



Cleaning Services for Edinburgh City Council's Heritage and Event Venues

Edinburgh, UK



"Supporting the local community initiative felt fantastic, and I'm so happy to be able to give back to the local area."

*–Christina Gonzales,
Edinburgh Council
Team member*

CHALLENGE

Edinburgh City Council owns and manages three historic and popular event venues in the city center, which rely heavily on public funding and events to cover operating costs. The venues include the Usher Hall, a category-A listed Edwardian concert hall, the Church Hill Theatre, a category-B listed former church, and the Assembly Rooms, a multi-purpose events space built in 1759. The cleaning service provider must take into consideration the historical significance of the buildings and infrastructure to ensure they are properly maintained and preserved. Additionally, the provider must work around the busy events schedule that varies month-to-month and requires a flexible approach, whilst participating in ESG initiatives in the local community.

SOLUTION

In 2010, Edinburgh City Council chose ABM to clean their venues. The cleaning delivery covers core cleaning such as vacuuming, washroom cleaning, scrubbing, drying, and mopping, as well as deep cleaning such as carpet cleaning. ABM has integrated cleaning services and sanitary services in order to offer the client a convenient and efficient experience. By consolidating these services, Edinburgh Council have a single point of contact to manage all their needs. ABM oversees all service disciplines with a one-team approach to performance management and quality standards, ensuring consistency and excellence in all aspects of their service. The company works closely with its supply chain partners who manage the sanitary elements of the contract, meeting with them monthly and including them in team briefings and training sessions.

Case Study | Edinburgh City Council

ABM has a dedicated site staff in place for each venue, including a site supervisor based at Usher Hall, ensuring consistent and personalised attention from a team that is familiar with the location. The teams consist of cleaning operatives and supervisors, with event support staff available when needed to ensure that the venue can be thoroughly cleaned and prepared for events, no matter the size or complexity. Due to the varying hours of operations across the venues, ABM's cleaning delivery is correspondingly flexible and can conveniently fit around the clients needs. Core cleaning of the venues is carried out from 07:00 to 15:00, however these hours differ depending on the individual requirements for the venues on a particular day.

To preserve and maintain the venues' historic surfaces, furniture, and finishings, all staff have received clear, thorough, recorded training on the site-specific requirements of each venue, including cover staff for events. ABM uses specific processes and cleaning products to ensure the venues are properly maintained and preserved. For example, the company uses historic-surface-friendly beeswax instead of all-purpose cleaners or cleaning chemicals for wooden panels/furniture across the portfolio.

ABM has also been implementing a range of ESG initiatives for Edinburgh Council over the past 18 months. The ABM team liaise with the council to choose from their list of available initiatives, aiming for one per quarter. One of the initiatives that ABM has been involved in is litter picking at local flats, helping to keep the surrounding environment clean and fosters a sense of community responsibility. Another initiative is the collection of food donations at local supermarkets, which are then taken to food banks. ABM also makes financial contributions to these food banks, helping to provide support to those who are in need.

The client wanted to include ESG initiative to support local children. As such, ABM provided a number of solutions including donating pantomime tickets to local children in need. ABM has donated funds to a school uniform bank, which helps provide school uniforms for children from low-income families. The Edinburgh school uniform bank will soon be moving premises, and ABM will be cleaning the new premises for free as part of the initiative. The site also began monitoring water consumption in 2022, installing Whiff-away waterless urinal systems and water-filled bags into toilet cisterns to reduce the cistern water capacity.

BENEFITS

The partnership between ABM and Edinburgh City Council has been successful, having retendered several times over the past 10 years. The benefits of ABM's cleaning services for Edinburgh City Council's heritage and event venues are:

Environmental Benefits:

- The historic venues' infrastructure is preserved through ABM's usage of environmentally friendly cleaning products.
- To ensure minimal impact on the surrounding area ABM's cleaning methods are sympathetic to the environment.

Economic Benefits:

- Providing cleaning services that are venue specific, as opposed to using a "once size fits all" approach, means that ABM are helping Edinburgh City Council save money.
- ABM's flexible cleaning delivery allows the council to adapt its delivery around the venues' busy events schedule, ensuring no disruption to public events.

Social Benefits:

- ABM's cleaning services provide a safe, clean environment for visitors to the venues.
- All staff have been fully security cleared and authorised to work on site, including cover staff for events.
- A high standard of delivery is achieved thanks to ABM use of a team of core staff who fully understand the specific needs of each site.