

Turnover and employment success

Ian Williams passes £100 million milestone



We are proud and pleased to be ending the year with the news that we have reached a £100 million turnover in what has been a record year for Ian Williams, seeing us grow from strength to strength to achieve this landmark figure.

Andy Havard, Managing Director, said: "I am delighted we have reached the £100 million milestone, securing our position in the market as one of UK's leading property maintenance companies.

"We set ourselves a target to reach such a significant turnover by 2015. Now we have done it, we are in a strong position to pursue future growth."

He added: "The result has been driven by the outstanding performance of our staff and our ability to create long

standing relationships with our clients in what is a very competitive sector."

For the year to 31 October 2015, we achieved a turnover of £102 million compared with £96 million for the previous year.

As an expert in providing maintenance services within the social housing, education, defence, corporate building and commercial sectors, we have recently secured new and renewed contracts with the Ministry of Justice, the National Trust, the Ministry of Defence, the BBC and a number of local authorities as well as housing associations.

Our 1,000-strong workforce, which is spread amongst 13 offices across England and Wales, has also grown to meet contract demands.

Increased opportunities for young people

We are celebrating after a record number of apprentices and trainees started programmes with us this year.

We recruited 26 trade apprentices, 14 trainee surveyors and 3 staff apprentices. We now plan to increase the number of apprentices to 10% of our trade workforce by 2017, with school leavers and graduates recruited every year into our trainee surveyor and staff apprentice programmes.

We're hoping our schemes will help us become the number one choice for young people looking to start their careers and be recognised as one of the top apprentice and trainee employers in the country.

Andy Havard, Managing Director, said: "We want to attract passionate and motivated young people who will not only deliver impressive and tangible results for the business but want a long term career and strive for success. It is good news for employment in the areas we work and for our current workforce."



Case study



Shining a light on an unusual expertise

We are delighted to be a preferred supplier with Trinity House which manages 69 lighthouses across the UK. The huge variety of lighthouses and their locations, from attractive seaside towns to rocky outcrops, means work on these projects is never predictable.

It provides us with an opportunity to train apprentices and new operatives in techniques they would not learn on other projects. Our employees have worked on many iconic coastal landmarks from Nash Point on the tip of the Bristol Channel and The Needles off the Isle of Wight, to Smeaton's Tower on the Hoe at Plymouth. A good head for heights is non-negotiable!

This summer, we were contracted to repaint two Cornish lighthouses - Pendeen Lighthouse in the far west of the county and Lizard Lighthouse on the Lizard peninsula. There were a number of factors which added to the complexity of this project, including the importance of the sites, their remote and exposed coastal locations and the fact we had to complete the work during the height of the tourist season.

The weather was also a major factor in ensuring the safety of our operatives. We had to constantly monitor the weather. If winds exceeded 27mph, it was too dangerous for operatives to use the mobile working platform needed for painting the main lighthouse walls, fog horns and chimneys.

In addition, both sites have holiday cottages and our first challenge was to devise a programme of works to minimise the disruption to the guests and conserve their privacy. As Lizard Lighthouse also houses a heritage centre, which remained open during the works, we also had to manage the public health and safety aspect effectively.

Both projects needed a wide range of safety equipment, scaffolding, ladders and towers to access the obscure features and heights of the lighthouses. Operatives were specifically trained in using a full body harness and working at height.

A bespoke paint specification was used for each site with more than 20 different paints specified, of which 12 alone were white in colour. The paints on the Pendeen lighthouse were all specialist materials designed to withstand the constant battering from the Atlantic Ocean.

Routine maintenance of lighthouses is usually planned from spring onwards to try to avoid the worst weather conditions.



Education focus

Our work in educational establishments continued this summer with some prestigious contract wins across the country. Here are details of two significant projects.

Eton project in a class of its own



We were pleased to secure a contract for an additional summer project at Eton College in Windsor, one of Britain's most elite public schools.

During the school holidays, our painting professionals completed internal and external works to a number of prominent buildings throughout the estate, getting them ready for the start of the new academic year.

The intensive programme included painting, decorating and repairing rooms and intricate staircases, the entire headmaster's and house masters' houses as well as a number of the scholars' boarding houses.

Mark Said, General Manager at Ian Williams, said: "We are delighted our expertise and knowledge has been used at such a prestigious college. We were given a tough schedule which included some residential buildings and are pleased to have met this with outstanding results."

Paul Bayley, Buildings Officer for Eton, added: "We are extremely pleased with the work that Ian Williams has completed for Eton. It is of the highest quality and was delivered ahead of schedule. The team were extremely professional and a delight to work with. It shows Ian Williams at its best."

Further work secured at university

Ian Williams was successful this year in securing a 20-week contract to refurbish basement-level laboratories at the University of Bristol, ranked as one of the top five institutions for research in the UK.

Allan Bland, Business Manager, said: "This was a very successful project and perhaps one of our more interesting challenges as the location of the work meant we had to lift in all the materials using a crane. In addition, the sensitivity of some of the experiments being undertaken nearby meant we had to implement a night-working schedule to minimise noise and disruption."

The work, which was a complete refurbishment of the basement area, included waterproofing, a new staircase, ceilings, floors and air conditioning systems.



Other schools, at locations across the country, where we carried out work this summer included:

- King's School & Nursery
- St Mary's (Calne)
- St Johns School Leatherhead
- Clifton College
- Great Walstead
- Merchant Taylors
- Bryanston
- Witham Hall
- Bedales School



Community to benefit from conversion

This month we are due to start work on a major refurbishment of a former care home in Plymouth. The eight-month project will completely transform the building from its current derelict state into a community drop-in centre and business units.

As part of the tendering process, we were able to identify a number of time and cost savings for this redevelopment which will provide a base for the Four Greens Community Trust.

We have also pledged to provide weekly work placements for young people from local schools and colleges and will recycle all suitable materials from the site to benefit local community projects.

The contract involves extensive external and internal works with structural changes including a new roof, solar PV panels, new access arrangements, new doors and windows and the reinstatement of a lift.

Councillor Chris Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Co-operatives and Housing added: "We are really excited to see work starting at the site. It makes everything feel more real and I hope local people will feel as positive as we do at creating somewhere for people to be and to learn new skills and take advantage of new opportunities."

With a scheduled completion of June 2016, the new facility will provide a base for the Four Greens Community Trust and business start-ups as well as clubs, groups and community meetings.



Handbook collaboration with erosh

Next spring will see the launch of a best practice handbook that will be produced in partnership with erosh, the national consortium for older people's housing and support.

The consortium, which includes member such as Waterloo Housing, the Chartered Institute of Housing and RCT Homes, already has a range of good practice guides and resources particularly aimed a frontline staff and their managers.

This new handbook will provide a range of information for contractors on best practice whilst working in older people's homes including sheltered schemes.

Rebecca Mollart, erosh CEO, said: "We are very pleased to be working with Ian Williams to produce this good practice handbook which will be a valuable source of support for our members.

"While many contractors adopt good practice, our members still cite examples of very poor practice. We hope this handbook will help to ensure that best practice becomes common place. It will also help contractors keep up to date with best practice appropriate for working in homes of people with dementia and in relation to safeguarding issues."

Supporting those in need



A foodbank set up to help the homeless and hungry in south Devon has reopened following a makeover project undertaken by us in conjunction with Teign Housing.

Foodbank reopens for business

Employees from Ian Williams carried out a refurbishment of Teignbridge Homeless Action Today (T.H.A.T.) foodbank in Newton Abbot.

Ian Williams' operatives redecorated the shop, created a space for a Citizens Advice Bureau and a children's play area. Other works undertaken included fitting a new kitchen, electric water heater and

privacy panel on the shop floor as well as the installation of additional switches and sockets.

Anne Buttenshaw, chairman of T.H.A.T. Foodbank, said: "We cannot praise the team at Ian Williams highly enough. All the workmen were highly professional, kind, obliging and helpful – thinking all the time of how we worked and making tweaks to



their plans as they went along to help make our life easier."

The new-look foodbank was officially opened by Mike Hanrahan, chief executive of Teign Housing, and Councillor Mike Ryan, Mayor of Newton Abbot.

Ian Williams staff give Whitleigh families a helping hand before Christmas

Our staff have got into the Christmas spirit by collecting unwanted toys to give to families with low incomes in Whitleigh.

Several vans packed with games, gifts and cuddly toys were gathered and given out to families at a toy fair at the Salvation Army Hall, Lancaster Gardens.

The event was organised by our client Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) to help struggling families with the cost of Christmas.

Ian Williams foreman, Nick Jeffery, who collected two car loads of presents with his wife Vicky, said: "Christmas is an expensive time for everyone, but families on a low income in particular find it a financial struggle. We just wanted to bring communities together and alleviate some of the pressures Christmas can bring."



Housing Associations play a valuable role in supporting community initiatives in the areas they operate but also face increasing pressure on funds to drive down costs, increase efficiencies and meet Government objectives. At Ian Williams, we understand these challenges and are committed to supporting our housing partners as these projects show.

Martial arts packs a punch



Ian Williams painting supervisor Cliff Witcher swapped his overalls for his uniform to lead a free martial arts workshop for young tenants of housing association bpha, living in St Neots, Cambridgeshire.

By day Cliff works on our contract with Bedford-based bpha but, in his spare time, he is a martial arts expert who holds no less than seven black belts, each in a different discipline.

He said: "I started off in judo, and was fighting for England in the national schoolboy team by the age of 18. I now hold seven black belts in seven different martial arts and have been a member of the USA black belt Hall of Fame for the past 10 years."

Cliff's main art is jiu jitsu, and he teaches classes for all ages in and around Bedford and St Neots, as well as throughout Europe and the USA.

The workshop was organised by Ian Williams and members of our local management team. Jane Grant and Jon Dixon were among those who took part in the session. At the end of the day the children were presented with a medal and certificate to mark their participation.

Linda Whifield, bpha's community development officer, said: "I have worked with Ian Williams on previous community projects and was thrilled when they approached me with this idea."



Wales and West – Making a Difference Awards

Ian Williams and Dulux jointly sponsored the photography at the Wales and West Housing 'Making a Difference' awards held at Cardiff's Vale Hotel in November.

The awards are a way of honouring the community spirit, enterprise, kindness and commitment shown by residents who live in their properties.

We were represented by Jonathan Coombes, surveyor (pictured) and Naomi Ford, trainee surveyor.

Together we're better

Orbit Heart of England customers got the chance to hear first-hand about our plans to invest in their communities, as part of a wider contractor day.

The 'Together we're better' partners' day saw Ian Williams and other contractors present to Orbit staff and customers. The aim was to improve partnership working and understand the services that matter to Orbit customers. More than 100 people attended.

Our talk also looked at our social value offer which

supports Orbit's priority of promoting employment and skills, financial inclusion, wellbeing and digital inclusion.

Last year Ian Williams was awarded a £15m eight-year contract with Orbit Heart of England to deliver large scale kitchen and bathroom improvement programmes in the south Midlands.

National help desk for Anchor



In recent weeks our centralised response help desk has increased its responsibilities for one of our largest customers, Anchor Housing. The help desk now provides first line call handling support for Anchor’s scheme managers, enabling them to report repairs directly to Ian Williams. This effectively means the help desk is now Anchor’s ‘first point of contact’ for all repairs and can offer customers an immediate appointment.

The Birmingham-based centre will now answer more than 60,000 calls a year, and help scheme managers successfully diagnose repairs to ensure problems can be resolved at the first time of asking.

Wendy Brown, Anchor’s Scheme Manager, said: “I must say that I was impressed with the telephone ordering service. Our customers are very impressed with the prompt service it provides.”

Help Desk Manager, Glen Nicholls added: “This is a significant step for us and a great show of trust in our help desk service. There are no call centre-style scripts here.

With customer service at the heart of what we do, our team members aim to build empathy with callers to get the best solution for them.”

The help desk now employs more than 20 representatives who work in close co-operation with our clients and our own operatives out in the field. Together we are achieving a ‘right first time’ service, maximising residents’ satisfaction.

By increasing the number of help desk representatives who live locally, we have been able to continue our commitment to investing in the local economy and communities in the places where we work.



Interserve contract with BBC

Work has begun redecorating the BBC media centre in Manchester following a successful contract win with managing agent Interserve.

The 12- week contract, which is worth £120,000, includes internal painting of the BBC’s meeting rooms and studios of some of the country’s best-loved programmes.

While presenters and journalists on top BBC shows such as Match of the Day, Dragons’ Den, The Apprentice, Countryfile and The One Show sleep, our operatives have been preparing and painting rooms on twilight shifts between the hours of 6pm and 4am.

Mike Turner, Development Director, said: “We were delighted to be awarded the contract with Interserve as we continue to grow our commercial profile. We were told by the client a main factor in being chosen for this project was because of our record of delivering high standards of work and customer service.”

Ian Williams at hub of community

As the main service provider for Cardiff City Council, we undertook work for Llanrumney Hub, a community project which provides a one-stop shop for council service for residents in Llanrumney and surrounding areas.

The flagship building sits at the heart of the community and the four-week contract included extensive internal redecoration to positively influence and complement mood and feelings in different parts of the building. These include a library, recycling points and children’s area.

In addition to a tight timescale for the volume of work to be carried out, the site remained open to the public which meant constant engagement to ensure the safety of both our operatives and the public.

This involved working closely with Hub staff keeping them informed on our progress to completion with as little disruption as possible.



Business wins

Ian Williams has secured the following new business wins:

Swansea City Council

External decoration of 440 houses will be carried out as part of a nine-week project for properties in the heart of Swansea.

Coastal Housing, Swansea

We have secured two 12 week projects that will see external decoration to two, four-storey blocks of flats at Mackworth Court and internal decoration and flooring renewal to a retirement complex at Marinas Court.

Sentinel Housing, Basingstoke

This project will see the refurbishment of three sheltered housing complexes over a 12-week period. We will be carrying out internal and external decoration, kitchen and bathroom renovations and renewing floors and ceilings.

Devon County Council, Barnstaple

This project involves restoring two cycle bridges, Rock Park and Fremington. We will be removing existing coatings using grit blasting and mechanical tools, applying an international coating system to prevent corrosion and to provide decoration.

Teign Housing, Newton Abbott

A programme of planned asset refurbishment to 3,600 homes, starting in spring 2016.

Southampton City Council

We have secured a one-year contract extension to deliver internal and external decoration to houses in the city.

Plymouth City Council

We will be converting an empty care home into a community hub and offices over a six-month period. Works include new roofing, solar PV installation, rewiring, new heating system, external landscaping and complete internal alterations, including toilet and kitchen facilities.

McCarthy & Stone, Retford

We have completed external painting works at Charter Court Retirement Living.

Savills, Crewe

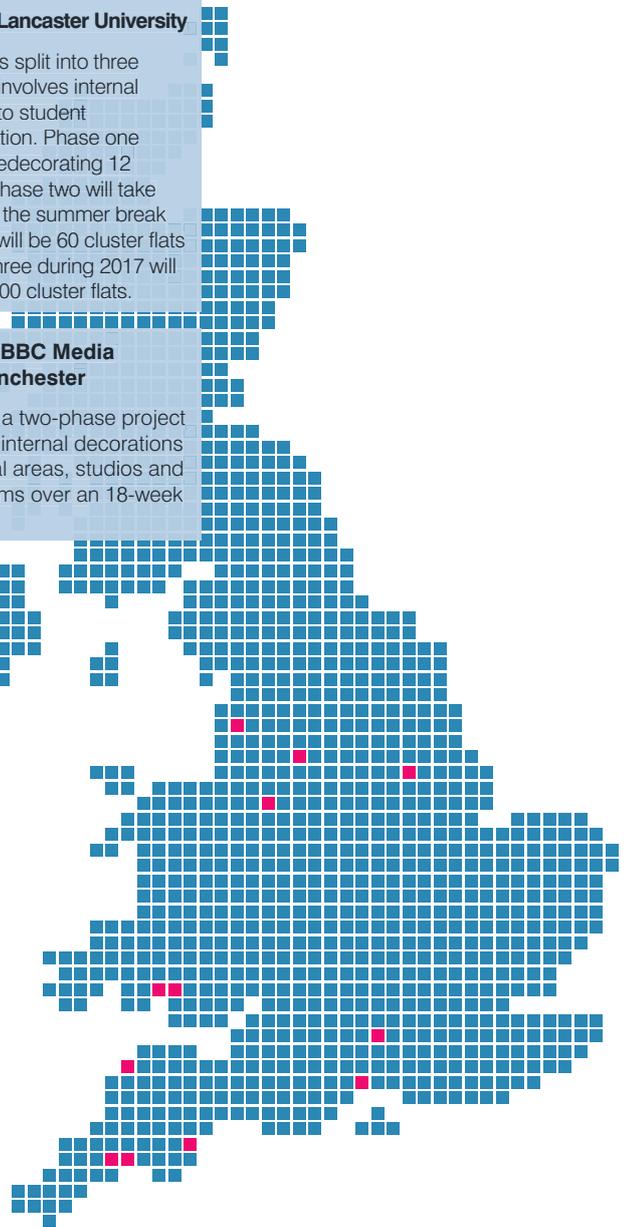
This project involved paint and repair works to 12 farm buildings located on the Duchy of Lancashire Royal Estate.

Student IQ, Lancaster University

This project is split into three phases and involves internal decorations to student accommodation. Phase one focuses on redecorating 12 staircases. Phase two will take place during the summer break in 2016 and will be 60 cluster flats and phase three during 2017 will be another 100 cluster flats.

Interserve, BBC Media Centre, Manchester

We secured a two-phase project to complete internal decorations to communal areas, studios and meeting rooms over an 18-week period.



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:

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