

SUPPLYING SEVERAL SOLUTIONS FOR MAJOR OFFICE REDEVELOPMENT



Our portfolio of products are on the money when it comes to protecting critical IT and fire suppression systems at a bank's newly refurbished head office.

Built in 1992, the Allied Irish Banks (AIB) Northern Ireland headquarters is one of Belfast's most prominent landmarks.

Nearly 30 years after its initial construction on Ann Street, the financial institution embarked on an ambitious refurbishment of the facility to create 91,000 square feet of modern Grade A office space spread over six floors.

The project saw the entire building stripped back to its shell and the installation of a revolving entrance door to the main tower.

Ground, first, and second floors were completely refurbished, including all new mechanical and electrical services along with AV and security equipment.

There were further basic M&E installations on the third, fourth, and fifth floors, which are sublet out.

PERFECT PROJECT PARTNERS

Braham Electrical earned the contract to carry out all the electrical installation works on the £1.6 million AIB office upgrade, including lighting, data cabling, fire suppression systems, and general power.

Founded in 1972 and initially known as Paul Braham & Sons, the Warrenpoint-based company now employs around 60 full-time members of staff, along with more than 100 sub-contractors and self-employed electrical engineers.

The business covers all aspects of electrical work, including general contracting and response maintenance services, as well as inspection and testing in commercial, industrial, public, and domestic sectors.

With uninterruptible power supplies an essential element of various aspects of the electrical fitout, Braham Electrical teamed up again with Belfast-based Ashdale Engineering Ltd, an authorised Riello UPS reseller and service partner for more than 15 years, to specify the optimum range of solutions.

The two firms have a proven track-record of working together, with Ashdale Engineering Ltd having specified UPS to back up projects including Hillyard House Hotel, Maynooth University, and the service centre of Belfast's 'Glider' rapid bus scheme.

Another advantage was Ashdale Engineering Ltd's recent involvement with several of main contractor Felix O'Hare's recent works, including the School of Law building at Queen's University Belfast's, the Merchant Square office redevelopment, and the non-clinical building at the Royal Victoria Hospital.

SEVERAL UPS SOLUTIONS

The project specification called for a 40 kVA UPS to support the building's main IT infrastructure. Ashdale Engineering Ltd highlighted Riello UPS's high-efficiency transformer-free **Multi Sentry (MST)** range as the optimum choice.

Designed specifically to protect mission-critical telecoms and IT networks such as those found in the AIB building, the MST combines proven performance and up to 96.5% efficiency with one of the most compact footprints in its category.

The MST 40 was installed with an external wraparound bypass and fitted with a NetMan 204 connectivity card to aid with monitoring and management.



As well as protecting the building's main IT and comms equipment, UPS backup was also a key consideration for the fire shutters installed as part of the site's comprehensive fire suppression systems.

This led to a 10 kVA **Sentryum** being chosen to support the fire shutter's mechanical doors, with a 2.2 kVA version of the **Sentinel Pro (SEP)** also installed to back up the wider shutter system.

Both of these solutions deliver the maximum double-conversion online UPS protection in a minimal footprint.

Working in close collaboration with Braham Electrical, Ashdale Engineering Ltd carried out all the mains wiring of the UPSs, as well as undertaking the battery build and final commissioning of each unit.

Ashdale Engineering Ltd will also provide ongoing maintenance on the UPS systems.

CHALLENGING CIRCUMSTANCES

The refurbishment was a challenging project for several reasons. Firstly, AIB required the building to remain in operation, so most of the power shutdowns and noisier works were scheduled for weekends and out of hours.

Then COVID-19 hit during the first phase of the refit. Inevitably, this stopped the project for several weeks, and even once the site was accessible again, it was at a greatly reduced capacity to enable contractors to maintain social distancing and other safe working practices.

Thanks to constant communication and coordination between the contractor, sub-contractor, and the bank's branch staff, the scheduled works were re-phased and the project successfully completed.

The project took around a year to carry out. As well as accommodating its Belfast staff, AIB is subletting out nearly 30,000 square feet of office space.

Braham Electrical's role as electrical installers on the AIB Bank development was recognised as winner of the 'Medium Commercial Project of the Year' category of the Northern Ireland Electrical Awards 2021.

