



BRIERLEY HILL | HEALTHCARE



fds consult

## CASE STUDY - BRIERLEY HILL | HEALTHCARE

A multi-tenanted building offering local communities a range of contemporary clinical facilities, Brierley Hill Health and Social Care Centre also includes the Midlands' leading audiology department and provides a base for social services and Dudley Primary Care Trust's headquarters.

The same building will also contain privately operated businesses including retail outlets and internet cafes. The development is a flagship NHS LIFT scheme, an initiative which aims to improve and develop frontline primary and community care facilities by allowing PCTs (Primary Care Trusts) to invest in new facilities that offer integrated health services to patients in a purpose-built environment. One of the largest LIFT schemes in the UK, it required a specialist approach to fire design and FDS Consult was brought in to apply its expertise and innovative approach to the project.

The brief to FDS Consult was to develop a fire strategy for the scheme that both maximised safety and minimised costs. This was complicated by changes to the fire codes relating to fire service access, venting and means of escape that came into force prior to completion of the project. However, FDS Consult was able to leverage the company's experience to take a creative and pragmatic approach to the fire strategy which both fulfilled the brief and achieved approvals. FDS Consult reduced costs and improved safety by:

- Minimising the cost and aesthetic impact of the fire fighting shafts required by changes to Approved Document B by working with the building's existing design
- Optimising fire service access enabling the removal of high cost mechanical venting systems and sprinklers from the specification
- Modifying compartmentation which enabled the building's design features, such as double height spaces, to be maintained and travel distances to be extended whilst ensuring adequate protection for escape routes and limiting the potential for internal fire spread
- Conducting First Principle radiation calculations to ensure that any non-rated openings were maximized, enabling better than code areas to be achieved

Thanks to the company's progressive approach to designing the fire strategy, FDS Consult was able to value engineer the building, removing high cost measures from the specification and reducing staircase and exit widths to provide a total cost saving of £160,000.

Type of project:  
New Build Primary Health Care Centre

Client:  
Dudley Primary Care Trust

Architect:  
Steffian Bradley Architects

