

Key to filling labour shortage published by SBFM

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Soft service provider SBFM has today launched a new white paper, [“Evolve: building a better future”](#) to explore the FM industry’s continued struggle with recruitment and retention since Brexit and the Covid 19 pandemic.

It discusses the wealth of untapped potential that lies within various underrepresented groups and the opportunities for upskilling and cross-skilling, as well as wider economic advantages.

The white paper reveals that businesses are not thinking about recruitment in a dynamic enough way. There is an untouched workforce in underrepresented and marginalised groups such as ex-offenders, ex-service personnel, care leavers, former sports professionals, people with disabilities and long-term unemployed people. The paper discusses the stigma associated with underrepresented groups and highlights that these are often the people that have the skillset, dedication and passion to help make a difference.

It also explains that recruitment is just the first step. Nurturing underrepresented individuals on a thriving journey will bring lifechanging outcomes for them individually, allow businesses to evolve and become more diverse, and help the industry evolve, as well as delivering benefits for the wider economy. The paper presents real-world examples including results that showed [a two percent increase in ex-offenders successfully steered into jobs within six months of release resulted in cutting crime, reducing spending in the justice system by £18 billion, and a nine percent reduction in reoffending.](#)

Employers must also see the development of their teams as an opportunity to cross-skill as well as up-skill. The nature of FM service delivery means that it is useful to cross-skill staff across different services,

enabling teams to execute an integrated approach. The practice can enhance the customer and occupier / employee experience and offers colleagues an opportunity to progress into management roles, even across different business functions. Whether people stay in FM businesses or find their passions elsewhere, SBFM's white paper demonstrates that employing people from underrepresented groups is undeniably good for society.

CEO Matt Chapman said: "It is unacceptable for anyone to be overlooked, no matter their background. We need to break down barriers, and open minds. It is fundamental we build trust and unity in society, not fuel segregation.

"FM has an ageing workforce and has experienced difficulties in attracting young talent. It still has a way to go on this front. Meanwhile, there are myriad untapped skillsets and potential in diverse groups. Care leavers, ex-offenders, veterans, people with disabilities, long-term unemployed and ex-sports professionals, to name a few, have so much to give and to teach others. Often, they just need an opportunity and a helping hand to get going. Society needs to change. Minds need to open. With the employment and talent challenges we are seeing, means now is a perfect time."