





## Quays to Success

‘The National Operations Centre is all about meeting and exceeding customer needs,’ says Fraser Dann. ‘It’s about improved productivity, improved efficiency and great customer service delivery. We’re on an ambitious growth plan, what you see here is a major part of that plan.’

**W**e’re visiting the showcase National Operations Centre for Balfour Beatty WorkPlace in Salford Quays. Fraser Dann’s the NOC manager – and rightly proud of what the facility offers to clients and staff alike. We started by asking about the choice of location.

‘We looked at a number of potential sites in the Manchester area, knowing we needed a showcase for clients to see our capabilities. Salford Quays is a great location for us. It’s close to the new Media City, it’s in a regeneration zone and very accessible for both clients and staff alike.’

‘We offer a distinct difference in the way we service clients. We invest in client relationships, supported by strategic investment in IT and service integration. This >>>>>

Case Study



▶▶▶ means a standardised and consistent approach to data capture, reporting and process offered to our clients. Our clients will see a unified BBW removing the uncertainty of local process conflicting with corporate governance. It's about doing it once, doing it right.

'The NOC provides true customer service, and by consolidating knowledge in one site we can showcase our multi-service capability. It's more than the best use of technology though; it's also performing through good, knowledgeable people. Currently we have 60 staff, but plan to grow very rapidly to a capacity of 200 staff in the next six months. This is all part of the sales process that will drive the growth we're looking for.

'We're recruiting massively locally – and we're looking for the best. The area is not especially over-populated with contact centres at this level; with a strong recruitment policy backed with effective staff development we're putting together an excellent multi-skilled team that's capable of handling up to two million calls a year.'

The impressive space was designed by Wylde Interior Architecture – a firm that has worked successfully on numerous

projects for the Balfour Beatty Group. As Wylde's Mike Rowen explains though, this first NOC took in branding allied with an effective and flexible interior design.

'The NOC is an exciting development for the business. The basic requirement was to house up to 200 staff in a flexible and dynamic environment that's able to cater for



changing head counts as and when new contracts were won or working practices changed. Our design allows for teams to expand and reduce, so the layout needed to incorporate the ability for change without changing the structure of the space.'

This flexibility extends to the multi-functional meeting and breakout spaces, as Mike explains.

'The meeting facilities need to work for internal meetings, training and client presentations. Furthermore there is a need for the design of these spaces to echo those already provided within the business – this creates familiar surroundings for visiting staff. There's further flexibility built in with the provision of both standing and seated meeting areas within the open plan areas as well. We incorporated large breakout spaces with catering facilities, which also double up as places for large team presentations and seminars.'

Our tour of the operation revealed the importance of their meeting rooms to the Balfour Beatty WorkPlace experience. Kitted out with cutting edge video conferencing technology, Condecco room booking systems and folding walls, the spaces illustrate the collaborative design and ▶▶▶



Unity benching. It performed best in creating the flexible layout but in a fixed bench structure,' adds Mike. 'Single piece tops are shared by users where possible to enable additional staff to be added when required without having to sit across table top joints. In the larger wing we created an angled layout as the uniform nature of the workstations would have made a standard linear layout seem too mundane.'

The welcoming reception helps to connect the two wings of the space, as Mike explains.

'We had to place the reception in the central space between the two wings of the building, with the shape and scale driven by the building design. Special joinery, glass panelling and the use of technology was developed to give a true headquarters feel while maintaining that important link. We added interest to the area by placing additional seating in an angled corridor, rather than opting for a service corridor leading to the open plan areas.'

The operation achieves something quite remarkable. Its blend of technology-backed fast growth business, allied with welcoming warmth, is extremely appealing. There's a humanity to the BBW business, evidenced by the design of the space, which intelligently underscores the business model.

A showcase indeed ●

▶▶▶ technology supporting the principle nature of the NOC.

'This is a showcase for the business,' continues Mike, 'so all the facilities are client facing and inspiring – but not ostentatious. It's attractive for staff too; with personnel being recruited across the business the environment needed to be impressive and attractive to a new workforce. Going forward, the whole facility is designed to be an attractive place to work, ensuring low attrition rates.'

'It's spacious, a pleasing workplace,' confirms Fraser. 'It's definitely not a 'battery hen' office! The individuals here have already clearly taken ownership of their new environment. It's a good specification – take for example the locker room and shower room facilities provided for all the staff to use.'

The sleek open plan areas feature a considerable amount of flexibility. This, of course, is intended to manage growth and changing needs.

Throughout the space subtle branding is apparent, designed to promote BBW's full service capabilities. The 'soup' brand style subtly (and wittily) reinforces the message. 'The brand style had been created, so we developed this into solutions throughout the building working with the Internal Brand Manager and Artworks Solutions,' notes Mike.

'We looked at a number of furniture products, and the client chose Task Systems



## essential ingredients

Client • **Balfour Beatty Workplace** | Interior Design • **Wylde IA** [www.wyldeia.co.uk](http://www.wyldeia.co.uk)

Project Manager • **Trilogie CRE** [www.trilogiecre.com](http://www.trilogiecre.com) | Furniture Supply • **Task Systems** [www.tasksystems.co.uk](http://www.tasksystems.co.uk)

Systems Furniture • **Task Systems** [www.tasksystems.co.uk](http://www.tasksystems.co.uk)

Manifestations/Artwork • **Artworks Solutions**

Flooring • **InterfaceFLOR** [www.interfaceflor.eu](http://www.interfaceflor.eu)

[www.artworks-solutions.com](http://www.artworks-solutions.com)