

Thames Valley CCTV Partnership

Deterring & detecting crime across the Thames Valley



Name

Thames Valley Police

Industries

Public Safety

Location

Thames Valley, United Kingdom

Products

Genetec Security Center; Genetec Cloud Services; Federation

Technology Partners

Hanwha Vision

Channel Partners

CDS Systems



Innovative partnership improves sustainable CCTV provision for police & local authorities.

Thames Valley Police is the largest non-metropolitan police force in England and Wales, covering 2,218 square miles and a population of 2.42 million people. Its jurisdiction includes multiple towns, city centres and council areas across the three counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.

Setting a long-term vision for public space CCTV

Public space CCTV is vital in deterring and detecting crime across the Thames Valley. However, significant pressure on local authority budgets has made it increasingly difficult for councils to provide public space CCTV. There was real jeopardy that financial constraints would result in unmaintained systems, with limited or no real-time monitoring.

A fresh approach was needed so the Thames Valley CCTV partnership between Genetec™ and Hanwha Vision was formed. The first major challenge was securing funding to overhaul several local authorities' ageing systems which were proving increasingly expensive to upgrade and maintain. The second was to manage the ongoing costs of staffing control rooms to ensure the long-term sustainability of monitored CCTV across the Thames Valley.

Ambitious plans were devised to pool resources and replace many disparate systems with one police-owned system that could extend across multiple authorities. In effect, the aim was

to transfer the ownership and monitoring of public space CCTV from local authorities to dedicated Thames Valley Police control rooms. It would be led by the Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) Matthew Barber, collaborating with any local authority who chose to participate. It was a feat that had never been attempted in the UK on this scale that held the potential to drive efficiencies and enhance CCTV provision in areas it might otherwise have deteriorated.

“CCTV is an important part of community safety; benefitting police and local communities in helping to deter crime and antisocial behaviour, identify offenders and support prosecutions. Ongoing commitment and investment enables high quality, consistent and sustainable CCTV provision now and into the future”, explains Matthew Barber, PCC, Thames Valley.

Centralisation creates area-wide visibility and control

Several control rooms in the Thames Valley, such as Windsor & Maidenhead had already implemented Genetec Security Center and were very happy with its operation. Furthermore, as an open platform video management system it could minimise costs by supporting a phased unification or “takeover” of existing systems across the Thames Valley. Finally, its hybrid cloud architecture provided Thames Valley with maximal flexibility to leverage any combination of cloud or on-premises infrastructure according to

what made sense for each application and location. This made it the obvious choice on which to standardise.

Following a competitive tender, Thames Valley chose CDS Systems to implement its proposed solution. This would be built on Genetec Security Center and incorporate a range of multidirectional AI-enabled cameras from Hanwha Vision. A key driver in the decision was the high levels of commitment shown by all three parties to cybersecurity. Another was the recognition that the system design and technology selection could ensure a cost-effective implementation that could continue to evolve in line with the needs of its users.

“We urgently needed to improve the quality of CCTV, enhance collaboration, and drive efficiencies for all partners. The respective capabilities and seamless integration between Genetec and Hanwha Vision technology was the optimal way of meeting Thames Valley’s requirements,” says Sam Thomas, CDS Systems.

Phase one of the deployment involved CDS taking over an existing control room in Milton Keynes, replacing the legacy analogue infrastructure with a modern IP backbone. It then installed Genetec Security Center to establish one platform through which officers could smartly interact with all incoming video feeds. Legacy cameras were retained and reused to maximise the return on existing investment wherever possible. A second Genetec workstation was also set up inside Slough Police station, allowing officers to rapidly review footage for improved community response.

CDS then introduced Hanwha Vision’s AI-enabled multidirectional 4k cameras to improve CCTV coverage and quality in public spaces. Each of these cameras incorporates up to five cameras in one device for wide-area surveillance, which would previously have required several separate devices, simplifying installation and resulting in significantly less associated cabling and infrastructure. They also provide powerful AI analytics, including accurate object detection and classification, to enable forensic search and save operators time when responding to incidents. For example, identifying and establishing the movement of specific people or vehicles based on attributes such as vehicle type.

Phase two will see four additional control rooms in Oxfordshire merged into a single hub inside Abingdon Police station, also built on Genetec Security Center. This and the control room in Milton Keynes will be interlinked, adding further resilience as each site will be able to act as a fallback for the other. At this point, there will be a dedicated team of eighteen staff responsible for monitoring CCTV and enhancing CCTV for all participating communities in the Thames Valley CCTV Partnership.

“The CCTV Command Suite enabled by CDS, Genetec and Hanwha Vision has improved our workflows beyond recognition, enabling staff to quickly review and package evidence for frontline officers or more complex investigations. It has received several plaudits from officers for its ease of use,” says Jason Owen, CCTV Operations Manager, Thames Valley Police.

“This collaboration between Thames Valley Police, Genetec, CDS Systems, and Hanwha Vision showcases the power of partnership



in driving innovative, cost-effective solutions that improve public safety,” says John Boorman, Head of Product and Marketing at Hanwha Vision Europe. “Our AI-enabled cameras are designed to reduce false alarms and streamline operations, ensuring teams can focus on real incidents and drive efficiency across their monitoring.”

Efficiency, at lower cost

Pooling resources and transferring ownership to the police has brought about significant cost efficiencies for participating authorities, while also enhancing the quality and reliability of public spaces CCTV.

Just as importantly, it has dramatically improved the police’s direct access to quality video evidence. Unlike in a traditional council-run control room, all CCTV operators are civilian police staff vetted to the same clearance levels as sworn-in officers. This means they have full access to Thames Valley’s suite of police databases and reporting software packages. They are better equipped to rapidly report incidents, support front-line officers, and communicate effectively with investigators as a result. On average it handles between 300 – 500 incidents a month and has substantially increased the number of successful requests for supporting footage.

“We’ve immediately seen the benefit of our investment in equipment and CCTV operators, with the police now much better equipped to deter and detect crime across the Thames Valley,” adds Barber.

A solid platform for further improvements

Looking forward, Thames Valley has plans to use the Genetec platform to connect its people and mobile surveillance assets back to its control rooms for better cross force interaction. Genetec Federation as a Service is already allowing live and recorded video to be shared with officers in the field. Soon it will also be extended to ensure video from police CCTV vans and drones is immediately available in the control room. In both cases this is achieved without complex network configuration, requiring only an internet connection.

It is also at the beginning of its journey of fully realising the value of the AI-equipped Hanwha Vision cameras specified by CDS.

Control room operators' intuition will always be the driving force that brings results, but AI is freeing them up to do what they do best by saving time on routine monitoring and searches.

Finally, talks continue that would see the addition of further control rooms across the Thames Valley to the Thames Valley CCTV Partnership. Having proven the model, would allow it to scale operations further to deliver even greater cost savings, resilience, and efficiencies.

"We're proud of what we've achieved to date but have no intention of resting on our laurels. The foundations we've established will

ensure continued high-quality, consistent, and sustainable CCTV provision for our communities," concludes Owen.

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