TCP / IP, PKI / SSL, LINUX / XML), which means that the system is not dependent on proprietary technology.

What's more, the solution is created by combining function modules and is completely scalable, so when security needs change, modules can be easily added and removed, making it a cost-effective option for both online and offline door environments.

Darren Lightfoot, SafePod Network Manager explained: "SafePods were created to widen the opportunities for approved researchers to work with data that requires secure access and improve the quantity and diversity of public benefit research undertaken across the UK. The ASSA ABLOY ARX access control system was a key component for providing researchers with secure access to SafePods. The online management software is straight forward to use, and it was great that I could brand the swipe cards to give a custom and professional finish."

Paul Nicholas, Business Development Manager - Education Sector at Abloy UK, said: "A key aspect of being able to achieve the goal for this project was to provide a physically safe environment, and ARX contributed significantly to securing the SafePods."