



Midland Heart

Customer Testimonial



Introduction

Midland Heart is one of the top ten housing and care organisations based in the UK.

As well as providing and maintaining homes for more than 70,000 people, Midland Heart supports those who need help to live independently, assisting in regenerating communities and helping an individual to discover their own abilities.

They own and manage more than 32,000 homes across 54 local authority areas and invest in excess of £100 million each year in their neighbourhoods, transforming lives and communities through social housing care and much more.

Midland Heart believes that every customer should be able to live in an environment they can afford; where they feel safe; are empowered; can shape services; and where their care and support needs are met.

The care and support business currently supports 6,700 customers at any time, employs 1,000 staff and delivers 2.1 million hours of care and support every year.

Challenges

Midland Heart had an Avaya Communication Manager (ACM) with 2141 Station Licenses in place that provided the telephony and contact centre functionality for the business. The main switch, sited at the Head Office in Bath Row, Birmingham, provided centralised telephony services across 8 locations.

The age of the system and its software level began to create problems for them particularly in the key areas of Customer Services and Income Recovery where they needed to expand the business. The end

of life software level also meant that Midland Heart were not able to receive the correct level of technical support that they required from Avaya.

Midland Heart had recognised that their customers would need to be able to contact them through a variety of channels. They decided to upgrade to a system that could handle multi-channel activity for the CSC so that they could provide an improved level of customer service through better visibility of their contact centre agent's activities.

The contact centre had specified the need for enhanced reporting down to a granular level for calls and with the ability to design their own reports, which was not available in the old switch.

The business also wanted to deliver an Agile Working solution to help support home workers and remote workers – and with a future need to develop virtual contact centres.

Solution

Midland Heart's strategy is to have a robust, leading edge telephony solution that will allow the business to leverage today's technology whilst also having a platform that can grow both with them and will support not just additional users but also future applications.

As a result of this strategy, Midland Heart decided to remain on the Avaya platform and upgrade to the latest versions available. They upgraded to the Avaya Aura Communication Manager 6 platform, which catered for an initial 2,000 users within the business with 150 contact centre agents and call recording for 500 users.

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Alongside this, 4net improved the redundancy of the infrastructure and enabled deployment of Unified Communication tools such as One-X Communicator and One-X agent.

Avaya one-X Agent is a contact centre agent desktop that gives agents the tools they need to provide a superior customer experience, whether they're working in a headquarters location, in a branch office or home office. The simple, intuitive user interface is designed to be easy for agents to learn and use while providing one touch access to common agent features as well as more sophisticated contact centre capabilities such as integrated video and instant messaging.

Avaya one-X Communicator® is a rich unified communications client that helps enterprises lower expenses and maintain business continuity with the delivery of a consistent set of applications and services with ease of deployment to users. Real time access to your critical enterprise communication capabilities including voice calling, audio conferencing and access to corporate directories and logs improves business collaboration and customer service.

Midland Heart are also using Avaya soft client phones to enable remote and home working. With this solution, personalised settings and unique contact numbers follow you with your home or remote working login, regardless of location, all through a secure virtual private network (VPN). When connected this way, home agents, appear transparently to reporting software, wallboards, workforce management software and other performance solutions. Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity was planned into the solution with services split across the main data centres.

Midland Heart wanted the option to integrate the telephony system into their CRM package at some point in the future and so the solution provided needed to be compatible with a wide range of CRM systems including Lagan. Midland Heart had installed the Open Wave Workforce Management Solution and the new system had to integrate directly into Open Wave.

Benefits

Steve Elliott, Midland Heart's Infrastructure Manager said: "We are really happy with Avaya OneX. This is an essential tool for our Agile Working initiative. One X will be our solution of choice as we move close down one of our Birmingham offices and move all our staff into the head office. We will have challenges with the building capacity so it makes sense to look at hot desking, home working, virtual contact centres and remote offices with One X."

Why 4net

Midland Heart chose 4net Technologies to deliver their new solution as they had built up trust over a number of years from the consultancy and overlay services that 4net had provided to them.

Steve Elliott, Midland Heart's Infrastructure Manager said: "4net are quick to respond to any questions or issues. We are able to have a technical conversation with any number of people from the support desk upwards. It's always easy to pick up the phone and talk to someone who understands our business and has time for us."

"It is great that we have an account manager who can keep in regular contact with us and it is important to us to have contact with people like the Technical Director or Managing Director who can have technical

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Steve Elliot - Infrastructure Manager, Midland Heart

conversations with me and also have meetings with key contacts within our business; such as our Contact Centre Manager, to understand his business challenges and help improve and develop our technology to support those challenges."

Asked how he would rate 4net on a scale of 1 – 10 Steve responded, "I am protective of my relationship with 4net. I don't go for price but expect them to continue to provide me with the high level of service I currently receive. I would give them a very rare 10."

Steve concluded; "I would recommend 4net to anyone – they are not huge but they are ideally placed in terms of size – I would say they are large enough to cope but small enough to care"

4net's powerful combination of service excellence and technical expertise makes us the partner of choice for organisations who want to transform the way they communicate with customers, staff and stakeholders, reduce costs and gain competitive advantage.

Our contact centre, unified communications, managed and cloud services are designed to address today's complex business challenges, helping you to respond to your customer and staff requirements.

From simple IP Telephony Solutions to Virtual Contact Centres, from Unified Communications to Cloud Services, we partner with best in class vendors such as Avaya, Microsoft and Enghouse to deliver a solutions portfolio that will address today's changing workplace and build tomorrow's future, making 4net the preferred communications partner for many businesses across the UK and the Globe.