



Comprehensive audio-visual solutions for meeting spaces

THE CLIENT



Progress Housing Group is a major not-for-profit housing provider, owning and managing nearly 13,000 homes, primarily serving communities across Lancashire.

Progress Housing Group also operates nationally as one of the UK's largest providers of supported living accommodation for people with a learning disability, autism, an acquired brain injury or a mental health condition.

Its portfolio also includes accommodation for Lincolnshire key workers.



Business Needs

Progress Housing Group previously had no business conferencing facilities at its headquarters, Progress House in Leyland, or its offices opposite at Leyland House.

The organisation was looking to renovate the meeting rooms at both buildings, whilst also taking into account an appetite for agile working gained during the pandemic.

“It was becoming increasingly clear that hybrid was going to be the future of the organisation. We saw that we needed video-conferencing facilities to fully support that,” explains Head of Technical Services, Andy Rawcliffe.



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Head of Technical Services

Progress Housing Group was also keen to make the best use of available space by offering flexible meeting room facilities at Progress House.

“There’s one big space which can accommodate 30 people for a board or full team meeting,” says Andy, “but that isn’t what’s needed most of the time. It’s fitted with cantilever walls so we can break it into three component parts to host three distinct meetings.”

This clearly created an audio-visual challenge, with any solution needing to ensure conferencing was either contained within each section or could serve the full room.

A further complication was that Progress Housing Group’s renovation plans included the introduction of ‘collaboration booths’, small, four-seat diner-style set ups. To be installed in both buildings, these would again need dedicated meeting room technologies.

Progress Housing Group also specified Microsoft Teams due to existing familiarity with the platform and knowing that “Teams was the way to go.”



The Solution

Knowing of Avoira through others' experience of our expertise, Andy first approached us to "understand the art of the possible".

He then put the project out to competitive tender, with Avoira's bid proving the most compelling of the four submitted.

"They had the expertise and a lot of experience around Microsoft Teams so they were able to give good demonstrations," recalls Andy. "Avoira clearly knew and understood our requirements.

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Our specialist team recommended majoring on proven Yealink technologies.

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For smaller meeting spaces across both buildings we recommended MVC400 and [MVC500](#) solutions. Our audio-visual specialists further advised complementing these with either Avocor interactive screens or commercial grade Sony screens, depending upon their application.

For the training facility at Leyland's House and the challenging divisible boardroom at Progress House, we specified Yealink's extra-large Microsoft Teams meeting room solution, the [MVC940](#).

At both sites we suggested deploying ceiling mics. Our team advised [Yealink VCM38s](#) would meet training room needs, but that the demands of the boardroom would be best met by Biamp Parle TCM-Xs coupled with Extron SoundField ceiling speakers.

Yealink's MeetingBar A20 Teams edition video conferencing kits were recommended for the collaboration booths.

Working closely with Progress Housing Group, we scoped the installations to match the time slots they specified and enable prompt and professional fitting.

"The installations went very smoothly, with the minimum of fuss and great attention to detail," confirms Andy. "We had the same engineers each time, so they knew us, how we worked and our various network requirements.

"It was good working with them"





The Benefits

Avoira's expertise was a crucial benefit, not least in designing solutions to meet the varied needs of both buildings.

Nowhere was this more apparent than in the boardroom, as Andy concedes.

"The most impressive work was in the three-rooms-into-one which works perfectly. If we shut the door the conferencing just works in the one section it's supposed to, it doesn't spill out. The ceiling mics are really good quality."

This is due to the sophisticated design of the Avoira solution. Each section of the room is equipped with it's own speakers and microphones. These are switched on and off automatically courtesy of a central control system connected to magnetic reed switches installed within the cantilever walls.

To learn more about how technology can deliver equality of participation, read our blog...

[Meeting Challenges: Are you empowering equitable engagement?](#)



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Its smart and effective.

Throughout both premises Andy reports that the quality of both sound and vision is "spot on", with the installations delivering equitable engagement, creating a level playing field for all meeting participants.

"People feel fully involved and engaged."

He adds that the delivery of state-of-the-art meeting rooms technology has enhanced productivity, serving both the organisation's interests and the desires of its staff.

"We don't have the desks to have everybody in the office and, frankly, people don't want to be in the office all the time anymore."

"Everybody has the ability to use the kit, to join a meeting remotely or in person. They no longer necessarily need to make their way in and spend a day at the office." Not only does this save time and please staff, it eliminates the need to hire out space for large meetings.