

= Forth Valley Royal Hospital =

Forth Valley Royal Hospital is a hospital located in Larbert , Scotland . With 860 inpatient beds , 25 wards , and 16 operating theatres , it was Scotland 's largest ever NHS construction project at the time but has been surpassed by the New Southern General hospital amongst others . Built at a cost of £ 300 million on the site of the old Royal Scottish National Hospital , it opened to its first patients in 2010 . It is operated by NHS Forth Valley .

The hospital is the first in Scotland to have a Forestry Commission ranger on site , whose job is to encourage the use of the 70 @-@ acre (28 ha) grounds formerly belonging to the Larbert House estate . It has Scotland 's first fully robotic pharmacy , in which robots dispense and label medicines . The hospital also employs robots to carry out tasks such as removing waste , delivering food to wards , and cleaning operating theatres .

= = Background = =

The Forth Valley Royal Hospital was designed by Equion , a subsidiary of Laing O 'Rourke , and Keppie Designs in cooperation with builders Laing O 'Rourke . After a consultation process in 2003 , involving 5 @,@ 600 local residents , it was decided that a new acute hospital should be built to replace the ageing facilities at Stirling Royal Infirmary and Falkirk Royal Infirmary , which were to become community hospitals .

At the time of construction the hospital was Scotland 's largest ever NHS construction project , cost £ 300 million to build , most of which was provided by a private finance initiative arrangement ; it was built on the site of the old Royal Scottish National Hospital . Originally to be called Forth Valley Hospital , it was granted royal status by Queen Elizabeth II , becoming Forth Valley Royal Hospital . It was hoped the new hospital would be ready by 2009 , but medical services did not start to be transferred until August 2010 , when the first patients were admitted . The process was completed in June 2011 , and the queen officially opened the hospital on 6 July 2011 .

= = Facilities = =

Set in 70 acres (28 ha) of woodland , the hospital has 860 inpatient beds spread over four floors , 25 wards and 16 operating theatres . The wards contain a mixture of single rooms or a maximum of four beds per ward section , and each bed has access to a personal television screen free of charge . The hospital contains the region 's only Accident and Emergency Department following the closure of the unit at Stirling Royal .

The hospital provides services for the 300 @,@ 000 residents of the Forth Valley area , stretching from Killin in the north to Bo 'ness in the south . Those services include :

For the use of staff , patients , and visitors the hospital has several catering establishments including Starbucks , a Marks & Spencer Simply Food shop and cafe , and a full restaurant open seven days a week .

The hospital 's design was criticised for not providing space for the storage of medical files . It was expected that all files would be stored electronically within five years . In the meantime , the paper medical files were transferred to the site of the old Falkirk Royal Infirmary . An old X @-@ ray department at the hospital was decontaminated and converted into a storage department at a cost of £ 40 @,@ 000 , and a taxi company was contracted to move the records between sites .

= = Radio Royal = =

Radio Royal is the hospital 's in house radio station . It operates 24 hours a day seven days a week , staffed by a team of around 27 volunteers . Founded in 1976 , it originally broadcast from the old Royal Scottish National Hospital in Larbert . It was latterly based at Falkirk Royal Infirmary , before returning to Larbert on the opening of Forth Valley Royal .

= = Grounds = =

The hospital is set in the grounds of the Old Larbert House estate , which until 2002 housed the Royal Scottish National Hospital , a state mental hospital . The 70 acres of land contain a loch , walled garden and woodland areas . The grounds were transformed into a " green oasis " for the use of those using the hospital and the local community with the help of a £ 101 @, @ 000 grant from the Forestry Commission Scotland . Forth Valley Royal is the first hospital in Scotland to have a Forestry Commission ranger on site . The ranger 's job is to encourage use of the green space and promote healthy lifestyles .

The hospital was fitted with large windows to give patients access to views of the surrounding countryside . On clear days the Forth Bridges and the Lomond and Ochil Hills can be seen .

Tunnels were discovered during the hospital 's construction , thought to have been built to allow wealthy guests staying at Larbert House , built in 1822 , to walk to the nearby loch unobserved .

= = Transport = =

The hospital is accessible by public transport via bus services operating from the main local towns . A shuttle bus used to but no longer runs every 20 minutes from Larbert railway station , (it was free for passengers with a train ticket) ; the station is thus now a 25 @- @ minute walk away from Larbert train station .

A large car park with 1 @, @ 500 spaces is provided , free with a maximum stay of four hours . Bicycle racks are provided for those cycling to the hospital .

= = Robotics = =

Forth Valley Royal was the first hospital in the UK to use a system of robotic porters . A fleet of 13 robotic vehicles operates within the hospital , supplied and maintained by services company Serco , part of its 30 @- @ year contract to provide cleaning , catering , portering and maintenance services . The robots have their own corridor system and lifts underneath the hospital , and navigate using guidance lasers . They can be called up to wards by staff using a portable computer , and are used for tasks such as removing waste , delivering food to wards , and cleaning operating theatres . To avoid any risk of cross @- @ contamination the fleet is divided into those robots performing " clean " tasks and those carrying out " dirty " tasks , each with their own network of corridors .

The hospital also has Scotland 's first fully robotic pharmacy , where robots dispense and label medicines . It is estimated that in reducing the number of errors and requiring less staff time the system , which cost £ 400 @, @ 000 to install , has cut the hospital 's drug bill by £ 700 @, @ 000 . Instead of completing prescription forms , staff on the wards order drugs via computer terminals .