

» CASE STUDY

Retrofitting Scholes Village

Wigan Council undertook the full retrofit of seven high-rise residential blocks at Scholes Village between 2021 and 2026, modernising critical building infrastructure while residents remained in occupation.

Cundall was appointed for multidisciplinary consultancy services via the NHS Shared Business Services Construction Consultancy Services 2 (CCS2) Framework Agreement. The framework agreement ensured access to pre-qualified expertise, streamlined procurement, and reduced the administrative burden on the Council, enabling the project to be delivered efficiently.



Each building has two lifts, and the old lifts only stopped on either odd or even floors. These are now replaced with lifts that will stop on every floor, making life easier for the residents. This investment in lifts will make a real difference."

Councillor Susan Gambles

Portfolio Holder for Housing
Wigan Council

» THE CHALLENGE

1960s high-rise residential towers at Scholes Village required urgent upgrade due to aging infrastructure, repeated system failures, and increasing fire safety risks.

The project presented several key challenges:

- **Occupied buildings:** All works needed to be delivered with residents in situ, requiring careful planning to minimise disruption.
- **Poor accessibility:** Existing 'skip-stop' lifts only served alternate floors, creating significant barriers for residents, particularly those with mobility needs.
- **Outdated building systems:** Critical services, including lifts, fire safety systems, and building infrastructure, required full modernisation.
- **Incomplete building information:** Limited original "as-built" data increased technical complexity and project risk, additional specialist resources were engaged for scanning of existing building structure.

Together, these constraints required a solution that would improve safety, accessibility, and reliability, while maintaining a high standard of resident experience throughout delivery.





» THE SOLUTION

Cundall delivered the survey, assessment, and specification for the replacement of 14 vandal-resistant lifts in seven high-rise blocks, removing the existing 1960s 'skip stop' configuration to provide lift service to all floors.

A multidisciplinary approach combined vertical transportation, CDM, structural, and quantity surveying expertise, alongside full tender preparation, evaluation, and project monitoring through to completion in 2025.

Led by the vertical transport team, integrated engineering services delivered upgrades to lifts, communal lighting, smoke ventilation, water infrastructure, and fire safety systems, including evacuation communications.

Advanced scanning and 3D structural modelling enabled new lift openings to be introduced without strengthening works, minimising cost and disruption.

A structured governance approach, with regular coordination and shared tracking, ensured effective programme control, while close collaboration with the Fire Service informed robust evacuation strategies.

Procurement through the NHS SBS framework agreement reduced legal and administrative effort, accelerating delivery while maintaining high-quality standards.

THE RESULT

The project delivered improvements in accessibility, safety, and building performance.

Lift upgrades provided full access to every floor and improving usability for all residents, particularly those with mobility needs. Phased delivery minimised disruption and enabled early issue resolution, supporting programme efficiency and cost control.

Fire safety was enhanced through upgraded systems and evacuation strategies, including one of the first installations of advanced evacuation communication systems in England. Quality assurance and sustainability commitments ensured alignment to the Building Safety Act.

Delivered on time, the project provides a modernised, reliable, and futureproofed portfolio, improving long-term performance and reducing operational risk for Wigan Council.



It was mentioned at the Housing Advisory Panel what an improvement the new lifts are for the building. They are quicker, quieter, look good and stop at every floor."

Councillor Susan Gambles
Portfolio Holder for Housing
Wigan Council

SUMMARY

- Project was delivered on time and within budget of circa. £10 million.
- Tenants reported being pleased by minimal disruption and clear, consistent communication.
- Close engagement with the local fire service significantly improved fire safety provisions.
- Energy saving design solutions will minimise operational costs and energy usage.



Collaboration was key to this project. With so many stakeholders, their satisfaction was a central measure of success, which meant maintaining open communication with tenants, client and contractors."

Graham Barker
Partner, Vertical Transportation
Cundall