

Wellington College, and Balmoral High School and Regional Training Unit

Delivering BELB's 'biggest capital schools building programme'

£53m

/ Project value

September 2000

/ The build commenced

January 2002

/ The build was completed

Through the vehicle of the Northwin Consortium, comprising a number of Northern Ireland's leading construction companies, we helped deliver Belfast Education and Library Board's "biggest capital schools building programme". As part of a Public Private Partnership, we undertook the design, build, finance, and operation responsibilities for two school campuses – Wellington College, and Balmoral High School, which included a Regional Teacher Training Unit. Notably, the requirements also featured hard maintenance services (as a subcontractor to the SPV under the 25-year PPP concession). This comprised building fabric, mechanical and electrical, planned and reactive maintenance, grounds maintenance, asset and lifecycle replacement, and the provision of helpdesk facilities.

The brief

BELB required "new, fresh and bright" facilities that were fit for the 21st century to replace the existing ageing buildings occupied by Wellington College, and Balmoral High School and the Regional Teacher Training Unit. Working collaboratively with the Board, a DBFO contract was initiated, with the construction programme completed as planned in January 2002. The FM services continue to be successfully executed.



"The buildings occupied by both schools and the Regional Teacher Training Unit were extremely poor by any standard that would be applied. The schools would acknowledge that what they now have is new, fresh and bright."

Brendan O'Reilly
Belfast Education and Library Board

“There is a willingness on the consortium’s side to make it work and that has helped. We have not, for example, had to initiate the dispute resolution procedure and this is primarily down to the good relationships that we have established with all members of the GRAHAM FM team. To date we have been able to negotiate, talk, communicate and resolve issues.”

Brendan O’Reilly
Belfast Education and Library Board

The challenges

To ensure continued excellence in service delivery and to mitigate the resultant risk of any abatements, we established an experienced facilities management team, which included site based multi-skilled engineers and helpdesk operators. Significantly, through robust monitoring and regular inspection of service delivery, and the use of a CAFM system, the contract has not been subject to any abatements. Furthermore, the innate risks of providing maintenance services in live, occupied educational environments, where there may be vulnerable adults/ children present, have been mitigated through effective programming, with works coinciding with lower levels of occupancy.

The solution

Thanks to our ability “to make it work”, the schools and regional teacher training unit were successfully handed over in January 2002. Despite an incredibly tight 14-month building programme, close collaboration and a deep understanding of the construction process ensured agreed timelines were met, and that the connected parties could welcome pupils as planned. Typically in PPP/PFI projects, the procurement of furniture and equipment can be problematic, however, in the spirit of true partnership between the consortium, GRAHAM Facilities Management and other stakeholders, all parties worked together to meet the unique requirements of each school/college. Significantly, the seamless operation of the facilities has benefitted from GRAHAM FM’s educational expertise. The multi-skilling of engineers to provide operational and resource efficiencies, which also reduced fix/response times, was a notable innovation.

Outputs & Benefits

- / **Efficient delivery:** Development of a Move and Decanting Management Plan, to ensure that a soft and manageable move was achieved; with further surety that the college could continue its core educational services during the handover phase of the project
- / **Innovation:** Innovative solutions were developed (and practically applied) to provide tangible energy savings, and therefore mitigating the risks innate in both consumption and tariff responsibilities
- / **Facilities Management:** A collaborative working relationship has ensured GRAHAM FM’s educational expertise has delivered substantial long-term benefits
- / **Sustainability:** More than 85% engagement with local supply chain
- / **Local community:** We employed a Community Liaison Officer to engage with the local community



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

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