

# Harrow Borough Council

Transforming city surveillance and evidence sharing



## Name

Harrow Borough Council

## Industries

Cities

## Location

London, United Kingdom

## Products

Genetec Security Center, Genetec Clearance, Streamvault

## Partners

DSSL, Hanwha Vision



LONDON BOROUGH OF  
**HARROW**

## Harrow Borough Council puts Genetec Security Center at the heart of a brand-new control room, driving ongoing improvements and efficiency

The London Borough of Harrow in North-West London covers an area of approximately 20 square miles and is home to more than 260,000 residents. It forms part of Outer London and shares borders with four other local authorities.

### PSTN shutdown prompts major upgrade

As the count down towards the 2025 deadline for the PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network) shut-off neared, the Council decided it would need to move from an existing analogue video system to a more modern IP security platform. Rather than simply seeking a replacement, Harrow took the opportunity to consider long-term requirements.

Following an assessment, Harrow decided that the existing control room, software, and cameras would all become increasingly challenging and costly to maintain. Ultimately, the current tech stack failed to meet quality and reliability standards needed to uphold effective public safety and enforcement activities.

Following an open tender, the London Borough of Harrow instructed its chosen integrator DSSL to design and fully equip a brand-new purpose-built control room. This came with specific parameters that would help the Council anticipate and respond to emerging future requirements.

“This was a rare opportunity to start with a blank sheet of paper and collaborate with Harrow on every little detail,” explained James, DSSL. “We knew Harrow were already impressed with

the capabilities and cybersecurity of the Genetec™ offerings. And that it was the perfect platform to evolve and grow with the Council’s needs.”

### Enhancing safety and visibility in Harrow with Security Center

Since Genetec Security Center is open architecture platform, Harrow and DSSL were able to choose from the widest range of hardware partners. They now monitor all cameras through one familiar interface. This includes security cameras and the Borough’s automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras used for traffic management and enforcement.

To date, Harrow has over 550 video streams coming into its central control room. Operators can easily monitor video and gather evidence to support investigations. This has helped to secure convictions ranging from fly-tipping and antisocial behaviour all the way through to violent assaults and serious organised crime.

Officers from the Met Police and Scotland Yard have also been using the new systems, conducting operations from the Harrow CCTV control room. They have lauded the ease and convenience of the Genetec Security Center platform as well as the cameras’ performance.

“Our old CCTV equipment desperately needed to be upgraded in order for us to deliver public safety and enforcement effectively,” added Councillor Anjana Patel, Portfolio Holder for Highways,

Infrastructure and Community Safety for the London Borough of Harrow. “We want Harrow to be a safe place to live, work and visit – so I am pleased that we have invested in a brand-new state-of-the-art control room which is now better equipped to monitor and respond to incidents quickly. It now boasts over 500 video streams which allows us to gather evidence across environmental crimes and ASB as well as support our partners from the emergency services to tackle serious violence and organised crime. However, it’s not just about dealing with crime, it also allows us to analyse traffic management and major events. This is one of a few ways that we are working towards our vision to restore pride in Harrow.”

## Using Clearance to simplify evidence sharing and compliance

Since getting the new system up and running, the quality of evidence has significantly improved. This has come with a sharp increase in the number of incoming requests for footage from police, members of the public, and other council departments.

Processing all these requests put additional pressure on operators. Firstly, they need to document and consider the validity of each request. Then, they need to find the relevant video and make any necessary redactions before providing access. All of this must be done in a way that complies with the Council’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) obligations.

As Harrow continues to drive efficiency and enhance control room operations, it decided to implement Genetec Clearance™. This cloud-based tool streamlines the secure collection, management, and sharing of evidence.

Using Clearance, the team no longer needs to go through the time-consuming process of manually redacting footage before transferring it to USBs or DVDs. Instead, operators can take advantage of automated privacy-masking features before instantly generating a link that can be shared with third parties.

This approach means Harrow retains full control over the use of its footage, with no danger of physical copies being lost or stolen. They can also specify viewing rights for different users, set time limits, or revoke access when it’s no longer required. All of this helps to bolster compliance with data protection regulations.

“A lot of the time, the ultimate end user of our video surveillance systems is the police and council enforcement teams who need the evidence to prove a civil or criminal offence. We do all we can

to support them and are delighted that Clearance is helping to dramatically reduce the associated workload,” said Ian Slaney, head of CCTV services for the London Borough of Harrow.

## Unlocking new efficiency and cost savings across the borough

The full solution engineered by DSSL includes Genetec Security Center, the unified security platform, as well Genetec Clearance, the digital evidence management system. They also chose the Genetec Streamvault™ 300 series, a highly reliable infrastructure solution purpose-built for demanding physical security applications. There are also several styles of multi-lens, static, and PTZ cameras from technology partner Hanwha Vision.

Following this progressive upgrade, Harrow Council has significantly increased camera coverage, image quality, and visibility across all public spaces in the borough. This helps to maintain its status as the second safest London borough according to reported crime rates.

In the future, the Borough plans to expand city-wide visibility and link other council buildings such as libraries back to the central control room. This will further increase the cost savings that come with centralised monitoring from a dedicated control room. Harrow is also staying open to unifying other technologies such as video analytics or environmental sensors within the unified security platform at a later date. All of this will help ensure a familiar operator experience even as the system grows.

“We’re a council that recognises the value of pushing the boundaries to unlock new gains in efficiency,” said Will Baron, who manages the daily operations of CCTV for the London Borough of Harrow, and played a key role in the design and development of the updated CCTV systems. “Genetec and DSSL have given us a far more advanced, far more reliable system. That means we can spend money on improved performance that would otherwise have been devoted to ongoing maintenance.”

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