BIM4FM says ‘Start with the end in mind’

Headline messages from BIM4FM ‘How FM needs to get ready for BIM’ event:

- BIM is creating a data knowledge gap as the construction side of the industry is leading the charge but FM needs to get its voice heard.
- BIM gives FMs the opportunity to influence design and construction. They can get all the information they need to run the facility by setting the EIR.
- The holy grail will be when the data generated during construction can be integrated with the tools FMs use, such as CAFM systems or IWMS integrated workplace management systems. But it's not just FM software — cloud-enabled software can ensure collaboration across the business.
- BIM is one version of the truth. It is a dynamic piece of information that needs to stay live throughout the operation of a building, not created and shelved. Resources, maintenance tasks and spares should be added to BIM as it is the information we need to maintain buildings. Adding condition grades to BIM fields will allow future cost modelling, whole life costing.
- Through their project, UBS found that the right contractor might not always be BIM capable but you can take them on the journey and get them up to speed and that the quality of build still needs to be monitored as the model won't do that for you.
- Soft Landings must be at the heart of any project. Soft Landings is used to support the bringing together all the parties to work collaboratively on BIM.
- The future is for the BIM model to be used as the graphical interface for all operational systems where graphics are used, including fire, security, and BMS. This will feed into training and safety management.
- Clients are paying for the industry to learn so the savings in construction are not yet being realised but the operational phase of completed buildings is where the savings are going to come from.

The BIM4FM group brings together leading institutions, professional bodies and trade associations with an interest in the built environment to champion FM’s involvement in BIM and to support raise awareness of BIM throughout the FM sector. The BIM4FM group is arranging a series of events bringing together facilities managers, owner occupiers and thought leaders to discuss how to ensure the sector is BIM-ready.

At the latest BIM4FM event, held at the University of Greenwich on 23rd March, the audience heard from expert speakers Simon Ashworth, Liverpool John Moores and Zurich University, Jacqueline Walpole, FSI (FM Solutions) Ltd, and Jason Clark, UBS. The imminence of Government’s BIM Level 2 mandate set the context for an insightful and thought-provoking evening.

‘Start with the end in mind’

This was a phrase used on several occasions during the evening as speakers reiterated that the majority of the life-cycle cost of a building is in its operation. The audience also heard that 80 per cent of the life-cycle cost of a building are made in the first 20 per cent of design.

This brings home the importance of thinking about the operational costs of a building, how it will be used, how it will be maintained, and how it might change over time, from the outset.

It is FMs who can provide answers to many of these questions and so need to be involved in decision-
making early on to make those images of badly designed buildings that go viral a thing of the past.

Asset management strategy
The speakers all hit on a common theme – the importance of an asset management strategy. For FMs themselves, being involved in the early design phases and setting out early what information they need to operate the building will help to achieve smoother handovers. Having an asset management strategy in place helps to align corporate, real estate and facilities management strategies and identify what information needs to be included in the BIM model from an operational perspective.

Interoperability between BIM and CAFM systems is on its way and will help to open up accessibility to BIM for FMs as well as pushing data back into the BIM model to maintain it over the long-term.

Where next?
BIM is here to stay. The Budget 2016 confirmed Government will develop the next digital standard – BIM Level 3 – and the Government Construction Strategy 2016-2020 outlines plans to embed BIM Level 2 and develop BIM capabilities across government departments. The FM sector needs to be prepared. The construction sector is ahead of the game, creating a “digital knowledge gap” between the two sectors, according to Simon Ashworth.

For FMs, each company and individual will be at a different stage of their BIM journey. For those just starting to get to grips with BIM, the Government Soft Landings document and PAS1192-3 are good places to start. BIFM’s forthcoming Operational Readiness guide will also be essential reading.

For those already some way down the BIM path, supporting clients and supply chain partners to invest in BIM will be key as well as training colleagues to keep the BIM project live and information up to date.

For early adopters, championing BIM and bringing forward case studies is a vital role.

Useful links:
⇒ Presentations from BIM4FM event speakers: http://www.slideshare.net/BritishInstituteofFa
⇒ PAS1192-3: http://shop.bsigroup.com/forms/PASs/PAS-1192-3/
⇒ BIFM Operational Readiness guide: http://www.bifm.org.uk/bifm/knowledge/resources/BIM/OperationalReadiness
⇒ BS8536: http://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030315621
⇒ BIM Task Group website: http://www.bimtaskgroup.org/
⇒ BIM4FM page: http://www.bimtaskgroup.org/bim4fm-group/
⇒ BIM4FM LinkedIn page: https://www.linkedin.com/groups/5029693