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# Finalist's case study

## UWE, Bristol

### Built Environment

## Soft Landings: Keeping it REAL

### About the project

#### Summary

At UWE, Soft Landings is all about keeping it REAL:

Realistic – Embedded – Active – Lessons learnt.

UWE have been using BSRIA Soft Landings principles on a number of projects over the last 2-3 years, principally the Bower Ashton Courtyard In-fill project with Buro Happold, and UWE are now championing the REAL approach for Soft Landings on all future major building projects

#### Project partners

Bower Ashton Project Team (BuroHappold Engineering, Kier) and UWE Stakeholders

### The results

#### The problem

Major refurbishment project, Bower Ashton Courtyard In-fill that was to provide many student-facing services including catering, SU Bar, Library and flexible event space, at risk from poor handover. With further plans for new buildings and refurbishments across the UWE campuses, creating a mechanism for robust and effective handover is essential.

#### The approach

Appointing consultant, BuroHappold Engineering, to champion Soft Landings for UWE, Bristol, and identifying how to embed this into all other projects.

#### Our goals

To have a smooth handover with happy staff, students and operations & maintenance team.

**UWE  
Bristol**

University  
of the  
West of  
England

#### Profile

Higher Education

- 35,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 3,000 staff
- Sub-urban/Campus



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## Obstacles and solutions

Many, but here are a few examples:

Capturing and understanding user experience in the building	Carrying out a before and after occupancy survey of the refurbished space. Huge support from internal comms made the first survey have over 220 respondents. However post-occupancy survey less successful due to timing of the survey.
Ensuring sufficient access points provided to allow ease of maintenance	Despite signed off drawings and discussions of what was required for maintenance access in the riser columns and ceiling voids, at the pre-handover walk-round it was noticed that sufficient access was not provided. We were able to pick this up quickly with the contractor and was rectified but there could have been a high risk of this not being identified, or not being resolved if there had not been buy-in from the contractor and project manager to resolve these issues.
Ensuring efficient operation of the building as intended in the building design	Lighting was designed to dim down with daylight sensors but when the first year of data was analyzed it was evident this wasn't happening. This allowed the estates department to raise as an issue with the design to be resolved.

## Performance and results

In terms of actual savings, a 45% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction over pre-refurbished building has been achieved based on 18-months of post-occupancy energy data. (41% of gas, and 47% of electricity).

## The future

### Lessons learned

- User surveys need to be timed correctly with the correct support from comms team.
- There can never be too many maintenance team walk-rounds as something is always picked up.
- Good buy-in from the main contractor and project manager is essential.
- Thorough analysis of the energy data always uncovers something.

### Sharing your project

Communications through the survey and internal comms, as well as student projects. UWE Bristol have plans to hold external events at the building, to share more about the REAL approach to soft landings.

### What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

It has been a huge boost for the University's Estates Team and Masterplanning, to realise that what we are putting into place is something of value to the wider sector. It has inspired us to carry on despite it being an uphill struggle at times!

### Further information

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