

Scottish Borders High Schools

A 'new era' for education in the Scottish Borders

£73.5m

/ Project value

October 2006

/ The build commenced

February 2009

/ The build was completed

Realising the Scottish Borders Council's "School of the Future" model, we designed and constructed three state-of-the-art high schools (Earlston, Berwickshire and Eyemouth) in the picturesque Scottish Borders. GRAHAM and Bilfinger Berger BOT Limited formed the consortium, Scottish Borders Education Partnership Limited, to deliver the design, build, finance, and maintenance of the trio of major educational campuses, which provide much-needed shared educational and community space. Finance was provided by Prudential. With a gross internal area of 38,775m², flexible functionality is at the core of each campus and facilitates multi-use for learning, sport, performing arts, workplace training and conferences.

The brief

The Scottish Borders Council required a trusted investment partner to undertake a DBFO project as part of a PPP scheme for three new education campuses in Earlston, Berwickshire and Eyemouth. The design brief focused heavily on maximising the shared use of the facilities between the schools and local communities.



"We have always prided ourselves on the high standards we set and the success we achieve – we now have the accommodation to match."

Michelle Strong
Head Teacher of Earlston

“This is the start of a new era for education in the Borders, and it is all down to our ongoing ambition to deliver the best services we can and ensure our schools continue to benefit thousands of young people, their families and local communities in the future.”

David Parker
Scottish Borders Council

The challenges

The Earlston High School site was set in a particularly challenging location on a sloping site in close proximity to a river, therefore making it ecologically sensitive. We worked extensively with SEPA & SNH to mitigate the risk of any pollution during the construction phase, and utilised drainage ditches and filtration solutions to ensure any contaminants were prevented from reaching the watercourse. A further key challenge of the overall project was ensuring the achievement of highly sustainable, energy efficient buildings, which met the required BREEAM Excellent rating and attained A-rated Energy Performance Certificates. To make this a reality, we appointed a dedicated BREEAM Manager who facilitated a series of BREEAM workshops, and ensured BREEAM principles were embedded into the design.

The solution

Completed simultaneously on time and on budget, the project has delivered a stimulating and inclusive learning environment through the construction of state-of-the-art facilities including three individually designed high schools of two and three-storeys, community accommodation, sports and leisure areas, and research space - Earlston Campus (£28.4m/15,076m²), Berwickshire Campus (£24m/12,873 m²), and Eyemouth Campus (£21.1m/10,803m²). Common construction materials were adopted and incorporated including structural steel frames, precast and in-situ concrete floors and standing seam roofing. Community engagement was the primary pillar of our approach. This not only influenced the design, but also positively impacted upon the overall success of the project.

Outputs & Benefits

Cost saving efficiencies: Mechanical and electrical containments, prefabricated off site resulting in reduced programme and increased quality and reliability

Innovative design: We enhanced and upgraded many of the local cycle and pedestrian transport routes. A sustainable Travel Plan was developed for the Eyemouth site, along with the launch of a cycle initiative, to suit the needs of the users with bike racks, showers and changing facilities

Experienced project management: Designed and delivered on time and within budget

Significant footprint: Combined gross internal floor area of 38,775m²

Local employment: We utilised in excess of 92% of local labour, exceeding the 75% target, and employed approximately 290 people from the Scottish Borders region



For more information on how we're delivering lasting impact:

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