

BOX CLEVER

When UBS consolidated its UK headquarters at 5 Broadgate, more than 7,000 staff were moved. We find out how they did it



Weekend working is a well-known side effect of being in facilities management, but even the most hard-working facilities professional would balk at working for 13 consecutive weekends. But that's exactly what the FM team at global financial services giant UBS, together with its relocation partner Harrow Green, did in the largest relocation project in the capital in recent times.

As part of a major business change programme, UBS decided to decommission four office locations

in London, including 100 Liverpool Street, 1 Finsbury Avenue and 21 Lombard Street, and move over 7,500 staff into a new London HQ at 5 Broadgate, near Liverpool Street station. The scale, risk and complexity of the project were unprecedented.

The 13-storey 'groundscraper' is visually innovative and represents a powerful vote of confidence in the City. The bold design from Make Architects – it is one of the largest stainless steel-clad buildings in the world – came from the idea of a perfectly cast engine of finance. Extending the

metaphor, the windows, courtyards and terraces are carved out of the beautifully machined block, helping to make 5 Broadgate one of the world's greenest buildings, with 65 per cent lower carbon emissions than the previous two buildings on the site.

The 700,000 sq ft facility, which is occupied entirely by UBS, includes four large trading floors that can accommodate up to 3,000 desks, plus seven levels of offices. The new HQ houses up to 6,000 people, allowing the firm to consolidate all



its London offices in one site for the first time. Agile working means the building can service all 7,500-plus staff.

A TARGETED APPROACH

UBS had several impact standards for the 5 Broadgate project to take into account during the move. Energy performance, waste and social responsibility were important, based on such measures as the donation of legacy equipment to charities. Efficiency and sustainability had to be demonstrated by, for example, the secure recycling of assets and zero waste.

Workspace had to be utilised effectively, particularly in specialist areas such as the trading floors.

Close collaboration between Harrow Green and UBS was required, and the project aimed for high levels of employee satisfaction resulting from the secure move of employees' belongings. Workspaces had to be set up to enable working within 15 minutes of arrival in the new building. Finally, service disruption had to be minimised during the move to ensure client satisfaction.

Move programmes are a deeply personal

experience for the people involved, so employee experience was a key success criterion of the overall change programme. Harrow Green was one of the primary partner enablers for UBS in achieving its target for every employee to be working at their desk within 15 minutes on their first day in the new building. "By each Monday morning, everything had to be functioning perfectly, from the mission-critical trading floors to the wealth and asset management businesses' office space," explains Harrow Green Project Manager Helene Edgar, who is permanently based within UBS and an integral part of its property team.

Led by Edgar, Harrow Green provided two full-time onsite project managers for 18 months in advance of the project to help plan and prepare for the relocation. The team had strict deadlines to meet, as the lease exit dates on the four buildings were fixed.

Another key impact standard for the move was space utilisation and effectiveness of the workplace. This was particularly important for specialist areas within the business, such as its trading floors, requiring specialist equipment and desk configurations. Moving these departments involved a complex multiteam process. This was further complicated by the requirement for key existing workstations and equipment to stay in situ for five days post-move in case of a 'roll-back'. However, the success of the initial moves allowed UBS to reduce this constraint to three days.

Working closely with UBS, Harrow Green created a dedicated move pack for each member of staff that ensured all staff were prepared for the move, understood the support network available and knew what was expected of them.

To further facilitate a smooth transition and boost employee engagement, 'move champions' were identified within each business or department. The champions became a central point of coordination for those departments. Regular open forums were held throughout the project to answer



questions and address concerns, supporting people through the change management programme and reducing the filing and archiving strain. The move champions personally delivered employee moving packs to help create a stronger, more trusting relationship.

ASSET RECYCLING

With UBS consolidating into one central location, Harrow Green was challenged to find new homes for all of its legacy furniture and assets. One hundred per cent recycling and reuse of assets including desks, cabinets, computers, planters and chairs was achieved. Through Harrow Green's Refresh environmental programme, the company organised the donation of these assets to local charities, community organisations and small businesses.

Capel Manor College in Waltham Cross received more than 1,600 planters, while the British Heart Foundation received over 5,000 cabinets. Twelve charities in total benefited, including The Bridge Academy in Hackney, which received more than 500 computers and monitors, along with screens, mice and keyboards (once they had been securely decommissioned and had all data removed by Harrow Green's IT asset recycling arm, IT Efficient). Where products had reached the end of their useful life, Harrow Green took them to be dismantled, sorted and recycled. In total, 8,200 pieces of furniture and over 2,200 tons of waste were recycled.

The combined team worked tirelessly and diligently to ensure UBS achieved the seven impact standards set out at the start of the programme. The positive impact on the employees entering the new facilities was immediate. Every employee was working seamlessly in their new, industry-leading London campus within 15 minutes.

By the end of the project a total of 7,685 staff had been moved. Harrow Green had also securely packed, transferred and unpacked 8,500 linear metres of filing, together with 1,500 computers. "This was a project that required an enormous amount of resilience from Harrow Green and, at times, more patience than could ever be imagined," says Dave Monger, EUS Change Delivery Lead at UBS. "Despite that challenging backdrop, it was one of the smoothest and most professional moves that UBS has ever experienced."

THE LONG VIEW

The 5 Broadgate project is the culmination of a 25-year award-winning partnership between UBS and Harrow Green which began in 1992. The relationship between the two organisations has matured in



that time, driven by mutual respect, trust, transparency and integrity. In the past 16 years alone, they have completed 116,000 moves, with an average of 600 people moved per month.

During this quarter-of-a-century collaboration, UBS and Harrow Green have worked together to develop best-in-sector approaches to relocation, many of which have been replicated by competitors. These include:

- ▶ The introduction of fixed per-head moving rates, allowing accurate budgeting for each move.
- ▶ The implementation of a 'crate-free' move using 'flight bags', designed to fit inside new agile lockers, making the move as seamless as possible.
- ▶ Providing a handyman service to reduce the number of suppliers on site and create a more integrated service at a reduced cost.
- ▶ On and offsite storage using barcode technology to provide a smooth and secure transition between locations.
- ▶ Access to Harrow Green's proprietary Moveware software enabling instant access to data and real-time planning.

The strength of this collaborative relationship has been further enhanced by creative problem-solving and strong crisis management. For example, Harrow Green had five truckloads of business-critical assets being transported from Basel, Switzerland, to the UK. Unfortunately,

the Port of Dover became embroiled in an industrial dispute, stranding the UBS assets off-shore. In order to meet the tight delivery deadlines, Harrow Green pulled out all the stops and arranged for an American cargo plane to collect the trucks and staff from Switzerland and fly them to London.

In addition to these examples of exceptional service, Harrow Green has worked to bring the two teams closer on a day-to-day basis by installing

Helene Edgar at 5 Broadgate on a permanent basis, a rarity in the relocation

world. This serves multiple purposes, from increasing the visibility of Harrow Green within UBS to fostering a greater sense of trust and collaboration, and enabling greater flexibility and even quicker response times for UBS.

"Our long-standing partnership with Harrow Green has helped to support our core business during a time of enormous change to the company," adds Ian Gregory, UBS Director and Client Lead. "Because we have worked hand-in-hand for 25 years, Harrow Green understands the UBS way of doing things. They are firmly integrated with our business, and because the relationship is so seamless, I often forget they are officially contractors. The strength of our partnership was ably demonstrated during last year's extremely complex move."

All of which means that as UBS grows and develops, there will be more weekend working for this strong combined team.

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