



North East Ambulance Service

About the partnership

Formed in 2006, North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) provides emergency medical services across Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, County Durham, Darlington and Teesside. Having become a Foundation Trust in 2011, NEAS is one of ten ambulance services in England, serving more than 2.71 million people.

We were awarded the contract with NEAS in 2021 to deliver ambulance station cleaning, as well as cleaning of controlled drug store areas. We provide cleaning services for 59 sites covering the whole of the North East region. The cleaning of the stations is carried out during the day between the hours of 7am and 7pm with a mixture of cleaning schedules across different sites, varying from every day cleans to two days per week cleans. Everything is completed to meet the requirements of the National Standards of Healthcare Cleanliness 2025, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and specialist areas requiring Infection Prevention and Control (IPC). We utilise mobile teams to clean smaller vacant sites.

We had ten weeks to mobilise the contract. The mobilisation was well planned and a great team effort during the period of continuous Covid restrictions. We successfully completed 39 TUPE consultations and delivered site files and cleaning equipment to sites in time for the contract start date. Due to the geographic distribution of sites, the creation of a bird's eye view map was critical to the success of the mobilisation, as it allowed for effective service planning and generated fastest routes to sites for our teams. We've also transferred in the previous contract manager, who provided invaluable knowledge and support throughout the whole process.





Enhancing audit efficiency

Due to the nature of the contract, the requirements for service standards are high and stringent audit procedures need to be followed to support NEAS in meeting the audit requirements of CQC, IPC, and the National Standards of Healthcare Cleanliness 2025.

Every ambulance station must be audited by a manager a minimum of once every three months. For any cleaning issues raised during the audit, additional audits need to be completed to evidence resolution. All issues are acknowledged within 24 hours and we have a seven day period for remedial actions.

We've introduced a number of new processes and changes to improve audits and align our auditing with NEAS' IPC audits.

We've set up a detailed audit process which is documented in one central online environment, accessible to our teams as well as the client. This was a welcome change which resulted in significant reduction of email

traffic, making it easier for our teams and the client to access, conduct audits and log issues on the go. The smartsheet generates automated updates and reminders to keep things on track and is accessible in necessary formats for the client to submit evidence to CQC. The standard quarterly audits, instant audits and annual deep clean audits are managed on our Mo:bus platform with client having full visibility via the client portal.

Initially, every individual area had a sign off sheet that needed to be completed by our cleaning teams. We've streamlined the process by rolling out one sign off sheet per site with separate sheets for high-risk areas, simplifying the process for our teams on the ground.





A dedicated team that drives consistency in standards

The winning factors in us getting awarded the contract were our track record in the healthcare sector and our dedicated management structure.

The contract is overseen by a dedicated account manager and mobile supervisor, who provide consistent management and leadership across all sites. This approach has ensured a high level of service consistency and has been reflected in strong client IPC audit scores across the contract. The mobile supervisor has been upskilled to deliver an enhanced level of operational and management support, which has contributed significantly to continuous service improvements and the successful achievement of key contract deliverables.

Having retained the contract in April 2026, we amended the cleaning specification in line with the NHS National Standards of Healthcare Cleanliness (NSHC), expanding the scope of service to include bimonthly mechanical floor cleans. This enhanced service has

been effectively implemented and managed by the account manager, resulting in positive feedback from the client and noticeable improvements in site standards.

We have developed a bespoke training matrix for NEAS. All Churchill colleagues working on the contract complete training modules which cover induction, health and safety, site access procedures, Infection Prevention Control, as well as site specific team briefings.

We have a fantastic team that successfully maintains the required high standards across NEAS sites. Pamela Ayton and Andrea Doonan are our shining stars of the contract who regularly score 100% on audits of the sites they look after and are regularly praised by the client who also nominates them for our internal awards.



Testament to the great work of our teams, the contract is in a great place and we look forward to continue supporting the client and ensuring optimum service delivery across all NEAS sites.

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NEAS have received cleaning services from Churchill since 2021 with a second term awarded following a tender process in 2025. We have seen improvements in cleaning standards, communication and effective management year on year.

Cleaning standards have significantly improved throughout the contract period, evidenced by audit scores completed by both Churchill management and key NEAS stakeholders, including the Infection Prevention and Control Team.

The introduction of the smartsheet has provided a dedicated platform to report Estates service requests and audits and allows recording of remedial actions completed where issues have been identified. The smartsheet also has an image upload capability to evidence this. This is an essential tool that allows the Estates team to provide feedback to the reporter and auditors, providing assurance that cleaning services are delivered to the required standards, often higher.

The dedicated management team ensures cleaning services on all sites are managed effectively as they are familiar with all sites, they understand the flexibility that is required to ensure there is no operational impact, and recognise the importance of timely feedback, proactive and transparent communication.

The Churchill management team maintains successful oversight of their staff, ensuring staff are fully trained, familiarised with sites, properly equipped, and strictly adhere to our site's safety and security protocols.

We are confident Churchill will continue to deliver a high standard of cleaning services and will consistently meet all key performance indicators throughout the contract period.

**Michelle Ashwell, Facilities Officer,
North East Ambulance Service**

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