



# Awards 2014 Case Study

Award Winner

## Client of the Year

Football Association of Wales (National Football Centre)

Best Play, Team Play is the motto of the Football Association of Wales, but it was also the inspirational ethos behind the development of the new National Football Development Centre that won the organisation CEW's Client of the Year award 2014.



Using the language and motivational techniques of football was second nature to Project Director Kevin Moon of the client for this scheme, The Welsh Football Trust. A former player and qualified coach, Kevin led the team through the entire process from concept and planning, design and detailing, material selection and site operations.

It was his inclusive approach to encouraging every member of the team - from designers to tilers - that resulted in a national facility of exceptional quality and of enormous significance to Welsh football. Since the Association was formed in 1876, it has been without a permanent base. The Welsh national squad has been based at a couple of hotels during this time and used a variety of club pitches for training. So this £2.4m project, funded by UEFA with support from FIFA, the Welsh Assembly Government and Sports Wales, marks the start of an exciting new era for the Welsh game.

The state-of-the-art facilities at Dragon Park, part of the Newport International Sports Village, include two full-size football pitches, a fibre sand pitch with floodlighting, synthetic warm up and goalkeeping area, access to a 3G pitch. It offers players 5\* facilities such as two changing rooms with showers and two plunge pools in each, a physiotherapy room and a players' zone. There is a very high standard of finish and durability throughout.

Most importantly, it finally puts the Welsh squad on a par with other international teams, providing Wales with a greater chance of attracting top coaches, international teams and presenting the nation as an attractive prospect to players, some of whom have dual nationality and might previously have been tempted by better facilities elsewhere. Opened by Michel Platini and Carwyn Jones, it is a shining example of what can be achieved through collaboration with a client who has clear objectives.

The Trust's focus, from the very beginning of the design process, was the players and coaches, and to make a statement worthy of a national centre that would draw international attention. Administrative offices for the FAW were a secondary consideration.

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Kevin Moon

Project Director

And with the proverb 'by failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail' perhaps serving as a guiding principle, Kevin Moon put his training as a civil engineer to best use, ensuring all initial documents given to contractor ISG made the Trust's requirements for the centre crystal clear.

"Whatever task you are doing, the preparation is often the most important stage," said Kevin, "and then not introducing changes. It allows the project to run smoothly and, in our case, enabled it to be delivered on time and budget."

This clarity of vision and thorough preparation was what prompted ISG to nominate the Trust for the Client of the Year award. The contractor site team commented that: "The client was made in heaven - they knew what they wanted and what they needed. They worked tirelessly to achieve their vision, but involving and listening to every member of the team: truly inspirational."

In turn, Kevin Moon was full of praise for ISG and their sub-contractors, who were 'fantastic'. Theirs was the best value for money submission at tender stage, rather than the cheapest, said Kevin. "They bought into our vision and we could see they understood what we wanted. In fact, if we were to carry out any future phases we would approach it in exactly the same way and pick the same team. I wouldn't change anything.

"As far as I am concerned, our motto 'Best Play is Team Play' doesn't relate solely to the team on the pitch" he continued. "We wanted to convey the same message to the landowners, architects, engineers and, most importantly, the guys on site working on the building. Having trust

in your team is also crucial – it's not good enough just to talk about teamwork. I never thought of myself as the client but as part of this team."

Throughout the project there was a strong emphasis on communicating important messages to all stakeholders and good use of publicity and high profile football figures to underline key issues. The innovative approach to Health and Safety centred on the appointment of Ian Rush as safety champion, a role he approached with commitment and enthusiasm. Individual site safety certificates, signed by Ian, were presented to those who exceeded compliance and good practice and incentives for going the extra mile included tickets to international matches.

Everyone involved in this project left with a huge sense of national pride and achievement, feeling they are part of a lasting legacy which is a testament to the entire team. Across the board, they commented that this was the most collaborative project they had ever had the pleasure to work on and it was client behaviour that was instrumental in achieving this and lessons learnt here will have long lasting repercussions, locally, nationally and internationally, as they are put into practice on future projects.

Kevin is keen to work with CEW to promote the team psychology that has been so successful on the National Development across the construction industry. He concluded: "It's still a surprise that we were held in such esteem as a client and that we are being held up in some ways as a benchmark for client behaviour, but we are absolutely delighted."

