

## Harrogate District Shopwatch Radio Link Scheme



Harrogate has operated a CCTV Radiolink scheme between shops, licensed premises and the CCTV Control room based in the town for over ten years. This was an analogue network that was installed by another radio provider at the outset of the scheme and owned by Harrogate Borough Council. The Council directly hired the radio handsets to scheme members as a revenue income.

Harrogate District also includes the towns of Ripon and Knaresborough. Both had a local Radiolink network organised by the police, but even though CCTV cameras were being monitored in both locations, CCTV operators were not part of the Radiolink owing to the distances involved.

Apex Radio Systems won the contract to replace the analogue network in Harrogate with a digital one, and to find a solution to the problem of getting Radiolink messages from both Ripon and Knaresborough back to CCTV control in Harrogate. After investigation and trial, an infrastructure using Harrogate Borough Council's own intranet system to relay radio messages was installed by Apex, which was a "no cost" solution that has proved very effective.

The outcome is a digital network covering Harrogate Town that has prompted positive feedback from many users of improved transmission clarity and reception, including CCTV operators themselves. That users in Ripon and Knaresborough can now talk to CCTV operators in Harrogate at all times of day or night has proven a more attractive product for businesses, resulting in an increased membership in both towns; this wouldn't have been possible without "going digital".

Throughout I have found Apex easy to deal with and from the outset they had a good appreciation of what Harrogate Council required, and the possible options available to meet our needs. Their costed proposals were clearly presented and of the three tenders we received, met our requirements at the most attractive price. Work was always carried out on time, and I was particularly impressed that on the day of Harrogate digital "go-live", their technicians arrived from Newcastle despite heavy overnight snowfalls, an indication of their commitment to getting our scheme activated on schedule.

Apex offered an attractive revenue return to Harrogate Council per radio handset taken up by scheme members, and have taken over all aspects of member invoicing, which has lifted a burden from our finance department. Apex clearly has an organised administration department, as revenue payments to us are being made promptly without problem and orders from new members radios are handled quickly and efficiently using overnight couriers.

To date our experience with Apex Radio Systems has been only positive. Their solution to our requirement for a digital network covering the district has fully achieved that goal and their service has been both professional and courteous at all levels. Despite being a large national radio provider, the service we continue to receive feels personal, and I feel confident of prompt attention should any issues ever arise.

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Contact one of our helpful team  
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