

Key division of Balfour Beatty plc chooses Advance Group for its communications infrastructure

“Advance Group has always been very helpful, they do what they say they will and always go the extra mile. I don’t know what we would have done without them. The Samsung systems are ideal for us and they are also far more cost-effective to upgrade and to expand than other systems.”

Melvin Conway – Facilities Buyer, Balfour Beatty Utilities

Balfour Beatty Utilities is a leading solutions provider in distribution asset management to the UK utilities sector, and has an excellent nationwide portfolio of blue chip clients. With a turnover of around £300 million and more than 2,800 staff, Balfour Beatty Utilities has developed its skill base to offer a complete asset management solution to customers in the gas, clean water, wastewater, civil engineering and multi-utility industries. The company is currently works with the UK’s major utility organisations, including Yorkshire Water, South West Water, Northumbrian Water, United Utilities, Anglian Water and Severn Trent Water.

Good customer care needs great communications

Balfour Beatty Utilities has a proven track record of providing innovative, proactive and flexible solutions that meet its clients needs, whilst also driving down costs and enhancing customer care.

With more than 100 sites, some of which operate only for a short term, managing the company’s communications infrastructure is a serious challenge. Facilities Buyer Melvin Conway is responsible for purchasing all communications and business equipment for Balfour Beatty Utilities. He explains further:

“We have always had a very good relationship with Advance Group. They have helped us to manage our communication systems as the business has expanded, and when we moved into our Head Office in Sheffield, they worked with us to make the transition as smooth and stress free as possible. They helped us to create a DDI plan and working out all our call routing so that the transfer was completed in just one weekend. It all worked perfectly without a single problem and our IT staff were very pleased that they could talk directly to the Samsung switchboard via their PCs.”

Advance manage a number of Balfour Beatty Utilities sites, including premises in County Durham, Darton, Rickmansworth, Worsley, Barnsley, Bamber Bridge, Redditch, Stockport and Penrith. They have provided Balfour Beatty Utilities with the latest Samsung technology, from the smaller Samsung 816 and iDCS 100 system, to the larger Samsung DCS 500s and OfficeServ 500s.

Going the extra mile

Subsequently, Balfour Beatty Utilities decided to make some changes to the communications set-up within its head office site. This was integrated into their IT infrastructure, meaning that the existing Samsung DCS 500 was no longer required. So Advance Group was then called upon to move the equipment, which was still in perfect working order, to another site in Worsley, near Manchester. This site is split in two with a road going through the middle, and so Melvin wanted to take time to decide how to handle this situation in the long run, whilst also maintaining communications capabilities in the meantime, as Melvin continues:

“While we decided how to proceed, Advance very kindly lent us a separate Samsung system. You can’t ask for better customer service than that. The Samsung systems are ideal for us. For me, cost and support are the two key factors in our decision-making process. Advance’s engineers take the time to go through our needs, work out what is right for the business, advise us accordingly and then make sure it works. We have never regretted choosing them for our communications services.”

Balfour Beatty Utilities now has a range of Samsung systems, both DCS 500s and OfficeServ 500s, providing all communications technology the company requires, including voicemail, DDI numbers, operator and reception functionality, call routing and so on. Melvin concludes:

“Advance Group’s engineers are great, they have the personal touch and take the time to us to find out exactly what we need at every stage. The company is flexible and adaptable and the price is right. They are helpful, they always keep their promises and go the extra mile to provide the best possible service. I don’t know what we would have done without them.”