

## Case Study: St George's Healthcare NHS Trust

St George's Healthcare   
NHS Trust

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Richard Harrison,  
WHB Associates

### Planet FM driving changes at St Georges Healthcare NHS Trust

**St Georges Healthcare NHS Trust is one of the largest hospitals in London and is the major acute hospital for South West London, leading the field in many specialist disciplines. The entire trust has over 5000 employees looking after 1150 beds. The Trust consists of three sites, St. Georges Hospital itself, plus Bolingbroke Hospital which is primarily a geriatric unit, and the Atkinson Morley Hospital. There is also a new PFI funded building nearing completion on the site which is due to come on line shortly.**

Qube Global Software in Woking, Surrey develop and support the Planet FM System. This is an integrated web enabled Estates Management system that provides a facilities help desk, manages repair and maintenance activities and budgets, and produces much of the data necessary for the NHS ERIC reports which are used to benchmark performance and asset utilisation within the NHS. It is a modular system with Help Desk, Planned and Reactive maintenance scheduling, Stores, Purchasing, Room Booking and Project modules, all designed to deliver a more responsive service to staff, patients and public. Planet systems are widely used by NHS Trusts in the UK, as well as universities, local and central Government and corporate headquarters.

Shane King, the Principal Engineer in the Estates and Facilities Department of St Georges, says that significant changes were needed within St Georges Trust including the centralisation and streamlining of the facilities and site services departments. The decision was made to purchase a computerised facilities management system to drive these changes and he enlisted the help and expertise of Richard Harrison at WHB Associates in Wiltshire to manage the project for him. Richard researched over 100 systems and presented Shane with a short list of five, including Planet FM. The decision to invest in Planet FM was based on the well established track record of Qube Global Software within the NHS, and the system's ease of use. It was also judged to be the best fit to the department's needs. After consultations with other members of the team, including the engineers and supervisors, Planet FM was purchased in March of 2002 and implemented by September of that year.



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Before installing Planet FM, there was no effective system for managing calls from anyone in the Trust reporting maintenance or servicing problems. This resulted in unnecessary delays for the completion of often small, but essential tasks. The Planet FM Help Desk module has changed that dramatically and Shane's 'clients' now know where to ring and who to chase for progress on their requests. The help desk is linked to the Trust's intranet site and many calls are being logged via e-mail and progress tracked via the Intranet. This has had a major impact on efficiency and now just two full time operators are handling 150-200 maintenance calls per day.

A key requirement was to improve the Supervisors' communication with their engineers wherever they are on the large site. Shane and Richard have worked closely with Zycomm Radios and installed Zycomm's mobile radio system which links directly to Planet FM's Help Desk. Maintenance staff have to deal with the countless minor tasks that occur every day in a large hospital, like blocked sinks, broken light bulbs etc. Speed is of the essence. The task is allocated to an engineer via radio and dealt with as quickly as possible, the engineer then just 'pushes a button', the message is sent electronically back to Planet FM and the job is closed off. Richard Harrison estimates that the system has saved at least 60% of a Supervisor's time as well as cutting the cost of producing paper work orders etc.

Symbol hand held units are being used for the more complicated reactive maintenance tasks. They have five of these units and the engineers are allocated the handheld devices which list the jobs for the day. Once the tasks are completed they are downloaded into the Planet FM system back at base to provide the management information that Shane needs. After an initial reluctance, some engineers now insist on using the hand held devices to plan their workload and complete their daily tasks! Richard estimates that they will shortly be requiring another five units to help with Planned Maintenance schedules.



St Georges purchased almost every module of the Planet FM system. Prior to the implementation the old estate management system (developed in-house) had reached the end of its life and departments were holding their own asset lists and other technical information on their own PCs. Furthermore the use of different suppliers for purchasing common items was preventing the Trust from fully exercising its purchasing power and obtaining economies of scale. The team are now rationalising all the different asset registers, purchasing processes and supplier lists. This is to be followed by implementing the Planned Maintenance module in order to create a cohesive maintenance plan.

Both Richard and Shane praise Planet FM highly. In addition to maintenance tasks, they are using it at the moment for managing grounds and gardens, telecoms systems and pest control. They hope to extend it soon to the catering and cleaning/domestic services. Shane sees it as a vital tool to bring about the necessary changes within the Trust, enabling them to offer an improved service to all their 'clients' and increase productivity. When all the modules within the system are fully operational Shane is convinced that the benefits will more than justify the cost and hard work involved in implementing the system. 'I like the logical progression in the way it handles the work and its ease of use' he said. In addition the control it has given him enables him to extract information from the system quickly and answer questions on costs and resources required, something that was almost impossible to do before its implementation.

Richard Harrison says that, as a project manager with a wealth of experience in Facilities Management, he is impressed by the way it allows him to formalise processes and then to review them, making the necessary adjustments for improvement. He says 'it is a real stimulus to business process re-engineering'. They were both delighted with the trouble free implementation of the system and were unanimous in their praise of the support supplied by Qube Global Software. There have been no major problems and 'customised tweaks' to the system have been produced very quickly.

[www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)

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Shane King  
Principal Engineer, Estates  
and Facilities Department  
St George's Healthcare  
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## What is Planet?

**Facilities management software which has been implemented in over 300 organisations across industry, commerce, NHS and the public sector. We focus on developing IT solutions that deliver real business benefits and provide the information that facilities managers and FM contractors need to optimize their operations.**

If you need to divide your buildings, assets and staff into separate regions or client contracts, Planet simply and efficiently filters your data. Local users work only within the data of their assigned area whilst global users have access to all areas for centralised reporting, help desk functions and state-of-the-art mobile solutions.

### Planet will enable you to:

- Provide a responsive facilities help desk
- Manage planned and reactive maintenance
- Keep control of your contractors
- Optimise your use of space
- Provide web-based facilities information to customers
- Ensure a safe working environment
- Quote and invoice clients
- Provide your workforce with mobile data tools



### Qube Global Software

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