

APM Project Management Awards



# WINNER'S

## CASE STUDY



Category **Programme of the Year 2013**

Winner **W1 Programme,  
BBC**

Sponsor



### Overview

In 2002, it was decided that three of BBC's largest broadcasting buildings in London – Broadcasting House, Bush House and Television Centre – were showing their age, paving the way for the largest programme of work in the BBC's history.

The BBC required a state-of-the-art creative hub in the centre of London.

Broadcasting House was chosen to be the home for the BBC's national and international journalism, BBC television services, BBC Network Radio, online teams and professional support services, bringing together thousands of staff

under one roof. The programme was to be known as W1 – named after the postcode of the BBC's famous Broadcasting House.

### Objectives

Through the programme's vision of 'coming together to serve our audiences better', the overall objective was to bring people and teams together in a new world-class broadcasting centre, in order to improve services to its audiences.

The programme was to be delivered on time and within budget, making sure that it supported innovation and new ways of working – thus delivering further efficiencies and value for money.

It was also crucial to deliver a building that was open and accessible, adding public value for audiences and increasing levels of flexible working.

## Resources

The programme's budget was set at £1.046bn, which was acquired via a 30-year bond.

The necessary resources were mobilised according to each phase of the programme, with early focus being on the design of construction and technology. The programme director and change team were recruited five years before the programme closure in order to mastermind workflow changes, communications, industrial relations and detailed migration schedules.

A full-time finance manager and his assistant were embedded in the team to maintain a constant focus on budget, costs, financial benefits and contingency spend, and a monthly summary was presented to the W1 Change Group, the W1 Steering Group and the BBC's Finance Committee every quarter.

The majority of recruitment came from other parts of the BBC in order to maintain tight cost control and to build a wider pool of in-house expertise.

Extensive feedback sessions were maintained throughout the migration period, so that the experiences of early-movers could be understood and any necessary adjustments made through a change-control process.

The meetings included 'meet the neighbour'; in which newly arrived departments explained what they did to other occupants.

## Challenges

The task would be the BBC's largest ever capital project at a time of enormous strain, with other ongoing major BBC programmes including the BBC North expansion at Salford and the delivery of the broadcasting of the London Olympics. The project was also being delivered during a period of intense political and press scrutiny.

Engineering challenges of the construction were huge, with the building being surrounded on all sides by city centre residential neighbours, and the digging of three storeys below ground – just metres above two underground lines.

The BBC had never before faced the challenge of moving so many live programmes into a new building with new technology, and key risks during the programme included the commercial collapse of a key contractor and on-air failures.

## Co-ordination

Three key teams helped ensure the success of the programme; the construction and fit-out team, the technology team and the change team, with the latter being assembled in 2009 alongside the appointment of new project director Andy Griffiee.

The programme had a wide range of dependencies and stakeholders beyond the immediate occupying output Divisions, with the links with other major projects constantly being mapped by the BBC PMO. Interfaces with other professions including HR, legal, procurement and communications were maintained, while a full range of other stakeholders were assessed by their level of support. These assessments shaped the communications plan and other activities.

## Successes

Phase II of the W1 Programme was delivered £30m under budget and has trebled the financial benefits first identified in 2002. Bush House and Television Centre were emptied and decommissioned on schedule with no penalty payments, and more than 5,500 creative staff were successfully moved with no loss of output.

For the first time, the BBC broadcast technology specialists – Major Projects Infrastructure – gained agreement that all of the technology in Broadcasting House would be the same. This helped to deliver substantial savings on its £154m budget on its work, as it installed 3,000 linear kilometres of cabling, 11 new television studios and 50 new radio studios.

The programme team is now applying the lessons learnt and captured to other significant projects across the BBC and beyond, with many stepping up to new roles and other projects and programmes.





**The APM Project Management Awards** have been celebrating project management excellence since 1993 and the broad range of categories is designed to make entry possible for projects and companies of all sizes and complexity.

The awards reflect the invaluable contribution project managers make in all sectors of society and the event provides an opportunity for industry professionals to meet with colleagues and entertain guests as well as celebrate at one of the year's most exciting events.

Highly regarded in the project management industry, the awards reflect the dedication and talent that helps to shape the project management community and the world around us. The finalists, winners and sponsors of the awards attract national publicity for their achievement and involvement. Winning an award provides invaluable recognition and kudos to the careers of winners.

For more details on the awards and how to enter or attend, visit [apm.org.uk/awards](http://apm.org.uk/awards) or email [awards@apm.org.uk](mailto:awards@apm.org.uk)

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