Head of Strategic FM – Q2 2017/2018 commentary

Below are some updates from across the wider FM team. Do get in touch should you wish to discuss any details or have any feedback on our service – contact details are below. Thank you, Lisa Hofen.

New buildings under FM management

Several new buildings around the University of Oxford estate are now using FM services.

- The Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages at 41 and 47 Wellington Square is the latest addition. The Faculty is one of the world’s leading centres for the study of European languages, literature and culture. Senior Facilities Manager Greg Demetriou-Swanwick is responsible for the building’s management.

- Boundary Brook House, near the Old Road Campus in Headington, is also now being managed by FM. It is under the control of Toby Christensen, Implementation Manager, who oversees the process of bringing new buildings under FM management; in due course responsibility will move to a permanent Senior Facilities Manager.

- Finally, the new modular structure at the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter site, now known as the Anna Watts Building, is now under FM management. It will be used for research and teaching by the Experimental Psychology department until a permanent replacement for the Tinbergen building is available. Ian Hope is its Facilities Manager.

Catering updates

Staff Changes

As many of you will be aware, Sally Rutty, our FM Contracts Manager has now left us to work for another organisation. I will recruit a replacement to ensure we carry on the good work Sally started.

In addition to recruiting for this role, I will also be introducing a new role of ‘Head of FM Contracts’ which will enable me, with the support and guidance of Central Purchasing, to provide University-wide contract support on large FM-related service contracts. I will be recruiting for these roles shortly, but in the meantime I am the contact for catering and contract-related matters.

Central Production Unit

We are continuing to make progress with the Central Production Unit (CPU) which is a crucial part of the catering arrangements and will lead to improvements in quality and consistency. Further updates will be provided on this, but we are anticipating that this will be completed by the end of September 2018.

‘Little Blue Van’

Our University catering supplier, Compass, will shortly launch its ‘Little Blue Van’, a mobile pop-up café that serves hot and cold drinks, snacks, sandwiches and other treats around town. During term time, the van will move around several University sites according to a fixed
daily timetable. These include the ROQ, University Parks and the Science Area. We will provide
more information about the van’s schedule shortly. It will also be available to hire for
University events.

University Club bedrooms due to re-open

The bedrooms at the University Club are re-opening after the Experimental Psychology staff
who were using them for research moved into the new Anna Watts building at the ROQ. 14
en-suite rooms including singles, twins and doubles have been fully refurbished and will
shortly be available to book at http://www.club.ox.ac.uk/

Event organisers enjoy venue showcase trip

More than 40 guests from all over Oxford enjoyed a showcase trip around the venues
operated by our FM Venues team in mid-April. They visited the Exam Schools, Osler House,
the Sheldonian Theatre and St Luke’s Chapel, enjoying a delicious lunch and a behind-the-
scenes look at some of Oxford’s most iconic buildings, finding out about their interesting
histories as well as what they can offer to modern-day event organisers.

Guests on the tour were also among the first to hear about various exciting new services the
FM Venues team have launched, including dinner at the Sheldonian. Those who book the
venue now have a choice of three different dinner options: a buffet, a three-course seated
dinner – with the option of watching chefs cook their food out in the midst of the guests in
the theatre – or even an ‘East Meets West’-themed street food fair. More information about
dinners at the Sheldonian can be found at http://www.venues.ox.ac.uk/fabulous-dinner-
venue-to-impress/

New FM apprentices arrive

We are taking on six apprentices, who will receive on-the-job training while working in a
variety of roles across the team and also pursuing a Level 2 City & Guilds NVQ qualification
in facilities management. After starting in early June, they will undergo a two-week period of
intensive training – the ‘FM boot camp’ developed for their predecessor apprentices – before
moving to placements in FM-managed buildings around the estate.

The new apprentices will follow in the footsteps of the cohort of eight young people who
were taken on in late 2016; six of those original eight have now moved into full-time
employment with the University, and four have taken up the opportunity to move onto a
Level 3 qualification in Facilities Management after completing their Level 2 NVQs.

Safety improvements coming to the Sheldonian Theatre gallery area

Staff at the Sheldonian Theatre are changing the layout of the seating in its upper gallery to
improve visitor safety. They will be adding cushions to every other row of seats in the hope
of discouraging guests from using them as steps. The cushions will clearly differentiate seats
from the walkway, improving safety by reducing the likelihood of a fall, as well as making the
area more comfortable. They will be installed in early August. This will reduce the upper
gallery’s seating capacity from 325 to 195 seats.
World FM day marked in style

The FM team celebrated World FM day on Wednesday 16 May. The day aims to raise awareness of the importance and achievements of the facilities management industry worldwide, and this year’s events to mark it revolve around the theme of ‘enabling positive experiences.’ All FM staff received a chocolate bar to thank them for their efforts to do this, as well as a form asking them to nominate a team member who exemplifies the theme, consistently going out of their way to give customers the best possible experience.

FM Forum continues to grow

The latest FM Forum met on 18 May at St Luke’s Chapel on the ROQ, giving building and facilities managers across the University estate a chance to meet and network, share best practice and discuss common challenges and how to tackle them.

More than 80 people signed up, a new record for the event. They heard about topics ranging from the Salto access control system and the University’s new planning procedure to new developments with the Science Transit Shuttle and exciting new projects aimed at reducing carbon emissions across the estate.

The next FM Forum is scheduled for Friday 2 November at St Luke’s. If you are interested in attending, email facilities@admin.ox.ac.uk.

Please do get in touch if you would like more information on any of the above, or would like to provide feedback on our FM services.

Warmest wishes

Lisa Hofen (BA CBIFM MRICS)
Head of Strategic Facilities Management, Facilities Management Estates Services | University of Oxford
The Malthouse, Tidmarsh Lane, Oxford, OX1 1NQ