Assuring a sustainable future

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION
Welcome to ROBERTSON

We’re one of the largest family-owned construction, infrastructure and support services businesses in the UK, and we apply the same principles to every aspect of our business today that we did over fifty years ago when Bill Robertson set up his joinery firm in Elgin.

Over the years our sustainable growth has enabled us to invest in our business, the future of people and communities, and to deliver on major projects, housing schemes and facilities management for customers nationally.

Our scale gives us the ability to accept big challenges, and build deep, mutually beneficial partner relationships. At the same time we think locally, working with stakeholders and the supply chain to deliver services and infrastructure that will stand the test of time.

Ultimately, everything we do is about making progress safely towards a sustainable future for our people, communities and our business.

It’s the Robertson Way.
Creating outstanding STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

Robertson understands the demand for high-quality student accommodation. Our comprehensive geographical coverage extends from Yorkshire and the East Midlands right up into the Scottish Highlands and Islands.

Working closely with a long list of public and private customers, we provide first-class accommodation enhancing the overall learning experience of students.

We ensure all projects are completed on time before the academic year begins, allowing students the opportunity to settle into their new surroundings.

With a wealth of knowledge and experience in this sector, we pride ourselves on understanding students’ needs, offering a range of affordable to luxury accommodation attracting young people in an increasingly competitive global market.

Case studies

- University of the Highlands & Islands, Northern Scotland
- Havannah House, Glasgow
- Pittodrie Street, Aberdeen
- Causewayend Apartments, Aberdeen
- Caledon Court, Aberdeen
- Kepier Court, Durham
- Portobello House, Sheffield
- Nova Apartments, Nottingham
- Samuel Tuke Apartments, York
- Roman House, Newcastle
- St Leonard’s House, Lancaster

Top and middle: Roman House, Newcastle; Bottom: Caledon Court, Aberdeen.
Drawing on the strengths of a large and resourceful group – combined with local and specialist expertise ranging from civil engineering to M&E and render services – we can offer local authorities and education partners a service that covers the entire built environment lifecycle. Below are some of the 22 businesses that make up Team Robertson.

Robertson Construction

With a host of award-winning, high-profile projects for customers in the education sector under its belt, Robertson Construction comprises a range of regional and specialist businesses.

Our projects include constructing new residences for University of the Highlands & Islands students, working closely with Watkin Jones to deliver modern student accommodation across Aberdeen, and creating Kepier Court and Roman House in the North East of England for Gilltown Ltd.

We often call upon the expertise of our sister companies and specialist divisions, ranging from civil engineering, building services, roofing, rendering and joinery to facilities management. We also have a wealth of experience in modular and offsite construction.

Robertson Capital Projects

Robertson Capital Projects is a project management and investment company that provides high-quality, community-based infrastructure through its long-term partnerships with public sector customers. Projects have been delivered from Hull to the Scottish Islands.

The company’s leadership role in the hub East Central Scotland framework will see the delivery of education projects in a territory ranging across seven local authority areas and three NHS Boards, together with blue light services, over the next 20 years.
Robertson Facilities Management

Robertson Facilities Management has grown from its public-sector roots to include a variety of commercial contracts in the private sector. We have developed a broad range of predominantly self-delivered FM services, which we now provide to more than 55,000 building users cared for by a team of over 1,500 talented employees.

Our services include mechanical, electrical and building fabric maintenance, grounds maintenance, energy management, security, cleaning, whole-life costing and space utilisation. These are available as individual service lines, as bundled services or as Total Facilities Management.

Robertson Specialist Division

Robertson Specialist Division provides proprietary render, plasterwork, mastic and insulated render systems. The business also incorporates an extensive specialist roofing service, undertaking tiling, slating and single-ply roofing work, and is moving into other specialist trades, such as partitioning, painting and decorating.

Robertson Engineering Services

Robertson Engineering Services has become a leading regional mechanical and electrical building services contractor, having built an outstanding reputation for installation and commissioning. Providing M&E services across the north of England and the Midlands, Robertson Engineering Services undertakes both traditional and design-and-build projects, including specialist trades and renewable technologies.

Robertson Timber Engineering

For over 30 years, our timber engineering business has been designing, manufacturing and erecting precision-engineered timber for education-sector projects, hotel chains, national housebuilders and construction firms right across the UK. With structural timber being the fastest-growing construction method in the UK, the business focuses on exceeding customers’ expectations and reliably meeting build programmes. Robertson Timber Engineering’s innovative products and systems provide cost- and time-savings as well as environmental benefits to our customers and end users.
We delivered new student accommodation for the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) throughout the north of Scotland. The project has included accommodation in Inverness, Elgin and Fort William with future phases planned for island locations.

The UHI is made up of further and higher education establishments across the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Key to their growth is encouraging young people to live and learn in the area, and to stay in the community. Part of this strategy is the delivery of student accommodation across the whole region.

Robertson Timber Engineering supplied fully insulated wall panels with prefabricated roof and floor cassettes, helping to reduce construction time without compromising on design, quality or cost.

Robertson Northern carried out the build, which took place during the winter months. Our offsite manufacturing approach helped to reduce the risk of delay from bad weather, delivering the project ahead of schedule, in time for the academic year.

University of the Highlands & Islands
NORTHERN SCOTLAND

CUSTOMER: Cityheart

“We think the new residences are fantastic and a great opportunity for more students from outside of Inverness to come and study at the University of the Highlands and Islands and Inverness College UHI. It will also give the campus a greater sense of community.”

Lizzie Munro, a fourth-year BA (Hons) student
Robertson constructed this new spacious student accommodation building in the heart of Glasgow city centre on behalf of developer Vastint Hospitality. The S-shaped building is set over six storeys and features a mix of standard, cluster and accessible rooms with quirky interior design features to attract the student market. Standard studios have integrated kitchen facilities, while cluster and accessible studios share one of the four communal kitchens on each floor.

The building encloses a private courtyard to the south together with a semi-public courtyard to the north. It was designed to achieve Gold Standard under the LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) certification scheme.
Pittodrie Street
ABERDEEN

CUSTOMER: Watkin Jones

Pittodrie Street replaces industrial premises that were out of keeping with the surrounding residential area and now provides modern facilities for Aberdeen students. It consists of two modern accommodation blocks within walking distance of the Aberdeen University city campus and with excellent accessibility to the city centre.

Block B was handed over a week early to our new customer Watkin Jones, ahead of the 2018-19 academic year, with Block A completed in May 2019.

We have been involved in various activities with the local community, including donations for local nurseries and charities; providing learning opportunities to Robert Gordon University Students and careers guidance to St Machar Academy pupils.

For Aberdeen Science Centre’s Summer of Engineering, we held ‘Robertson Family Days’ events. The aim was to entice the next generation into the construction industry. It was a huge success with over 400 people through the door over the two days and over 27 activities that took place.

In addition, our contract for the supply of mattresses for the project gave security and support to Glencraft, a social enterprise that provides employment for visually impaired people.
This stand-out development saw Robertson refurbish the listed building and former site of the Causewayend School in Aberdeen and construct a new build annexe on the one-acre site.
The project was undertaken by Robertson Eastern for student developer Visage Properties with Hardies Property and Construction Consultants. Robertson Specialist Division, our roofing and render business, provided external insulation finished with acrylic render.

Designed to achieve a BREEAM ‘Outstanding’ rating, as well as the Scottish Building Regulations ‘Silver Active’ standard. It was shortlisted for a BREEAM 2018 award as one of the best examples of sustainable design and construction completed over the last year, thanks to its cutting-edge pre-fabricated panelised system construction.
“This project was a great success, completing the works ahead of the 2017 student intake and on budget. The key to success was ensuring the project team shared common goals and worked together in a collaborative manner to overcome the inevitable challenges that were thrown up.”

Murray Warner,
Partner at Hardies and Project Manager
Caledon Court
ABERDEEN

CUSTOMER: Watkin Jones

Caledon Court is another great example of a project Robertson delivered on time, while maintaining the customer’s budget and working with an outstanding team.

Formerly a derelict public house, it now has the capacity to house up to 200 students and is just a stone’s throw away from the Robert Gordon University campus.

The area has gone through a massive transformation – not only does it benefit the students living in the new accommodation but the whole community, providing a new business and a fresh, contemporary building design.

The customer, Watkin Jones is delighted with the results and the overall space that has been created for students to enjoy during their studies in Aberdeen.
We constructed a student accommodation development in suburban Durham that provides 214 bed spaces through four new buildings, plus the conversion and refurbishment of the historic Kepier House.

Kepier Court is a carefully considered student accommodation scheme that uses redundant brownfield land, while remaining sensitive to Kepier House and the surrounding suburban and historic context.

Although Kepier House is not listed, the development site was located within the Durham City Conservation Area and our sensitive approach resulted in its retention. Construction work also took into account the residential location with detailed programming and a restriction on noisy equipment to minimise disruption.

The building was at one time used as a prison, and the residences were branded as ‘The Clink’ when completed.

In addition to relatively low-density accommodation blocks with an appropriate suburban scale, the scheme includes approximately 2,500m² of amenity space, which integrates existing trees and planting with new hard and soft landscaped areas.

The focal point of the scheme is a central courtyard garden area in front of Kepier House. The proposals maximised the retention of most of the existing mature trees on the site.

Robertson North East England constructed the development, with Robertson Engineering Services providing M&E.
Portobello House
SHEFFIELD

CUSTOMER: GHL Ltd

On a tight city centre site, this accommodation sits within the University of Sheffield campus and serves the busy student population of Sheffield. We completed this project ahead of schedule giving students the opportunity to settle into their new accommodation before the start of the 2016/17 academic year.

Within easy walking distance from the main University, Portobello House is half a mile from Sheffield Hallam University and is located right next to Sheffield train station. The accommodation comprises a combination of studios, ‘super studios’ and self-contained two-bedroom apartments over seven storeys.

We finished this project to a high specification, with detailing such as acoustic glazing appropriate to the nature of the city centre location. It also has the facilities expected by today’s students, such as on-site cinema room, games and common room, private gym, laundry, study room and CCTV.

Robertson Engineering Services was the M&E subcontractor on the project, installing services including lighting and power, door access, sprinkler system, smoke ventilation.
Nova Apartments
NOTTINGHAM

CUSTOMERS: Fusion Students / Talbot Nottingham Construction

We delivered this new development for Fusion Students, providing stylish student accommodation in the centre of Nottingham, with several accommodation blocks, some up to eight storeys, built around a central courtyard.

The development is part of Nottingham’s regeneration of Talbot Street, which will see the area become a ‘student quarter’, with three other student accommodation buildings having been built there in recent years.

The listed Art Deco frontage of Talbot House was retained in the project, while most of the old building and an adjacent derelict office building was demolished with new accommodation built.

By working closely with Nottingham Civic Society, we made sure our work did not impinge on the Canning Circus conservation area and that we sympathetically retained the front section, an internal staircase and a stone wall dating back to 1852.
Robertson was appointed by Harrison Development to deliver a new four-storey student accommodation building on Lawrence Street in York.

We worked closely with English Heritage, in conjunction with local architects CSP, to ensure that the existing main building was retained, and key features were preserved for generations to come.

The project connects the new building to the former Tam O’ Shanter public house. The sheds and buildings to the rear were demolished but a sensitive programme of works has seen the frontage onto Lawrence Street returned to its original splendour.

A university student studying Heritage Management spent her work placement researching the history of Tuke House and produced a heritage report as part of her final year studies.

This report was then passed on to a group of history undergraduate students who were taking part in ‘children’s university’ volunteering programme. They produced a workshop for primary school children on the history of Tuke House and heritage construction, which was delivered to Year 5 pupils at St Lawrence Primary School.

The school were so enthused that we did other sessions with them, covering tetrahedron building, construction materials, and a design competition.
Roman House
NEWCASTLE

CUSTOMER: Gilltown Ltd

This student accommodation scheme, situated at Clavering Place in Newcastle, was designed to be ‘best in class’.

The project, undertaken in the centre of Newcastle, comprises a five-seven storey student accommodation block with 210 beds in total, located on the corner of Clavering Place and Forth Street, behind Newcastle Central Station.

The high specification of the development was aimed at postgraduates, international students and returning students. Internally the living accommodation provides spacious, contemporary facilities that raise the bar in terms of visual design while also being practical.

The larger-than-average rooms are part of a mix of self-contained studios, one-bed apartments and en-suite bedrooms within cluster flats. The amenity space includes a large communal lounge, study room, cinema room, gym and cycle store.

The building elevations are a combination of facing brickwork and aluminium cladding panels, which incorporate a large Roman soldier feature. Earlier archaeological exploration on the site had discovered what was believed to be the main road to the Roman fort of Pons Aelius, and two stone coffins, thought to be the burial plot of a high-status family. The building was subsequently named Roman House.
“We worked this scheme out together and we have delivered it together. It’s first class, absolutely top dollar. I have to say, I have been in this industry a long time and the relationship with Robertson has been the best I have ever been through, by far.”

Paul Gillespie, Managing Director, Gilltown
St Leonard’s House
LANCASTER

CUSTOMER: Robertson Property

St Leonard’s House is a grade II listed building located in the centre of Lancaster. This is the first of several student accommodation projects that Robertson Property is looking to develop across the North of England and Scotland.

Robertson Property’s funding partner, Knight Frank Investment Management (KFIM), forward funded the development under their investment management mandate with Lancashire County Pension Fund, which is part of the pooled LGPS investments managed by Local Pensions Partnership. The property has been forward funded based on a completion value of £14.34m reflecting a net initial yield of 6.0%.

Asbestos removal and soft strip operations were undertaken to allow surveying of existing structures to be carried out to further develop the design stage of the scheme.

The internal structure to the stone building has been removed, replacing structural elements with a new steel frame and the installation of new timber floors.

The concrete building has been stripped back to structure to allow the remodelling works.

A new floor has been added to both buildings by removing the existing clerestory roof and by adding a lightweight steel structure in its place.

“...The development revitalises this historic building by retaining many of its original features while providing high-quality accommodation that will improve the city’s current student accommodation offering.”

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Chief Operating Officer, Robertson

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We work closely with local communities, giving them a voice and working in a transparent way that builds trust and real relationships.

We’re passionate about having a positive effect on communities. Whether it’s delivering much-needed infrastructure, investing locally in talent and skills, or working with our customers, suppliers and partners to support the local and national economy, we take pride in transforming places knowing there is a greater purpose to what we do.

We understand that quality of life in any community is closely linked to taking pride in places and buildings. That’s why we work on projects that mean a lot to people, such as schools and nurseries - creating learning opportunities along the way and making sure we do it sustainably.

Because we are a family business with strong roots in its own community, it’s important to us that we leave a positive lasting legacy everywhere we work for communities to flourish in the future.

2018–2019

People benefited from 408 activities bespoke to local needs and stakeholders

29,425

Communities
LEAVING A LASTING LEGACY

22
CCS National Site Awards received

40.4
Average CCS score versus 36.15 industry average

128
Employability and community group activities with 911 people

135
Early years and Primary school activities with 8,182 pupils

76
College/university activities with 1,469 students

164
Secondary school activities with 16,350 pupils

300
Completed work placement

2018–2019

Pupil involvement at Bertha Park, Perth