

THE CO-OPERATIVE GROUP

The Co-op's managers, always looking to improve value, get better cleaning of 18 headquarters buildings, at lower cost... guided by i-Clean Systems

Over two-and-a-half million members have a say in the running of Co-operative businesses, which serve 10 million customers a week in over 4,000 branches and through online shopping, achieving annual sales of over £9 billion. Sometimes, though, only on-the-spot managers can see new ways of upholding the group's reputation for the ethical creation of value – and that is what happened when the cleaning of the headquarters buildings was put under scrutiny.

"We wanted to review soft services provision – the cleaning of office interiors and all windows, washroom services and the maintenance of indoor & outdoor plants, for example – to our major occupancies in Manchester," explains Ray Lyons, the Co-operative Group's facilities operations manager.

"That meant us considering the supply of services to 18 headquarters buildings, covering an area close to 93,000 sq m and housing 9,500 staff. We needed expertise regarding the cleaning, which had an annual budget of some £1.3 million.

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The CIS Tower, Miller Street, Manchester,
with PV solar panels

"i-Clean Systems helped us to evaluate our requirements for a specification for the tendering process," Mr Lyons continues. "We were guided in specifying management control mechanisms, also, for our use when the new cleaning contract went ahead. Without the constant support of the very knowledgeable consultant assigned to us, it would have been a daunting process!"

Using the tendering management module of the i-Clean® Cleaning Management System, the consultant showed how standards could be improved by cleaning taking place throughout the week, and according to demand (linked to occupancy levels). The changes should bring an uplift in staff morale, also, he advised.

"We achieved some good savings as well!" Mr Lyons concludes.

The Co-operative Group's businesses, which employ 87,000, include food sales, with over 2,500 refurbished stores and supermarkets around the UK; the Co-op is the only retailer to sell food grown on its own farms, and it is the biggest supporter of Fairtrade, with over 200 lines.

In banking, it has over 90 branches, and it is the only UK high street bank with a clear ethical policy based on the views of its customers. 'smile' is part of the Co-operative

Bank: it was the UK's first full internet bank when launched in 1999. The Group provides travel, pharmacy, legal, insurance and funeral services, also, and has an on-line shop.

Since its introduction in August 2005, the i-Clean® Cleaning Management System has attracted interest from a variety of organisations in the commercial, manufacturing, service and public sectors. It is the first cleaning management system to be approved by the British Institute of Cleaning Science.