

# Behind the closed doors: Building the future of healthcare FM

5 months ago



FM Director recently caught up with Wayne Goldsmith, Managing Director of the Health & Care Division at [CBRE](#) to discuss his journey through the FM industry. CBRE GWS manages 20 million SQFT of healthcare space managed in the UK for private and NHS, maintains over 150,000 healthcare assets and oversees 550+ people in the UK Health & Care division. Wayne talked us through the unique challenges of healthcare facilities management, as well as his vision for attracting the next generation to this rewarding sector.

Like many in the facilities management industry, Wayne Goldsmith's career path was far from planned. After nearly two decades in the sector, he has worked across diverse environments from aviation to healthcare, discovering along the way that FM offers something truly unique: access to the extraordinary.

"It's one of those careers that you never sit in school thinking, 'I know I'm going to work in FM,'" Wayne reflected. "Most people just fall into it, and my circumstances are no different."

His journey began when a previous boss offered him an opportunity with a large organisation, leading to a role managing Heathrow Airport. From there, his career evolved through the interconnected nature of the FM industry, taking him across manufacturing, industrial sectors, central government, transport, and aviation.

A calling in healthcare

Four years ago, CBRE approached Wayne about leading their healthcare sector. Whilst he had some previous healthcare experience, it wasn't his main background. However, the opportunity to contribute to a sector in desperate need of support proved irresistible.

"It was a great opportunity to give back to a sector that was in desperate need of support," Wayne explained. "It's a great place to be able to create new talent, create apprenticeships and graduates in an environment that is so rewarding."

Under Wayne's leadership, CBRE expanded their healthcare offering beyond traditional hospital services to encompass the full care continuum. He recognised the seamless transition opportunities between acute hospital care, community care, and the care sector.

"We support the hospitals, which is great, but actually it's the community and then the secondary care within the care sector - it's a real seamless transition," Wayne said. "Speaking to many hospital directors, they say around 40% of all patients could leave if there was somewhere for them to go into a care environment."

This holistic approach reflects Wayne's belief in supporting local communities through local jobs, local suppliers, and accessible healthcare provision. "People don't need to go to hospital for an appointment if we can do it in a local environment, within one to two miles of your home - it makes that much easier," he added.

#### The rewards of FM

Wayne's enthusiasm for the industry is infectious, particularly when discussing the unique access FM provides to extraordinary environments. Throughout his career, he has been behind scenes that few others see: control towers at Heathrow, rail operating centres managing train networks, military installations, and even the Old Scotland Yard stables.

"You see behind the closed doors," Wayne said. "It's phenomenal, absolutely phenomenal, and I love it to bits."

This passion drives Wayne to visit schools and career fairs, spreading the word about FM opportunities. He emphasises that at a global organisation like CBRE, the possibilities are vast - from UK-based roles to opportunities across Europe, APAC, and America.

"While you might do something here in the UK, in two to three years' time you could be doing something in Europe, APAC, or America because our model mirrors every country," Wayne explained.

#### Attracting the next generation

For Wayne, attracting young talent requires early education about the industry's possibilities. He advocates for both graduate programmes and FM apprenticeships - not just engineering apprenticeships, but comprehensive FM training that encompasses market analysis and strategic thinking.

"We need that next generation of thinking to challenge people like myself," Wayne said. "Why do you do it that way? Well, because you've always done it that way. Or have you thought about doing it this way? That fresh thinking is what will make us stand out in the years to come."

Wayne believes the industry needs to better publicise its successes. "We always seem to be blamed if something goes wrong, but there are so many good things going on that we need to highlight to the younger generation," he observed. "The AI and smart technology that goes along with it is exciting - some

of the stuff we do is really clever, and we need that next generation to see it."

### Healthcare challenges

The healthcare sector presents unique challenges that Wayne and his team navigate daily. The most significant is the ageing estate, with backlog maintenance and chronic under-investment in properties accumulated over years.

"Changing governments can kick that forward, but it can also stifle progress," Wayne noted. "When we went through the general election last year, budgetary controls were frozen for the right reasons, but that allows the backlog to build up even more."

Resource challenges extend beyond buildings to people. Wayne acknowledges that healthcare FM isn't suitable for everyone, as staff may encounter upsetting situations. This requires careful recruitment and education to ensure people understand what they're signing up for.

The sector also demands enhanced compliance standards. Beyond industry regulations, healthcare FM must meet Healthcare Technical Memorandums (HTMs) – elevated standards designed to protect vulnerable patients with suppressed immune systems.

"We need to ensure that highest level of compliance is definitely there because patients are vulnerable," Wayne emphasised.

### Looking ahead

For the next three to five years, Wayne sees several key priorities. Developing the next generation of engineers remains crucial, as does leveraging AI and smart technology to transform healthcare facilities.

"If we took one of our hospitals that we look after, probably built in the early 1900s, how do we take that building and make it smart and efficient to reduce energy consumption?" Wayne asked. "We've got to challenge the sector and say we can do this smarter."

The challenge lies in implementing these improvements in live environments. "We can't close hospitals, so how do we do it at very low risk to implement the changes that are necessary?"

Wayne's personal mantra – "people, customers, then growth" – reflects his belief that getting the right people with the right skill sets into the right jobs creates lasting success. "If I get that right, they'll love it and they'll stick around. It's an industry where people stick around for a long time because it's so diverse and rewarding in so many ways."

With his sons now grown – one working at PwC and another in his second year at university – Wayne is open to new adventures. He would welcome the opportunity to work abroad, taking the UK's advanced FM outsourcing expertise to support CBRE's expansion into new countries.

"The UK is seen as advanced in FM outsourcing, and we've got new countries coming aboard," Wayne said. "If I can help with my expertise, I wouldn't say no to a little stint abroad."

For now, Wayne remains committed to driving growth in CBRE's health and care sector in the UK, continuing to demonstrate that facilities management offers not just a career, but access to an



extraordinary world behind the closed doors that most never see.