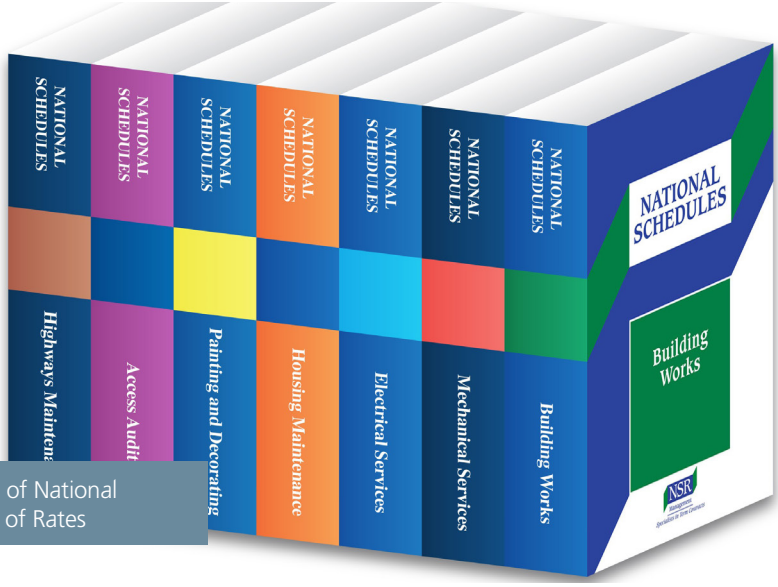
NSR Management



The range of National Schedules of Rates

Managing Director
David Fairbrother

Aylesbury-based NSR Management, formed in 1984 and owned by Co-directors David Fairbrother and Susan Rickard, specialises in the field of measured term contracts. For more than 35 years, the firm has produced custom and standard schedules of rates for building works and other infrastructure projects. David tells *The Parliamentary Review* that his 35-year career as a quantity surveyor has provided him with a wealth of knowledge that he brings to the business. He explains about the contract documentation that NSR handles.

In 1980, the Local Governments Planning and Land Act established the need for a pre-determined means of pricing building works. As a direct result of this legislation the national schedule of rates was developed. Initially intended for local authority repairs and maintenance contracts, it soon became clear that the schedules were suitable for all reactive maintenance and minor works, not just for local authorities.

Over the years, the national schedules have become the industry standard used by a variety of public and private clients. We produce a range of ten different schedules which encompass repairs and maintenance works for building, electrical, mechanical services, highways, painting and decoration, housing and access, and adaptations works.

The building, mechanical and electrical schedules follow the rules laid out in SMM7 – Standard Method of Measurement of Building Works – and with the introduction of the RICS New Rules of Measurement, we now also produce versions to follow NRM2.

FACTS ABOUT NSR MANAGEMENT

- Managing Director: David Fairbrother
- Founded in 1984
- Located in Aylesbury
- Services: Construction and publishing consultation services
- No. of employees: 8
- www.nsrmanagement.co.uk

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These rules ensure that we are able to work seamlessly with contract documentation and specifications. As the market leader, we are named specifically in the JCT standard form of contract for measured term contracts.

Schedules of rates

Where there are buildings, there is a need to maintain them, which brings with it the issue of procuring a reasonably priced contractor. The best way to achieve this is by using a measured term contract. The contract can be considered as "measured" because the works are measured against a schedule of rates and "term" is used because the contract runs for a fixed period of time, typically three to five years.

The schedule of rates is a pre-priced list of typical maintenance tasks that can be used together to calculate the value of repairs and of maintenance works.

At the tender stage, the tenderers are all given the same base rates and they then adjust the rates by means of a percentage to allow things such as overheads and profit, preliminary costs and other factors.

This percentage adjustment allows the tenders to be quickly and easily analysed as all tenderers work to the same specification and service levels as one another. The only difference between them is the adjustment itself.

The nature of repairs and maintenance means that it is never known which precise works will be required during the contract period and thus the comprehensive nature of the schedules ensures that the majority of scenarios are covered.

Another benefit is that the repairs can be accurately priced before they are carried out. This allows the building owner to go directly to the contractor, in the knowledge that they will work to the required standards and agreed costs, saving valuable time and expense.

The schedules are updated annually, with new versions being released every August. During the update we review each element of every rate – labour, materials and plant – using our unique compiling software to develop new rates and update existing ones.

Our compiling software, which was developed in-house, also allows us to produce schedules for organisations such as the insurance industry software provider Symbility and Network Rail.

Internal view of new offices

Company evolution

Our business is driven by our clients and through good customer service. We listen to our users' needs and, coupled with technology and innovation, we have developed a full range of additional support services to supplement the schedules.

Along with the ability to create schedules for a range of clients, we also support this with specialist consultancy services and our project management software, MTC QS.

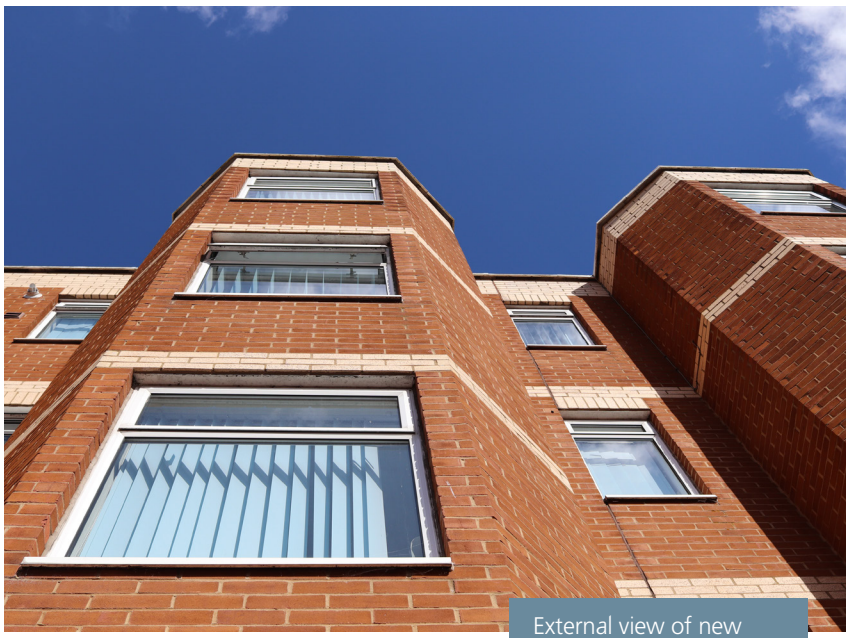
MTC QS is a time-saving online estimating and quotation system, used by the construction industry for pricing maintenance and refurbishment works. MTC QS houses our schedule of rates data and takes the effort out of finding prices, managing contracts and producing estimates and invoices.

The software can be used for pricing building works, refurbishments, extensions, renewal works, highways maintenance and reactive maintenance. MTC QS is available with an option to install the National Schedule of Rates. You can choose which schedules you require and configure the contracts for the adjustments tendered. Our software works for clients, client representatives, QSs, contractors and subcontractors.

MTC QS enables data flow from client to contractor and then from contractor to subcontractor. This ensures that clients are ahead of the game and allows them to keep their budgets on track with a clear audit trail. The software has the ability to attach unlimited files in any format such as drawings, specifications, certificates and photographs and more to keep all the relevant information in one place.

Opportunities and challenges

Change often brings challenges, and our experience is no exception to this rule. This year we launched our new interactive website and have been supporting customers and staff throughout this period of change.



External view of new offices

The construction industry is notorious for the difficulties in implementing new technology and systems of working. It can be easy to convince a client of the benefits of a new system; however, we have found that getting their staff on board is often more difficult. We endeavour to overcome these difficulties with comprehensive training both online, through our website and a free helpdesk, and through workshops configured for each client's individual needs.

Continually developing our schedules and software to reflect industry changes and listening to our users' needs has required significant investment. Bank finance has been difficult to obtain, and our ambitions may well have been frustrated if we only had the banks to rely on. It was fortunate therefore that we were able to call on alternative funding vehicles, which we would not hesitate to use again if the need arose. We are pleased with the way we have been able to respond to these challenges, leaving us robust as we look towards the future.

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