

CASE STUDY:  
Major MoD Project Benefits  
from Constructive Partnerships



<https://www.skanska.co.uk/expertise/projects/57017/RAF-Wyton>

## Major MoD Project Benefits from Constructive Partnerships

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A multi-million pound contract to create new Ministry of Defence intelligence facilities at RAF Wyton in Cambridgeshire benefitted from support from Acorn Coaching and Development in the main build stage to accelerate the performance of the multi-partner team.

The project, known as PRIDE (Wyton) (Programme to Rationalise and Integrate the DIS Estate), was to deliver a new secure facility to house a range of MoD intelligence-gathering resources. The project cost £308 million, and reached completion in September 2014.

Skanska UK plc, under the supervision of Defence Estates, was the prime contractor responsible for the construction of the new complex of buildings to house Defence Intelligence employees as well as associated facilities. In addition, Skanska was responsible for the architectural, structural and civil design and the mechanical and electrical management and installation for the new buildings.

### Background

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In the early stages of the Wyton (PRIDE) build Skanska enlisted the support of Acorn, a long time collaborator with the construction group, to help facilitate more effective partnering between Skanska, Defence Estates and the MoD and embed a culture of high performance for the lifetime of the project.

### Requirement

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Reflecting on the positive effects of collaborative working on the performance of project teams Acorn Director Keith Longney explained: "The project involves different divisions of Skanska for the construction and mechanical and electrical installations and, as in many construction projects these days, they must work seamlessly together to ensure it is delivered on time and to budget".

"Moreover, on complex projects of this size it is vital that effective relationships are fostered with the client - in this case Defence Estates – and this can be assured only if it is identified and supported as a specific aim within the project."

## Solution

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Acorn provided a multi-stage intervention in the course of the project.

Firstly Keith conducted interviews with all of the primary stakeholders to define their expectations from the project and determine the key performance indicators that would help define success.

Acorn then worked with Skanska's project delivery team across commercial, operations and design functions to analyse roles and responsibilities at executive level, continued that process through the organisational structure supporting the project, and extended it to embrace supply chain partners.

Keith took the Project Execution Team through our copyrighted Team Coaching process, a diagnostic tool that systematically analyses the team's capability in five key areas of team performance. This provided essential information on areas for improvement which would then be cascaded through the delivery teams.

1:1 coaching was provided for several individuals whose performance was frustrating the project.

Acorn also assisted Skanska in clarifying the hierarchy of its meetings and how they feed and re-enforce each other.

Following the conclusion of the build, in 2014, Acorn assisted Skanska to carry out a 'lessons learned' exercise in which they identified key learning from the project that would be carried forwards to other complex builds.

Keith said: "Skanska recognises from its previous experience on MoD programmes that allocating resources to ensure true collaborative working among all the stakeholders for the lifetime of the project is a valuable element in its delivery. Appropriate behaviours and a genuine understanding and appreciation of the demands and drivers on all sides of the project can make a huge contribution to its ultimate success."

## Outcomes

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Following Acorn's involvement Matt Collins, Skanska's Project Director for Wyton PRIDE, said 'Acorn's involvement delivered significant benefits both in terms of the contractor/client/customer relationships and also helped facilitate more effective working practices between the various Skanska business units involved in different construction disciplines on the site.'

Rob Dawson was the Defence Infrastructure Organisation's principal project manager for the PRIDE programme.

Speaking on the government's defence blog site of the main facility, known as the Pathfinder Building, he said: 'The fact that Pathfinder was delivered to the MOD several months early and under budget by several millions is a testament to the hard work of the team from DIO, Defence Intelligence, Skanska and White Young Green.'

## An Award-Winning Project

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The Wyton PRIDE project was voted 'Project of the Year' as one of the highest performing projects in the Skanska AB Group.

The project also won a Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology (MinDEST) Acquisition Award, which recognises good performance across procurement in the MOD, and three silver Considerate Contractor Awards.

## Continuing Benefits

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As a result of Skanska's notable successes on the build they were granted an Extension of Build on the project, for construction of further outlying buildings.

Skanska then won the bid battle to build a new military training centre to replace the Deepcut Barracks in Wiltshire.

The 250 million pound project, known as Project Wellesley, brings together onto one site the majority of logistics and personnel administration training for the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force.

Skanska will also act as development manager for the redevelopment of the Deepcut site where around 1,200 homes, a school and other facilities will be built.

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