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A & J WASTE SERVICES LIMITED

ALTHOUGH IT WAS ONLY FORMED IN 2017, SOMERSET-BASED A & J WASTE SERVICES LIMITED ALREADY HAS THE REPUTATION AND CAPABILITIES OF A MUCH LONGER-ESTABLISHED OPERATION THANKS TO THE EXPERIENCE WITHIN THE COMPANY AND THE FLEXIBILITY OF ITS BUSINESS MODEL.

FURTHER AWARD RECOGNITION UNDERLINES CONSISTENCY

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SUSTAINABLE NEW HOMES LAUNCH IN CAMBRIDGE

Premium housebuilder Stonebond has launched a collection of sustainable new homes at Waterbeach in Cambridge. Stonebond at Waterbeach forms the gateway to the pioneering new community by Urban&Civic, which is transforming the former barracks and airfield at Waterbeach .

The development will provide 6,500 homes designed to create a thriving community just outside the city centre. With sustainability, biodiversity and nature at the heart of the transformation, Waterbeach provides a neighbourhood rich in heritage, ecology and opportunity.

As the first housebuilding partner on site, Stonebond is providing 89 homes including apartments and houses, ranging in size from one to four bedrooms.

Situated on entry to the new development, Stonebond at Waterbeach offers residents with high quality homes inspired by and connected to its surroundings and past. The homes are arranged in mews and terraced styles and include detached villas overlooking a beautiful communal green open space. Each property has a high-quality specification, carefully considered layouts and a clear focus on incorporating sustainable additions.

Robert Wilkinson, Managing Director at Stonebond, comments: "We are incredibly excited to have now launched our new development, Stonebond at Waterbeach. The wider Waterbeach scheme is phenomenal and the location of these homes, with the fantastic lifestyle on offer, is exceptional. The development looks to the future in terms of its sustainability attributes, sense of community and incorporation of nature into residents' daily lives. We are seeing strong levels of interest from prospective buyers and look forward to welcoming more people to our interactive marketing suite, show home and apartment."

The development offers more than homes but a new way of life with a collection



of both existing and planned new local amenities, entertainment venues and educational facilities, particularly suited to families with children. Heron's Preschool is situated on the development whilst additional early years, primary, secondary and further education facilities are being rolled out within the development over the next few years – starting with Deneia Primary Academy, run by Anglian Learning Trust. Outside of education, children can burn energy at the 25 upcoming play areas, which includes the Wild Woods play area ready for first residents, as well as making use of the sports hall and studio, which already runs sporting groups, as well as yoga, Zumba and other courses for the young at heart of all ages. Waterbeach also has its own monthly Community Market already up and running with stalls for local produce, artisan gifts, jewellery and crafts.

With a community building with health clinic, , and a shop and cafe, all coming forward within the first phase, ahead of the future town centre, Waterbeach will provide the very best of a connected and thriving neighbourhood where everything

is on the doorstep.

Stepping outside the dynamic community, residents can access Cambridge centre which is 20 minutes drive away or a swift 11 minutes from Waterbeach train station. The world-renowned destination has something for everyone, from its beautiful waterside setting which sees punters glide past, through the eccentric entertainment venues, to a choice of three bustling shopping centres.

Public transport options are extensive, with a Sustainable Travel Hub to encourage residents to make use of the many sustainable services available, including the regular shuttle buses to Waterbeach Station which provides connections to Stansted Airport in 57 minutes and London in a little over an hour. Bikes, e-bikes and scooter hire are available as well as carpool options. The Milton Park & Ride is also available and for those travelling by car, the A14 and M11 links residents to the M25.

Prices start from £290,000 for a one-bedroom apartment and a range of incentives are available to enable buyers to secure their new home.

CEMCOR INVESTS OVER £6M IN SUSTAINABILITY



Cookstown-based cement production business, CEMCOR, is putting sustainability at the forefront of its multi million-pound investment in the plant in 2023.

After acquiring Lafarge Ireland in 2022, Cookstown Cement rebranded to CEMCOR following significant investment from the new local ownership of Managing Director, David Millar and LCC Group. In 2023, CEMCOR has invested an additional £6m in multiple industry-leading upgrades, focused on the sustainability and futureproofing of the plant.

Immediately after the purchase of Cookstown Works completed, CEMCOR pledged over £6m to replace the existing electro-static precipitators (ESPs) with a state-of-the-art bag filter at the plant.

Within a period of fourteen months from final design agreement in March 2022, the new bag filter was commissioned and fully operational from May 2023. This investment project is centred around the abatement filter, with the filter separated into four quadrants with twenty-two rows per quadrant, fourteen

bags per row and a total of 1,232 bags. Within the new filtration, there is a Tribor System which detects and locates damaged bags. This system will isolate the cleaning operations to a specific row and if the damage is minor, reseal with process dust. If the bag is severely damaged, CEMCOR's new bag filter has the ability to isolate the entire section and online maintenance can be carried out, making it much more efficient operation.

In addition to the bag filter upgrade, CEMCOR also installed a new dust particulate conveying system at the Cookstown plant. This system will transport the captured dust to an existing silo via a new batch weighing feeder where it will be recycled through the cement manufacturing process, so no material is landfilled or disposed elsewhere.

For sulphur dioxide abatement and the neutralising of other process gases such as chlorine, CEMCOR installed a reaction tower in 2023 with hydrated lime injection from a dedicated silo as well. Process gases will be directed from the kiln system through the

filter prior to clean gases being released via the stack due to the instalment of a new 750KW main process fan as well.

CEMCOR Managing Director, David Millar said: "We are delighted with the huge leaps forward CEMCOR has made with regards sustainability and efficiency upgrades since the acquisition last year.

"The plant itself looks and operates at an extremely high standard, which is a credit to the whole team involved in these projects. We are forward thinking at CEMCOR and understand it was time to put our money on the line and invest in the plants efficiencies and sustainable outputs, to protect the environment around us and futureproof the plant itself."

With a well-rounded focus on plant upgrades, CEMCOR also focused its research on how the paper packing market of cement bags has been developing in recent years. CEMCOR undertook an in-depth review of its paper packing system and invested in both new hardware and software upgrades.

Over the years, customer

trends in the packed cement market have changed with longer shelf life, weather resistant plastic packaging becoming more prevalent. However, recent developments in paper-based packaging has resulted in recyclable, biodegradable paper options now available and hugely popular on the market.

In addition to the high-tech hardware upgrades such as filling frames, spouts and weighers on the packer itself, major improvements to the PLCs on the packer and palletiser systems have been completed. These updates have already provided efficiency benefits through improved reliability and consistency as well as improving the ease of operations through a new touchscreen operating system which has built in diagnostics and remote support access.

Later this year, CEMCOR will also replace the existing manual pallet wrapping process with automated stretch hood equipment, ensuring the plant is as efficient as possible. Further upgrades, similar to those carried out on the paper packing line, have been planned for the plastic packing line in the near future.

Not settling for complacency in any area of the company, CEMCOR is also investing in new laboratory equipment to improve the speed and accuracy of the raw feed analysis, including online monitoring and new handling facilities for alternative raw materials including biogenic carbonates.



STEPNELL COMPLETES HEALTH AND MEDICAL EDUCATION FACILITY FOR UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER

A new Centre for Health and Medical Education at the University of Worcester has now been completed by Stepnell. This is the fourth project the complete construction partner has delivered on behalf of the University.

Starting on site at the University's Severn Campus in 2021, the highly anticipated project has involved the delivery of a sophisticated anatomy laboratory, a suite of GP simulation rooms, and a range of general seminar and teaching rooms. Offices, break-out spaces for group

study and a café have also been constructed by Stepnell.

Adrian Barnes, regional director at Stepnell, said: "The Elizabeth Garrett Anderson building is our fourth project with University of Worcester and shows the success of our collaborative approach in creating lasting partnerships. Having this strong relationship helps to mitigate any risks to maintain the end goal of delivering a high quality project in time and to budget, which is what we have achieved.

"The building is uniquely enveloped with gold copper

shingle and is flooded with natural light from the impressive North light roof structures, so it was a priority to use our experience to ensure the redevelopment project would retain the legacy of this 1965 building, while delivering on sustainability and creating a modern teaching space. Throughout, we were also pleased to work with the University and its students and put in place measures to reduce emissions."

Working in close collaboration with the University of Worcester, Stepnell added social and environmental value throughout.

This included supporting local students with training opportunities and creating several sustainability initiatives to reduce emissions. The Stepnell team encouraged the use of public transport, walking and cycling and installed a biosite system to help track site visitors, deliveries and reduce worker emissions as part of a green travel plan that saved 122,721 transport miles.

As part of the project team, M&E consultancy CPW also provided energy modelling, strategy and design support to enhance the existing fabric of the building and reduce air permeability. This has helped achieve a Gold SKA environmental rating from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and an energy performance certificate (EPC) A rating.

Mark Evans, assistant director of Estates at the University of Worcester, said: "The University of Worcester has worked with Stepnell on a number of projects since they were appointed to our Medium Works Contractor Framework. This includes recently completing our fantastic new Elizabeth Garrett Anderson building on our Severn Campus. Stepnell has demonstrated it can work collaboratively and innovatively to deliver what the University believes will be an outstanding teaching facility for the future healthcare and medical professionals."



SITE REMEDIATION PAVES WAY FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN HUDDERSFIELD



architects, Brewster Bye, during the planning process and look forward to delivering a successful and high-quality development which will help to address the shortage of affordable housing within easy reach of Huddersfield town centre.”

Anthony Askew, Development Manager at Yorkshire Housing said: “We’re delighted to be working with Urban Group (York) and Brewster Bye, and that this project is now underway.

“When complete, this site will provide over 20 families with high-quality affordable homes and brings us closer towards our plans of delivering 8,000 new homes over the next few years.”

Urban Group (York) Ltd has won a significant contract from Yorkshire Housing to deliver 22 new homes in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.

The site in Newsome, off Hart Street, sits by a former mill. Urban Group is currently carrying out the remediation phase of the project prior to commencing infrastructure works on the development.

The scheme comprises a mix

of two and three-bed semi-detached affordable homes, as well as associated landscaping, access, roads, and sewer installation. The development will complete in spring 2024.

Rick Long, Head of Housing (Construction) at Urban Group, said: “The team is delighted to be working with Yorkshire Housing on this exciting development.

“The initial phase of the development has proved to be

challenging. Prior to commencing works on site, a flock of ducks had taken up residence on the former mill ponds, and a small number of fish had also found their way into the ponds. The ducks were given time to leave the ponds of their own volition, whilst the fish were humanely re-located prior to the ponds being drained.

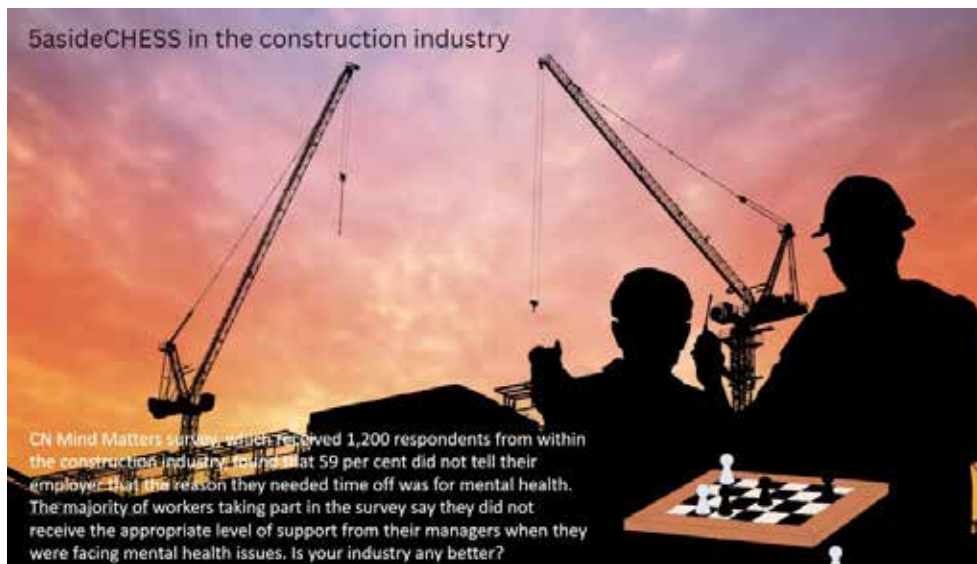
“We worked closely with Yorkshire Housing and

As well as delivering new housing developments for local authorities and housing associations, Urban Group also provides decarbonisation options to propel properties up the crucial Energy Performance Certification bands. Its retro fitting measures include a wide range of services including damp mitigation, wall, cavity, floor and roof insulation, along with window, door and secondary glazing upgrades.

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TACKLING LONELINESS AND MENTAL ILL HEALTH IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY USING THE POWER OF CHESS



It is well known that construction workers face unique challenges that can take a toll on their mental well-being. Long hours, tight deadlines and the physical demands of the job can lead to stress, anxiety and even depression. Sadly, suicide rates in the construction sector are alarmingly high. In fact, the industry has the highest suicide rates for men in the workplace. Something needs to change to address the reasons why this is the case and, as Diane Waldron explains here, a social enterprise based on chess could provide the answer.

5asideCHESS was set up as a social enterprise in 2015 by co-founders, Ross Smith and Ian McKay, in response to their concern about the levels of disconnection and inequality that they saw in society. The project has a huge mission: to create connection in order to tackle loneliness, social isolation and the mental ill health and depression that these issues can cause.

The 5asideCHESS Battling Suicide Bus has been on the road since 2018, visiting towns and cities all around the UK. The bus carries a simple but powerful message, #CHECKONYAMATE, urging people to check up on the people they care about. The bus is signed with more than 300 messages to loved ones lost to suicide – tangible evidence of the devastating ripples caused when someone takes their own life. So many of the messages people have written on the bus are along the theme of: ‘I just wish we had talked’ and yet talking is not that easy.

CN Mind Matters survey, which received 1,200 respondents within the construction industry, found that 59% of workers did not tell their employer when the time they needed off was for mental ill health. The majority said that they did not receive the appropriate level of support from their managers when they were facing mental health issues.

But here’s where the game changes. David Jones, Director of Education & Training at ICM and Head of Compliance and Competence at NAADUK, said: “5asideCHESS brings workers together, both on and off the construction site, through the simple act of playing a small game of chess. It creates an opportunity for meaningful conversations about mental health, breaking down the barriers that often prevent people from seeking help. Each move on the chessboard is an opportunity to connect with someone, to ask: “How are you doing?” or “Are you okay?” The game becomes a catalyst for open dialogue, allowing workers to support one another and share their experiences.”

The 5asideCHESS WingMAN programme, developed through the social enterprise’s work in UK prisons is now being rolled out into workplaces around the country following its success at tackling mental ill health amongst men in prison. Governor of HMP Chelmsford, Garry Newnes, said: “I believe if 5asideCHESS can break down barriers, resolve conflict and improve mental health in a prison setting, it can do it anywhere.”

5asideCHESS train WingMEN in the work place and give them the tools to provide support their colleagues by improving confidence, life skills, mental health and understanding. Importantly, they provide each trained WingMAN with 30 minutes of independent one-to-one coaching and support every month, which will be delivered remotely. This allows them to offload to someone outside of their own organisation as well as to develop their own skills.

David Jones again: “The 5asideCHESS WingMAN programme is transforming the landscape of mental health in the construction sector and within prisons. By creating safe spaces for conversation, offering support, and fostering resilience, we can make a difference. Remember, every move counts. Together, we can checkmate the stigma surrounding mental health and create a brighter future for those in the construction sector and beyond. Let’s continue this important conversation and work together to build a mentally healthy industry.”

HYDE NEW HOMES AND BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL TO LAUNCH NEW AFFORDABLE APARTMENTS

A joint venture between award-winning home builder Hyde New Homes, and Brighton & Hove City Council, is set to bring a new enriched living experience to the picturesque suburb of Coldean this Spring.

Launching in June, and available to purchase with shared ownership, Bluebell Heights will offer Brighton buyers a choice of one, two and three-bedroom apartments nestled in natural landscape woodland at the foot of the South Downs National Park.

Boasting views of the nearby countryside and landscaped terraced communal gardens, and backing onto Stanmore Park, the development offers spacious, contemporary apartments with lots of natural light, a private balcony, terrace or patio and allocated parking. Every shared ownership home takes careful consideration from its natural surroundings and nearby architecture, and has a particular focus on providing a peaceful escape from busy urban life.

"You would never know that the bustling city of Brighton was just a 15-minute drive away," said Minnie Dando, Head of Marketing & Communications for Hyde New Homes. "And for those who prefer to use public transport, there are plenty of options."

Embracing a more eco-conscious way of living, Bluebell Heights prioritises sustainable transport options, and comes with cycle storage

and electric car charging points to selected plots.

A bus runs directly from Coldean into Brighton, where commuters and day-trippers can take the train from Brighton Central to Gatwick Airport in 36 minutes, Clapham Junction in an hour and Portsmouth in an hour and 14 minutes.

Every resident at Bluebell Heights will also receive travel incentive options, including subsidised bus or train season travel or a subsidised bike share or car club membership.

There is also a focus on providing sociable outdoor space, including desirable landscaped communal gardens for residents to enjoy. Many of the surrounding features have been retained to encourage outdoor activity and enjoyment, and the biodiversity of the site is enhanced with a grassland and woodland management plan.

The stylish homes have been built to be both energy and cost efficient, with superior insulation, double-glazed windows and solar panels on the roofs. The living space has also been expertly designed, offering light-filled open-plan living spaces, large windows, stylish fitted kitchen with integrated appliances, sleek bathrooms, spacious bedrooms and valuable storage space.

Minnie continued: "The added benefit of having to save for a 10% deposit only on the equity you are buying in your shared



ownership home, makes buying much more attainable. You can then enjoy your desired lifestyle, and makeover your home to suit your own taste."

Along with a mortgage, shared ownership buyers pay a subsidised rent to Hyde New Homes on the remaining share of their home. Further shares can be purchased in the future through a process known as staircasing, which allows homeowners to own all of their home at any time they wish."

Prices for homes available at Bluebell Heights are:

- 1 bedroom apartments from £80,250 (based on a 30% share and full market value of £267,500)
- 2 bedroom apartments from £108,000 (based on a 30% share and full market value of £360,000)
- 3 bedroom apartments from £103,125 (based on a 25% share and full market value of £412,500)

Bluebell Heights is the second development to be built by the newly formed joint venture between Hyde New Homes and Brighton & Hove City Council, which is committed to delivering 1,000 quality, affordable homes to the region by delivering half the homes at 'Living Rent' prices and the other half for shared ownership.

The first joint venture of the 'Homes for Brighton & Hove' scheme – St James Square in Portslade – is already providing much needed affordable rent homes for residents, with the shared ownerships apartments already 60% reserved since in launch in February.

Minnie said: "Brighton is one of the least affordable cities outside of London in the UK, so we are keen to do our bit in providing affordable – good quality – housing for those wishing to live in this vibrant city."

KUBOTA SHOWS OFF NEW MACHINERY AT PLANTWORX 2023



Kubota showcased its new and innovative construction machinery for the first time at this year's Plantworx exhibition, allowing members of the public to get hands on with the newly launched construction equipment.

The centre piece of this year's Kubota stand were three brand new models; the KX085-5, an eight and a half tonne mini-excavator; and two new additions to Kubota's Smart Energy Solutions range of sustainable construction machinery, the RT210-2e and the RT220-2, electric RT compact wheel loaders.

The KX085-5 offers operators advanced performance and superior operational functionality, powered by a low emission advanced Kubota engine. The mini-excavator can be used with a two-piece boom,

expanding the working range and increasing efficiency in narrow spaces.

Kubota's next generation RT compact wheel loaders offer high productivity with a zero-emission performance, reducing carbon output while offering the same standard of performance operators have come to expect from Kubota. Powered by a 48V system with modular 260Ah lithium-ion batteries, the machines regenerate energy when the machine decelerates.

In addition to the new machines, visitors to the Kubota stand also were able to find out more about Kubota's OnSite App, which gives users access to information about Kubota machines at the touch of a button. The brand-new app which launched last month, allows users to access their machinery

handbook and quick start guide, and 'how to' videos for each machine.

Leading construction influencers including Lord Muck and Digger Girl also stopped by to greet fans and discuss the latest machines.

Rob White, division manager for construction at Kubota UK, said: "It's fantastic to be back at Plantworx for this year's show. It's been an exciting year for Kubota so far, with a host of new models and service updates announced, so it was brilliant to be able to demonstrate them to the visitors to our stand.

"Plantworx is a corner stone event of the UK construction machinery sector and it was great to see so many people at this year's show and to see such interest in our newest models to market."

CADDICK SECURES PLANNING FOR NEW WAKEFIELD OFFICE



Caddick Construction Group has secured planning permission to redevelop Cape House at Wakefield 41 Business Park, which is set to become the business' new headquarters in 2024.

Building work on the new office is set to commence imminently, and will include extensive refurbishment work to repurpose and modernise the vacant two-storey building, increasing its size from 11,000 sq ft to 15,000 sq ft.

Designed by DLA Architecture, the office will incorporate a new two-storey extension, a glazed front extension with a double height atrium reception and cafe space. The development will include open-plan office

space, meeting rooms, and break-out areas.

Work will include a range of measures to enhance sustainability, both in the building's design and operations. Features will include renewable energy technologies such as photovoltaic panels with EV charging stations also being installed.

The redevelopment plans will incorporate the existing building superstructure, which will be stripped back to its steel frame and updated with new building fabric, windows, and all new mechanical and electrical installations.

Once complete in early 2024, Cape House will become home to 130 staff. Caddick Construction

plans to retain its current premises at Knottingley, which has acted as the business' HQ for its 500-strong team since its formation in 1979, and is also undertaking wider regional expansion in the North East.

The move will form part of Caddick Construction Group's controlled and planned growth following the appointment of its new Construction Group Managing Director last summer. The business is active in a range of sectors, with key projects including SOYO, Leeds' new £300m neighbourhood, Trafford Council and Bruntwood's £50m King Street regeneration scheme and Bradford's new Grade A office development, One City Park.

Paul Dodsworth, Caddick Construction Group Managing Director, commented: "We are growing as a business; our team is expanding, we're extending our geographical presence and our project portfolio is growing in all of our core sectors. It's the perfect time for us to invest in our new headquarters, which will give us a well-connected, modern and energised office from which we'll continue to thrive. It's also vitally important that we create a head office that will help attract and retain staff going forward."

Jason Clarke, Director at DLA Architecture, added: "DLA are delighted to support the Caddick Group in achieving planning consent to redevelop Cape House for its new HQ. This collaboration further strengthens our long and illustrious relationship with the Group and we feel privileged to have been entrusted to design new state of the art premises to align with their business aspirations and expansion plans."

The team working on the project include planning consultant, Sheppard Planning, M&E delivered by CSD, structural and civil engineering delivered by Roscoe, building control by Stroma, acoustics by Apex and the transport assessments were completed by Fore Consulting.

POOR MENTAL HEALTH PUTS THOUSANDS IN CONSTRUCTION AT RISK

More than 150,000 construction workers may be suffering in silence from common mental health problems figures from the Mental Health Foundation reveal.

Association for Project Safety [APS] President Ray Bone said fewer than half of male sufferers were able to talk about their problems posing a major challenge in an industry employing over 1.1m men - around 85% of the total workforce. Mr Bone said the construction sector had to address its behaviours and attitudes, stop avoiding difficult conversations and start taking mental health seriously considering three out of four suicides are men and it is the leading cause of death in those under 45.

Figures from the Mental Health Foundation reveal around one in eight men suffer from common mental health conditions - like anxiety, stress or depression. The week is focussing on the impact of technology and social media on men's health and Bone said this is particularly important in a sector where workers often work away from home and are prone to turning to their phones and devices for company and entertainment.

APS President, Ray Bone, said: "The Association for Project Safety [APS] believes the construction sector needs to do more to tackle mental health issues in the industry. Construction is still a very male dominated environment and - because it is clear men find it hard to open up and talk about their problems - we all need look to the behaviours and attitudes that are contributing to this often hidden health crisis. APS is supporting men's mental health week to raise awareness of the issue.

"Everyone needs to find ways of talking about our problems and helping our colleagues who may be suffering in silence. But talking is not enough. The industry needs to look at how it behaves and how workers are treated. We are all responsible for the way we treat each other, and we need to understand the effect we can have on the people around us.

"It is not the responsibility of people who are ill to have to highlight problems - we need to look out for each other and remember how we act is how we will be judged. The internet has brought many benefits but, when people are often working away from home without family support nearby, an easy click can lead to long-term problems with addictive & risky behaviour."



[APS] President Ray Bone

ANOTHER YEAR OF SUCCESS

IN THE YEAR OR SO SINCE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY NEWS LAST CAUGHT UP WITH IHUS, THE DONCASTER-BASED ANNEXE SPECIALIST HAS ENJOYED YET MORE IMPRESSIVE GROWTH. IT HAS ALSO WELCOMED LEGENDARY DJ TONY BLACKBURN ONTO THE TEAM AS AN AMBASSADOR FOR THE BUSINESS, FURTHER UNDERLINING ITS GROWING REPUTATION WITHIN THE MARKETPLACE.

“ The last 12 months have been pretty phenomenal across all our metrics,” highlights Trevor

Smeaton, CEO. “Sales have been performing really well and build output is up 57%. Operating profit is also up, so we’re in a strong position with the order book being full for the rest of the year.”

The positive performance hasn’t come about by accident, as iHus has continued to work hard to provide a quality-led service to its customer base. This has involved ongoing investment in the company’s infrastructure, as Mr Smeaton explains: “We’ve made efficiencies across the organisation and introduced a number of operational changes too, including the recruitment

of additional project managers. We have also been approved for ISO 9001 and are now working towards securing ISO 14001, which relates to environmental management.

“It’s vital that we keep striving to improve in all areas of the operation and we are constantly updating the product range too. We’ve got some new offerings that will come to the table in the next few months. One particular focus has been solar, and we’ve been developing products that are much more sustainable.”

Amongst iHus’ growing list of satisfied customers is none other than Tony Blackburn, who was so impressed with the service and the quality of the end product that he offered to become an ambassador for the company. “We’d established a good relationship with Tony

after we built an annex for his mother-in-law a number of years ago,” says Mr Smeaton. “He therefore knows all about the service we can provide and the impact our products can have on people’s lives.

“We’ve set our targets for the next financial year, which we believe are more than achievable. We’re keen to grow but at the same time careful

management will be crucial to our long-term prospects. There’s certainly a great deal of scope to develop the business further.”

Having hit upon such a winning formula, iHus’ desire to keep improving is sure to see further progression for the business in the months and years ahead, progressing and further building its reputation within the marketplace.

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FLEXIBLE BUSINESS MODEL LEADS TO FAST-TRACK SUCCESS

ALTHOUGH IT WAS ONLY FORMED IN 2017, SOMERSET-BASED A & J WASTE SERVICES LIMITED ALREADY HAS THE REPUTATION AND CAPABILITIES OF A MUCH LONGER-ESTABLISHED OPERATION THANKS TO THE EXPERIENCE WITHIN THE COMPANY AND THE FLEXIBILITY OF ITS BUSINESS MODEL.

“ I started the company six years ago after working for a groundworks contractor for over 25 years,” explains James Watson, Managing Director. “I drew on this experience to put together an operation that could provide Materials Management services to the construction industry throughout the south and south-west of England.”

From its head office in Shepton Mallet, A & J Waste Services now covers a region that stretches across from Heathrow in the east, as far north as Worcester and down to the tip of Cornwall, all without owning any of its own lorries and with just a core staff of 20 employees. The company can service such a large area with so few people thanks to its business model, which utilises the services of 150 sub-contracted haulage companies.

“Due to our geographical coverage, if we were to offer a similar scale of operation with our own lorries, we’d face a headache in terms of the lorries not being in the right place to cover all the work,” adds Stuart Knight, who has recently become Operations Director, having previously amassed a wealth of experience in the waste industry prior to joining



“WE’RE VERY PROUD OF THE MODEL WE HAVE DEVELOPED. HOWEVER, WE’VE ONLY BEEN ABLE TO CAPITALISE ON ITS STRENGTHS THANKS TO THE RELATIONSHIPS WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BUILD AND THE CONSISTENCY OF SERVICE THAT WE PROVIDE THAT MEANS CUSTOMERS KEEP COMING BACK.”

JAMES WATSON,
MANAGING DIRECTOR

A & J. “This sub-contracted model provides us with a tremendous amount of flexibility that suits our requirements and the needs of our customer base. It has allowed us to grow very quickly without losing any quality from a service perspective.”

Underlining the strength of the service it can provide, A & J Waste Services’s customer base includes many of the leading housebuilders, such as Persimmon Homes, Barratt Homes, Wain Homes and Taylor Wimpey, as well as the likes of Balfour Beatty and Volker FitzPatrick. From their perspective, the benefits of

the arrangement for the sub-contracted hauliers are clear too, as the company prides itself on paying them on the 1st of each month, having developed a slick invoicing and ticketing process. This has helped to instill a high degree of confidence in the hauliers and, as a consequence, A & J Waste Services has never struggled to find suitable haulage when needed. Sales are generated through relationships gained through a well-connected and highly experienced sales team.

Demonstrating the rate of progress it has made, A & J Waste Services has seen its turnover increase from £2.5m in its first year to its current level of £16m. This has been achieved not only thanks to the strength and flexibility of its model, but also the experience that James and Stuart have amassed by working in the housebuilding and waste industries bolstered by a friendly, knowledgeable, and well connected sales force of Andy Stewart, Adam Farley and Mel Bryant, who all bring decades of industry experience, as well as a slick transport team of Stacey Howe and Nick Sheppard, plus many other staff all playing a vital role to the success of the business. Being poachers turned gamekeepers has given them the insight to traverse the challenges associated with the sector, such as obtaining the relevant licenses for running large landfill sites.

“We’re very proud of the model we have developed,” highlights James. “However, we’ve only been able to capitalise on its strengths thanks to the relationships we have been able to build and the consistency of service that we provide that means customers keep coming back. Ultimately,



it’s all about delivering what you say you’re going to. The key has been getting knowledgeable people onboard, and Stuart is a prime example of that philosophy in action.”

Having already made such major inroads into the marketplace since its creation, A & J Waste Services is now

striving to keep that progression going by improving further and taking its systems and internal processes to the next level.

“We want to kick on and continue our growth in a more efficient manner,” says Stuart. “We’ve got key customers that we want to bring onboard including some Tier 1 contractors, as we

look for further opportunities to develop the business. There’s a huge amount of housebuilding in the pipeline and we’re keen to keep capitalising on that. There’s plenty to be positive about and as long as we continue to make the right appointments and keep developing our systems and our service then we’re confident we will continue to progress. We have a great model and it’s just a case of tweaking it where appropriate.”

Given how far A & J Waste Services has come since its creation, the signs are that the company will keep continuing along its upward trajectory thanks to the strength of its business model and its focus on customer service.

ON AN UPWARD GROWTH CURVE

SINCE ITS CREATION IN 2010, LANCASHIRE-BASED MULTEVO HAS BLOSSOMED FROM A FOUR-PERSON BUSINESS HIRING OUT AND SELLING PLANT MACHINERY FROM A SMALL OFFICE ABOVE A VILLAGE SHOP, INTO A COMPANY WITH OVER 250 EMPLOYEES AND A MUCH BROADER RANGE OF SERVICES INCLUDING A CONTRACTING OPERATION.

“

When we were first established, we initially focused on selling and hiring out Multihog equipment, which is manufactured in Ireland, as the sole UK distributor of their equipment,” explains Aimee Dewse, Marketing Manager. “The Multihog itself is an articulated compact tractor that can be used for a variety of purposes.

Thanks to its versatility, we were able to grow strongly and build up the brand. It is now used by around 40% of local authorities nationwide for a wide range of tasks including winter maintenance, highway maintenance, grass cutting and flood prevention. It has also been picked up by the airport sector and Heathrow and Gatwick now have around 55 Multihog units between them. That was when



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“WE BEGAN BY SUPPORTING THE MAIN CONTRACTORS WITH PERMANENT ROAD REPAIRS USING MULTIHOG EQUIPMENT. THINGS THEN NATURALLY EVOLVED, AND IF A CLIENT HAD A POTENTIAL ISSUE, THEN WE WOULD LOOK TO DEVELOP A SOLUTION FOR THEM.”

AIMEE DEWSE,
MARKETING MANAGER



things really started to take off, pardon the pun.”

Underlining its faith in the Multihog range and its appreciation of its capabilities, in 2017 Multevo used the equipment to set up its own contracting operation focusing on highway maintenance. It then began working with major contractors, such as Amey, Kier, Balfour Beatty and, most recently, Milestone. “We began by supporting the main contractors with permanent

road repairs using Multihog equipment,” adds Aimee. “Things then naturally evolved, and if a client had a potential issue, then we would look to develop a solution for them. As a result of this collaborative approach, we created a number of additional contracting divisions looking after the likes of traffic management, civil engineering, arboriculture and vegetation; supported by over 250 employees working nationwide.”

Due to its role in maintaining

the road network, Multevo continued to operate throughout the Pandemic and actually used it as an opportunity to further develop its offering, as Aimee outlines: “We developed our own app that supports the services we deliver, so we were able to send out COVID safety alerts directly to our operatives. The key was making sure that everyone stayed safe.”

Throughout the development of its contracting activities, Multevo has remained as the sole UK distributor for Multihog, helping to introduce its newer models to an ever-larger audience. One particular area of innovation has been the development of lower emission products, as demand for this type of solution increases. “In 2021 we developed the Hydrovo, which is a dual fuel system that sits on the Multihog and uses hydrogen and HVO to power the machine,” says Aimee. “It enables heavy duty tasks such as road planing, grass cutting and snow clearance to still take place, but with 90% less carbon emissions involved. We launched

it towards the end of 2021 and completed various trials with councils and contractors. Glasgow City Council were the first local authority to hire the equipment to use for road repairs and winter maintenance. Interest continues to grow due to the rising demand for low carbon solutions and it has also attracted award recognition.”

Having come so far since its creation, Multevo looks in no mood to take its foot off the accelerator, as Aimee concludes: “We want to keep pushing forward across all aspects of the business and we have developed a clear road map for meeting our own net zero targets and to help our clients in achieving theirs. We also want to keep developing our suite of services for our customer base and to make the most of the opportunities that we’re seeing, particularly within highways maintenance. We are extremely people focused and will continue to make Multevo a fantastic place to work through initiatives such as personal skills development, wellbeing and community integration.”

A NOTABLE LANDMARK

NEXT YEAR WILL SEE NORTHUMBERLAND-BASED PREMIER PLANT & CIVIL ENGINEERING LIMITED CELEBRATING ITS TENTH ANNIVERSARY THANKS TO THE QUALITY OF ITS OFFERING AND ITS BROAD RANGE OF SERVICES, AS MICHAEL THOMPSON, DIRECTOR, RECENTLY OUTLINED TO CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY NEWS.



“We began trading in 2014 and primarily we’re a civil engineering and groundworks company covering all aspects of drainage and earthworks,” explains Mr Thompson. “We’ve always prided ourselves on our service, which is underlined by the commitment we have to staff training and our ongoing investment in our plant.”

Premier Plant’s emphasis on service recently came to fore after it took on the main contractor role at a project at Berwick Sports and Leisure Centre following the announcement that the original contractor, Tolent Construction, had gone into administration. “We’d been working with Tolent on a number of projects so the news was a significant blow to us as a business. Thankfully we were able to step up for this

particular project, which is valued at £1.6m, and have been working on the remaining works. These include the construction of a new car park, a tarmac access road, street lighting and general landscaping. We’ve been busy tendering for new contracts to replace the work we’ve lost but it does take time. We have been working for Bam Nuttall on the Clifton Ings flood alleviation scheme, which has been another major project to be involved in.”

Premier Plant’s ability to take on projects of this scale stem from its experience and the quality of its well-trained 30-strong workforce, not to mention its modern fleet of plant. “We’re very strong on training and staff development so thankfully we have a low rate of employee turnover,” says Mr Thompson. “This is vital at a time when there’s a major shortage of skills and

labour within the marketplace. We’re also continually investing our machinery, which ensures that our fleet is both reliable and highly efficient. Again this is important given the cost of fuel, while we also strive to be as sustainable as we can as a business.”

With plenty in its armoury, Premier Plant is now looking to bounce back from Tolent’s demise by moving forward and taking more of a leading

role in projects. “Obviously it’s been a tough one to take but we’re putting it down to experience and remaining positive moving forward,” concludes Mr Thompson. “We are certainly keen to utilise our skills and experience further by operating as the principal contractor on more projects. We have definitely shown that we can carry out the role so we’re keen to show more people what we’re capable of.”



Binks Landscapes are pleased to be working along-side **Premier Plant & Civil Engineering (Uk) Ltd** and wish them continued success for the future.

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GREEN APPROACH PAVES WAY FOR MAJOR GROWTH

NEXT YEAR WILL SEE REACTIVE HIRE LTD CELEBRATING ITS TENTH ANNIVERSARY AND SINCE ITS FORMATION BY EDDIE TAIT, THE COMPANY HAS EVOLVED INTO A MAJOR PLAYER WITHIN THE SUSTAINABLE CABINS SECTOR UNDER THE STEWARDSHIP OF MANAGING DIRECTOR, JOHN MCCLURE, AS HE RECENTLY OUTLINED TO CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY NEWS.

“Reactive Hire has been operating since 2014 having started out as a local hire company serving customers in Leicestershire and the East Midlands,” explains Mr McClure. “At the time I was working as a sales rep for Boss Cabins and Reactive Hire were my biggest customer. In 2016 I was head hunted by Eddie Tait to join the business as Sales Manager to help him grow the fleet size and region. I left Boss on good terms and have always maintained a strong working relationship with them – in fact, they remain our biggest supplier – I have used my previous industry experience, gained at Boss Cabins, to help move Reactive Hire forward by targeting a larger geographical area with the most innovative products on the market. To support this process, over the years, we have added more staff and drivers to the team.

“We’ve subsequently grown the business naturally through our expanding customer base and we’ve increased turnover from around £400,000 in 2016 to its current level of about £4m. At the

same time we’ve been careful to build the infrastructure to support the growth we’ve seen.”

Having successfully used his ‘poacher turned gamekeeper’ knowledge to such favorable effect, Mr McClure has not only helped oversee Reactive’s growth from a 60-cabin company to a 300-plus-cabin business, but he has also been integral to its transformation into an eco-led operation with its offering now being completely diesel generator-free.

“I’ve always been something of an eco-warrior myself: I drive an electric car and do everything I can to be environmentally friendly,” adds Mr McClure. “I’ve therefore been keen to replicate this approach with Reactive and when Boss Cabins began producing generator-free units, the range dovetailed perfectly with our new vision.”

What’s more, Mr McClure’s background at Boss Cabins has helped play a part in assisting this process. “I’ve always encouraged Boss Cabins’ move towards developing products that implement the latest green technology and we’ve been keen to test their new pieces of kit as



JOHN MCCLURE, MANAGING DIRECTOR

they’ve come to market. We’ve therefore helped them pioneer much of their range. Many unit manufacturers have attempted to go down the eco route but have only been able to come up with highly expensive or unreliable options, whereas this range from Boss Cabins really ticks all the boxes. It performs really well even in the darker winter months, so we knew it would be able to be used all year-round.

“Around 90% of technical problems for cabin hire companies are related to the generators, whereas this is no longer an issue. At a stroke our number of call-outs have almost fallen to zero because it’s simply much less of an issue. This is not only

“I’VE ALWAYS ENCOURAGED BOSS CABINS’ MOVE TOWARDS DEVELOPING PRODUCTS THAT IMPLEMENT THE LATEST GREEN TECHNOLOGY AND WE’VE BEEN KEEN TO TEST THEIR NEW PIECES OF KIT AS THEY’VE COME TO MARKET. WE’VE THEREFORE HELPED THEM PIONEER MUCH OF THEIR RANGE.”

JOHN MCCLURE,
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A DEDICATED APPROACH

Astley Cabins is a dedicated supplier of top quality and refurbished used mobile welfare units and here Managing Director, David Parkinson, outlines the company's origins and its continual rise ever since.

"I used to be a solicitor but didn't see a long-term future for me in that particular profession," explains Mr Parkinson. "My father-in-law has a used portable cabin business in Liverpool and so I set Astley Cabins up in 2017 primarily selling my father-in-law's stock.

"I quickly learned that there was a strong demand for used mobile welfare units but there was no dedicated supplier of them in the UK so I focused the business solely on the supply of mobile welfare units.

"The business was fast growing and, like all other businesses in the welfare industry, was boosted by the frenzy like demand for mobile welfare units during the pandemic driven by the requirement for additional units on sites to facilitate social distancing.

"This was at times a poisoned chalice because the hire companies, who would usually dispose of their older units in their fleet to us, were keeping hold of their older units to service the increase in demand which meant we had problems obtaining stock. The hire companies were also placing large orders with the manufacturers which resulted in lead times of up to 18 months for new units which in turn forced more customers into the used market cleaning us out of the stock we had.

"Due to the initial quick growth of the business though we were well positioned to take advantage of Elliott's (now Algeco) decision to sell their entire fleet of mobile welfare units which resulted in Astley Cabins purchasing around 200 units from them which in turn meant Astley Cabins was the only supplier of mobile welfare units in the UK with stock which allowed us to service the increased demand for used units further accelerating the growth of the business."

As a rule of thumb, mobile welfare units find their way on to the used market after about eight years but due to the buying power of Astley Cabins it has become the only realistic go to outlet for the major hire companies who are looking to dispose of large numbers of mobile welfare units from their fleet even if those cabins are nearly new or a few years old. Astley Cabins has recently agreed a deal to purchase over 100 diesel units from Reactive Hire which has enabled Reactive Hire to reinvest in their fleet in their push to become a market-leading supplier of sustainable mobile welfare units.

Astley Cabins is now the only business in the UK being able to offer a real alternative to buying a new cabin saving customers considerable sums of money.

In the last 12 months Astley Cabins has purchased circa £1.75m worth of stock. There is a clear and obvious push for sustainability in the construction industry and Astley Cabins' offering of high quality used mobile welfare units means that those companies with an environmental conscious (with regard to their embodied carbon) have a real alternative to buying new.



great from a service perspective but saves us money as we're not having to travel from Leicestershire to London or wherever to fix a problem with the generator.

"It's quite a saturated industry we're in, so we're always striving to get ahead of the curve and provide a real point of difference. As we metamorphosize the business into a completely solar powered operation, we've sold off all our diesel generator powered cabins to a company called Astley Cabins. This has given us the finances to add further full solar - no generator cabins to our fleet. Many other operators are reluctant to stock solar units as they don't want to cannibalize their existing diesel fleet. This is obviously something we don't have to concern ourselves with."

Reactive Hire's ability to offer a clear point of difference within the marketplace has been typical of its approach in recent years, as has its customer-led focus. "During Covid the demand for welfare units was obviously astronomical, so everything we had was out on hire. Many of our competitors were therefore buying more units

to meet demand, which at the time seemed a little short-sighted because normality was always going to return at some point. We therefore didn't really buy anything ourselves during this period, preferring to just cross-hire anything that we needed over and above the usual demand. The main objective was to look after our existing customer base that we knew would be coming back to us time and time again."

This loyalty has also been reflected in the success that Reactive has had in converting its customers to go down the generator-free route. "We've been slowly turning our customer base onto solar powered cabins and a growing number are turning their back on diesel. Yes, they are a little bit more expensive, but the fuel savings and the environmental benefits are clear.

"Our vision is to be the greenest, most environmentally friendly cabin business out there. I'm extremely proud of how far we've come but there's still more progress to be made. As part of this process, we will build further on our relationship with Boss Cabins,



“WE’VE SUBSEQUENTLY GROWN THE BUSINESS NATURALLY THROUGH OUR EXPANDING CUSTOMER BASE AND WE’VE INCREASED TURNOVER FROM AROUND £400,000 IN 2016 TO ITS CURRENT LEVEL OF ABOUT £4M. AT THE SAME TIME WE’VE BEEN CAREFUL TO BUILD THE INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE GROWTH WE’VE SEEN.”

JOHN MCCLURE,
MANAGING DIRECTOR

and we continue to have a strong pipeline of products that they’ll be delivering to us in the months ahead. We’re certainly committed from an investment point of view.

“More importantly, we’ve got such a fantastic team here that we’re able to cater for all our customers’ needs and beyond and deliver nationwide. We’ve got 24 employees, so we remain small enough to really have that personal touch with customers. They don’t have to go through a call centre or customer service centre. I still look after many of our customers personally and they’ll phone me directly when necessary. My team all know our customers by names and will bend over backwards for them.”

The strong progress that Reactive has been making is all the more impressive given the challenges that all companies have to contend with in recent years, such as rising prices and increased utility costs. “It hasn’t been the easiest situation, but we’ve got an extremely savvy



finance manager who’s fantastic and is very scrupulous when it comes to controlling overheads. If anything, the rising cost of energy has helped underline the importance of sustainable power and the savings that can be made. We’re therefore keen to further promote the benefits that our range can offer. Obviously, there are pressures on all businesses at the moment but we’re confident that we can provide cost-effective and reliable cabin solutions.”

As it rapidly approaches its tenth anniversary next year, in the meantime it is clear that Reactive Hire is keen to keep the momentum going. “We’ve got some exciting additions to the fleet coming as we strengthen our relationship with Boss Cabins as we develop further into a truly eco-friendly business,” says Mr McClure. “Some companies are perhaps guilty of greenwashing but we are 100 per cent committed to providing the most sustainable solutions available in the

marketplace. The customer base is building nicely but I would like to get more Tier 1 contractors onboard if possible, although it can be tricky when you’re relatively less well-known in the industry. That said, we’re more than happy with our existing clients and they will always be our main priority and we will continue to ensure that we don’t let them down. With this in mind, we will keep developing our infrastructure, our range and our team. It would be great if we were able to add another depot to the business within the next 12 months too. We want to keep growing but it has to be manageable. We certainly wouldn’t want to overstretch ourselves and risk compromising the quality of service we offer.”

It is this customer-led approach that has served Reactive Hire so well, coupled with its total commitment to providing sustainable cabins. It therefore looks like it will increasingly become the first port of call for businesses searching for truly eco-friendly solutions.

INVESTMENT PAVES WAY FOR EXPANSION

AS BEFITS SUCH A WELL-ESTABLISHED AND FORWARD-THINKING COMPANY, THE HOLLINGSWORTH GROUP HAS ALWAYS STRIVED TO HAVE A MODERN FLEET OF MACHINERY TO SUPPORT ITS DIVERSE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES, WHICH INCLUDES THE DESIGN, BUILD, MAINTENANCE AND FINANCING OF BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

“ We invest in plant every four years and have recently purchased some new machinery for the construction arm of the group,” explains Paul Hollingsworth, CEO. “We don’t employ any mechanics as we always buy the kit brand new and under full warranty, so we know it’s not only safe and reliable, but more efficient too.”

Hollingsworth Group, which is based in Deeside, boasts many of UK industry’s most significant names within its list of blue-chip clients. The fact it operates at the top end of the marketplace means continual investment is key and it has acquired new plant to support its plans to expand its construction operation, Hollingsworth Ellery.

This investment in new equipment and machinery has been in the region of £1m and includes seven new Hitachi Excavators. In addition, Hollingsworth Ellery has bolstered its team with the addition of senior staff to further strengthen its capabilities.

As well as acquiring new plant, Hollingsworth is paved the way up for significant expansion into construction with four key appointments: operations manager, Peter Blake; two quantity surveyors, Mike Steen and Chris Wardle; and buyer, Jim Cartridge. It is hoped they will help the business increase turnover by in excess of 50% to £25m from its pre-lockdown £16m. The company is already making strong progress in achieving this objective with a healthy order book.

An element of the expansion involves an increase in turnkey construction work on small residential sites including the development of specialist accommodation for the care and health sectors that will be carried out by Hollingsworth Ellery.

The Hollingsworth Group was founded in 1988 by brothers Paul and Shaun Hollingsworth and has grown into the leading civil engineering, construction and development group with North Wales and the North West.

Specialising in bespoke construction solutions and innovative design, its clients include such well-known names such as Airbus, dairy giants Müller, Hanson, Vauxhall Ellesmere Port, Veolia and Balfour Beatty, for which it has been working on strengthening the sea defences on the Denbighshire-Conwy coast.



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SINCE IT WAS ESTABLISHED IN 2011, REFLEX VEHICLE HIRE HAS CONTINUALLY GROWN AND DEVELOPED THANKS TO A COMBINATION OF ONGOING INVESTMENT AND ACQUISITIONS. MOST RECENTLY THIS HAS INCLUDED THE PURCHASE OF HIREWAY VEHICLE RENTAL, WHICH ADDED TWO NEW LOCATIONS (GLASGOW AND MANCHESTER) TO ITS ARMOURY, ALONG WITH 900 VEHICLES AND 11 NEW STAFF.

In terms of the services that support Reflex's operation, these include an in-house fleet team complete with a telematics team. It services and maintains all its vehicles internally with its in-house maintenance team, workshop staff and mobile technicians. It now offers completely bespoke vehicles, complete with everything from racking to livery to towbars etc, which are all done in-house

supported by the company's 155-strong workforce.

Thanks to the strength of its offering, Reflex is able to cater for the needs of a wide range of B2B customers in various sectors including rail, utilities, construction, facilities management and civil engineering.

The company's main USPs are its safety as standard promise with its Drive with Reflex service offering (tracking and dash cams in all vehicles

as standard), as well as its significant focus on people (including staff and customers) and first-class customer service. It aims to deliver vehicles where its competitors can't.


Reflex wants to continue to grow and strengthen their position in the market, so if the correct opportunity arose then it is open to it. It is always looking to add to its fleet, although buying new vehicles has been challenging because of pricing and lack of supply to the


rental/leasing industry.

As we all start to progress towards a greener future, Reflex understands the pressures fleet managers can face when developing their EV strategy. The company can then support its customers through this journey. This is where EV:IE (Electric Vehicle Information Exchange) comes in.

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FURTHER AWARD RECOGNITION UNDERLINES CONSISTENCY

IT IS TESTAMENT TO WJ GROUNDWATER'S STANDING WITHIN THE INDUSTRY THAT FOR THE SECOND SUCCESSIVE YEAR THEY HAVE BEEN SHORTLISTED FOR A GROUND ENGINEERING AWARD WITHIN THE CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR CATEGORY. WHILST THEY JUST MISSED OUT LAST TIME, HAVING BEEN HIGHLY COMMENDED, THEY COULD WELL GO ONE BETTER THIS YEAR ON THE STRENGTH OF THE SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL INSTRUMENTATION & MONITORING SERVICE.

“We've been very strong in every area this year, but one real highlight has been how

well our environmental team have been performing on their biggest ever contract,” explains Tom Rendall, Design Manager. “It's a high value, multi-year contract, so it's really positive that we've been able to make such successful progress in this area. It's a shining case study of what we can offer and is a clear demonstration of how we've been able to diversify our offering and exceed technically. This ability to adapt, diversify and deliver in new markets, as well as continuing to perform highly in established sectors, has really counted in our favour with the award nomination.”

WJ Groundwater's success in its environmental monitoring contract, comprising of a high volume of groundwater and surface water sampling, spot flow gauging, telemetric instrumentation, aquatic ecology



surveys and hydrogeomorphology assessments is even more impressive given the scale of the project. As Nick Gigg, Project Manager, outlines: “With over 500 monitoring locations, 4,000 survey visits so far this year, and over 12,000 surveys since the project began, it has taken careful management to ensure the project is being delivered successfully. It is also a large project geographically stretching 80km, so it has been a logistical challenge at times,



and it is testament to the team that it has been delivered so successfully to date. As the work has developed and progressed, we've had to be quite dynamic and adaptable in terms of how we programme the works.”

The client's Project Manager overseeing these works has said: “[WJ Groundwater's] ability to adapt and accommodate changing site conditions and stakeholder demands has truly set them apart. They've been consistently navigating the vast scope of the HS2 project with dependability that has truly made them a partner we can count on. Their strong inter-team collaboration underpins the critical environmental monitoring process, setting some of the highest standards in the industry. As we advance further into the HS2 project, I look forward to their continued involvement and hopefully future collaborations.”

Another individual who has played a key role in the success of the environmental monitoring service is Ula Markowicz, Technical Manager, who stressed the desire to continue developing and growing WJ Groundwater's offerings in this sector. “Throughout our history repeat business has been key and we strive to ensure that each project we complete leads on to another. It was therefore vital that we got it right first time on this particular contract, even in the face of the scale of the project. The use of web-based field forms, live databases and visualisation platforms has enabled us to streamline our data management whilst ensuring our quality assurance and control levels remain high.

“We're really pleased that the works we've been delivering so far have been to a really high standard and we're hopeful that it will lead to further projects in the future.”

While the success in environmental monitoring is a





major plus for WJ Groundwater and its future prospects, it is not the only reason the company can look forward with confidence, as Tom points out: “We’ve seen strong performances across the entire business, with major infrastructure projects across the UK having played a significant role in that. In addition, we have seen a major uptick in the requirement for ground source energy schemes providing not only a boost to WJ, but also raising the profile and viability of these systems as the drive for cleaner energy continues. By diversifying our services, we are not only delivering a more complete service to our customers but also becoming more resilient to individual market fluctuations. At the same time, we are continuing to innovate and have recently introduced an improved version of our web-based dashboard and visualisation platform that provides our clients with near real-time data, system status and trigger alert/ alarming functionality on their projects to keep them informed of current trends and performance to enable them to make the best and well informed engineering decisions.”

It is this desire to keep improving that has served WJ Groundwater so well over the years and which has once again seen it in the running for the Contractor of the Year accolade at the Ground Engineering Awards. While it remains to be seen whether it is successful this time around, what looks certain is that the company can look forward to further growth across the business thanks to its forward-thinking approach.



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AWARD UNDERLINES QUALITY APPROACH

IT IS TESTAMENT TO THE QUALITY OF GREENSLEEVES CARE'S APPROACH THAT IT RECENTLY ENJOYED SUCCESS AT THE LAST-EVER PINDERS HEALTHCARE DESIGN AWARDS WITH THE TEAM BEING PROUD TO RECEIVE THE 2023 AWARD IN THE BEST EXTERIOR SPACE CATEGORY FOR BUCKLER'S LODGE, THE PURPOSE-BUILT PROPERTY OPENED IN CROWTHORNE, BERKSHIRE, IN EARLY 2022.

“

We believe in form that follows function, so everything we do is geared to deliver

high-quality care,” says Chris Doherty, Greensleeves' Chief Financial Officer, whose mandate includes the group's property portfolio. “Awards that recognise the design quality of our homes are always welcome as they speak to that approach. We share the success with our many partners across development, construction, fit-out, consultancy and more, and we're delighted to have been recognised in this way.”

The design at Buckler's Lodge promotes a healthy and welcoming place for residents, colleagues and visitors. It aims to encourage behaviours known to improve residents' quality of life and well-being, such as central communal spaces with a variety of atmospheres, a range of accessible outdoor spaces, and large well-proportioned rooms. The abundance of facilities at Buckler's Lodge promote choice for residents, be that for privacy or to socialise with fellow residents, their family and friends.

“With the home set in over two acres of grounds surrounded by unspoiled countryside and forest, it was important that the design both sat well in that setting and



made the most of it,” adds Chris. “Not only is it a stunning home with state-of-the-art facilities, but its design really allows anyone who lives, works or spends time there to make the most of the beautiful context it sits in.”

The strength of the offering at Buckler's Lodge has come on the back of considerable experience, as Greensleeves Care is a leading not-for-profit provider with over 25 years of history built on proud heritage. The organisation was born in 1997 to take forward a small family of care homes previously run by the then Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS).

Today the organisation is recognised as a leading not-for-profit care provider in the UK, consistently named among the top 20 in England, and delivers exceptional 24-hour residential,

dementia and nursing care to around 1,000 older people across our 28 care homes in England.

“Through our history, we have stayed true to a few key principles: we never forget we are guests in our residents' homes and we consider ourselves to be privileged to share those homes with them,” says Chief Executive Paul Newman, who has been at the helm of the charitable organisation for over a decade.

Greensleeves Care works across the full spectrum of care needs, from residential to dementia and nursing care. The group manages 28 homes and is looking to expand its portfolio. Most of its properties are concentrated in southern England and East Anglia, with some presence in the Midlands. The homes are a mix of converted properties full of character, and modern spacious



CHIEF EXECUTIVE
PAUL NEWMAN

purpose-built spaces.

The organisation, which has been gold accredited by Investors in People, employs over 1,600 talented colleagues, many of whom have been with the group for many years and even several decades.

Following the award win, Greensleeves is now keen to not rest on its laurels and is instead striving to make the most of the opportunities available within the marketplace, as Chris outlines: “We believe there is a clear and growing demand across the country for care that is high-quality and fit for purpose. For us, the availability of skilled care workers will be a key driver in the location of new homes, along with the traditional demand-based demographic evaluations.”

As a charitable organisation, Greensleeves' focus is on

providing high-quality care and running a sustainable and thriving family of homes. Any surplus generated is invested back into its services and used to continually improve the experience of residents.

“Our business model and financial robustness also allow us to offer unique assurances to families, like our Home for Life Commitment – which means we don’t ask any of our residents to leave one of our homes if they use up their personal funds,” explains Chris.

“We’ve always been proud of the quality of our services and our approach as an employer,” says Paul. “We also know residents and colleagues really value our ethos.”

Like most in the sector, Greensleeves is also feeling

the challenge of attracting and retaining talented colleagues in care. While its workforce turnover remains considerably lower than the industry average, the group wants to do even better.

“We recently announced a sector-leading pay increase of £10.1 % for all our staff, and we continue to build on our package of benefits,” explains Paul. “We’re particularly proud of the progress we’ve made with our support for colleagues’ mental health and wellbeing. Our accessible app-based service really took off in a short period of time and 16% of colleagues are active on the app compared to around 9% only a few months ago.”

The desire for sensible expansion is in Greensleeves’ very foundations – its charitable

mission is to provide high-quality care to increasing numbers of older people in England.

“Over the past 10 years, we have seen exponential growth moving from 17 homes to 28 in 2023, through a mix of acquisitions and new builds,” says Shona King, Director of Business Development. “Our long-term ambition is to continue building on that growth and expand our social impact.”

Looking to the next 12 months, the goal at Greensleeves Care is to continue its social impact mission of delivering quality care to yet more older adults in England. This year, the organisation will continue progressing its strategy to 2025, which sees the teams focusing on a handful of key priorities, as Paul explains: “A key focus is

putting quality first – including through progressing our digital transformation programme. Another priority is inspiring our people – recruiting, training and retaining to ensure our turnover stays low and that our people can develop and thrive while with us.”

“Growing sustainably remains at the heart of who we are and how we operate,” adds Shona. “This includes expanding the number of homes, progressing our net zero agenda, reprocurement where needed and extending our charitable and social impact to over 1,300 residents.”

It is clear that Greensleeves Care’s Pinders Healthcare Design Award win is clear evidence of the quality-led approach it has taken and it is sure to prove the winning formula for future success too.



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