

Borders General Hospital, Melrose, Scotland

Case Study



CLIENT:
NHS Borders – Borders General Hospital, Melrose, Scotland

CHALLENGE:
To transform a 132m² internal storage space with no access to natural daylight into a comfortable and productive working environment for Human Resources staff.

The solution needed to introduce natural light effectively without major structural alterations while supporting staff wellbeing and energy efficiency within a healthcare setting.

RESULTS:
The previously windowless area was successfully converted into a bright, functional office environment. Natural daylight significantly improved the quality of the workspace, reduced reliance on artificial lighting during daytime hours and created a more positive atmosphere for staff working within the facility.

PRODUCT:
Solatube SolaMaster® series
10 Solatube 330 DS (530 diameter system)

SOLATUBE DISTRIBUTOR:
Solalighting Limited

GENERAL CONTRACTOR:
Solalighting Limited

BACKGROUND: Borders General Hospital in Melrose operates under NHS Borders, providing healthcare services across the Scottish Borders region. As the facility continues to evolve, there is ongoing focus on improving both patient environments and staff working conditions while making efficient use of existing building space.

As part of this initiative, an internal storage area was identified for conversion into new Human Resources offices. However, the space had no access to natural daylight, making it unsuitable as a long-term working environment without an effective daylighting solution. Creating a brighter, more comfortable workspace was therefore a key priority.

CHALLENGE: The area being converted was fully internal, meaning traditional windows or skylights were not feasible. Introducing natural daylight required a solution capable of transporting light from roof level into interior spaces without major structural disruption.

In addition to technical considerations, the hospital needed to ensure the new workspace would promote staff comfort, productivity and wellbeing. Achieving consistent, high-quality daylight in a healthcare environment demanded a solution that was reliable, energy efficient and practical to install within an operational facility.



SOLUTION: Following evaluation of available daylighting options, Solatube Daylighting Systems were selected for their proven ability to efficiently deliver natural daylight into interior spaces. The hospital initially installed a pilot system to assess performance within the space.

The results exceeded expectations, leading to the installation of an additional nine units, bringing the total to ten Solatube 330 DS Daylighting Systems. These systems channel natural daylight from roof level into the office environment, providing consistent illumination while minimising energy use and maintaining the building's structural integrity.

RESULTS: The introduction of natural daylight transformed the previously windowless storage area into a bright, welcoming and productive office environment. Staff benefit from improved visual comfort and a more pleasant working atmosphere, while reduced reliance on artificial lighting supports energy efficiency objectives.

The main office area also provides borrowed light to adjacent glass-fronted offices, extending the benefits of natural daylight throughout the workspace and enhancing the overall quality of the environment.

CONCLUSION: This project demonstrates how Solatube daylighting solutions can unlock the potential of internal building spaces that would otherwise be unsuitable for regular occupancy. By efficiently delivering natural daylight into a healthcare environment, the installation improved staff wellbeing, enhanced workplace comfort and supported the hospital's sustainability objectives.

The project highlights how daylighting can play a key role in modernising existing facilities, improving operational efficiency while creating healthier, more attractive working environments.

