



Cardiff Council: Grand Avenue Day Centre

Grand Avenue Day Centre in Cardiff provides a vital service for people living with dementia across the city. Housed in a 25-year-old building, the centre required a full refurbishment in order to accommodate the new specialist dementia care service.

The solution

Following a competitive tender process, Cardiff Council awarded the £850k 11-month refurbishment contract to Building Solutions (the specialist building and refurbishment arm of VINCI Facilities), due to its successful delivery of a similar project for the Council. Now complete, the following aspects proved crucial to the project's success:

Supply chain management

Building Solutions managed a team of suppliers from its network of approved contractors, with priority being given to local firms whenever possible. To maximise standards, all of the firms were provided with free access to Building Solutions' comprehensive e-learning platform, which provides training on topics such as asbestos awareness, fire safety and first aid.

Community support initiatives

- » £700k+ was spent with suppliers from the local area.
- » As the works required access via the rear of the neighbouring Bernardos building, Building Solutions volunteered to conduct a free upgrade of its playground.
- » Building Solutions collaborated with a local primary school to support the children in completing an environmental project designed to promote the importance of recycling.

Tailoring works to suit users

The works were designed by the Council's in-house design team to meet the specific needs of people living with dementia.

For instance, to create a homely atmosphere, the design incorporates an electric fire that creates a smoke effect using water vapour, and an internal corridor that replicates a street – complete with shop awnings and street lights.

In addition, non-reflective surfaces were used to minimise anxiety to service users, as many don't perceive themselves to be old.

Health and safety

Safety was of paramount importance, particularly during works within a highly confined undercroft that housed M&E pipework. Due to the potential dangers of the space, Building Solutions developed rigorous safety initiatives, including conducting air tests to check for contaminants, creating a buddy system to ensure no one entered alone, issuing two-way radios to all personnel, and easing access by doubling the size of the entrance and installing a passenger sled.

Initiatives such as this ensured that there were zero accidents throughout the duration of the project.

SCOPE OF WORKS

- » Full internal refurbishment including replacement electrics, plumbing and lift shaft.
- » New roof covering.
- » New-build extension.
- » External landscaping and installation of footpaths with disabled access.

KEY RESULTS

- » The client was delighted with the works, as evident from Jon Gibbens, Project Manager at Cardiff Council, who commented: "Building Solutions played a vital role in the delivery of a dementia-friendly design created by Projects, Design and Development (Cardiff Council's in-house design team). Building Solutions understood and helped deliver a positive and successful project utilising a design based on understanding the users' care needs and the sensory, cognitive and physical constraints of dementia. The quality of the final finish was exceptional and the centre has attracted an overwhelmingly positive response from all visitors."
- » The project was also recognised with a CLAW (Consortium of Local Authorities Wales) Award, with the judges commenting: "Creative interiors derived from simple problem-solving solutions. This difficult building has been cleverly adapted to successfully create a positive environment for a very worthy cause."



BUILDING SOLUTIONS



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