



Future-proofing communications

O₂ Gateway is the key to a new communications strategy for whg.



One platform for fixed line, mobile, wifi

West Midlands-based housing organisation whg was looking for a secure, stable basis on which to build its communications strategy as it prepared for future growth. With different providers for each element of connectivity, whg was finding it difficult to manage an unnecessarily complicated estate and there were persistent compatibility issues.

O₂ Gateway offered the solution, with a range of services and expertise that combines the three connectivity essentials of fixed line, mobile and wifi.

One provider to bring it all together

O₂ Gateway brings three services together under a single banner. It's easy to implement and it simplifies the process of developing a communications strategy that allows employees to be connected wherever they are, however they want to be. And because it's all managed by O₂, there's less pressure on whg's existing resources.

Reduced complexity, increased potential

All whg's communication needs are now met by a single provider, with a single SLA, providing a clear overview of all issues and making it easier to introduce innovations in the future.

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O₂ Gateway takes the headache away from our internal support team as they provide a fully managed service and maintain the network for us.

”

James Elliott, IT Solution Delivery Manager, whg



Seamless connectivity

With ambitious plans for growth and development over the coming years, whg wanted a stable communications platform which they could build on for the future. They elected to refresh their LAN, WAN and wifi provision with a single provider, using O₂ Gateway.

“Our previous set-up was very complicated and left us with a high level of technical debt,” says James Elliott, whg’s IT Solution Delivery Manager. “And it was going to cost us a lot to develop it further. But the O₂ solution is far simpler. It will give us the resilience that we need to support our businesses and our estate. Also, O₂ is working with our own internal technical teams to build the configuration, which means we’re closely aligned to support the system going forward.”

With employees connected to the network at all times, wherever they are, the focus of the workplace has shifted. Now employees can type up reports online while visiting properties, allowing them to spend more time talking to residents and increasing their efficiency.

“Wherever our colleagues are, they’re effectively in the office because we have connectivity from their device via our APN and directly into our network,” says Paul Perkins, Director of IT, whg.

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We’re trying to future-proof the organisation, put it in a place where we can easily adopt new technology as it comes out. I have every faith that our partnership with O₂ will help us do that.

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David Mathews, IT Service Provision Manager, whg



Three services in one

Working with a single partner, combining all major connectivity channels, has its advantages. Paul Perkins says: "If we had one provider for our internal network and a different provider for WAN and mobile services, we'd be sure to have integration issues. But that's all gone away by implementing O₂ Gateway."

In addition to connectivity services, O₂ provides other services for whg. Mobile devices are all provided as part of the contract and David Mathews, whg's IT Service Provision Manager, believes this contract provides significant business benefits. "whg has the initiative to be more digital and to make our workforce more mobile," he says. "The deal we now have with O₂ to provide devices for us on a four-year replacement programme, has made an immeasurable difference to the way we work, and to our bottom line."

Benefits of O₂ Gateway:

- Fixed line, wifi and O₂ mobile network with secure internet access
- One partner and one SLA means minimal integration issues
- **O₂ mobile:** with 25m customers, rated Ofcom's number one for customer satisfaction seven years running
- **O₂ fixed:** the secure WAN, certified to ISO27001 and CAS(T) standards
- **O₂ Wifi:** our national wifi network provides secure, reliable internet access and includes over 15,000 hotspots

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Our colleagues can go out in to the field, do their job, without the need to come back into the office to type up their notes. It's time and productivity, they're the main benefits of rolling out this technology for the business.

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Paul Perkins, Director of IT, whg

O₂



About whg

Providing high quality homes for the Midlands.

whg is one of the West Midlands' most successful providers of high quality homes. A non-profit organisation, it owns and manages around 21,000 properties. In 2018, whg marked 15 years of providing affordable homes and community services, and since 2003, whg has invested more than £700m in its existing homes and has built or acquired more than 2,000 new properties. The organisation has also proven it is more than just a good landlord, by supporting more than 9,000 people on a wide range of community projects designed to promote independence, improve health, build confidence and gain the skills to secure employment.

Among its achievements is the E2020 Social Housing Project award for the group's first purpose-built wellbeing scheme, Cardan Pointe, on the recently regenerated Waterfront in Walsall. The judges were impressed that each of the homes in the £5.5 million development for residents over 55 was designed with a reliable, energy-efficient heating and hot water system.

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When I look for an IT provider I want an organisation that can partner with us, work with us and help us grow. That's certainly been the case with O₂.

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Paul Perkins, Director of IT, whg

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