



COMMUNITY GATEWAY ASSOCIATION

The Community Gateway Association (CGA) was set up to meet the housing needs of people in Preston and the surrounding areas. It was the first new style housing association giving tenants greater control over their communities by involving them in decisions about their homes and neighbourhoods. With 6,500 dwellings, CGA's aim is to provide high quality homes for people in need and to create friendly communities where people want to live.

FOCUS

The project was valued at £1 million and CNT provided everything from an IT and Communications perspective.



CNT was chosen by CGA to provide the IT and Communications systems required for the stock transfer and move to the new premises.

THE SOLUTION WE DELIVERED

As is the case with stock transfers, CGA needed a complete solution to separate themselves from the council systems and then move to the new building. The project was valued at £1 million and CNT provided everything from an IT and Communications perspective. The procurement cycle was also managed to ensure that CGA had the solution they needed prior to the release of funding.

With 150 users in the new headquarters and seven remote sites, CNT provided CGA with the following:

- Converged Cisco wireless IP network
- 15 seat contact centre with call recording and tracking
- Unified messaging, desktop presence and SMS from email
- Citrix SAG (Secure Access Gateway) for remote/home working
- GSM Gateway to minimise the cost of calls to mobiles
- Internet access, security and monitoring

- Storage, backup and SAN
- LAN and WAN
- Network cabling
- PC's, servers, plasma screens, printers and photocopiers
- Camera surveillance at all sites
- Desktop applications
- Forensic email archiving solution
- Support and maintenance

From the design stage of the project, migration was a key consideration. Data was transferred from the housing management systems and a migration from Fujitsu Teamware to Microsoft Exchange was implemented.

Using a consultative approach from the beginning of the project, CNT outlined our extensive experience of working on other stock transfer projects to CGA. This process helped to design the best solution for CGA and its customers.

The project was managed using the Prince II methodology and CNT took complete ownership of all third parties. The move from the council premises to the new building took place over a weekend, with all systems in place and working on Monday morning.

HELPING TO MAINTAIN VALUES

CGA's work is based on a set of values which form the basis of everything they do. Among other things, they promise to deliver, be open and honest, be effective and efficient and to widely communicate their message.

The solution CNT provided supports these values in a number of ways. By connecting staff in a single working environment and giving them easier access to information, they can provide more accurate and timely information to tenants about payments, repairs or general information affecting their homes. The following are just some of the capabilities that CGA now has:

- Other locations can be called as if they are extension numbers
- Automatically updated directories accessible from a handset
- Conference calls with remote staff can be made easily.
- Ability to see instantly whether someone is available without wasting time calling them
- Every staff member can receive voicemail, email and SMS on a single device, regardless of their location
- Availability of staff by location is displayed in Microsoft Outlook

- Calls are answered quickly at a central location and callers directed to the best person to deal with their call first time
- Home and remote workers can operate as though they are office based
- Surveillance cameras at each office are monitored from a central server
- Sheltered housing schemes have broadband connections in place to connect them to the headquarters

Overall, the solution has improved communication both inside and outside the CGA and it has empowered staff with the knowledge they need to deliver on their promise of efficiency.

DELIVERING PRACTICAL BENEFITS

The more tangible benefits provided by the solution can be categorised as cost, productivity and improved communications. Operating a single converged network and using a GSM gateway for making calls to mobiles, account for the main cost benefits while productivity has been increased due to the efficient handling of calls and the availability of information on how to contact colleagues quickly.

Home working and remote working are also now more productive as staff operate as though based in the office. All of this, together with a wireless network and integrated applications, has led to an improved environment where communication is simplified for everyone.

“We chose to work with CNT because of their extensive experience in the social housing sector. Having successfully completed a project with them at Calico Housing I had absolute confidence in their ability to deliver a full, working solution. We are now operating in a state-of-the-art environment where we can continue to grow our business, safe in the knowledge that the systems are in place to support it.”

Paul Atkinson, Resources Director for Community Gateway Association.

FOCUS

I had absolute confidence in their ability to deliver a full working solution. Paul Atkinson CGA



Central Networks and Technologies Ltd

St Chads Court, School Lane, Rochdale, OL16 1QU

t: +44 (0)1706 747474 f: +44 (0)1706 712222

e: housing@cnt.co.uk

www.cnt.co.uk