

The Countess of Chester Hospital Women and Children's Building

Complete	Area	Client	Architect
2025	UK England	Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust via Integrated Health Projects (IHP)	AHR architects

The Women and Children's Building at the Countess of Chester Hospital officially opened in September 2025. The facility provides maternity, neonatal, paediatric, and women's outpatient care, designed with a family-centred approach. Its development involved extensive input from service users and clinical teams to ensure it meets a diverse range of needs and represents a significant transformation in both patient and staff experience.



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The building offers private single rooms and overnight family accommodation for maternity and paediatric patients, as well as family-friendly rooms to support children and their families during recovery. To further support children and young people, the facility features dedicated sibling play areas, sensory rooms, teen rooms and landscaped courtyards.

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Sandy Brown was appointed by Integrated Health Projects (IHP), a partnership between VINCI Building and Sir Robert McAlpine, to provide acoustic consultancy. Our services ranged from planning stage design input, providing an environmental noise survey and report, and support through the RIBA Stages 3 and 4 design, to construction phase through to completion.

Key acoustic design aspects considered were:

- Challenging acoustic design of the newborn hearing room where it was critical to achieve high levels of sound insulation to adjacent areas, including an external plant area directly above, low internal noise levels and suitable acoustic conditions.
- The sound insulation design was carefully considered for the needs of the Trust with bespoke criteria set to provide higher levels of sound insulation than required by HTM 08-01 to noise sensitive areas.
- Compliance with strict plant noise egress limits to meet the requirements of the Local Planning Authority and sustainability credits, mitigating the challenge of noise from substantial plant equipment on the roof located near noise-sensitive premises whilst also controlling noise transfer to sensitive spaces below the plant deck.
- Internal sound insulation to meet the requirements of Health Technical Memorandum 08-01: Acoustics, including where high levels of sound insulation were required between delivery rooms.
- Control of reverberation with sound absorbent finishes, including within the large three storey atrium space.
- Design of the building envelope to control noise ingress from nearby road noise.

The project achieved the Department of Health's healthcare-specific acoustic requirements (HTM 08-01) and BREEAM Excellent sustainability standards. Sandy Brown conducted acoustic commissioning testing needed to demonstrate compliance with these standards and BREEAM New Construction 2018 Hea 05 internal acoustics and Pol 05 plant noise egress credits.



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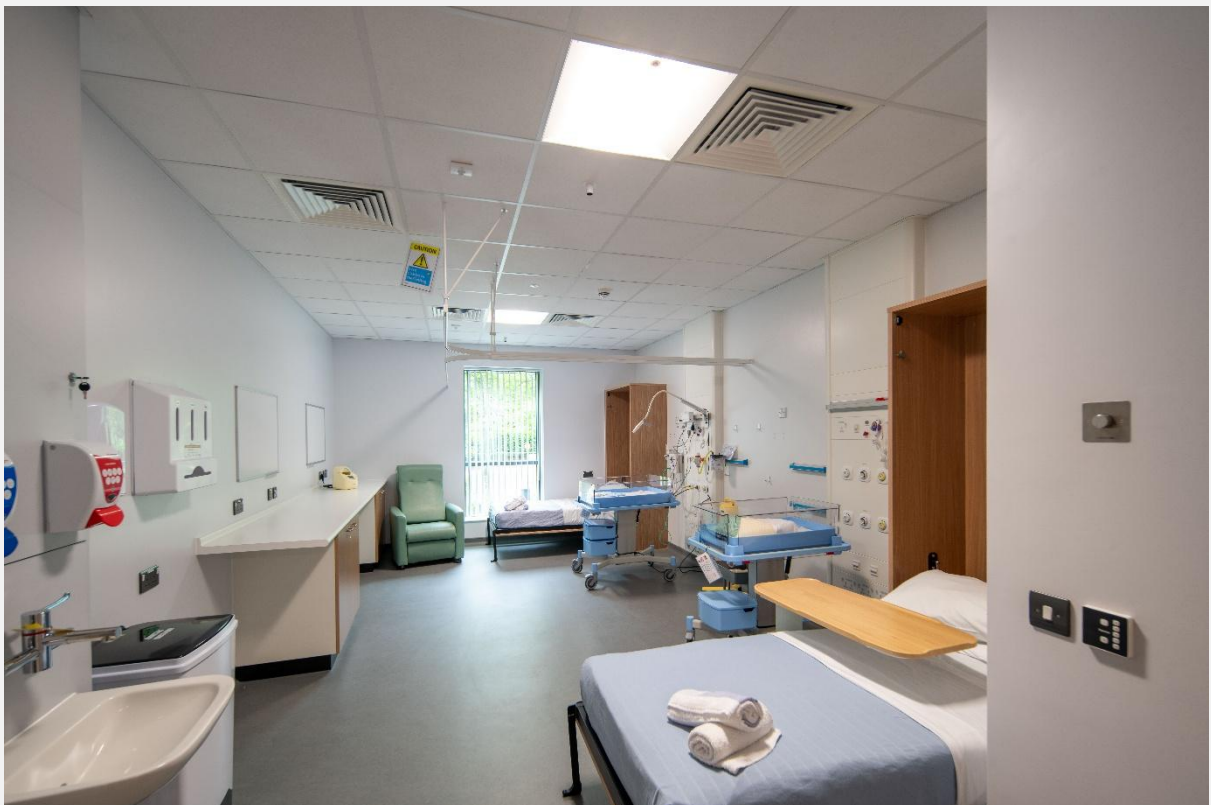


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