

Life Church Case Study

Life Church in Folkestone, Kent is one of the county's largest churches. A predominately open plan building, it also houses office accommodation, a private school, a conference centre/church hall and a bookshop. With this multitude of uses the church plays host to hundreds of visitors a week, and its 6,500m² of floor space needs special attention paying to it when it comes to cleaning and in particular the maintenance of over 4,500m² of carpet.



Host distributor, Timberstone, has been responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of Life Church for the past seven years, using the Host dry extraction cleaning system.

Colin Hemmings, MD of Timberstone, says: "Over 50% of Life Church's floor space - the conference area, school, bookshop and offices - consists of loop pile carpet tiles. This is a particularly busy space, which is constantly seeing heavy usage throughout the day. Using the Host Liberator and Freestyle vacuum machines combined with Host sponges means that this space can be cleaned and maintained quickly and efficiently and, importantly, be back in

use minutes afterwards. The remaining floor space consists of pure lambs wool carpet, sonic cord and quarry and ceramic tiles - the Host system is used throughout all these areas."

A cleaning programme has been devised by Timberstone that includes spot cleaning of carpets and upholstery which is carried out by the church's in-house cleaning staff all of whom have been trained by Colin in the use of the Host system - a facility that operations manager, Jo Harris, has found invaluable.

"Colin and his team regularly update our staff on any new developments with the system providing product support and help when required. The Host system has been a real revelation - it is environmentally sensitive and therefore meets the environmental purchasing policy of the school, it maintains and protects the considerable investment made in carpets throughout the building and, most importantly, there is no down time or shut down period of any areas after cleaning - a problem we previously had with wet cleaning systems. *All in all it is excellent value for money.*"

Host's dry extraction cleaning system, incorporating both the Liberator and Freestyle vacuum machines, is very easy to use because of the machines' counter-rotating brushes. Only a light touch is needed to guide both these machines across carpet as they brush Host Sponges thorough the carpet pile.

In the case of Life Church it was a simple three stage process. Firstly, to use the Freestyle machine with its counter rotating brushes to dislodge dirt and pile lift the carpet.



The powerful **ExtractorVac vacuum** removes the dry soil that is freed by this brushing action, even right down to the carpet backing. This is a critical step, given that up to 85% of the soil in carpet is dry and can be removed by this unique system.

Secondly, to brush into the carpet **Host sponges**, a safe non toxic, biodegradable cleaner. This cleaner deep cleans by dissolving, trapping and removing spots, spills and greasy or oily dirt. The final third stage is to vacuum up the soiled cleaner using the **ExtractorVac**. The brushing continues grooming and pile lifting achieving a great finish.

The key, however, to keeping the Life Church carpets looking good is the maintenance plan. According to Colin using the Host system with a maintenance plan has prevented the carpet from looking worn from use.

Under the maintenance plan certain areas are cleaned more often than others. Unnecessary cleaning is

eliminated and the focus is on areas more prone to soiling. This means that areas such as entrance halls, doorways and heavy usage corridors can be cleaned regularly to ensure that they maintain both appearance and lifespan.

As Colin says “The advantages of using dry extraction cleaning means that when you have finished the cleaning process *the carpet is ready for service immediately*, a vital factor - particularly in commercial properties. **Host** is an interconnected system that involves the vacuuming and extraction of dry soil all the way down to the carpet backing. Having completed this process then areas that have other types of soil can be attacked, by other soil we mean the soil that is bonded to the fibres of the carpet, generally called sticky soil. These bonds can be loosened by the application of a mixture of water, detergent and solvent and then brushing this mixture around the carpet fibres.”



“The dry extraction system does exactly this. The key point is that this liquid mixture is applied in just the right quantity by the **Host sponges**, the water detergent and solvent break up the sticky soils and the sponge traps and absorbs these soils. Carpets don't get over wet, shrink or suffer from seam splitting. The soiled sponges are easily removed by the integrated vacuum system.”