



Setting the benchmark for partnership working: Chester-le-Street Community Hospital, County Durham

What makes this a flagship project?

- Winner of 2006 BIFM award for Best Practice in a PFI/PPP project
- Excellent stakeholder and community involvement
- A model for partnership working: £100k of savings per year since the contract award
- PEAT (Patient Environment Action Team) award: 'Excellent' site environment status.

Chester-le-Street Community Hospital is a busy 44-bed facility providing inpatient, outpatient and day hospital services. Operational from 2003, this has been a flagship project for partnership working and customer relationships ever since.

A hive of sustainable activity

The success of this project relies on a high degree of communication and operational interfaces between the doctors' surgeries and facilities on site. The onsite FM team manages, coordinates and delivers total FM, lifecycle, minor works and energy management services. These services radiate from our on-site FM hub, from which all aspects of the site can be controlled. One of our key areas of design innovation was the development of the 'clean and dirty routes' to and from this bustling FM hub, and the on-site team uses a BEMS system to proactively manage energy consumption.

Food for thought

It's not enough for our FM services to be excellent: they need to be excellent value for money. At Chester-le-Street, we've provided £40k worth of cost-savings by revisiting weekend working rotas, reconfiguring the car parking to become a shared revenue stream, and reviewing linen suppliers. We continue to work in close partnership with the Trust to achieve cost efficiency: we have recently undertaken a full review of the catering and cleaning services, and are implementing changes that result in significant efficiencies without sacrificing quality. Between these and other initiatives, we will deliver further savings of £60k per year. In all, we have saved the Trust around £100k per year on a contract that has 20 years left to run: a whole-life benefit of £2m.

Client: County Durham & Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Contract: Provision of full hard and soft FM services

Dates of involvement: 2003-2033

Community spirit

Mark Nelson, Project Manager, says: "This is a tight-knit community. We employ a team of 35 people dedicated to this facility, and most of us live in or near Chester-le-Street. We have friends and family who have used the hospital as patients or who are members of NHS staff, and at some stage, the team members may end up using this hospital too. So it's very much about being part of the local community. We always get great reports from the client, and that is because of this team spirit and effort: our people here, from the youngest to the oldest, treat the hospital as something they want to be part of."