

STCS PROJECT PROFILE

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# Homes and Communities Agency Milton Keynes Tariff System



## HOMES AND COMMUNITIES AGENCY

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The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the national housing and regeneration agency for England, with an annual investment budget of more than £5bn. The HCA was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 through the transfer of the functions and assets of English Partnerships; the investment functions of the Housing Corporation; a number of delivery programmes from Communities and Local Government and the transfer of the Academy for Sustainable Communities.

The Homes and Communities Agency is a non-departmental public body and their sponsor government department is Communities and Local Government (CLG).

The statutory objects of the HCA, as listed in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 are to:

- improve the supply and quality of housing in England
- secure the regeneration or development of land or infrastructure in England
- support in other ways the creation, regeneration or development of communities in England or their continued well-being
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and good design in England, with a view to meeting the needs of people living in England.

## PROJECT REQUIREMENT AND SCOPE

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The Milton Keynes Infrastructure Tariff (MK Tariff) is a legal mechanism designed to deliver more than £300M in forward funding for infrastructure and services to support the planned expansion of Milton Keynes over the next several years. MK Tariff income will be generated from development of housing and commercial units, and will be spent on MK infrastructure projects

The MK Tariff management system will be a management tool for the management of the MK Tariff programme, including the following:

- creation of an effective and efficient tariff collection process
- creation of an effective and efficient process for collecting funds from other funding sources (when the project is being delivered by HCA and is only partially funded by the tariff)
- pooling of tariff receipts
- creation of an effective and efficient process for the management of Works-in-Kind (when infrastructure development is carried out in lieu of tariff payments)
- creation of an effective and efficient distribution process for tariff receipts across all of the MK infrastructure projects earmarked for tariff funding, whether delivered by HCA or by another party (e.g. MK Council)



**Milton Keynes Partnership**

**“A big thank you for all the hard work you put into developing the new tariff management system, especially given the timescale we were working to and all the other ongoing HCA work at the same time. Audit Committee were extremely impressed with what has been developed and the fact that this had been achieved before the transfer to the HCA. I know via David that you all worked extremely long hours in order to meet this deadline, so thanks again from me and the rest of my team.”**

**Carol Cairns, Operations Manager  
Milton Keynes Partnership**

STCS provide the following services for this:

- Business Analysis and System Design
- Application development (on-line application and interfaces)
- Second-line support, and occasional first-line support
- Training and support of HCA Applications Development staff
- Impact Analysis
- Peer Reviews
- Testing
- Database installation and administration
- Application Server software installation and administration
- Performance-tuning

We provide a mixture of on-site and remote support, and have build up a close working relationship with the client, allowing us to react very quickly to any urgent Change Requests or support issues.

## **TECHNICAL APPROACH**

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This project is the development of a database, new screens and batch processes and integration of these within an existing Project Control System. The user requirements for the system are investigated and specifications consisting of screen designs and a narrative description of the processing are agreed with the client. Impact analysis is completed to assess impact upon existing systems. The database and application changes are then developed using an application framework provided for other applications at English Partnerships. These are then peer reviewed before going to System testing, and then on to User Acceptance Testing. Changes may be batched with other changes before being scheduled to go live.

There were several complexities/difficulties in this project. In particular:

- The tariff charging and rebate calculations and application of multiple indexation rates.
- Extremely tight deadlines
- Managing the project along with several other pieces of work, including the setup of the Homes and Communities Agency

## **KEY TECHNOLOGIES USED**

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The system has been built using the following technologies:

- Oracle Designer 10g
- Oracle Forms and Reports Developer 10g
- Oracle Enterprise Edition Database 10gR2
- Business Objects v6.5
- Windows Server 2003 R2