

Putting Fusion on track to deliver High-Speed Rail



Park helps Fusion keep a check on all aspects of health and safety on their part of the HS2 construction

Park Health & Safety was invited to take part in a tender process in May 2016 to deliver a comprehensive health & wellbeing programme to cover a 100km stretch of the high-speed HS2 rail network.

Having already earned a well-deserved reputation for innovation and excellence in the field of health and wellbeing for delivering the first-ever Olympic build (London 2012) without a fatality, it was felt that the team at Park was well-placed to support this ambitious construction programme.

It was agreed that the programme, known as Fusion, responsible for early construction works from West Hyde to Warwickshire ranging from ecology



and the environment to demolition, archaeology, utility diversions and highway realignments, presented Park with a tremendous opportunity to raise the bar for health support and leadership for employees and neighbouring communities.

Recognising that HS2, through its Safe at Heart programme, is here to push the boundaries of design and innovation, it was a necessary progression for the team

to extend this aspirational thinking to making health a primary consideration on site.

By focusing on harm prevention and futureproofing their ways of working by developing a more rigorous pathway of healthcare across the supply chain, just as they had with the 2012 Olympics, Crossrail and Tideway, Park was able to embed the gold standard for ill-health prevention, health preservation and promotion across the Fusion project.

As such, working alongside partners Morgan Sindall, Bam Nuttall and Ferrovial, Park went beyond a traditional reactive and worker-based approach to one of holistic occupational health which allowed it to proactively:

- Eliminate occupational health hazards.

- Limit exposure to health risk where hazard could not be eliminated.
- Ensure staff were fit for the work required of them.
- Rehabilitate workers so that they could continue in employment.
- Provide opportunities for workers to enhance their general health & wellbeing.

THE CHALLENGE:

With a wealth of expertise and practical know-how to call upon, Park was then faced with addressing the question: "How do you provide meaningful mental health and wellbeing to all employees working across a 100km stretch of rail network construction, considering the mobile and dispersed nature of the

workforce and the geography of the extended site?"

Melodie Gilbert, Senior Partner at Park and Occupational Health Manager for Fusion, explained: "The difficulty, of course, is you cannot have an army of occupational health professionals dispensing advice along the whole 100km site."

"It's not logistically or financially feasible, so we had to find meaningful ways in which we could provide access to information, making sure it remained timely, accurate and relevant."

THE SOLUTION:

Using learnings from the delivery of previous successful projects, the Park team was able to create a robust

health management plan which used preventative and reactive intervention, rehabilitation and health promotion techniques to support a workplace that aimed to be free of occupational health risks, across the full 100km.

The health management plan defined the scope of the preventative, intervention and rehabilitation health services, which included:

- Preplacement health checks.
- Return to work assessments and reviews.
- Fitness for work screening and medical checks.
- Ongoing exposure monitoring (utilising the occupational hygienist).

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Aiming for success right down the line

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- Health surveillance and monitoring.
- Ongoing and comprehensive analysis of health risk and mitigations for them,
- Training requirements for project staff and the workforce.
- Physiotherapy and functional rehabilitation.
- The provision of onsite occupational health staff and technicians if required,
- Continuous improvement in health performance.
- Ensuring control measures were in place identified by the health risk assessment process.
- Detailing proactive and reactive health performance monitoring arrangements that occurred within the contract.

In addition and perhaps most compelling of all was the inclusion

of a wellbeing strategy as part of the health management plan.

The strategy was used to detail how wellbeing

was to be integrated and embedded into the on-site ways of working, how it would be able to empower and engage the workforce to embrace positive health changes and how, ultimately, wellbeing was monitored for effectiveness.

It included mental wellbeing and ill-health prevention, individual and manager resilience programmes, functional fitness to address ageing population and reduce musculoskeletal injuries and chronic pain, fatigue, adverse

weather, transient workers and general well-woman and well-man health. Having considered the most beneficial topics for the Fusion wellbeing programme, it was also decided to include:

- A focus on mental health, as this is an ongoing priority nationally, as well as across the construction industry and particularly for males under 50, as suicide is the leading cause of death for this group. Several Fusion employees previously identified themselves as having a mental health disability and had experienced absence due to stress. It was also highlighted as a topic of interest by other employees.
- Musculoskeletal issues as this was a construction priority and identified in absence data.
- Colds/flu and vaccines due to absence data and NHS priorities.

● Diet and exercise due to UK NHS priorities and workforce interest.

- Obesity, diabetes,

“When it comes to occupational hygienist knowledge, Park Health stands alone...”

air pollution and alcohol as these were also covered by NHS priorities.

This also formed the foundation for the Fusion positive mental health programme, which not only maintained the existing health status of employees but facilitated improvement in their quality of life by giving them more informed lifestyle choices.

The team was able to extend these interventions beyond the employees to include the wider community

which meant those visiting the project and those living and working within its vicinity were also able to benefit.

In real terms, this comprehensive approach to occupational health, underpinned by Park’s award-winning 4Ws framework, was delivered by working closely with all sub-contractors and suppliers to ensure they had a depth of understanding of the expected ways of working and the assistance and resources available to them before and during their time on site.

This was backed with a full calendar of supporting activities which was used to maintain the momentum behind the positive standards being adhered to during the lifespan of the project.

By implementing the 4Ws framework on the Fusion project, Park has been fully-supportive of HS2’s aspiration to engender inclusive health and wellbeing for all employees in this challenging geographic environment.

This will stand the programme in good stead as the partnership teams strive to successfully achieve their goals by 2022 when the early works are expected to be completed.

Clinton Horn, (former Fusion) Health, Safety & Wellbeing Manager said: “When it comes to occupational hygienist knowledge and service that has been developed over years of hands-on operational experience by their in-house hygienists within the construction project environment, Park Health stands alone.”



Park’s occupational health management strategy, the 4Ws, is recognised as a best practice approach in all the aspects of occupational health. Here is the framework.

1. WORKPLACE

- Designing-out workplace health risk as far as reasonably possible.
- Profiling, tracking and reducing possible health hazards by the use of Health Hazard Evaluation and Mitigation Plan and health risk assessment.
- Preventing occupational ill-health through exposure to health hazards including: physical hazards such as noise and vibration; chemical & biological hazards including gas, vapour, fume, dust and bacteria; ergonomic stressors such as heavy and/or awkward loads and repetitive tasks; psychological factors such as pressure of work and working time.
- Providing training to all managers and employees, to ensure staff deal with health hazards in the same way as safety hazards and understand the importance of the hierarchy of control in reducing the risk of ill-health.

2. WORKER

- Where individuals have an existing health condition or where they experience ill-health, we will provide support



to help manage their condition and to remain in work, or return to work while supporting ongoing recovery.

- Monitoring the health of individuals to highlight suitability of controls (health surveillance); pre-placement fitness (pre-employment screening, safety critical medicals); individual susceptibility (lifestyle and functional capacity assessments); treatment of harm caused (first aid, physiotherapy).

3. WELLBEING

- Providing a range of activities and information in the workplace to promote healthy lifestyles and encourage employees to make and sustain positive behaviour changes.
- Promoting wellbeing by using the workplace as a venue to promote healthy lifestyles.

4. WIDER COMMUNITY

- Assisting wellbeing in the community by delivering initiatives that positively impact those surrounding our works.
- Using the workplace to promote healthy lifestyles to the community.
- Using information gained from national and local health data and local Primary Care Trusts to ensure that initiatives and advice offered to both staff and the wider community is based upon relevant local health needs.

What the 4Ws mean

