

NHS Nightingale Hospital Exeter



NHS Nightingale Hospital Exeter is a 116-bed healthcare facility built to provide care for patients suffering from symptoms of coronavirus. Due to the critical nature of the facility and construction during a time of national emergency, collaborative working, and innovative thinking were key to the success of the project. The facility was completed in just 57 days, including eight days demolition and site preparation and 49 of construction.

- **Date of completion: July 2020**
- **Cost: £23m**
- **Location: Exeter, Devon**

Challenges and solutions

The project involved re-purposing a former Homebase DIY retail unit with no suitable infrastructure into a full acute facility with the requisite ancillary space and welfare areas. This meant a full scale construction project during a national lockdown and global COVID-19 pandemic to an extremely challenging timescale.

Over 2,500m³ of earth was shifted and an 80m retaining wall created, which required the diversion of three HV cables, a 90mm diameter water main, installation of a new 2,500kVA diverse HV ring main and a 200mm diameter gas main plus the design and installation of all drainage. Prefabrication was incorporated into the design from the outset to minimise onsite works as far as possible. The design team was just 24 hours ahead of construction, sometimes less, and there were elements of work designed one or two days, or even hours, before they were installed.

Meeting social distancing protocols, despite the site's constrained nature, was achieved using crowd barriers and one-way systems with over-sized toilet and handwashing facilities.



Benefits and achievements

The NHS Nightingale Hospital Exeter was completed in just 57 days, on time and to budget - all without a single reportable incident or COVID-19 issue. To put this in context, the team were working seven days a week, for up to 20 hour days on double shifts, and at its peak there were 467 operatives on site. Over 80% of the total project spend went to supply chain partners within a 45 mile radius of the site, including many SMEs.

This project has had an immediate impact upon the local community. At the height of the first national lockdown it provided a fully operational ICU facility, delivering a much needed treatment facility for COVID-19 and other conditions. This facility has also provided vital, additional capacity for local NHS Trusts, enabling existing facilities to focus on clinical care while alleviating pressure on services.

This scheme delivered more than a temporary facility, as other Nightingale projects were designed to do. NHS Nightingale Hospital Exeter provides a permanent, 'mini' General Hospital, close to the strategically important M5-A38-A30 communications network.



Fascinating facts

- ❑ The project involved over 170,000 working hours, with over 2,500 people employed on site.
- ❑ Twenty articulated lorries made deliveries every day, including 100,000 bottles of water for site workers.
- ❑ The works more than doubled the size of the original building, from 3,300m² to 8,200m², including 2,000m³ of external plant space.

People who made it happen:

- Client: Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust
- Main Contractor: BAM Construction Ltd
- Structural and Civil Engineer: Arup
- Architect: Stride Treglown
- Building Services Design: Services Design Solution Ltd (SDS)
- Mechanical and Electrical Contractor: T Clarke and Totus
- Quantity Surveyor: Ward Williams Associates (WWA)
- Project Manager: Peninsula Project Consulting