

East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership



Collaboration holds the key to successful school renovation project ▼



Improvements benefit teachers and pupils at Woodstock Primary School

New facilities for Woodstock Primary School delivered with speed and quality ▼

A project through the East Midlands Property Alliance (empa) to refurbish the catering facilities and add a Food Technology extension to Woodstock Primary School in Leicester, successfully took place despite challenging circumstances and tight timescales.

In just sixteen weeks, Interserve Project Services Ltd completed the £421k project, upgrading two dining halls, a kitchen and serving area,

as well as building a brand new food technology extension block measuring 25 square metres. For ten weeks of the project, the school was fully operational and the work completed without any disruption to the teaching staff and children.

Over 70% of subcontract engagement was retained within a 20 mile radius of the project. This meant that approximately £300k spend of a £421k project was recycled in

this locality. The full worth of this process generates approximately £2.35 million to this economy.

“The success of this project was largely due to the early climate of trust which was created throughout the entire team involved. Engaging with local contractors has proven to be cost effective and was another major factor in the project’s success.

The outcome is that the school now has fantastic new facilities including a new food technology building, which has delighted the school and will bring learning opportunities for the wider community.”

Alan Coole
Business Development Manager
empa

Learning about the challenge ▾

Woodstock Primary School within Leicester City Council is a 1920s building. With little funding received in the past, it was in desperate need of refurbishment and improvement. Interserve, which is a Scape/empa Framework contracting partner, was awarded the contract in July 2009. The Framework supports and delivers Local Authority projects throughout the whole of the East Midlands; Interserve was selected because it is a committed and active partner, regularly delivering similar projects for other local educational services and authorities. This project was carried out under the empa Minor Works – Lower Band. This band caters for project values between £10k and £500k.

The project comprised the refurbishment and upgrade of two very dated Victorian dining rooms, a kitchen and a food servery, as well as the building of a new food technology extension block. This

will be used as a learning facility for local families and young parents to help them gain experience with domestic skills they may not have otherwise had the opportunity to gain. As well as its own children, the school also prepares and distributes meals to three other primary schools and including Woodstock the kitchen feeds 380 children daily.

The refurbishment included new windows to all areas, new flooring, a suspended ceiling and decoration throughout. The kitchen was to be fitted with new commercial cooking equipment and a canopy to add an updated and modern feel. New hygienic wall cladding was also planned for the kitchen and servery together with updated heating, ventilation systems and lighting.

Although some of the work was carried out during the school holiday period, the majority of the work had to be completed when the school was fully operational.

Partnership pays ▾

When working to an empa Framework, Interserve runs workshops with key partners to develop a simple creed and ‘modus operandi’, to which all partners sign up, and then cascade down through their respective organisations. For this project workshops were run at the school, at the Interserve office and at Leicester City Council offices, with an average of five attendees per workshop. Early structured workshops provide good process training and help with relationship building within the Framework or project. They are proven to help breakdown any barriers that may be evident. The delivery of the mission is then supported, led and directed by a Partnership Steering Group, which has a representative from each partner and which meets twice yearly.

Two key outputs from these workshops include a statement on ‘values and behaviours’ and agreed success factors, to articulate the business imperatives of the partnership. The benefits of this include having; a clear

mission, collective ownership and direction and purpose, as well as a benchmark to re-visit in terms of providing a ‘framework health-check’.

Through this collaboration across the supply chain, Interserve has achieved the following added value benefits:

- The creation of a compact team with large backup, expertise and skills.
- The use of shared communication tools.
- An established, clear and understood delivery process, which everyone is working towards.
- The benefit of shared best practice.
- Commercial teams experienced in producing a robust cost within a set timescale.
- A construction team that works sensitively, maintaining uninterrupted facility activity, in this case for the school.

For guidance, best practice case studies and video case studies visit our website:

www.eastmidlandsiep.gov.uk

Timing is everything ▾

The timescales for the Woodstock Primary School project were extremely tight when Interserve was first awarded the project on 25 June 2010 at Feasibility Stage. Through early discussion and engagement with Leicester City Council a project brief was developed to understand the ambitions of the team at every stage in the process. The budget for the project was also very tight, but some challenges were overcome in a way which provided an opportunity for others and this was true of Leicester City Council's procurement and manufacturing processes.

Leicester City Council had long procurement and manufacturing processes in place, so new and innovative systems and products were introduced, which proved invaluable during the first phase

of the project. During the summer holiday shutdown 45 new windows, some of them standing five meters high, which were installed in the first six week period.

From Feasibility Stage to agreeing costs and a construction commencement date took just four weeks. The project was split into two key phases:

Phase 1 – This phase began on 19 July for six weeks during the summer holidays. This was a period of intensive work to restore the kitchens, dining hall and servery to ensure they were fully functional for the start of the new school year.

Phase 2 – This phase began on 6th September when the new school year began and involved the construction of the food technology extension.

The term time challenge ▾

The food technology extension and the remainder of the works were continued after the holidays, which meant Interserve were faced with working with restricted areas and times.

The key challenge during phase two was to ensure robust health and safety procedures were in place to mitigate against problems.

A number of activities and initiatives took place:

Sub-contractor inductions:

All sub-contractors coming in to the school were given strict inductions and health and safety details.

Site Manager Assembly:

The Site Manager gave a special assembly to the children and school

staff on Health and Safety and the dangers that exist on a building site.

Competition:

A competition was held for the children to design a poster on how to keep buildings safer at work, to further engage them with health and safety procedures. Fifty children entered the competition.

Workshops:

Two workshops were held for children to learn more about health and safety and in total forty children attended. The Site Manager ran these as an informal open day for children to pop along and learn more about health and safety also took place.

The value of local ▾

By consistently operating within a Framework culture and environment, Interserve already regularly supports local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). One of the main targets on the empa Framework was to engage local contractors at all times. It is expected that 25% of the supply chain are employed within a 20-mile radius of the site as a minimum. This is a key performance indicator of the project's success and is always of paramount importance to local councils.

Local engagement is not only cost effective but also helps to influence employment within the local community. As a result of the

work done at Woodstock Primary School, Interserve is working closely with Scape and the East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership to capture and film a case study following one of the sub-contractors called Millbrook Property services Ltd, who were used on this project, through their journey over the first year on the Framework. Through their engagement with Interserve they have grown from a very small business into one which now employs three more personnel. The infrastructure of the business has developed into one with planned vision and forward workloads something which they had never done before.

Criteria for success ▾

The successful delivery of this project within the tight timescales and the allocated budget can be attributed to a number of different factors:

Customer Care Manager:

During the early stages of the project a Customer Care Manager was introduced as part of the team to encourage a clear way forward and develop a firm project understanding. This role prevented unnecessary interfaces being needed during the aftercare period and help to streamline every process and close out any issues that arose before they became a major problem.

Using local talent:

Against the Framework target of using 25% of local Supply Chain, Interserve exceeded, using an impressive 65% in total.

Collaborative Working:

From the beginning of the project Interserve encouraged collaboration as the only way forward to deliver a successful project such as this. It actively encouraged the participation of the end users into the team including the Children's and Young Person's Service. Engaging with the end user in this way helped to arrive at the best solution at an affordable cost with the minimum of risk.

Workshop and Partnership Steering Group:

The collaborative working practices, which resulted from the workshop's agreed mission statements, combined with the presence of the Partnership Steering Group have been fundamental to the success of the project. This led to close and early engagement and generated total team support throughout.

Woodstock Primary School headmistress, Mrs Hazel Willis summed up the project's success, saying, *"I am so grateful to Interserve for giving me the opportunity to demonstrate to the children what the word 'fantastic' actually looks like."*

The Woodstock Primary School refurbishment and Food Technology extension was a great success for all involved.

"I am incredibly proud to have been involved in this project. It was delivered on time, to a very restricted timescale and budget and has provided a facility that has benefited not only the client, but the school, its children and the local community too."

Sean Purtill

Framework Manager

Interserve Project Services Ltd.

<http://www.eastmidlandsiep.gov.uk/emiep-tv/1/53/empa-project-supporting-local-smes-leicestershire/#>

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East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership Case Studies

The East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (EM IEP) is committed to celebrating the successful, innovative and imaginative project work that exists in the East Midlands region.

The EM IEP Support Team publish case studies showing how East Midlands councils are improving services and delivering significant improvements and efficiencies.

The case studies are intended to inspire councils in the region, and indeed nationally, to transform services and benefit from the processes developed by those councils that have pioneered the way forward.



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