



## Paragon Community Housing improves service continuity performance by over 90%

Organisation turns to HPE Helion Continuity Services to protect enterprise data

### Objective

Reduce the risk of outage exposure while simplifying and streamlining the data and IT services recovery process

### Approach

Turn to HPE Helion Continuity Services and deploy Disaster Recovery-as-a-Service within six weeks to protect enterprise information and IT availability

### IT Matters

- Simplified the recovery process and freed up IT resources while reducing the complexity and costs of traditional recovery methods
- Established a service fail-over capability by securing a second replicated off-site data set housed in a highly available and resilient HPE data centre that provides multiple recovery points
- Completed a full implementation within six weeks to meet company goals for business continuity

### Business Matters

- Enhanced business continuity by implementing dual-site data replication with managed fail-over and fail-back
- Improved IT service continuity performance by over 90%
- Significantly reduced the potential costs and brand damage risks due to lost data



Paragon Community Housing was backing up changing enterprise data to tape daily, but needed to improve business continuity and prepare for disaster recovery to avoid potential exposure to data loss and a protracted recovery time and process. After evaluating alternative solutions, Paragon selected HPE Helion Continuity Services.

### Defining continuity requirements

Operational threats can challenge an organisation's complex IT systems, and Paragon Community Housing Group, an award-winning provider of affordable homes and services across ten boroughs in southeast England, needed to protect its business against disaster recovery risks and ensure business continuity. Protecting enterprise data and ensuring business continuity is essential to Paragon, but the company had been relying on full daily backups of enterprise data to tape, which was insufficient for meeting its recovery point objectives (RPOs) and recovery time objectives (RTOs).

“Our previous recovery method was backup to tape, and we needed to better protect our business information and ensure fail-over in case we experienced an outage or a disaster scenario. HPE quickly implemented Disaster Recovery-as-a-Service and helped us simplify and modernise our backup and continuity implementation while significantly improving our performance indicators.”

— Barry Alford, Head of Information and Communications Technology, Paragon Community Housing Group

Paragon concluded that there was no quick fix that they could easily implement themselves, and would give them the type of dual data centre protection and disaster tolerance they were seeking at the confidence levels, budget, and project timelines they had in mind.

Paragon's management was seeking to reduce exposure to the potential business impact costs following a local outage or catastrophic event by improving its continuity performance indicators, and set clear and measurable goals for this infrastructure upgrade. The company wanted to reduce the RPO, which measures exposure to data loss, from up to 24 hours down to less than 2 hours. In addition, management wanted to improve the RTO, which measures the total time to recover, from around 48-72 hours to less than a working day.

Management also wanted to establish a secure, replicated off-site data set, housed in a highly available and resilient data centre that would also provide multiple recovery points to protect against data corruption. Simplifying the existing recovery process by adopting Disaster Recovery-as-a-Service (DRaaS) would help Paragon free up IT resources while reducing the complexity and costs of managing business continuity and disaster recovery.

Paragon initially selected another disaster recovery service company, but was unable to come to terms to finalise the contract. Barry Alford, Head of Information and Communications Technology for Paragon said “We evaluated several alternative solutions and selected Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE). After inspecting the HPE data centre and meeting the team we swiftly moved forward with HPE to easily finalise the negotiations.”

By selecting DRaaS from HPE, Paragon could keep its business running and data safe while benefitting from continuity from the cloud. Paragon could then benefit by establishing an Internet connection to the HPE managed fail-over and fail-back service and enabling unobtrusive, in-flight remote rehearsals to streamline IT efficiency.

## Rapid implementation

Paragon was consolidating data into its main head office in Walton-on-Thames, Surrey from a secondary redundant head office. Users in Paragon's managed facilities connect to 13 virtual servers, and Paragon also runs two HPE ProLiant DL380 servers to support enterprise applications. Enterprise data is stored on HPE MSA P2000 SAN Arrays<sup>1</sup>. Contract negotiations were concluded in late February and the implementation date was set for four weeks later.

<sup>1</sup> Helion Continuity Services are server and storage agnostic

## Case study

Paragon Community  
Housing Group

## Industry

Social Housing

## Customer at a glance

### HPE Services

- HPE Helion Continuity Service

### HPE Hardware

- HPE ProLiant DL380 Servers
- HPE MSA P2000 SAN ArraysSoftware

Within two weeks, the seeding (replication) process was completed and data sets were synchronised across both sites. All Paragon servers, both physical and virtual, are protected with near real-time replication running live between the Paragon location in Walton-on-Thames and the HPE data centre located an hour's drive away in Reading.

The next day, RPO statistics showed an average two-minute RPO window was being achieved over the 65 Mbps MPLS link that was connecting the Paragon location to the HPE data centre. The statistics showed that the link could be reduced to 20 Mbps and still deliver the same RPO — well within the established 15-minute service level agreement (SLA) parameter established.

Days before the deadline, a proof-of-concept rehearsal was implemented. All systems were failed over to systems running on a replica of the failed data set, and Paragon checked the failed-over environment, ran some additional compliance testing, and the DRaaS solution went live as planned.

Dave Anthony, Networks Manager for Paragon, said, "HPE worked closely with us and with our ISP to implement the solution quickly and efficiently. It was a very collaborative process, and HPE continuously provided us with data throughout the implementation so we could monitor progress and understand that our RTO and RPO goals were being met."

## Ensuring reliable ongoing operations

By choosing the HPE DRaaS option, Paragon managed to successfully transition to a much-improved service regime based on dual-site data replication with managed fail-over and fail-back features. Paragon has minimised the risk of losing productivity due to any potential protracted IT outages.

"Disaster Recovery-as-a-Service has let us plan for events that we hope will never happen," Dave Anthony explained. "We're now prepared for worst-case scenarios and have the ability to recover our data quickly enough to ensure business continuity and protect ongoing business operations."

## Delivering measurable results

Company objectives for business continuity are being exceeded, and Paragon has now achieved a two-minute RPO. Paragon's RTOs have been exceeded by 90% compared to tape, and RPOs have improved 95%. As a result of this deployment, the company's business exposure to potential costs and brand damage from continuity losses has also been significantly reduced.

According to Barry Alford, "Our previous recovery method was tape to backup, and we needed to better protect our business information and ensure fail-over in case we experienced an outage or a disaster scenario. HPE quickly implemented Disaster Recovery-as-a-Service and helped us simplify and modernise our backup and continuity implementation while significantly improving our performance indicators."

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