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Case Study

Project Location: Creetown Peregrine
Client: Creetown Heritage Museum
Date: May 2006

Project Description

The Creetown Heritage Museum contacted Outersight wanting to have a remote controlled camera on a Peregrine Falcon nest site in a quarry with viewing facilities located in the museum in Creetown in the Southwest of Scotland. A secondary aim was to receive live images from the Osprey Camera at Wigtown 5 KM over the water to the west.



Camera on Quarry face

The project presented some challenging problems. The site was 3.5 KM away from the Museum over a hill and the nearest power supply was 1.4 KM away. The museum was also low lying and there was no line of site to the nest location or to the County Building at Wigtown where the Osprey Camera is viewed so a direct microwave link was not an option.

We decided that a 3.5 KM armoured fibre optic cable would be the best option and this was installed by volunteers and the local farmer. A further 1.4KM of low voltage power cable was installed to the farm building. The 8 core fibre optic cable was specified not only to carry audio, video and data from the peregrine camera but also to provide an Ethernet data link up to the Peregrine site from where there is a line of sight to the Wigtown County building for installation of microwave radio link in the future.

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The camera is a "broadcastable" quality colour unit with an 18 x optical zoom allowing excellent close up shots of the nest site even at long distances. The 360 degree continuous rotation and 270 degree tilt allows the camera to be moved to view the Peregrine's feasting perches and will be able to catch the Juvenile learning to fly in the summer months. The small form factor of the camera, at only 300mm tall means the camera is discrete and does not suffer from wind induced vibration like traditional CCTV cameras. A microphone installed near to the camera picks up the calls of the juvenile when it is hungry.

The camera was installed early in the Spring before the birds had resettled on the nest so that no disturbance was caused. The remaining equipment was installed in May, without causing any disturbance to the birds. If the installation had disturbed the female then we would have abandoned the installation to avoid the female being away from the nest during such an unseasonably cold May.

The camera is viewed on a 26" LCD screen and the live images and audio on a recorded on a DVD recorder with built in hard disk. Due to the nature of the site visitors are not able to control the camera as the location of the nest could be revealed but staff members do have the ability to move the camera from the control keyboard.

The camera allows people of all abilities to observe this wonderful bird in its natural environment. It also provides a deterrent for would be egg thieves as the camera feed can be recorded 24 hours a day and even works in very low light levels.



Peregrine Feasting

Although only one chick was raised this year it looks to be very healthy and well fed by it's parents.

The project has increased visitor numbers to the museum and to the area as a whole bringing much needed economic benefits to the area This project would not have been possible without the assistance of Scottish Natural Heritage, Tarmac Aggregates, Forward Scotland and the team at The Creetown Heritage Museum

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