



CASE STUDY: Simons Group

Focus on Wellbeing

It has been widely recognised that having physically healthy employees, helps to maintain a mentally healthy workforce. Lincolnshire based contractor Simons Group fully engages with this ideal and goes above and beyond to address this. Paul Hodgkinson, Executive Chairman of Simons, has spoken publicly about the need to raise awareness of the importance of mental health and to diminish the perception, which exists both outside and inside the construction industry, most recently in a comment piece for Construction News in October 2014, which you can read by [clicking here](#).

To ensure the company were fully aware of any concerns held by Simons Group employees, an external employee effectiveness survey was carried out. Simons Group saw a 90% completion rate by the workforce with the following results:

- 87% felt that they are treated with respect as an individual
- 85% felt that Simons seek to understand customers' needs and requirements
- 85% felt that their jobs provided them with the opportunity to do challenging and interesting work
- 100% of 1 year employees were proud to work for Simons, and would recommend the business to their family and friends

Michelle Page, HR Manager for Simons commented on these results: *"I joined the business in November 2013 and my initial perception was that people were happy in their work, and proud to work for the business. I am pleased that my observations were correct and I am extremely proud that we have achieved such fantastic results."*

The company have taken the findings and areas for improvement and collated action plans for each department and as a group, to further improve their engagement levels.



Keeping their construction sites at the forefront of the wellbeing focus, Simons has further identified mental health problems which often arise in the industry. In response to causal factors such as long hours, working conditions, high pressure on sites, depression, work-life balance issues; a 'You said - We did' workforce consultation board has been introduced to all sites and via an anonymous helpline at their head office, introducing visibility to all on concerns and improvements made to health, safety and wellbeing, ensuring a greater level of transparency from a corporate perspective and for employees and their wider audience to feel valued.

To mirror these values, a wellbeing event was held to raise awareness for World Mental Health Day. The aim of this event was to encourage employees to step back and take a look at their own wellbeing.

To help raise local awareness, local specialists joined Simons Group for the day, including Mind, Access LN6, Lincolnshire Sport and WPA Health Insurance. These organisations brought with them a host of knowledge on the issues surrounding mental health, to help raise awareness of the prevalence of individuals experiencing mental health problems within society, the common causes and the measures to help prevent and support those suffering with mental health problems.

Workshops and talks were provided, along with free fruit and vegetables, stress relief products and tools, yoga classes, Indian head massages, nutritional guidance from local specialists, health insurance advice, smoking cessation advice and introductions to neighbouring community activities to further engage employees.



The project team working on Sheffield Children's Hospital have introduced the "Fruit on Friday" initiative, challenging each site team member to avoid processed desserts and sweets and to replace them with fruit for the day.

Simons Group continues to reinforce their Drug and Alcohol policy to their employees and supply chain. Random testing takes place on a monthly basis across the business, including directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, casual and agency staff. On the company's site in Cambridge for Nuffield Hospital, random drug and alcohol screenings are carried out at every induction, with the initiative being rolled out across all sites.

The efforts made to support their employees have been further demonstrated by the launch of the 'Green card' scheme. This scheme recognises the positive contributions made by the workforce on site, to further encourage innovative ideas to create a safer and healthier environment during construction works. This initiative has been embraced by the supply chain, with regular feedback, suggestions welcomed and healthy competition from supply chain companies to be awarded a Green Card.

Employees of the business are equally as keen to encourage healthier living and have embarked upon creating 'Building Healthier', a company strategy to highlight healthy living and to help realise mental health issues that may arise at work. Once feedback and suggestions have been gathered from employees, details of the 'Building Healthier' strategy will be provided and implemented.

Figure 1: You said we did at Nuffield Hospital, Cambridge

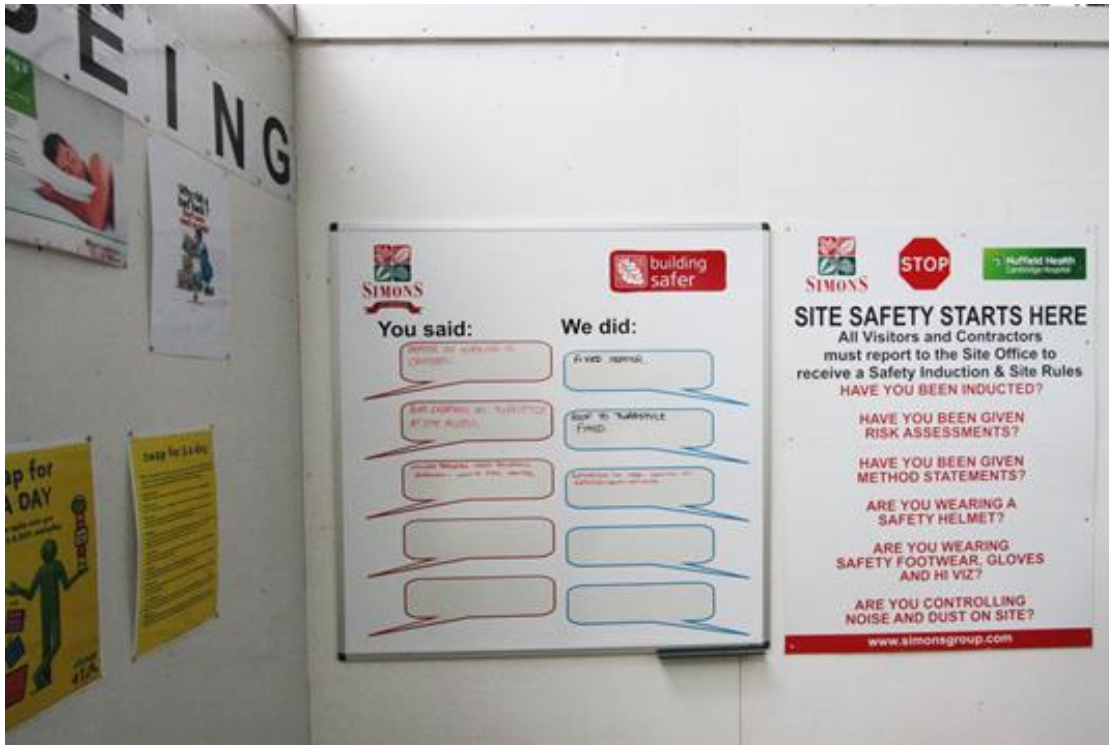


Figure 2: Green Card on site at Cambourne

