



**CONSTRUCTING
EXCELLENCE**
in the built environment



demonstration project



Night view of Church Square

St Helens: Partnering Delivers Added Value

Client:	St Helens Council
Contractor:	Mayfield Construction Ltd
Case Study Ref:	335
Project Number:	2880
Publication date:	April 2009
Region:	North West
Sector:	Local Government
Project Value:	£6m
Project timescales:	December 2005 – December 2008
Themes:	Partnering and Sustainable Development

St Helens Council joined together in partnership with Mayfield Construction Ltd to deliver an ambitious £6 million upgrade to St Helens town centre. Partnered appointments were based on detailed submissions which showed a clear commitment to sustainable outcomes on the project. From the outset, the aims of the project were clearly set with environmental, social and economic sustainability as the key drivers.

The Procurement Process

A procurement model was initially developed to satisfy best value requirements. The three stage procurement process that followed was quality led based on 60% quality and 40% price. Detailed submissions needed to demonstrate the ability of contractors to deliver sustainable solutions for the project. Key sub-contractors were selected on the same basis (quality/price), which meant the partnering ethos was embedded throughout the supply chain.

The Partnership and Sustainable Objectives

"A seamless team was created with no organisational boundaries"

St Helens Council

Once contractors were appointed a managed process, lead by the client, commenced to create an integrated team. Partnering workshops were held to identify common needs and aspirations.

Alongside this sustainability workshops were held which showed that the team wanted to achieve results which differentiated from normal KPIs but instead wanted to deliver more tangible benefits.

The team wanted to demonstrate that by collaborative working teams can achieve above average results within an environment of trust and understanding. The sustainable objectives the team identified were:

- To develop good designs in order to minimise waste
- To reward people for waste reduction
- To use performance indicators which had tangible results
- To demonstrate efficiency savings (Gershon savings)
- To focus the team on environmental issues
- To communicate best practices to Industry
- To source the best products not for lowest cost but for whole life cycle
- To engage local suppliers
- Employ and train local people
- Support community projects

With these objectives set the team reviewed construction processes, packaging, recycled content, material re-use and design and came up with an environmental strategy which would achieve the project's sustainable objectives and if possible exceed them within the cost model of the project.

"From the initial workshop it was identified there was a need to design, develop and construct the project with sustainability as the key driver, therefore best practices had to be implemented at all stages of the project"

Mayfield Construction Ltd

Advisory and Stakeholder Groups

The Environment Agency, English Nature and Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service were all involved at the earliest stage to ensure their ideas and concerns were built into the project, driving benefit in the same way as Early Contractor Involvement does in terms of project build. Rather than trying to fix the environmental issues down the line, the issues were discussed and embedded at the earliest stages of the project.

Local economy

Supporting local businesses and promoting local labour initiatives encourage reinvestment into the local economy of St Helens. The partnered constructor, Mayfield, has a tradition of employing local operatives rather than sub contract labour to allow investment in local skill development. Contractors took on apprentices and recruited from the local area which constituted 11% of the work force. As well as direct employment, there was extensive employment of locally based SMEs for construction (materials and labour) and non construction related services (e.g. graphic artists, sign makers and hire/consumable suppliers).

Outcomes

The upgrade of St Helens town centre was a success on many levels: the construction works were delivered on time and on budget but considerable benefits were also achieved. Benefits achieved were of an environmental, social and economic nature but the main achievements made on the scheme were of an environmental nature. The partnership between St. Helens Council and Mayfield Construction Ltd was a fantastic success and the reason behind realising the sustainable benefits.

Environmental Benefits

- 97% of all waste material was segregated, reused or recycled. Packing waste is segregated on site in to the main recyclable properties consisting of timber, polythene and waste paper.
- £1,265.00 was saved on the cost of skip hire by segregating waste.
- Implemented a scheme on site whereby site operatives can share in a financial return in the form of a waste bonus, by reducing the percentage waste factor as against those allowed within the cost plans. To date total bonus payments for waste reduction is £7,632.00. In wastage percentage terms overall waste has been reduced to 2.1% from a cost allowance of 5%.
- The 'Mains water consumption as a construction process' KPI is currently scoring 38 which again places the project in the top quartile for lowered water use.
- 22 HGV movements were reduced by the direct result of material re-use on site i.e. material screening.
- The scheme will benefit from lower electrical charges by using a high proportion of L.E.D lighting for the street scene creating an annual saving of £3,876.00 year on year.
- 3,564 tons of segregated material, which equates to 178 vehicle movements, have been made within an 8 mile radius of the project thereby reducing further carbon omissions, whilst again supporting local enterprises.

Social and Economic Benefits

- Existing block paving was reused in community benefit projects such as the repaving of the exhibition floors in the World of Glass St Helens, providing paving to the Restorative Justice Project St Helens, providing over 2,200m² of block paving to the Harlow allotments and Wellington terrace scheme which has saved those schemes in net terms £22,000.
- Assisted stakeholder groups such as the 'justice reform programme' with elemental training.
- 11% of workforce were local.
- Engagement with local SMEs for construction and non-construction goods and services.
- Considerate Constructor Scheme – a site audit by the Considerate Constructors stated: "this is a very impressive contract in which the public care and accountability is being exercised at a very high standard."

Awards

Evidence of the success of this project is highlighted by the awards received since its completion. The awards received include:

- Environmental business of the year 2006 – Groundwork Trust
- Energy, water & waste conversation award – Groundwork Trust
- Gold medal winner Innovation / Sustainability at the National Green Apple Award 2006
- Short listed for the 2006 North West Environmental Business Award
- Considerate Constructors Award 2007
- BALI principal award winner – mainly hard landscaping

What made this project work?

By implementing early contractor involvement with the client prior to commencement of phase one, sustainable initiatives could easily be achieved at no cost to the project. Lessons learnt from phase one were then applied to subsequent phases of the scheme. The most important points of the project can be best summarised as follows:

- For both the customer and provider to jointly agree tangible targets.
- The early buy in of the supply chain to change / improve packaging systems.
- Aiding local community projects with re-usable materials.
- Using health and safety as design driver.
- Good monitoring systems – BRE smart waste.
- Introducing incentive schemes for waste reduction.

Best Practice Continued

This project-led initiative has had significant implications to the contractors' business operations and, in particular, has given specific consideration to the environmental impact of construction works. Following the success of the sustainable construction initiatives, Mayfield Construction Ltd have utilised the knowledge and experience gained during the construction process to implement companywide environmental initiatives, incorporating the benefits of sustainable construction and reinforcing their existing Environmental policy and practices.

Key Lessons Learnt:

- Essential to collaborative working is strong leadership, an individual who will champion collaboration, someone who believes in its value and who will ensure a team approach is adopted throughout the process. Create partnering charter.
- To put in place a clear governance structure that supports and respects collaborative working.
- All key organisations (client, contractor, supply chain) to attend partnering workshop(s) to ensure an integrated team, a seamless team with no organisational boundaries that will produce a common set of delivery goals.
- To establish themed/specialist delivery groups to manage priority issues i.e. materials (innovation, savings/value engineering/whole life cost, community benefits, KPIs. It is critical that such groups are attended by client, contractor and specialist advisory bodies and that they are appropriate personnel in terms of knowledge and decision making ability.
- The availability and use of recycled materials does not hinder a project and can be cost effective.
- Ensure key groups (stakeholders, end users, local businesses and residents) are kept well informed through the construction process so as to manage their expectation and to enrol their support.
- Adopt an open book accounting with savings reinvested in schemes thus delivering better value for residents.



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