

Office space “Utopia” with services: Banbury division of national operation Serco relocates to Bloxham Mill

To stay, or not to stay?

When there was a break clause in the lease of its current office building. Serco Wincanton's first steps were to move its Control Room – serving the whole operational area – to other Serco premises in Gloucester. However, this in turn left up to 25 staff requiring office accommodation, once they vacated the three-storey building that housed its HQ in central Banbury town.

So, how did Serco Wincanton overcome this challenge? Business Coordinator Hayley Hoy explains: *“Following the relocation of our Control room to Gloucester, staying in our existing town centre headquarters was just not financially viable. We would have been paying for space we just didn't need. Nevertheless, it wasn't a decision we took lightly.”*

Having assessed their office needs and the fact that they do not get many visitors – and certainly no cold callers – the concept of office space with on-site services seemed the most sensible option. This would allow certain services like reception and office cleaning to be outsourced and critically, give Serco Wincanton scope to expand or contract with much more flexibility.

Remaining in Banbury wasn't strictly necessary, although it would certainly enhance staff retention. Equally, having a large geographical operational area meant that a central location would be the most practical. Serco Wincanton eventually looked at four or five locations along the M40 and M1 “corridors” including Aylesbury and Milton Keynes.

“Our very first viewing of serviced offices was at Bloxham Mill, which set a really high benchmark. The ambience was warm and welcoming and the ethos really seemed to be that nothing was too much trouble – the passion from Managing Director Ray Avery, was particularly evident. I just didn't get this from the other sites we visited because they seemed cold and clinical.”

Hayley Hoy, Business Coordinator, **Serco Wincanton**

Community “feel”

With Serco Wincanton now settled in at Bloxham Mill, was the decision to choose office space with services over conventional space the right one?

Initially, moving out-of-town – although only slightly – was a concern for some of our staff, notes Hayley: *“Now we've settled in the advantages far outweigh this concern. Everyone likes being part of the 'community feel' here at Bloxham Mill, not to mention the pleasant views and office environment. They're certainly looking forward to eating al fresco on the on-site café terrace in the summer.”*

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She adds that the Bloxham Mill team has really gone the extra mile to help Serco settle in. *“From sourcing new office furniture to helping with office layout plans, the Bloxham Mill team has been there throughout to make our move – and settling in – a great success.”*

“Free on-site parking, a pleasant, welcoming reception area and an on-site café are a boon. Whilst hiring modern, serviced meeting rooms only as and when we need them rather than paying for space we don’t need, has revolutionised the way we think about office space. Add to all that the ‘open door’ policy of Ray Avery and his team where nothing is too much trouble, it’s just ideal. From sourcing new office furniture to helping with office layout plans, the Bloxham Mill team has been there throughout to make our move – and settling in – a great success.”

Hayley Hoy, Business Coordinator, **Serco Wincanton**

The only on-site service that Serco Wincanton doesn’t readily use, is the sophisticated, on-site IT services, continues Hayley: *“This is purely because Serco Wincanton has its own central IT department, via its Control Room now in Gloucester. However, having Bloxham Mill’s IT team on hand during our relocation made the transition so much easier.”*

Bloxham Mill’s Managing Director Ray Avery comments: *“We’re just delighted that Serco Wincanton has become part of our community.*

“At Bloxham Mill we think ‘clients’, not ‘tenants’ and are always on hand to serve them as such. Our clients want and deserve their space to be delivered in a different way – free from the conventional office ‘millstones’ such as leasing, maintenance and health & safety legislation. They just want to get on with their business. Being a Bloxham Mill client allows them to do just that.”

Long-term base?

So, does Serco Wincanton see a long-term future at Bloxham Mill? Hayley concludes:

“Undoubtedly. The contract that we manage from here is for seven years so we see that being a minimum for staying here. Plus, with all the advantages and the possibility of being able to adjust our office space at Bloxham Mill to meet the varying demands and requirements, we see no reason why we should want to be anywhere else.”

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Serco supports governments, agencies and companies who seek a trusted partner with a solid track-record of providing assured service excellence. Our people offer operational, management and consulting expertise in the aerospace, defence, education, health, home affairs, local government, science, technology, transport and the commercial sectors.

We improve patient care with our health services; we rehabilitate offenders in our prisons; we protect borders through technology; we provide swift, safe travel with our trains and transport systems; we help young people learn in the schools and training centres we manage; we enable trade by the precise measurements undertaken by our scientists. We bring service to life.

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