



Alliance Leisure



Leisure Centre
Build



February 2025



35 Weeks

Project Overview

Universal Civils & Build (UCB) were appointed by Alliance Leisure Services (ALS) to complete the construction of the Cath Thom Leisure Centre for Hyndburn Borough Council (HBC).

UCB's first involvement in the project was preparing a cost to complete under a Pre-Construction Services Agreement in Q4 2024, with works commencing on site on 27 January 2025 and completing on 30 September 2025 (Practical Completion).

The development of the Cath Thom Leisure Centre represents a multimillion-pound investment by Hyndburn Borough Council in a modern, inclusive hub designed to enhance community wellbeing and support local regeneration.

The Cath Thom Leisure Centre officially opened its doors on 10 October 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

Project Scope

This purpose-built leisure facility was designed to serve all ages and abilities, bringing together cutting-edge fitness, wellness, and recreational amenities. The scope of work included:

- ▶ A state-of-the-art gym and fitness suite
- ▶ A four-lane, 25-metre swimming pool
- ▶ Sauna and steam room
- ▶ Group exercise studio
- ▶ Wellbeing room
- ▶ Large pool changing village
- ▶ Changing places facilities
- ▶ Dedicated team changing facilities for outdoor sports users
- ▶ Community club room
- ▶ On-site café



Universal Group

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Forest Street, Sutton in
Ashfield, Nottinghamshire
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Challenges and Solutions

1. Taking Over the Project from Another Principal Contractor

UCB took over the project after the original principal contractor entered administration, which presented significant challenges including incomplete or undocumented works, limited handover information, and disruption to programme continuity.

We rapidly assessed the existing construction, verified compliance with regulations, and re-established site management and supply chains. Despite these complexities, we ensured a seamless transition, stabilised the project, and maintained progress without compromising quality or safety.

2. Quality Control

Quality was of utmost importance to the end user, a point consistently emphasised during pre-construction, early construction, and pre-handover meetings.

To ensure quality was not only maintained but exceeded—while working to a fast-paced programme—UCB appointed the following at its own expense:

- ▶ BSIM Consulting Ltd – Appointed as Third-Party Consultant to manage the MEP process alongside our Project Manager
- ▶ Lampros Ltd – Appointed as Third-Party Consultant to inspect and sign off the roofing and cladding installations
- ▶ Armin Resources Ltd – Appointed as General Clerk of Works to snag sub-contractors' works ahead of Client Inspection at Practical Completion

3. Programme / Overall Duration

UCB successfully maintained the original principal contractor's programme duration despite undertaking major remedial works to the roof, which had been exposed to the elements for an extended period.

To achieve this, UCB implemented seven-day working weeks with a rotating site management team, ensuring progress continued without compromising on-site quality standards.



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4. Inheriting an Incomplete Building Services Design

When UCB commenced construction works, it became evident that the Building Services design was only at preliminary status and had not been developed under the previous contract.

To avoid delays to the MEP programme, UCB appointed the MEP sub-contractor at risk to begin design work immediately. As noted above, a third-party MEP consultant was also engaged to work alongside our Project Manager to review, comment on, and approve the Building Services design—progressing it to construction status in line with the overall programme.

5. On-Site / Live Logistical Issues

UCB managed construction activities adjacent to a live pavilion servicing multiple sports clubs. This was achieved through regular on-site meetings with the relevant clubs and an HBC representative.

Following the pavilion's demolition in May 2025, UCB provided temporary accommodation for the sports clubs, ensuring all their needs and operational requirements were met throughout the construction period.

Key Takeaways

- ▶ **Community-Driven Design:** Every element of the centre was planned with inclusivity and accessibility at its core.
- ▶ **Modern & Flexible Spaces:** Facilities cater to a wide demographic, with a future-proof design supporting evolving community needs.
- ▶ **Collaboration in Delivery:** Strong partnerships between the council, contractors, and stakeholders ensured successful and on-time completion.

This case study demonstrates how thoughtful investment and collaborative planning can transform not only a building but an entire community's wellbeing and outlook for the future.



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