

Hydrock

Headlines

Headlines is the newsletter of Hydrock: a leading provider of consultancy and specialist contracting services for construction, infrastructure and the environment

December 2009

Hydrock gets waste Wrap-ed up!



The government-created **WRAP scheme** (Waste & Resources Action Programme) has recognised Hydrock's work in waste management, inviting it to produce an 'exemplar' document detailing its own best practise in resource efficiency. The 'exemplar' document is an education tool which highlights Hydrock's methodology and results in a number of projects, and forms



just part of the wider WRAP scheme, which also invites

businesses to sign up to a commitment to reduce waste to landfill by half by 2012 and lead the UK into a greener future. Hydrock is well placed to take part in the scheme given its track record of assisting clients in reducing waste from site through remediation technologies, design expertise and value-added engineering which consistently saves clients millions of pounds.

The landfill target is in alignment with the Strategy for Sustainable Construction and with the construction industry responsible for roughly a third of all waste sent to landfill in the UK, a significant reduction across the industry will have a huge impact on total landfill levels. The WRAP scheme already has over 200 signatories in the industry, with the potential to divert 3m tonnes of construction, demolition and excavation waste from landfill. In the new year the exemplar document will be freely available via WRAP and directly from Hydrock.



I would just like to say...

Usually we get to this time of year and say 'hasn't the year gone quickly' - I suspect the construction industry will look back at 2009 and say 'it couldn't have gone quick enough!'. For many it has been an 'annus horribilis' but just think how much we will appreciate the good times when they return! As for Hydrock, we are busy on all fronts and delighted that our new offices in Woking and Solihull are winning and delivering work. Based on the size of some of

the projects we are discussing with clients from energy projects, to major infrastructure schemes, to mining, and with signs of life returning to core sectors like regeneration and development, we feel that the recession could be over, despite what Gordon Brown says. Many thanks to you, our clients for continuing to put your trust in Hydrock and I hope we have exceeded your expectations. You have all played a part in our continuing success and we look forward to working with you in 2010. It's going to be a tough and competitive market place, but we're ready for it. In the meantime, we wish you a Happy Christmas and a more prosperous New Year!

Dr Brian McConnell
Managing Director

Home Builders Bouncing Back!

A survey by the **Home Builders Federation (HBF)** shows that the slump in the housing market may well be past its worst with a marked easing in the rate of decline of new home prices and a busier than usual summer period. This has certainly been reflected in the level of activity of Hydrock's various consultancy teams; "We have seen a steady rise in enquiries across all our disciplines from our residential developer clients since the summer," commented Hydrock director Dr Matt Hilton (pictured).

"From ground investigations to land remediation, land stabilisation, flood risk assessment and structural and infrastructure engineering, there seems to be a significant increase in demand for our services at each stage of the development process."

HBF data also shows that mortgage approvals in the summer were up more than 50 per cent on last year, and that estate agents have been reporting rising levels of interest from new buyers for months. Speaking in September, Housing Minister John Healey said: "I am determined support for the sector will continue, from the £500m



investment for over 5,400 new affordable homes I recently confirmed, to our billion pound drive to get stalled developments back on track through the Kickstart programme." Meanwhile the Department for Communities and Local Government has revealed that



UK house prices rose by 1.2% in September, and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors found the results of an October survey were the strongest in favour of rising prices since December 2006.

Works start on England's first major zero-carbon development!

Hydrock has started work on a major green Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) project, Hanham Hall near Bristol, which is set to be the first large-scale 'Carbon Challenge' development in England. The project combines residential units with community structures, all geared to a more sustainable way of living. For client Barratt Developments plc, Hydrock is providing services in structural

engineering consultancy and geoenvironmental site investigation. The site will feature its own on-site biomass energy facility, allotments, orchard, cycle-routes, super-insulated homes decked out with the latest in energy-saving technology. Robert Napier, Chairman of the HCA, said: "In the current economic climate, it is even more important that we take steps towards achieving a low carbon future."



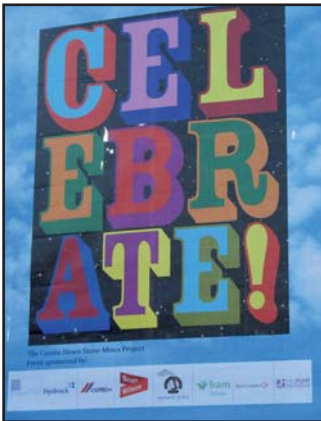


Merry Christmas From Hydrock redruk

In lieu of sending Christmas cards to clients, each year Hydrock makes a donation of similar value to a charity. Last year Hydrock staff selected the British Heart Foundation, and this year RedR is the recipient. The charity works to train people, including engineers, to aid in disaster relief and humanitarian crises. We hope you understand and support our decision.

Mine villagers give thanks

A Celebration event in Combe Down, Bath, was held at the end of September to give thanks to the Hydrock contractors who have worked for eight years to stabilise the abandoned mineworkings below the village. The event involved poetry, music, films and 3D projections of underground footage, Hydrock MD Dr Brian McConnell was handed an award by the Combe Down Heritage Society. As the landmark project draws to a close, one resident commented:



"The miners will really be missed and they have been a huge part of the community up here. They have all done a fantastic job."



1000-Unit Land Release Project Kicks Off

A £54m scheme to rejuvenate 3.5ha of run-down council housing and an abandoned school in Coventry has begun, following Hydrock's work to produce the contamination assessment, materials management plan, remediation strategy and implementation plan for the WEHM (Wood End, Henley Green and Manor Park) regeneration project. Hydrock will also be preparing the demolition strategy for the school, which sits above a previous landfill site.



Working for a consortium of clients (Bovis Homes, Keepmoat Homes, Westbury Partnerships, Whitefriars Housing Association and Coventry City Council), Hydrock produced a report which covered; a summary of risk with regards to controlled waters, plant life and human health posed by the soils on the site; presentation of the site specific remedial target values (RTVs); and presentation of method statements for the remediation of the site. This is the first of four phases of the project, which will lead to 1,000 new homes being developed in the regenerated area. The scheme is a part of the "New Deal for Communities" in Coventry, a community-led initiative aimed at improving neglected and disadvantaged local communities.

Hydrock Wins Health & Safety Nomination

Hydrock has been shortlisted for a prestigious health and safety award by Ground Engineering magazine. The awards celebrate the industry's achievements and are an opportunity to recognise and reward those companies, individuals or projects that have accomplished significant results.

Hydrock's nomination reflects a health and safety culture which exceeds normal good working practice in conditions which are often potentially hazardous.



Former Red Arrows home to become Enterprise Hub

Hydrock has been appointed to complete infrastructure assessment and site investigation works on two proposed industrial development sites of 7,000m² each, at the prestigious 52ha Kemble Enterprise Park in Wiltshire. This is the first phase of a £50m overall scheme to develop the site - which was formerly the home of the Red Arrows and before that an aircraft repair centre in WWII - into a sustainable business centre harnessing renewable energy sources such as wind energy and geothermal heating, becoming the first Enterprise Hub in Wiltshire.



Hydrock Director Wins IoD Award

Dr Mike Higgins has been named IoD (Institute of Directors) Director of the Year for the East Midlands, 2009. The IoD recognised Hydrock director Dr Higgins' achievements as the region's most hardworking and innovative business leader, chosen from nominations made by IoD members. The awards celebrate those directors who demonstrate exceptional vision and leadership qualities. Ron Lynch, IoD East Midlands regional director, commented on the event's winners: "They have shown exceptional leadership and gone above and beyond in their work to develop their companies and profitability."



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