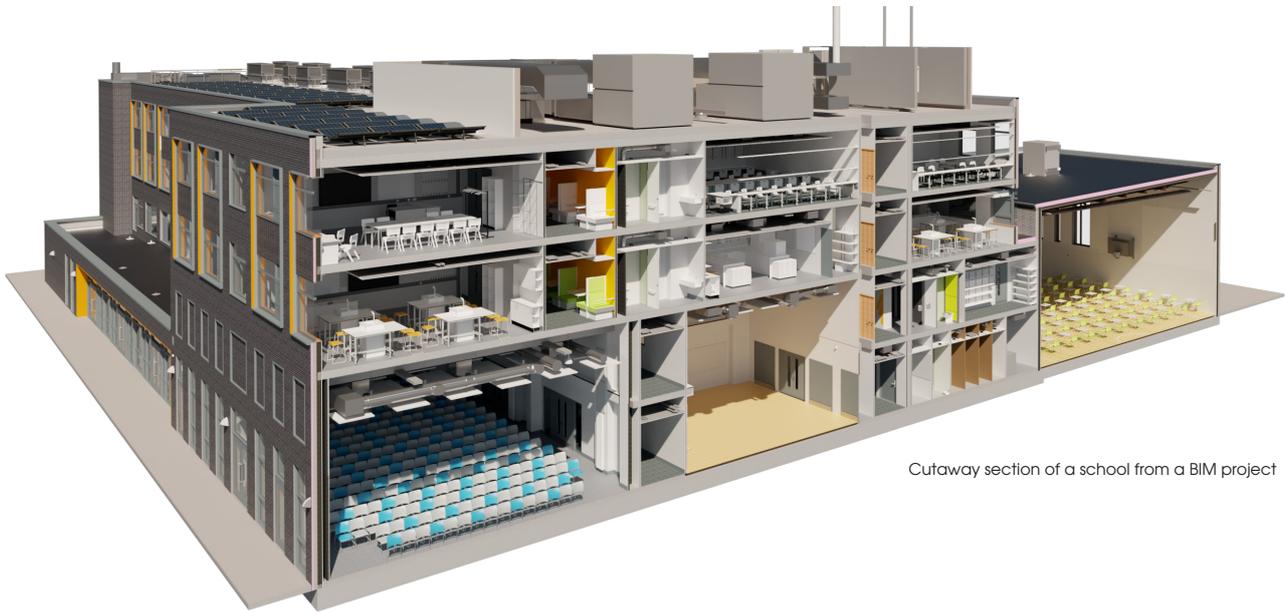


Guiding the journey to BIM Level 2 Accreditation



Cutaway section of a school from a BIM project

“Excitech are sticklers for detail. This is why we keep going back to them. They ensure that our users have the confidence and skills to work with our authoring software (in our case, Revit) in a BIM environment.

That diligent level of insight and training was precisely the focus we needed when we set off on the BIM Accreditation journey. They explored every aspect of our processes and got us in great shape to sail through the audit.”

Howard Turner, Associate Director and BIM Manager,
Peter Taylor Associates Limited

Meet Peter Taylor Associates Limited

Peter Taylor Associates Limited (PTAL) was founded in 1978. Today, it operates with a staff complement of 40 from offices in London, Birmingham and East Sussex, providing services to UK and overseas clients.

PTAL’s team of architects and technicians deliver quality architecture across the residential, education and hospitality & leisure sectors. The company generates around 80% of its fee turnover through repeat business commissions from its existing clients. As well as working with a number of private developers and companies, PTAL also works directly with many London Boroughs and other local authorities in developing strategies that meet the needs of

local communities. The company’s success is due to the commitment of its team in creating strong relationships with clients of all types, and its involvement with local communities.

PTAL’s specialties are Architecture, Master Planning and Design services. Whilst residential projects account for about 70% of its business, the company is growing fast in both the education sector and the hospitality and leisure sector. In addition, PTAL has worked on a number of high-profile mixed use schemes in recent years. In the education sector, PTAL can provide demonstrable proof of its established BIM capabilities and high internal standards.

Given its own internal standards, PTAL was almost there, but needed expert validation that it was on the right lines; plus, training in certain areas to elevate skills levels in areas that would come under scrutiny with any independent accreditation body.

The challenge – Reinforcing credibility through objective and independent validation

Building Information Modelling (BIM) is slowly making inroads within the residential sector but could not yet be described as sweeping through the private sector as it is in the public sector. Despite this, PTAL’s main driver to align its working practices to BIM standards followed a company directive from Berkeley Homes, their biggest client with whom they have worked for 30 years, that all new projects would have to be delivered using Level 2 BIM.

Other considerations were also in play, however, as they always are for architectural practices; the essence of professionalism in working to the highest standards, in the interests both of best project outcomes and of commitment to delivering efficiently, collaboratively, and within specified budgets and timelines.

Anticipating client needs

Howard Turner, Associate Director and BIM Manager at PTAL, explains how the company's strategy of driving continuous improvement in internal processes took on an external aspect:

"Our transition to a BIM-accredited practice mirrors the general direction we had started to follow in implementing consistent and robust standards across all our offices and all our projects. As BIM became more commonly subscribed to in construction, we wanted to make sure we were well-positioned to respond to the sorts of requirements we knew we could expect more of, particularly in the education sector. So, ahead of clients asking us about BIM, we wanted to be pro-active, and to be seen to be so; showing that we were aligned to client needs before they even articulated them."

PTAL's transition had begun in 2013, when it made its first move from AutoCAD to Revit. Starting with three users, the company expanded its use of Revit to over 40 users within five years. Excitech had provided Revit Fundamentals training for PTAL's users through three-day training courses at one of Excitech's Autodesk Authorised Training Centres.

"Excitech offered just the right approach," explains Howard, "taking our people away from their normal working environment and enabling them to get totally

immersed in how to use the software, and how to explore its development possibilities. This was our first experience with Excitech, and we were inspired by the way their trainers dispelled user fears of moving into new territory, and removed any hesitation about getting straight back to the office and putting their new skills to work. We saw great efficiencies from the whole process and knew we could rely on Excitech's construction experience for the next challenge."

Moving from BIM-aligned to BIM-accredited

The next challenge was not long in coming. As part of its proactive strategy around BIM, PTAL had already set up an in-house 'BIM Forum', where representatives from each of the company's three offices regularly convened to make sure internal standards were being followed by all staff, at all locations, on all appropriate projects.

The Forum had also created an internal BIM Manual, based on the national standards, including BS 1192:2007 (collaborative production of architectural, engineering and construction information - Code of practice), PAS 1192-2 (specification for information management for the capital/delivery phase of construction projects using BIM) and BS 1192-4 (collaborative production of information/ fulfilling employer's information exchange requirements using COBie. Code of practice). PTAL was already BIM aligned. Now it recognised both the need to, and the value of, becoming BIM-accredited, and ultimately aligning its practices to the new ISO 19650 standard.

The solution - Mind the gaps

"We knew we were in good shape – already ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 Certified (against the updated 2015 Regulations)



Excitech's training room - Bishopsgate, London

– but we also knew there was scope for improvement. In going for BIM-Accreditation we had to have spotted those areas and fixed them. We asked Excitech to assist. They had a whole range of services designed for the job; from initial evaluation of where we stood, through to advanced training and then helping us resolve the remaining issues in detail,” says Howard.

The main stepping-stones for PTAL were:

- **Course 1:** Overview of BIM Level 2
- **Course 2:** BIM Level 2 workshop (understanding and working with the associated BIM forms). The PTAL team were guided on the pre and post appointment BIM Execution Plan (BEP), and the IT, resource and capability assessments which formed the Project Information Plan.
- **Course 3:** COBie workshop for understanding COBie specifications and data formats in relationship to BIM projects (delivering asset data as distinct from geometric data)
- **Gap Analysis:** Excitech’s BIM Gap Analysis found areas of potential improvement in PTAL’s risk management; primarily in linking the various procedures together through a Project Risk Register. Other areas covered included project resourcing, recruitment and information management skills.

The Result – Officially in the running

Following the training, and the rectification of gaps spotted in the Excitech analysis, PTAL were ready for the Lloyd’s Register BIM Audit. A few minor non-conformities were identified, but were easily and quickly resolved. PTAL then became only the second architect’s practice in the UK to receive BIM Accreditation through the Lloyds Register. Since accreditation, Howard says that bid documents and tenders have been easier to complete when trying to win new work. The company has also become noticeably more productive and efficient given the streamlining of many processes following the in-house BIM policies and protocols.

“Excitech haven’t just accompanied us on the BIM Accreditation journey; they have charted our direction and helped us navigate problems along the way for us to become more efficient in what we do and to be able to make that claim to clients with confidence. We know about working with robust processes. It makes us more efficient since all processes go faster if they run along established tracks,” says Howard.

21st Century construction: “Excitech got us there”

PTAL has achieved its aim of being at the forefront of BIM adoption and is feeling the benefits not only because it is

in line with sector expectations but because clients now come to the practice for help in certain BIM aspects, as Howard explains:

“Residential operators are starting to realise the benefits from working in a BIM environment and this can only grow. The focus for most clients to date is mostly in the capital delivery phase, where we have assisted some clients in formulating their information brief for the project. We are finding that BIM is not yet fully grasped in facilities management and the operational phase, but that will come. When it does, we’ll be in a strong position.

We had long wanted to strengthen our growing reputation as a business that understands and actively practices 21st century design and construction methods. Excitech have got us there.”

About Lloyd’s Register

Lloyd’s Register (LR) is a global engineering, technical and business services organisation wholly owned by Lloyd’s Register Foundation, a UK charity dedicated to research and education in science and engineering.

It has been in operation since 1760, providing over 250 years of industry experience. The organisation has significant capacity with 9,000 employees working throughout 78 countries and has a well-known reputation for integrity, impartiality and technical excellence.

About ISO 9001

Just like ISO 9001, BIM Level 2 Accreditation is a quality management standard helping organisations of all sizes demonstrate they deliver a consistently high level of professional service. In fact, if you already have ISO 9001, you’ll find that some of the hard work has already been done and therefore can contribute significantly to your BIM Level 2 Accreditation.

About Excitech

We provide technology solutions and services for the construction sector, supporting the complete project life cycle from the manufacture of building products through to design and construction, building handover and maintenance. Our services include the provision of software, consultancy, training and support, and we offer a comprehensive range of IT, Document Management and Facilities Management solutions.

We pride ourselves on building close working partnerships with our customers based on mutual trust, going the extra mile and extensive sector knowledge. Our purpose is to enable our customers to take advantage of the role that technology can play in achieving their own business goals.

Established in 1985, we are the largest Autodesk Platinum Partner in the UK specialising in the construction sector, and have accreditations with leading technology vendors such as Microsoft, Dell, and HP.