



NETWORK UPGRADE DELIVERS IMPROVED SERVICES TO RESIDENTS

Solihull Community Housing (SCH) is an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) set up in April 2004 to run the housing service on behalf of Solihull Council. SCH manages around 10,000 tenanted homes, 1,000 leasehold properties, 5,000 garages and a small number of shared ownership properties. It also manages around 100 temporary accommodation units, supplemented by private sector leasing properties.

The Challenge

With its legacy CCTV network reaching end of life, SCH wanted to upgrade the system, comprising 480 cameras, with a new IP-based infrastructure that would deliver higher levels of performance and provide residents with an improved service. As part of this upgrade, the organisation wanted to migrate away from the fibre-based network provided by Virgin Media and install a resilient wireless network that make it easier to connect other locations, including sheltered housing and warden-run properties. This would also allow redeployable cameras to be quickly installed in any location to monitor activities such as reported anti-social behaviour.

The Solution

Openview Security Solutions was awarded the contract to install a new wireless network across Solihull. The first phase of the project was to upgrade SCH's CCTV control room with a new Flir Latitude video management platform. This reliable, enterprise-level software solution would support an unlimited number of IP-based cameras enabling SCH to further expand the network in the future to meet changing requirements. The Latitude platform also features enhanced cyber security, edge device integration, analytics and global administration.

The new control room was fitted out without impacting the existing operations. Openview also supplied and installed four operator workstations, a video wall comprising twenty 56" HD monitors and twelve FLIR Latitude network video recorders (NVRs), each of which provide up to 30 days of continuous recording. OpenView installed all equipment in SCH's new Intech desking.



The Flir Latitude platform was also integrated with the legacy GDX5 concierge system installed in forty tower blocks located across the town. Simultaneously, OpenView carried out the latest upgrade to each system enabling control operators to see live footage of each person they speak to. SCH is now currently evaluating performance of the new GDX SIP concierge system which is being trialled at three locations.

The second phase of the project was the installation of a resilient network comprising four independent rings to link the tower blocks with the new control room. This included the installation of new 80GHz equipment on the roof of each block to enable interference-free transmission across the network along with any new cabling that was required. Two NVRs were also provided for each of the network rings and installed in server rooms situated within specific blocks.

To extend the life of SCH's existing fleet of analogue cameras, which monitored public areas within the tower blocks, including lobbies, lifts and external doors, Openview installed Flir IP encoders enabling them to be used on the new ring networks. The company also supplied and installed an additional 50 cameras to extend coverage to other areas including six newly built biomass boiler houses. Eight new HD PTZ cameras were installed in external locations around the blocks.

Migrating away from the Virgin fibre-based network to the new wireless infrastructure is delivering significant ongoing cost savings. As well as providing greater flexibility in terms of the range of equipment that can be connected, the new IP-based infrastructure has future-proofing built in to enhance ROI. It allows the use of remote monitoring and diagnostics tools to speed up the identification and resolution of potential issues to maximise network availability.