

STOCKTON BOROUGH COUNCIL SHOWS QUICK RESPONSE TO THREAT OF CRIME

Stockton Borough Council's security section is working with partners in reducing crime and fear of crime in the area. As part of this initiative, Rapid Deployment Cameras (RDCs) have been developed for quick and easy installation wherever a need for them is recognised.

RDCs are an effective, portable wireless CCTV solution that can be set up quickly and easily to provide a security system for a variety of situations. "Problems move around in any Borough, but with the use of the RDCs, we can follow them, tackling issues such as anti-social behaviour as well as environmental issues such as fly tipping and dumping," explains Mick McLone, Security Services Manager for Stockton Borough Council.

Mr McLone moved to the Stockton Surveillance Centre with almost 20 years experience in crime prevention and it is here that the CCTV control room, which forms the hub of the wireless system, is based. "It's located next to Stockton Police station with direct telephone and video links to Police Headquarters, so we have developed a very strong and effective working relationship with the police," he says.

Stipulations for the new system included the ability to supply and install a camera quickly and with a minimum of delay. By removing the need to liaise with a third party such as BT for transmission, significant amounts of time and money could be saved. The whole system also needed to be expandable with both encrypted and restricted access where required.

A unique solution

Mr McLone brought in installers VIZSEC trading as Visual Security Systems to handle the project. "They are a local company with a very forward thinking attitude," he explains. "They immediately understood what we were trying to achieve and came up with some excellent suggestions as to how we could overcome issues we had faced in the past."

Each RDC designed by VIZSEC consists of a Pelco Spectra III or IV colour/monochrome camera enclosed in custom housings that also contain the transmission equipment, antennae and the power supply. This set-up makes it very simple to install the camera at any required location, providing that a point-to-point visibility to one of the receiving locations can be achieved.

More than 88 Verint units have been installed to provide the wireless transmission which is then decoded by the Verint receivers in the CCTV control room. There are over 35 cameras currently on the system along with several networked DVRs which enable connectivity to a



further 80+ cameras at various locations. At present, hub stations are located at various points, including three high rise blocks of flats which are all in line of site of each other. Additional receivers have been proposed that will allow the outer areas of the town to be encompassed by the system.

Before VIZSEC even began work on the project they carried out a number of feasibility tests, at no charge to the council, to ensure that the technology they were applying was appropriate to the task. "In some cases we had to use portable equipment and access platforms to set up links at the proposed location to check and verify that connectivity could be achieved," says Ashwin Lal Managing Director of VIZSEC t/a Visual Security Systems. "Whenever a situation arose where line of sight was not possible, such as in wooded areas, we had to consider alternatives such as a relays to achieve our objective." They also had to ensure that other nearby equipment such as transmission arrays from communications providers was not going to cause problems.

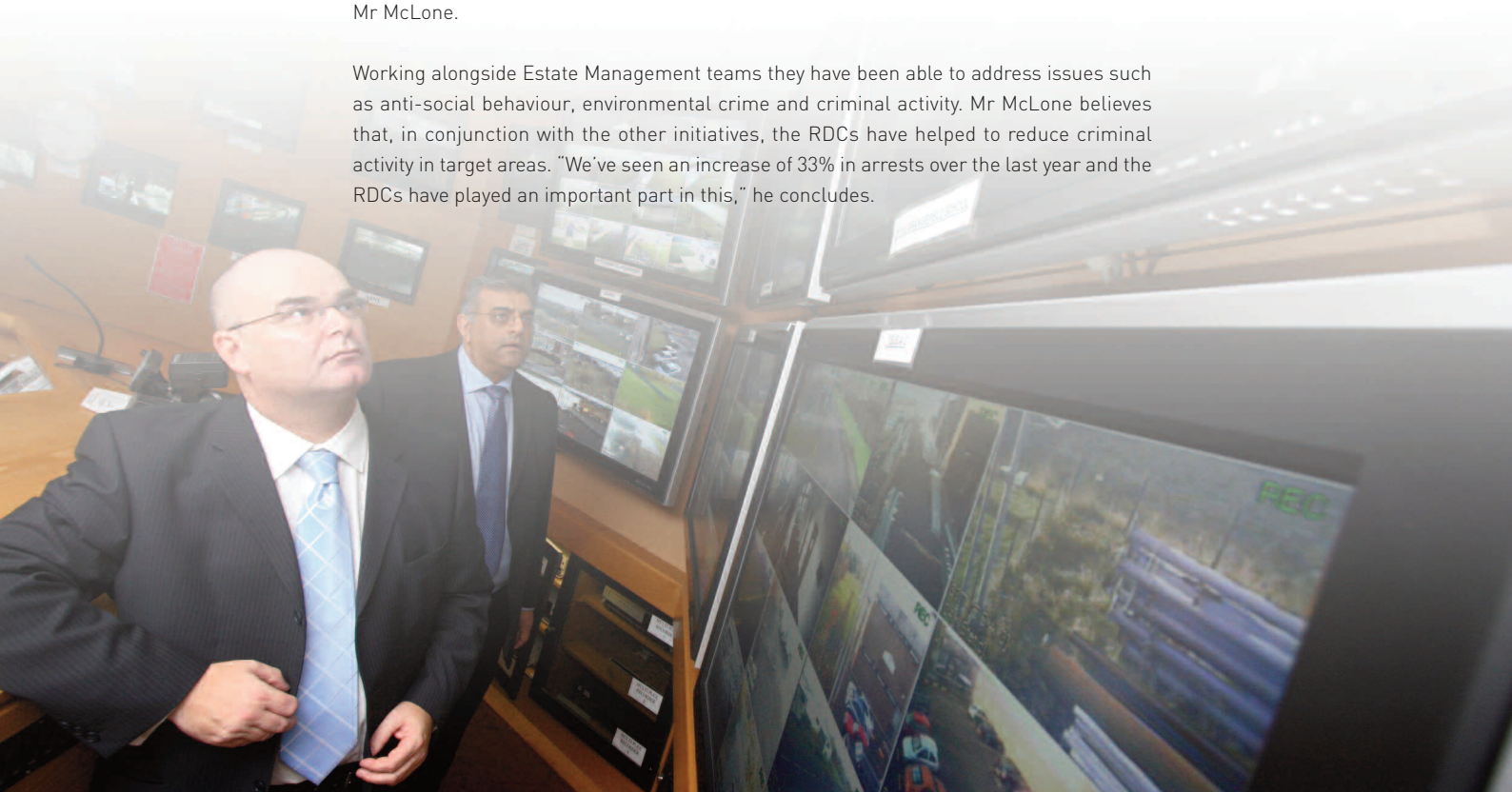
Remote control

The whole system has been set up to minimise VIZSEC's need to visit the control room within Stockton Borough Council's Security Centre to make any adjustments. "Because we use remote access software, the client is able to monitor our performance which gives them peace of mind and reassures them that all the required work is being carried out," says Mr Lal.

An important part of any installation is ensuring the reliable supply of equipment. "My direct contact at Norbain is not only a sales person but also has the technical knowledge behind him which ensures a good working relationship," says Mr Lal. "We certainly don't profess to be a large customer, but Norbain's policy of offering a good professional service to all customers is much valued."

The initial phase of the work took 18 months to complete but the system is continually expanding as the benefits of RDCs become more obvious. "We've used a local company and local people which is all part of our goal to make Stockton an even better place to live," says Mr McLone.

Working alongside Estate Management teams they have been able to address issues such as anti-social behaviour, environmental crime and criminal activity. Mr McLone believes that, in conjunction with the other initiatives, the RDCs have helped to reduce criminal activity in target areas. "We've seen an increase of 33% in arrests over the last year and the RDCs have played an important part in this," he concludes.



About VIZSEC

VIZSEC specialises in the design, installation and maintenance of CCTV and fibre optic systems. The company was founded in 1989 and has always made it a priority to pay personal attention to every customer's individual requirements. To this end, the highest quality of products, equipment, installation, service and staff are provided to ensure customer satisfaction.

The company ethos demands that quality and assurance are maintained at all times and so they are certified to BSI ISO9001 and are principal members of BSIA.

VIZSEC's knowledge of CCTV incorporates telephone line transmission systems, a vast experience of microwave and RF video and data links, fibre optic networks, digital recording systems and IP network systems.

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