



“Culture Driven Space” The concept at the heart of UKGI’s decision to move to Carrwood Park

After 13 years occupying a large lease office in South Leeds, UK General Insurance Limited (UKGIL) decided to make the move to a serviced office.

They took up residence at WorkWell’s Carrwood Park site in August 2020, moving out of their old building just before the world went into lockdown, and moving their 100 strong team to a new office location soon after restrictions were lifted.

Darren Buxton, Executive Personal Assistant to the CEO and Executive Directors, assisted the transition. We talk to him here about his experience with WorkWell, moving offices during a global pandemic, and the overall benefits of the new office environment, not only for the business but for its employees.



Before moving to Carrwood Park, the UKGIL team were based in a purpose built 19,000sqft building in Hunslet. The contract was a full fixing and repairing lease, meaning they were responsible for all business costs, including business rates, cleaning, and security contracts, lift and air conditioning repairs.

The building they occupied wasn’t being utilised effectively and was costing the business a lot of money to maintain its upkeep.

UKGIL started looking at alternative solutions and were immediately sold by the culture driven space concept that WorkWell was offering. UKGIL saw a real opportunity for the business to move towards a more cost-effective solution of flexible ‘space with a purpose’, providing productive space for teams to collaborate while offering staff choice and flexibility.

Given the changes brought about by the global coronavirus pandemic, it was important that the space chosen for the business delivered by maintaining and instilling a positive company culture, providing staff with an environment to thrive and also delivered on maximising value for money.



“Space with a purpose”

Darren said: “Moving to Carrwood Park, has allowed us the opportunity to look at the space we have and how we use it. It not only provides us with the flexibility and opportunity to grow but it also offers value for money.

It also allows us to be more agile, as you can move into a bigger office space if you need and there are more options available to you. With a fixing and repairing lease, the landlord is likely to want a 10-year contract which as a business gives you less flexibility.”

“It took away the headaches”

One of the key factors in moving to WorkWell’s Carrwood Park for Darren was it’s all encapsulated solution - it removed a lot of the issues he encountered on a regular basis when it came to the upkeep and maintenance of the old office.

He said: “The attraction of Carrwood Park for me was it took away the headaches. Costs like business rates are all included, the handyman can come across for any repairs, you don’t have to worry about security, that’s all taken care of.

“On moving in, everything was sorted for us, it was seamless. We didn’t have to worry about sourcing office furniture as that was all provided. They just made everything so easy.”

“Office provider who takes care of the day to day facility challenges”

Like every business across the world, in March 2020, the UKGIL team instructed all employees to work from home, and in August 2020 they started working on a team rota system, bringing specific teams back to the office on set days of the week.

For Darren, having the WorkWell team on hand to assist with implementing the relevant Covid safety measures was integral, allowing the business more time to focus on ensuring staff were set up and happy in their new working environment.

He commented: “With getting our staff back to work, I didn’t need to worry about getting the communal areas, kitchen, toilets etc. all set up to be Covid safe, this was all taken care of for us, which meant we could focus on the set up in our work space and ensuring that staff were happy in their new environment. I had started to put all of the necessary plans in place for moving back in to our old office, so I know what’s involved, so to have that already done for you has been a huge help.”



Staff health and wellbeing is also high on the agenda for UKGIL. Like many businesses in the current climate, they've encountered a number of challenges with remote working, particularly in keeping staff engaged and motivated.

"A modern, collaborative workspace"

Moving to Carrwood Park has allowed them to offer a more flexible structure to their teams, giving them the choice to work from home when needed and work a small number of days from the office. This has helped mitigate some of the challenges encountered.

Darren said: "All staff adapted well to working from home and are now getting used to their new working environments. Their health and wellbeing is incredibly important and we were very mindful with a move to a new office to get employee feedback and work with them to make sure they felt happy and safe in coming to work. WorkWell have made that process easy, they are open to the feedback we've given them and where possible have implemented changes.

"Having a modern, collaborative workspace to come to twice a week has also helped lift morale. We've been very mindful over the last few months about our staff's mental health and the isolation that can come with working from home. People crave interaction with other colleagues and need to see the bigger picture which can be really hard to achieve remotely."

"The office of tomorrow"

For Darren, moving to Carrwood Park has been a change for the better. He added:

"I see Carrwood Park as the office of tomorrow, a modern workspace for collaborative working, with people dividing their time between home and the office. They have a great team who are there to look after you, they understand your needs and requirements and have delivered on everything we've asked for."

