

Royal Commonwealth Pool, Edinburgh

# History, ingenuity and sporting legacy

**£37m**

/ Project value

**July 2009**

/ The build commenced

**February 2012**

/ The duration

An infrastructural icon of British sport since 1970, the Royal Commonwealth Pool in Edinburgh triumphantly returned to its former glory in February 2012 following an innovative £37 million redevelopment project. Completed on programme, within budget and in compliance with Historic Scotland regulations, the Grade A listed building, a proud venue for the 2014 Commonwealth Games (its third), is now a world-class centre of sporting excellence and a catalyst for the creation of Scotland's next generation of aquatic stars.

## The Brief

Affectionately known as the 'Commie Pool', this building transformation required creative, and sympathetic, redevelopment and upgrade in preparation for its inclusion as a venue for the 2014 Commonwealth Games while leaving a lasting legacy long after the conclusion of the Games' closing ceremony.



**"Right from the start, everyone understood that the project had to be delivered on time and on budget and there was a real team spirit generated by all of the Design Team members in trying to achieve this"**

Stephanie-Anne Harris  
Head of Sport and Physical Activity,  
City of Edinburgh Council

**“Whilst the project did have its challenges, we were delighted with the positive attitude brought by the Contractors, which has resulted in a fantastic refurbishment of this A-listed pool”**

Stephanie-Anne Harris  
Head of Sport and Physical Activity, City of Edinburgh Council

### The Challenges

The protection of listed features, on a constrained city centre site, water integrity testing and the precision demanded of competition-standard pool tolerances, minus 0mm plus 5mm, underscored the intricate challenges of this exciting transformation. Demolishing the Grade A listed structure, and building from within, posed considerable project hazards, which necessitated technical expertise such as a custom-designed open cut solution for the construction programme. Furthermore, the scale of the project, which necessitated over 6.5 million ‘man-hours’, and its complexity, exemplified in the orchestration of 55 different subcontractors, required robust planning.

### GRAHAM’s added value solution

Tailored to this elite environment, our solution was, in itself, world class and involved stripping the Grade A listed building back to its bare shell before rebuilding from within. Conserving all of the listed features, and the significant internal remodelling of a 25,000m<sup>2</sup> floor area, were the backbone to the creation of a multi-use main pool hall, inclusive of three distinct pools, a 900 seater spectator viewing gallery, changing village, soft-play area, fitness studios and conference facilities. Included in the scope of works was the complete refurbishment of 7000m<sup>2</sup> of listed Iroko timber ceiling panels throughout the building. Some 390,000 tiles were laid, 3000m<sup>3</sup> of concrete poured and 300 tonnes of reinforced steel manipulated throughout the programme, which concluded with a ‘National Silver Award’ from the CCS for our commitment to social inclusion and community engagement.

### Outputs & Benefits

- Heritage Expertise:** The transformation and refurbishment of a Grade A listed building
- On Time:** The project was completed on programme, within budget and in compliance with Historic Scotland regulations
- Quality Delivery:** Main pool extended by 1.5m with inclusion of special boom, learning pool deepened by 2m
- Seismic Scale:** 6.5 million ‘man-hours’ worked, 380,000 tiles laid, 7000m<sup>2</sup> of listed Iroko timber ceiling panels, 3000m<sup>3</sup> of concrete poured
- Sustainability:** Features include CHP heating system, timed lighting system, waste shower water used to flush toilets
- Partnership:** 55 different subcontractors were engaged
- Mitigating Disruption:** Awarded ‘National Silver Award’ by the Considerate Constructors Scheme



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

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