



Voyager Case Study | IP Telephony

## Muir Group Housing Association

“We had identified the existing IT infrastructure was not capable of supporting the demanding customer service requirements. The telephony system at our head office in Chester was due for renewal and we started to look at ways of consolidating both the telephony and data networks”  
**Steve Roberts, Network Manager, Muir Group.**

**Muir Group Housing Association operates a portfolio of around 4,500 housing units across the north and west of the UK. It works in partnership with over 20 local authorities within 5 regions of the Housing Corporation. The organisation is responsible for addressing the housing needs of a diverse group of people from sheltered accommodation to the disadvantaged and disabled.**

In order for Muir to improve and fulfil its service level objectives in the provision of accommodation to its tenants, they recognised that their existing communications infrastructure was unable to support

their requirements. Muir needed to have an efficient networking infrastructure in place in order to improve the organisations delivery of IT services.

## Muir Group Housing Association

The Muir Group has its head quarters located in the historic city of Chester. With six regional offices based at Blackpool, Burnley, Helsby, Huntingdon, Hereford and Northallerton (North Yorkshire). The housing association is involved in a number of areas of the housing sector, from running sheltered schemes to social generation and development of areas as a whole.

With Muir adopting a broad approach to assisting a number of housing needs the requirement for efficient and effective communication between the sites is imperative. To improve on the delivery of business services, Muir identified the need to consolidate their existing systems and update their IT infrastructure.

During the review process, the housing association looked at alternative methods available to them to enhance the existing voice communications infrastructure. It had already been identified that the existing telephone network was difficult to manage and very expensive to operate. With a number of regional offices needing to communicate with the head office in Chester on a daily basis, Muir realised the majority of its spending was from making inter-office calls.

“When considering the implementation of the new infrastructure, we found that the costs we had accumulated in making critical inter-office calls from the existing telephone system were extremely high. With the implementation of VoIP across the network, the cost of inter-office calls would be reduced dramatically and the return on investment would be high,” comments **Steve Roberts**.

The IT department also recognised the need for the standardisation of hardware applications. Muir had in place a variety of hardware applications across their network and running these multiple applications only added to the increasing costs the company was incurring.

From the key features identified with the existing infrastructure Muir recognised the need for a solution that could reduce costs, improve tenant relationships and produce mobility amongst its staff, whilst helping Muir Group achieve their business objectives.



## the challenge

Having quickly identified the limitations of the existing telephone system in Chester, Muir set about looking for a new solution. Muir looked to Voyager Networks, a preferred National Housing Federation partner for the provision of IT networking solutions, to provide and support a reliable network infrastructure.

Voyager has a long standing relationship with Muir and has worked on a number of projects in the past. Voyager identified that the existing infrastructure and the Toshiba DK280 telephone system and legacy data network needed to be consolidated. The housing association also needed to standardise the telephony systems across the whole organisation.

The proposed changes would ensure a secure, scalable network capable of handling the increased level of voice and data traffic across the network. It would also allow them to meet their service level requirements of providing quality housing for those in need.

## the solution

Voyager completed a full site survey and security analysis. The survey took into account the current infrastructure and the telephony requirements of the regional offices and future needs. Voyager suggested the implementation of a new data solution at their new site in Helsby that included a Wide Area Network (WAN) along with a VoIP solution to connect to the headquarters, featuring Cisco Call Manager for corporate telephony services and Cisco Unity for employee messaging. This broadband solution facilitated the consolidation of the infrastructures at both sites, providing Muir with a seamless new infrastructure.

Following the success of the initial implementations, Voyager added two further remote sites, Huntingdon and Burnley to the VoIP network. This allowed the organisation to reduce its operational costs by applying a telephony feature called Toll bypass between the sites. The new systems introduced significant improvements in network management and staff mobility.

With the proof of concept undertaken, Voyager incorporated 17 additional remote sites into the network which included small offices and home office workers, many of whom use their telephone to communicate over the broadband (DSL) connection. These users now have the ability to access the Muir Housing network and communicate with anyone in the company, at no additional cost.

## the benefits

The adoption of IP Telephony and VoIP between the offices has brought much needed flexibility and cost savings to the organisation. The processing of housing contracts is now automated which saves time and allows the staff to be more responsive to customer requirements.

The introduction of VoIP has allowed inter-site calls to be free for the first time, dramatically reducing costs, along with the reduction of maintenance costs through the standardisation of hardware across the organisation. The solution put forward by Voyager has provided a high performing, scalable network capable of dealing with increased traffic levels and transparently linking remote users.

“We chose Voyager not because of price but because of the excellent service we have received in the past. The project has now been completed and we have in place a reliable network infrastructure which is significantly easier to manage. This is something that the business demanded; as we could not afford to lose the IT services as it would seriously impede the operations of the business”, comments **Steve Roberts**.

### the objectives

- Provide a converged voice and data infrastructure to facilitate cost reduction, flexible working and improved customer satisfaction.
- Provide an enhanced telephony system capable of expanding with the company's future requirements.
- Provide access for remote office users and home workers to enable a virtual customer contact centre to be implemented.

### the solution

- Implementation of a resilient Cisco IP Communications solution featuring Cisco Call Manager for corporate telephony services and Cisco Unity for employee messaging.
- Consolidation of all telecoms costs into a centralised, easy to manage package with PSTN dial out provided from one central location.
- Integration of remote sites and employees via broadband using Cisco IP Communicator soft phones and IP Phones.
- ‘Contact centre-ready’ design featuring location independent working, end to end IP infrastructure and centralised corporate communications directory.

### the key benefits

- Increased productivity, reliability and cost savings compared to the previous solution.
- Increased visibility and auditing of customer transactions to ensure monitoring of performance against KPI targets.
- Scalable open standards architecture reduces the complexity and time associated with the introduction of new applications and facilitates application integration.
- The ability to easily integrate with other organisations in the future should the need arise.



Phone: 01244 313 613  
W: [www.muir.org.uk](http://www.muir.org.uk)  
E: [info@muir.org.uk](mailto:info@muir.org.uk)



# need more information?



Voyager has published a series of documents providing customers with a comprehensive set of procedures for implementing convergence based technologies. The step by step approach taken by Voyager Networks ensures that the correct technology and security measures are adopted for each customers specific access needs.

For more information on how **Voyager Networks** can help your organisation meet your business objectives, please call Voyager on:

# 0870 170 9700

## Voyager Networks, your partner of choice

Voyager Networks develops and deploys secure multi-service Internet Protocol (IP) solutions for private and public sector organisations across the UK.

Established in 1993, Voyager's core strength is adopting new and advanced technologies and translating them into effective solutions that deliver genuine business value for it's customers.

As a Cisco Gold Partner, Voyager understands the need for organisations to operate a network infrastructure that is recognised as being secure. Acknowledged for leading the way with innovation,

Voyager specialises in providing IP Communications, Managed Services, Security Solutions and Consulting services to enable the installation and maintenance of secure end-to-end solutions for its clients.

Voyager has implemented a range of secure tailored solutions, many of which are pioneering in their sector, for customers across a broad spectrum

of private and public sector organisations. Voyager will continue to pioneer and provide complete end-to-end solutions and deliver genuine business benefits to their clients.

To discuss what Voyager can offer your organisation please do not hesitate to contact one of our consultants.



## The right network solutions partner for your business



VOYAGER NETWORKS LIMITED  
VOYAGER HOUSE, SIR WILLIAM LYONS ROAD  
UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK SCIENCE PARK  
COVENTRY, CV4 7EZ.  
Phone: 0870 170 9700 Fax: 0870 170 9749  
Email: [info@voyager.net.uk](mailto:info@voyager.net.uk)  
W: [www.voyager.net.uk](http://www.voyager.net.uk)