

Winter 2006

Alan Soper's presentation on time and trust to Housing Forum's South West Conference

The 2006 Housing Forum's South West Regional Conference was attended by approximately 80 delegates representing a broad cross section of housing sector professionals.

Ian Williams' MD, Alan Soper was among the panel of expert guests invited to address the Conference. Alan's presentation on the issues facing contractors in the social housing supply chain, focused on four key themes. The first was asset management, giving particular emphasis to the convergence of contracts moving towards long-term management of stock and risk transfer to the appropriate part of the supply chain. Alan also tackled resourcing, specifically, the importance of ensuring the right skilled labour and target-focused managers are in place from the outset of a project. On the subject of customer service, he stressed that social landlords and providers have different roles to play and recognition of this is key to successful delivery. Finally, looking at the opportunities afforded by partnering arrangements and the different perspective of Registered Social Landlords and providers, Alan outlined how achievements can be limitless within an environment of mutual trust.

A year of milestones

It is traditional at this time of year to reflect on the past 12 months and look forward to the year ahead.

2006 was a year of milestones for Ian Williams as we continued to spearhead the tightest service levels, expand our client base and seek out new opportunities. As a result, the 05/06 financial year has seen a 17% year-on-year increase in turnover and we have secured a 50% increase in our order book.

We have extended our work within social housing and have won many significant contracts, notably with the Industrial Dwellings Society in Stoke Newington and People 1st in Slough. Simultaneously, we have expanded current partnering agreements including those with Plymouth City Council, Cardiff City Council and Gloucestershire Housing Association. These longer-term agreements are the result of previous contract work where the 'added-value' gains of partnering agreements have become apparent.

2006 has also seen a major expansion into the education sector with a variety of initiatives



aimed exclusively at this area. This has included organising seminars on how to outsource cost-effective refurbishment and maintenance work for educational buildings.

An important part of our long-term strategy, reflecting shifting market trends towards partnering, lies in Private Finance Initiatives (PFI). Alongside the Brent Coefficient Consortium, we are currently at 'preferred bidder' stage of our first PFI with the London Borough of Brent. PFIs play to our strengths in handling whole life asset management.

This year marked our 60th birthday. However, to meet the challenges of the next

generation, we need to build upon our success. Our forward-thinking strategy and a commitment to quality has won us impressive and varied customers. With such a portfolio, we are now well established as a multi-service partner for the next 60 years.

The end of such a successful year would not be complete without a sincere thank you to those who have made this possible: our business partners, employees and customers. We wish you all a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Alan Soper
Managing Director

Success of educational seminars

The 'Ensuring buildings work for you - not against you' seminars took place through October and November, organised by the University of the West of England and jointly sponsored by ourselves.

The seminars which took place in Bristol, Plymouth and Southampton attracted delegates including head-teachers and

bursars from primary, secondary and higher education across the Southern region. They learnt how the public and private sector could work together to benefit education.

The seminars' objectives were to emphasise the benefits of long-term partnering agreements and advise on best

continued on page 2...

Housing Association update...

Gloucestershire Housing Association

Ian Williams has recently won a contract with Gloucestershire Housing Association (GHA) for response and void work covering around 2,500 homes in the area.

Ian Williams has previously provided external decoration work to GHA for the last 4 years. The contract is worth £2 million, and started on 4th September 2006 and runs for 5 years, with the possibility of renewal for a further five. The work is largely for 'new stock' which is a mixture of blocks and single houses, located in the Cotswolds, Gloucestershire and as far as Herefordshire. Ian Williams is also heavily investing in the area, beyond its contracted work. They have given three apprenticeships to people from Gloucester, who are learning and working on this project. Additionally, for every satisfaction survey returned from GHA residents, Ian Williams will donate £1 to the charity Shelter.

Gedling Borough Council

We've expanded our current contract with Gedling Borough Council, Nottinghamshire.

The new partnering agreement due to start in April 2007 will cover response and voids for the whole of Gedling Council an extension of the firm's current agreement for response maintenance in the south of the borough. This is another example of where existing agreements have developed naturally into contract partnering through the quality of service and local investment, such as apprenticeships that we offer to every individual project.

Ian Williams' new contract win with Sarsen HA and The Duchy of Cornwall



Ian Williams has won a Design and Build contract with Sarsen Housing Association in Cornwall.

The land at St Anns Chapel near Gunnislake, Cornwall is a rural exception site and was leased to Sarsen Housing Association by The Duchy of Cornwall. The Spring newsletter will provide further information about the development of this working relationship and the specific requirements it has brought.

The contract will see Ian Williams responsible for the detailed design and construction of the 19 properties, including drainage and widening of the existing highway. On building completion there will be a 12 month defects period.

The development funded by The Housing Corporation and Caradon District Council aims to be completed by December 2007. The new stock will comprise of 17 two, three and four bedroom houses and two, one-bedroom flats.



Success of educational seminars

...continued from page 1



practice for building maintenance within an educational environment.

The Government has allocated £2.2bn a year to rebuild and renew every secondary school in England and these seminars show how schools and colleges can best spend their funding in areas such as construction, maintenance and refurbishment.

Sponsoring the event gave us an opportunity to learn from the delegates how they felt about the implications of devolvement and its long term effects. These findings are going to be published in the New Year, together with statistics and opinions of those in the education sector where they will form part of an unprecedented research document.

Initial findings indicate:

- The private sector can help schools reduce costs and improve students' educational experiences.
- The quality of buildings directly impacts on educational performance.
- Management of buildings is challenging for teachers, bursars and property managers.
- The use of Asset Maintenance Plans is variable.

Whilst current challenges appear to be:

- Poor maintenance of buildings can reduce educational performance.
- Management of buildings is becoming increasingly challenging for teachers, bursars and property managers.
- The cost of maintenance is difficult to benchmark between schools.
- There is a willingness within the education sector to work with the private sector but it is difficult to find organisations that have the experience and competence to manage educational facilities.

Feedback has been largely positive with one delegate explaining that the day had showed:

"An interest and awareness in educational needs, aspiration and passion, solid practical advice and sources for further information were provided."

North London Branch Strengthened

The 1st November saw Ian Williams merge its Neasden and Loughton offices to create a central North London Branch. By streamlining services from a single principal office, the merger offers customers throughout North London more choice and improved delivery.

Painting and Repairs were previously driven by the Loughton office while the

Neasden office had control of Response and Planned Maintenance. All three services are now headed by Grant Christie, Manager for North London.

Grant Christie explains the advantages: "The benefits are universal. It has been a long term plan to shift the focus to one centralised office that will provide a more co-ordinated service for clients and more opportunities for staff. The move has enhanced our service with

more of a focus on an 'account management' style and will enable us to offer our clients a multi-product service. This gives the specialist skilled tradesmen, technical and managerial staff scope for their self-development and growth. The Client or resident will benefit because it means they deal with only one Ian Williams team member, so ensuring cohesive, efficient and competent service delivery."

The recent article by Educational Executive and Mike Turner, Development Director, is reproduced below for anyone who missed it.

Planning for the Unexpected

In a world where we feel increasingly less in control of our environment - with climate change, terrorism and criminal damage in the headlines - we try to grab more control over the outcomes of emergencies.

Risk Management and Crisis Management have become independent industries as society employs people to think the 'unthinkable', plan for it and recover from it. The unexpected fire, flood, subsidence or accident, even when minor, can create havoc. Damaged buildings, roads and infrastructure have a local impact. Communities cannot afford chaos in daily life.

Managing the impact

Disaster planning and recovery came into focus as people watched the social and business repercussions of hurricane damage in the US in 2005. What became the double tragedy of Katrina left New Orleans not only reeling from hurricane devastation, but also recovering from an inadequate crisis response.

Schools are particularly vulnerable to criminal damage, as well as natural disasters. On average three schools in the UK suffer an arson attack every day. Schools need to be made safe and secure, recovery teams need to be managed and those using the buildings need to be informed.

Recovery and Response

The processes that have to be in place to ensure normality is returned as quickly and as efficiently as possible are usually set up in advance of any incident. At a time when arson attacks on schools are daily occurrences and 61% of malicious school fires occur outside school hours, effective planning for emergencies is a necessity. Action Five in the Arson Prevention Bureau's Five Point Action Plan is: Reduce subsequent losses and disruption resulting from a fire.

Recovery planning and response is a way to ensure the effects of any disaster - on people, buildings and infrastructure - are managed in



the right way. The work involves planning a strategy of resources and equipment needed to cope with an incident.

Strategic Support

Many schools may find planning disaster recovery on their own daunting. It is time consuming and often a steep learning curve for schools to prepare and manage this on their own. Increasingly, outsourced service companies, like Ian Williams, are employed to take the burden off schools.

Maintenance providers come in at the planning stage and work with an educational establishment throughout the

process to create a tailor-made emergency programme. They will then put that programme into action, managing all the elements resulting from an incident, when needed.

Customer liaison is crucial in a crisis but so is the practical response. A successful contractor plans disaster back up in advance providing immediate project management along with teams of professional contractors. Suppliers support one another, working cohesively in teams across different projects. An effective contractor will have the capability to respond to any buildings-related emergency, providing a seamless support service.

... 'when' rather than 'if'

Current trends in school fires indicate that unfortunately, for many, it may be a question of 'when', rather than 'if' arson strikes. With around 1,400 incidents of school arson in the UK a year (costing an estimated £43million) Disaster Recovery and Response Planning is a service worth having. Thinking

proactively about an emergency response can save time, money, resource and reputation. Mere fire-fighting just isn't enough anymore.

● **For a full copy of how to prepare a Disaster Response Programme please call Jo Janes on 01454 328000**

Happy 60th birthday



In April this year, Councillor Alan Lawrance, Chair of South Gloucestershire Council officially marked the opening of our newly refurbished Chipping Sodbury head office - one of many milestones reached during our birthday year

Sixty years ago Ian Williams, now one of the UK's leading property service specialists, was founded in South Wales.

Now a multi-service company, specialising in all aspects of property maintenance, particularly for Housing Associations and Local Authorities. Working alongside such organisations, Ian Williams is thoroughly committed to local communities, developing sponsorship and charitable programmes.

Ian Williams now has a workforce of over 1400. Investment in staff is a priority for Ian Williams, and this is repaid by the long service of many employees, 94 of whom have been with the company over 20 years.

Ian Williams remains a family-owned business. According to Alan Soper, 'the family have remained firmly behind the business

throughout 60 years, and are strongly supportive of the business today and of the opportunities in front of us.'

Turnover is now reaching £100m pa and Ian Williams is well established to meet the challenges of the 21st century including future strategic moves into Private Finance Initiative (PFI) projects. The company's recent re-branding initiative together with the new strapline 'Looking after Buildings' makes it clear what Ian Williams does, how it communicates with its customers and ensures their standing as a leading property services company, for the next generation.

Mike Turner explains why Ian Williams is set to prosper in the future 'A good reputation for service and as an employer of top quality trade labour are the best foundations we can have, a great legacy from our first 60 years and a strong basis for the next.'

Rushcliffe Homes Resident Wins a Tradesman



Mrs. Foulds from Asklockton, is the lucky winner of a competition jointly organised between Ian Williams and Rushcliffe Homes, part of the Metropolitan Housing Partnership, the largest social housing landlord within the Borough of Rushcliffe, Nottinghamshire.

Ian Williams provide the responsive repairs and maintenance for Rushcliffe's 3,600 residents.

The competition offered the chance to have an Ian Williams tradesman help with any of those little jobs around the house that people don't seem to get round to doing - things like putting up curtain poles, assembling flat pack furniture or simply tidying the garden. The choice of skilled tradesman is up to Mrs. Foulds to choose depending on what she has in mind for him.

Ruth Powell, Business Solutions Manager explains: "There's more to being a property service provider than looking after people's homes - at least that's the way we at Ian Williams view things. We work closely with Rushcliffe and the residents here, attending Advisory Residents Group and Resident meetings to help us really understand the relevant issues and deliver consistently high service levels. The competition was one of our more light hearted initiatives! Running in Insight, the resident newsletter, readers were asked to provide the funniest caption to a photograph. We had over fifty entries to the competition and really enjoyed the judging."

- Planned future initiatives as part of Ian Williams' partnering arrangements with Rushcliffe include resident road shows and job shops.

If you have any comments, or would like further information, on any of the articles in this issue of **Review**, please fill in the form below:

Name

Company

Address

Telephone Fax

I would like more information on

Fax back to: 01454 310 997 or post to: Jo Janes, Ian Williams, Quarry Road, Chipping Sodbury, Bristol BS37 6JL


ian williams

Looking after Buildings

Head Office: Quarry Road,
Chipping Sodbury, Bristol BS37 6JL

T 01454 328000

E enquiries@ianwilliams.co.uk

www.ianwilliams.co.uk