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Case Study

Solihull Hospital

Static Systems undertakes 'live' upgrade of Solihull Hospital's fire alarm system.

Overview

Solihull Hospital is an acute general hospital in the West Midlands, managed by the University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust. The facility provides general and specialist hospital and community care for the residents of East Birmingham, Solihull, Sutton Coldfield, Tamworth and South Staffordshire.

The hospital has 229 beds, around a quarter of which are single-bed rooms.

Our challenge

In January 2019, following a tender process, electrical contractor Harrold Jones Services (HJS) was awarded the contract to replace the hospital's existing closed protocol fire alarm network and panels with an open protocol solution. The Trust stipulated that the existing detection devices were to be reused where possible.

Having worked with Static Systems previously on a fire alarm upgrade at Alexandra Hospital in Redditch, HJS had included us as a named supplier in its tender submission for the Solihull Hospital project. The hospital was also already acquainted with Static Systems as over the past four years we have been contracted to upgrade the site's nurse call systems.

Brian Rowley, Managing Director at HJS, comments: "Having worked with Static Systems on a previous fire alarm upgrade, we knew they would deliver the same professional level of service on the Solihull hospital project. This, coupled with their product offering and ability to deliver a cost-effective solution, made it an easy decision to include them as a named supplier in our tender submission."



Static Systems' commissioning engineers were highly experienced in working in a live hospital environment."

Neil Turnbull, Electrical Estates Officer at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust.

HJS appointed Static Systems to supply, commission and maintain the hospital's new fire alarm system.

Our approach

Static Systems was involved from the very early stages of the project, offering support to the Trust and IBSEC (the Trust's chosen M&E Consultant) in terms of formulating the planned scope of works. This involved producing an initial site report of the existing system and then outline proposals for moving the project forward.

As there was only limited information available on the existing system and its operation, our engineers undertook a number of site visits as part of their investigation works. This ensured a thorough understanding of the original system's cause and effect and enabled us to replicate it with the new panels and, where appropriate, offer additional suggestions for improvement. ▶



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We recommended a networked fire alarm system comprising 19 sector panels, two repeat panels and four graphics displays from our Evo2 product range, as well as a BMS interface to the Drax System. The Evo2 system is ideally suited to large multi-panel sites such as hospitals as it provides true peer-to-peer networking.

One of the areas to be connected to the network was a remote building which would ordinarily have required part of the staff car park to be dug up in order to install cabling. To avoid this costly and disruptive exercise, we provided wireless connectivity between the fire alarm panel in the remote area and the nearest panel connected to the network.

Having installed a new network and the new panels, we put the system on soak test for a week before starting the process of transferring the existing Apollo detection circuits to the new fire panels. Then, once all the detection was transferred across, we undertook the cause and effect testing to prove that the new network and panels were up and running, and that the software was working correctly.

This work took place within a live hospital environment, with very little disruption. Most of the work was undertaken during normal working hours, however the swap out of the existing detectors in a couple of the departments had to be undertaken out-of-hours. Similarly, commissioning in the hospital's theatres was also carried out out-of-hours to avoid any disruption to operations.

Commissioning ran very smoothly, as did the installation works which took place over a 10-week period, with completion in July 2019. We provided maintenance support to the hospital throughout the changeover from the old to the new system.

Neil Turnbull, Electrical Estates Officer at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, adds: "Static Systems' commissioning engineers were highly experienced in working

in a live hospital environment, which was vital for this particular project. They also communicated with the hospital's departmental staff when carrying out the detection changeover and testing, which helped ensure a smooth transition."

Matt Thompson, Senior Account Manager (Healthcare) at Static Systems, concludes: "Having previously undertaken a number of nurse call upgrades at Solihull Hospital, we were delighted to be tasked with upgrading the fire alarm system. We worked closely with HJS and the Trust's project team throughout the planning, commissioning and installation process, which helped to ensure clear communication and very efficient project delivery. As a result, the Trust now has a full understanding of how the system works and is wired. They also have peace of mind that the system is open protocol and, importantly, have the flexibility to carry out elements of work themselves or involve third parties should they wish."

The new system is fully HTM 05:03 compliant and the Fire Alarm Panels are EN54-2:1997 & EN54-4:1997 compliant. Static Systems will continue to provide ongoing support and maintenance as part of our contract with HJS and the Trust.



Having worked with Static Systems on a previous fire alarm upgrade, we knew they would deliver the same professional level of service on this project."

Brian Rowley, Managing Director at HJS.



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