



Dean Close School

Case Study

Project:

To support the management of the 50-acre school.

Objectives:

To implement IWMS software capable of managing the intricacies of an educational site. The system must be efficient and analytical to help with the reporting and data.

Results:

Improved efficiency and accuracy through QFM via improved analytics, automated reporting, and better data capture. Sustainability improvements, including reducing paper usage.

Educational Insight

Dean Close School was established in 1886 and is set in a picturesque parkland of 50 acres within the centre of Cheltenham, UK. It is a prestigious day and boarding school, renowned for focusing on student development, with its ethos encouraging independent thinking and self-confidence.

With an average of 800 students attending, facilities include a two-storey art school, a music school, three theatres, an all-purpose sports facility with a 25m pool, floodlit AstroTurf pitches, and rifle ranges climbing walls, squash, and tennis courts, and seven boarding houses.

Dean Close School has been a valued client of Service Works Global (SWG) since 2015. We spoke to Mick Seamarks, Compliance Manager at Dean Close School, about how they are using QFM to ensure their sites run smoothly and cost effectively whilst maintaining compliance for the safety of staff and students.

Choosing a Software Partner

“We investigated three different IWMS software vendors. SWG, another major company and a local software house, wanted to create a bespoke system for us. QFM was the best choice for us and came out on top for meeting our requirements. Before QFM, we used a Microsoft Access database-style job sheet that the help desk would print and give to operatives. Jobs were being cherry-picked, some jobs were being lost, and just generally, it wasn't working efficiently for us.”

Improving the Efficiencies

“With QFM, jobs can now be allocated to operators throughout the day. As they come in from the help desk, work orders can be passed to the operator. This means that they can check their work in real-time whilst out and about around the site. Now, jobs that may be in the same building or next door in the adjacent buildings are picked up while the operators are there, instead of them having to travel backwards and forwards across sites – and we have eight sites in total. So, it's more efficient for staffing resources, which means jobs are getting done quicker, so everyone benefits.”

Reducing the Costs

“We have reduced paper usage alone by somewhere in the region of 3,000 sheets per year, purely by using a mobile device and digital forms.

And the information added to these forms gets saved straight onto the main database for reporting. The most important thing is that QFM has saved us time, which of course, equates to money. Jobs are getting done quickly, and we are not having to work overtime or getting delayed, and we can plan work more efficiently.”

Compliance Insight

“One of the things we have been extremely strict on is compliance. QFM allows us to look at where we have outstanding work, where observations in compliance tasks have been raised (by either ourselves or external contractors); we can see the whole picture so we can plan more work. For example, if we know the job is scheduled in an area where we are doing building refurbishment, we can now look at QFM. If we see other outstanding jobs, they can be swept up simultaneously. We are not doing the job and then going back and undoing something we've already done to rectify something else. “

Effective Data Management

“I like the reports; they're so good. I have to do monthly stats for the bursar, and I can schedule them to run overnight so that in the morning the interface is ready and waiting to go. Then it's just the case of manipulating that data as appropriate.”

Improving the Process

“We employ one individual to do our compliance checks: that's water testing, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, etc. The QFM app allows him to perform necessary checks on various items and equipment, and record faults there and then, which automatically feed back into the system. For example, if an extinguisher needs replacing, he can raise that task while he's there. QFM immediately captures it: he hasn't got to remember to log it when he comes back to the office. We pick up more issues as we are going around in this way and have also started using the mobile device for general day-to-day, walking around the building. If we see something, we can open the app, fill out the details, and it's in the system. So, we are more proactive in identifying faults and getting them resolved often before the staff's noticed there is an issue.”