

## BSI launches code of practice for facilities design

### STANDARDS

BSI has published a new code of practice for facility designers, owners and operators. The new British Standard aims to help ensure that design takes account of the expected performance of the facility in use.

The development of 'BS 8536: 2010 Facility management briefing' was sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting innovation in the UK. It is an addition to an existing set of standards connected with FM, focusing on aspects of design that are concerned, among other things, with ensuring the operational success of a refurbished or new facility.

The standard is intended for use by individuals and organisations preparing or contributing to the preparation of a design brief, including owners

refurbishing an existing facility, organisations procuring a new facility, and designers.

Stan Mitchell, chair of the technical committee that developed the standard, said: 'The value of BS 8536 is significant. The real value that a true facilities management approach offers government, commerce and industry is the contribution at design stage, whether this be new build or refurbishment.'

'Input at this stage will influence the operational costs and efficiency of use of the asset, which is now recognised as representing 80 per cent of the whole-life cost.'

He added: 'When you add the potential to directly influence the carbon footprint, sustainability, working environment and flexibility in use, the value at such early stages in the development thinking can be invaluable.'

## PowerPerfactor unit 'not responsible' for fire in college power room

### STATEMENT

Voltage power optimisation supplier powerPerfactor was prompted to address false claims in November that its product had been responsible for a building fire.

Ystrad Mynach College in Wales had answered a freedom of information request about a powerPerfactor unit that was installed in the college in 2006. In the FOI response, the college said that the powerPerfactor unit failure caused a fire in the power room.

PowerPerfactor CEO Angus Robertson said: 'This is completely untrue and our

statement that "since our technology's introduction to the market in Japan in 1993, and in the UK since 2001, no unit has ever failed" still stands.'

The college's deputy principal, Paul Martin, said in a statement to powerPerfactor: 'The fire in our power room was the result of substandard installation by a third party – not your unit.'

'In fact, we are looking forward to working with powerPerfactor in the near future as we seek to further drive down and manage energy costs.'

*It's time to reclaim key concepts such as 'partnership' and 'innovation' from FM's spin doctors, says Mark Purnell*

## Leap of faith

The English language is constantly evolving, although whether such evolution always represents an improvement is open to debate. An obvious case in point is today's ubiquitous youf-speak with its new and bewildering English/American street parlance, intended to enhance (or replace) more conventional vocabulary. Like it or hate it, at least it demonstrates a certain level of innovation and enrichment by a new generation, preventing us from becoming linguistically stale.

Far less encouraging is today's insidious culture of commercial and political spin, which is severely prejudicing the traditional, honest lexicon. A number of familiar nouns have been so serially abused, for so long, that they have now been rendered almost worthless. In the world of FM, 'partnership', 'transparency' and 'innovation' spring to mind. They pervade so many FM websites, articles and marketing documents that we have become largely anaesthetised to their effect. The perpetrators are now seeking alternative biz-buzzwords in an attempt to differentiate their otherwise dull commercial wares or services.

And yet, I suggest that the three words cited above – if delivered with meaning rather than just as an exercise in spin – actually encapsulate the essential components of a successful FM culture. We need to cultivate and establish true client partnerships, not profiteering relationships dressed up simply to win new business, or to sucker service providers into believing that the client wants anything more than just the cheapest services on their unilateral terms. We need transparency to bridge the client/supplier divide and to foster trust, which is essential to build and maintain long-term, genuinely mutually beneficial associations. And we need innovation to keep relationships fresh and to ensure that the process of FM evolution and continuous improvement is sustained. But where is the innovation? What is happening that is truly innovative in the world of FM that can be touched and felt, and is not just sales hype?

In order to develop any truly successful relationship – a 'partnership' – these key words need to form the bedrock of the day-to-day culture and practical dealings on both sides of the equation. So, clients as well as FM providers and practitioners need to be honest and intelligent, not just in the slightly condescending FM connotation of the phrase 'intelligent client', but in the real meaning of the word. Clients should use their wit to build a legitimate rapport with a supplier who is genuinely willing to live and breathe the key words in practice rather than just trot them out as part of a sales process, which is utterly at odds with the reality once the contract has been secured.

If the emerging generation of client and supplier FMs can rediscover the true significance of these words and deploy them to proper operational effect in practice, then surely this could only be of benefit to all parties. It would be a heck of a leap of faith – but the rewards could be massive.

### Further Information

Mark Purnell is a founding director of complyNC. [www.complync.com](http://www.complync.com)

COMMENT

editor@fmxmagazine.co.uk to email us