



Case Study...

Knole, Sevenoaks, Kent

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Set within the idyllic Kent countryside, Knole is steeped in history. As one of the National Trust's busiest sites, Knole attracts around 100,000 visitors each year. Tens of thousands more visit the wider estate for walks, picnics and a variety of events. Located within a vast 1,000 acre deer park, reliable communication between staff across the Knole estate is crucial.

The Challenge

Knole's old analogue radio solution was beginning to creak at the seams. Coverage was patchy at best. Static was regularly causing communication issues. The analogue portable radios were working 'back-to-back' without any central repeater infrastructure which also contributed to the site's lack of coverage in certain areas.

As National Trust staff at Knole spend a good deal of their time outdoors or in small places, their communication devices need to be robust, in case of drops and knocks. They also need to be weather-proof as they will face the elements all year round. Staff at Knole often work alone within the grounds and house. Therefore some form of lone worker, man down or emergency alarming functionality would be required from a health and safety perspective.

Whilst management at Knole knew it was time for their radio solution to be upgraded, Knole, as part of the National Trust, had to be conscious of costs. Day to day running funds for Knole are received by charitable donations.

It was clear that Knole needed a communication solution that provided good coverage of the vast site, was highly reliable, user friendly and feature rich. And, crucially, it had to remain cost effective.

The Solution

Having recognised it was time for a radio upgrade, management at Knole turned to local 2-way radio suppliers and communication experts, Smye-Rumsby. Throughout the consultation process, Smye-Rumsby liaised with National Trust staff at Knole to ensure the best possible solution was provided to meet Knole's increased requirement and budget. Smye-Rumsby's answer was Hytera DMR (digital mobile radio).

Upon completion of the site survey, Mike Syrett, Account Manager from Smye-Rumsby knew that a central repeater would be vital for improved site coverage. To meet this need, a Hytera RD625 repeater was installed within one of the turrets at Knole itself. The RD625's small size and 'plug-and-play' nature meant it could be easily and discreetly installed within this historic building.

The majority of the radio communication at Knole is point-to-point individual calls. Therefore Knole required an easy-to-use digital radio with screen and keypad. Being compact, robust (IP67) and cost-effective, the Hytera PD685G portable radios were the obvious choice.

Hytera PD685G radios feature lone worker and man-down functionality which staff at Knole now use to full effect when working on their own. With GPS location tracking also a feature on the PD685Gs, Knole has radios that can be tracked via GPS software should they decide to utilise this in the future.



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The Benefits

Since installation by Smye-Rumsby, the Hytera digital radio solution has more than met Knoles' expectations. Complete coverage of the 1,000 acre site has been achieved thanks to the RD625 repeater. Staff at Knoles now benefit from crystal clear DMR communication complete with back-ground noise cancelling.

With an incredible 16 hours battery life and IP67 rating, users can rely on their radios for day-to-day operations, no matter what the conditions. Peace of mind also extends to emergency situations thanks to the PD685G portable's superb man-down and lone worker feature sets.

The selection of Smye-Rumsby as the 2-way radio solution provider ensured Knoles experienced a customer-focused, professional transition to digital from initial consultation to commissioning.



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The installation of the RD625 repeater ensures excellent coverage

Testimonial

We are extremely happy with our new Hytera radio system as it has improved the communication across our site. They have exceeded our expectation in both clarity of sound, range and increased functionality for both now and for the future.

We were offered sound advice and service from the Hytera agent and Mike Syrett, Account Manager for Smye-Rumsby.

Jo Hatcher
Premises Officer
National Trust-Knoles

