

# Redstone Converged Solutions Case Study

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## The Client

Mid Bedfordshire District Council (Mid Beds) offers a range of services to local residents including handling planning applications, environmental health, licensing issues and Council Tax. Faced with a massive repairs and refurbishment bill for its two existing and ageing offices in Ampthill and Biggleswade, Mid Beds decided to put these offices up for sale and build a new, purpose built central location. Work began on Priory House in early 2005, replacing the two old offices with a new building which would not only save on repair and refurbishment costs, but would bring together all of the staff on one site for the first time.

## Realising the benefits

The new building offered Mid Beds the opportunity to consider its future IT needs. It decided to base its new IT requirements on a Cisco network infrastructure and to roll out Cisco IP telephony and a Cisco wireless network.

Following a successful tender process, Redstone Converged Solutions was appointed as its IT partner to deploy the new technologies.

### The results

- IP telephony has allowed for joined-up services between Mid and South Beds District Councils, therefore extending the service offering to local residents
- The new IT infrastructure responds faster, allowing staff members to work more productively
- It has enabled improved communication links with branch offices
- Improved work/life balance as network and telephony infrastructure allows for flexible working

# Mid Bedfordshire District Council

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*Paul Arthur, IT operations manager, Mid Bedfordshire District Council*



## The Challenge

A new purpose built office bringing all of its staff together, under one roof for the first time, has given Mid Beds District Council the opportunity to review its current and future IT requirements.

"The move to the new office has enabled us to thoroughly evaluate our business requirements and match these with new and emerging available technologies," comments Paul Arthur, IT operations manager at Mid Beds.

In order to be fully prepared for the move, the organisation decided to pilot IP telephony across its two existing sites so that all users could be trained and to iron out any glitches in the system before the move took place.

Mid Beds decided to base its new IT requirements on a Cisco network infrastructure, Cisco IP telephony and Cisco wireless technology. Following a successful tender process, Redstone Converged Solutions was appointed as its IT partner to deploy the new technologies.

## The Solution

"We had a huge mountain to climb consolidating our two existing offices into the new purpose built central location. The services and equipment provided by Redstone were fundamental in completing our move successfully," comments Paul Arthur. "The technical competence demonstrated by Redstone helped solve numerous problems which could have potentially de-railed the whole office move."

He continues: "The team at Redstone Converged Solutions made us feel like a valued customer before we even actually became one. The company demonstrated a proactive, can-do approach which filled us with confidence that we had made the right decision."

The new IT infrastructure at Priory House has provided numerous improvements to the running of the District Council and ultimately benefited local people. To widen the services it delivers, Mid Beds is working with South Bedfordshire District Council (South Beds) to allow it to piggyback on its new IP telephony system. This will not only improve communication links between the two organisations, but this joined-up service will in the future enable Mid Beds and South Beds residents to access Mid Beds and South Beds services, from any of the Citizone Points of Presence (PoPs) offices in either district.

Mid Beds' IP telephony system will also help improve its responsiveness to the public due to the resilience of the infrastructure. A new 20 seat contact centre system has also been deployed based on Automatic Call Distribution software, which helps to ensure that residents can speak to the appropriate agent depending on the query.

## The Outcome

The Cisco network infrastructure responds faster than Mid Beds had previously been used to, allowing its 330 staff and council members to work far more productively. The new network has also enabled improved communication links between Mid and South Beds branch offices, also known as Citizone PoPs. Now staff members who work from the PoPs are able to access the network as if they are in Priory House.

One of the council's initiatives to help staff members improve their work/life balance is also being realised thanks to the new IT infrastructure. Employees can now work remotely far more flexibly, thanks to the use of IP phones and remote access to the District Council's network.

Redstone Converged Solutions also deployed a Cisco wireless network at Mid Beds to allow those council workers who travel around the region the ability to log on to their laptops when they are just popping into Priory House for a quick visit.

"The new kit deployed by Redstone Converged Solutions has enabled a whole host of improved working practices for ourselves and also our colleagues at South Beds. In turn this has allowed us to provide a much improved service to residents in both Mid and South Bedfordshire," comments Paul Arthur.

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