

## Case study

**Uttlesford District Council**  
District Council



### **UK District Council save councillor's time** **Speed up decision making and save money**

Uttlesford Council offices are located in historic Saffron Walden. The town market is said to be one of the earliest in Essex (started in around 1141) and the town grew up around it. The name Walden means 'Valley of Britons' and the name Saffron was added to Walden when it became the major English center for the production of the Saffron Crocus. The Saffron Crocus was introduced to the UK by the Crusaders returning from Greece and Turkey. Its stigmas provided both a perfume and a yellow dye for the ancient world. The crocus was planted throughout the local countryside where, in bloom, it lent a distinctive purple hue to the landscape.

The Uttlesford District has 69,000 residents in a large area North West of London. It is an affluent area, with good commuter links to London. In a survey commissioned by the Sunday Times, Uttlesford was described as offering the best quality of life in England and Wales.

With this success has come growth. The area is expanding rapidly and the Council's planning department has to cope with an upsurge in building. Many of the planning applications are related to the rapid expansion of London's third airport, Stansted, and these applications can be huge and complex.



#### **Business Issues**

Uttlesford District Council needed a solution to two related issues. The rapid expansion in area growth required an acceleration of the planning permission process. Uttlesford planning staff had to make plan copies and overhead projection foils available at committee meetings for councillors to discuss.

"We used to have one person almost full time preparing foils for presentation to Planning Committee members" says Kim Tedman, Uttlesford Development Officer.

The second issue was meeting a government mandated deadline - all UK local bodies are required to have everything available electronically by the end of 2005 as part of the government's e-Government initiative. This includes paper documents.

#### **The Solution**

Uttlesford District Council uses Anite Public Sector's document management system *Iclipse*. To address the needs of councillors to view the large and complex plans during committee meetings, Trapeze was integrated with the existing document management system.

Large documents are scanned using a Colourtrac 3640e color scanner, and some 35,000 drawings have been filed into *Iclipse* over the last year.

Now they simply use Trapeze to project scale drawings onto a large screen. Aerial photos, plans, maps, documentation are now all presented as if the paper was in the councilors' hands.



The measuring tools are used to do such things as measure the distance to the boundary of a neighboring property, check areas or even measure the pitch of a roof. The use of rubber stamps has been superseded; Trapeze's stamps capability is now used instead. Notes can be made right there and then on the documents, on-screen comparisons between plans can be made, and Trapeze makes the plans easy to understand by displaying the whole drawing and the detail in context at the same time.

***On the spot, Councilors can use Trapeze's capabilities to help make decisions. No longer do they need to prepare foils for the meetings. As Ms. Tedman expressed it: "Using Trapeze has saved heaps of time".***

Planning officers use the same Trapeze tools when assessing applications and making their recommendations, and Trapeze is about to be rolled out to the building department as well.

Uttlesford District Council is one of over 150 UK councils obtaining great benefit in using Trapeze as part of their document information systems. Now over one third of all the councils in the UK are experiencing the time and money savings from integrating Trapeze for the handling of maps, plans, aerial photos and other complex documents within their document management systems.

For Uttlesford, the Trapeze integration has not only made the Councilors' meetings faster and easier, it has also put them on target to meet the UK's e-Government initiative deadline.

For further details please look us up on the Onstream Website [www.onstreamsystems.com](http://www.onstreamsystems.com) or contact us on **+64 4 473 1711**.

We look forward to chatting with you.