

Case Study:

West Lancashire Borough Council

Local Government



ATEC keeps West Lancashire's public safety network running, year after year

From a borough-wide camera network to a full control room rebuild, ATEC has supported West Lancashire Borough Council's community safety operation for the best part of twelve years.

Ongoing public safety **CCTV coverage since 2010**

Borough-wide network of **over 80 CCTV cameras**

Brand new **control room** fit out with **video wall**

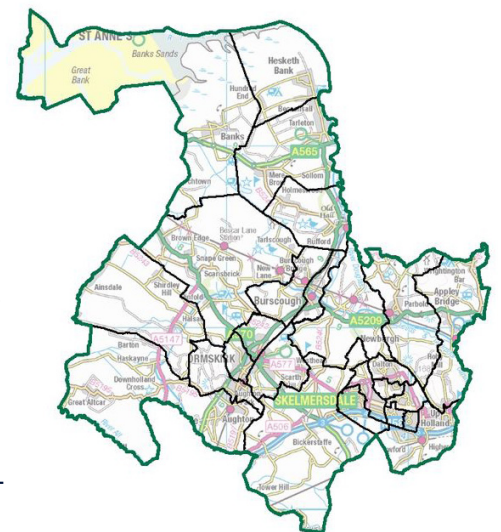
Extensive wireless network engineering

Investigating **5G camera links** for future rollout

The challenge

West Lancashire Borough Council covers around 134 square miles of Lancashire, from the market town of Ormskirk, home to the council's headquarters and Edge Hill University, to Skelmersdale, the borough's largest town, and a wide spread of smaller villages and outlying communities in between. Keeping a public safety camera network running reliably across that kind of ground, in all weather and across a mix of urban centres and rural stretches, takes more than simply installing cameras and leaving the council's staff to get on with it.

ATEC has worked with the council since 2010. The maintenance contract was lost on price at a later tender, but a lower price didn't mean a better service, and the council brought ATEC back in. ATEC is now two years into a new five-year contract as the council's incumbent maintenance and project partner.





The network

The council's network was originally built around 120 cameras during the analogue/digital era. Budget pressures and a review against the Home Office's minimum thresholds for CCTV under the relevant code of conduct have since brought that down to 85 active cameras. Where an existing camera no longer meets the criteria for crime prevention or public safety, it is switched off rather than removed, in case it is needed again in future.

Cameras sit on building sides, roadside masts and towers, including a link via the police mast in Ormskirk, and feed back to a control room in the council's Ormskirk town centre building. To avoid every camera depending on one signal path back to base, ATEC has also built in local recording points, so a single link failure does not take out the whole network. The majority of cameras are pan-tilt-zoom, so control room staff can actively direct and monitor incidents rather than only watch a fixed view.

Every wireless link gets checked and checked again over time.

Getting video from a camera on a column back to the control room reliably takes detailed planning. ATEC's approach starts with a line-of-sight survey, that covers: what can be seen between two points today, what might change over the years (tree growth is a common culprit), and the Fresnel zone clearance the link actually needs.

A recent example: foliage growth began interfering with the wireless link carrying video from Christchurch Tower back to the control room mast, taking a cluster of cameras offline whenever the link degraded. ATEC identified an alternative route via the police mast and has now installed a new 60GHz wireless link from Christchurch Tower to the police mast, onward to a car park wireless point, and from there via dedicated fibre back into the control room.





The solution

Alongside the network itself, ATEC delivered a full refit of the council's control room, replacing an ageing setup of individual monitors with a modern video wall of around twelve to fifteen LCD screens, new desks, new storage infrastructure and an upgraded network to support it all.

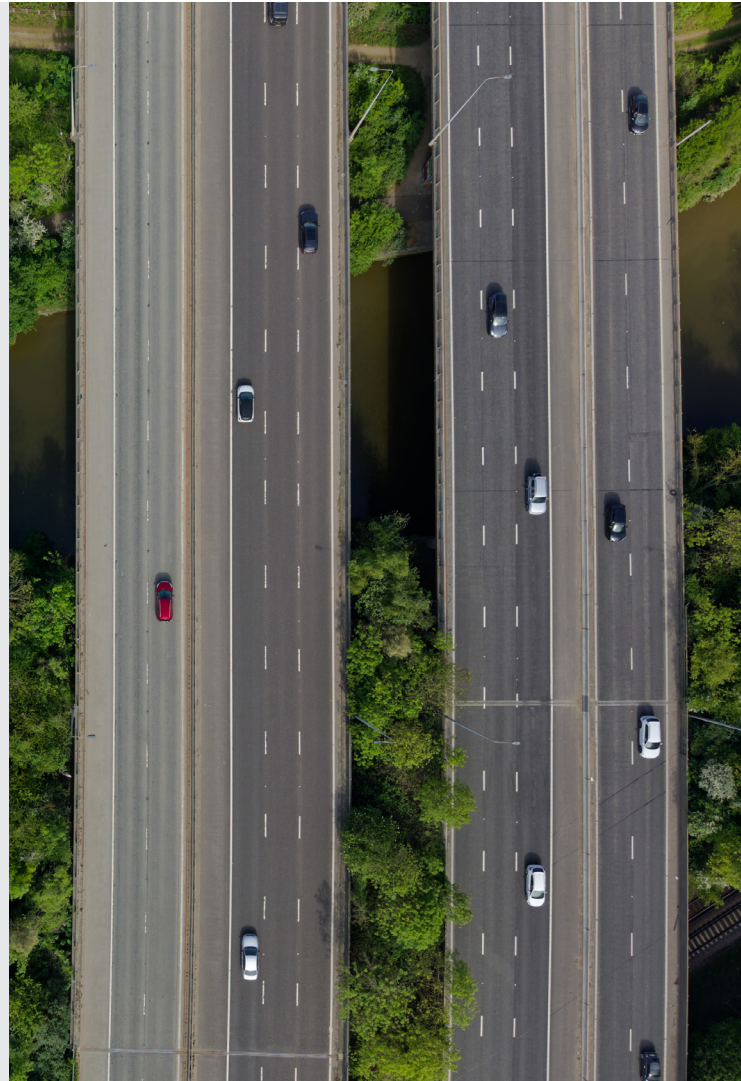
ATEC and the council meet monthly to go through a key set of KPI's, review network and camera operations, ongoing projects, health and safety, compliance with the contract, product/solution improvements and recommendations and any other topics that need discussing.

Traffic management on the highway is a legal duty

ATEC's traffic management plans are produced to meet its duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and, where work takes place on the public highway, in accordance with the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Safety at Street Works and Road Works Code of Practice (Chapter 8 guidance).

This translates into a traffic management plan for every camera location ranging from: a suspended footpath with chapter 8 barriers and signage to traffic lane suspensions and temporary traffic lights for busier roads, whilst always collaborating with specialist contractors where city centre conditions demand it. Engineers assess the plan against current site conditions prior to undertaking any works to ensure compliance with the regulations.

ATEC also supports the network remotely wherever possible, which means faster response times and fewer engineer visits to site whilst helping to reduce its carbon emissions by reduced vehicle traffic.

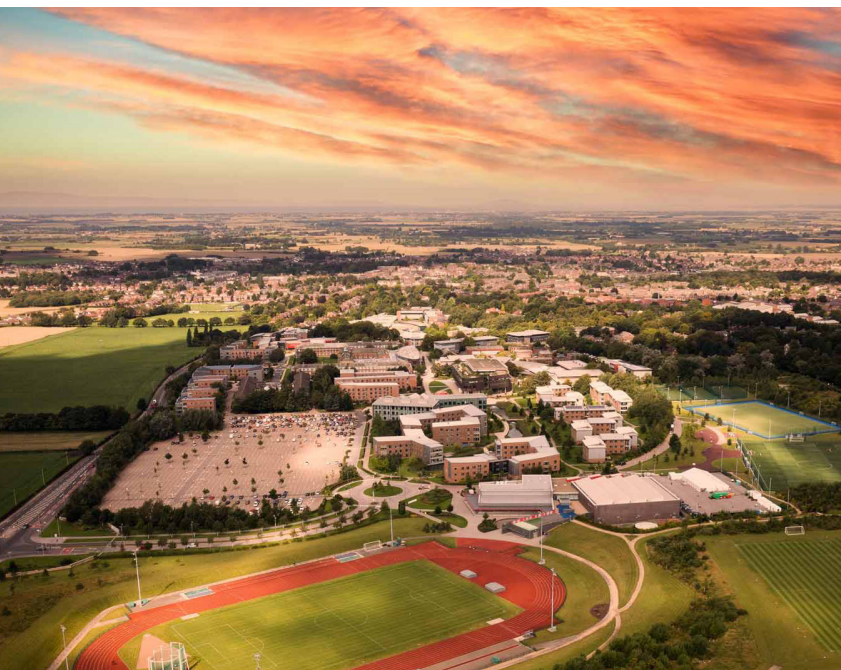




West Lancashire Borough Council

Clifford Owens, Community Safety Officer

"ATEC consistently provides an outstanding CCTV support service for West Lancashire Borough Council's Public Open Space CCTV system. Their team demonstrates exceptional technical expertise, responsiveness, and commitment to maintaining a reliable and effective surveillance network. ATEC's proactive approach to system maintenance, fault resolution, and ongoing support ensures that our CCTV infrastructure remains operational and fit for purpose, helping us to enhance community safety and support our partners in protecting the public. Their professionalism and dedication make them a highly valued and trusted service provider."



The results

The cameras play a direct part in policing across the borough, from town centre crime prevention and shoplifting response to monitoring parks and public areas for anti-social behaviour and more serious incidents.

With Edge Hill University based in Ormskirk, it also supports the safety of the town's student population, particularly on the routes between campus and the town centre.

Security solutions for local government

Most councils have more infrastructure than they think and less coverage than they need. We will survey what is out there, advise what is worth keeping, and build the case for the rest.