Affordable Housing through JV North Framework

Casey’s construction division has been given a boost this month with two exciting new project wins in the North West. The schemes reflect the increasing need for quality affordable housing and will help to alleviate increasing pressures on social housing waiting lists for our clients.

Egerton and Gower Streets, St Helens

Casey is delighted to be working with Helena Partnerships again on an exciting new development of 27 properties in St Helens.

The scheme has been procured through the JV North contractors framework which Casey was appointed to back in 2013.

Casey have secured the contract for the design and build construction of new build dwellings on an infill site at Egerton Street and Gower Street, St Helens.

The scheme comprises 17 two-bed, two storey houses and 10 three-bedroom, two storey houses.

The dwellings have been designed to achieve low energy and carbon dioxide emissions to meet current Building Regulations Part L, using thermally efficient and airtight construction and will achieve low carbon emissions on all dwelling types. Heating and hot water will be met from condensing boilers.

The scheme is being built to Code Level 3.

Peter Varley, Contracts Manager, said, “It’s fantastic news that Casey are starting work on regenerating this under-used brownfield site. The scheme will make a real difference to the lives of local people in St Helens, as well as improving facilities for the wider community and providing a boost to the local economy.”

Oak Tree Drive, Dukinfield

Casey have been awarded their first ever contract with New Charter Housing Association through the JV North contractors framework.

The scheme comprises 12 high quality apartments, arranged in two buildings. The arrangement of the buildings along the street edges to the north and west wraps around a south facing area designed to be a pleasant sunny shared garden court. The gardens will further benefit from the retention of mature sycamore trees on the southern boundary.

The existing site sits within a residential area, which is a mix of social housing and privately owned housing.

This scheme is designed to ‘knit together’ the street scene and complete the line of development in a charismatic manner.

The properties have been designed in line with Standards and Quality in Development, Lifetime Homes and Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3. These standards will result in apartments that are reasonably flexible and adaptable and will be energy efficient to help reduce running costs and avoid fuel poverty for future residents.

Our Waithlands Road project completed in October 2013 for Rochdale Boroughwide Housing is a finalist in the Building Excellence Awards (North West Region), held by LABC. The building was designed by Rochdale Architects, CJ Partnership.

The Building Excellence Awards are all about the essence of good buildings. Finalists are not judged on architectural beauty, but on the “Excellence” shown from a construction and technical building control point of view. These awards showcase buildings and design teams that have had to tussle with technical issues, difficult sites, innovative and creative solutions.

Award winners will be announced in April.

To submit articles or information for this newsletter, contact Debbie Hubbard on 07834 867580 or debbie.hubbard@casey.co.uk.
Health, Safety and Welfare

Dangerous machines in unpredictable, public environments

Driving is the most dangerous thing most of us do on a regular basis — you are operating a potentially dangerous machine in an unpredictable, public environment. It requires full concentration at all times.

Driver distraction
A study of in-vehicle video footage of driver behaviour taken from over 2 million miles of journeys found that 22% of crashes could be caused, at least in part, by driver distraction. It also showed that drivers who perform a secondary task at the wheel (such as talking on the phone, texting or reading emails, eating etc) are 2 to 3 times more likely to crash.

Many people have questioned whether it is rational to ban hand-held phones when it is impossible to ban conversations with passengers. However, research comparing drivers on phones with drivers with chatty passengers found drivers on phones had much longer reaction times and worse speed control.

Some drivers are still unaware that talking on a hands-free kit is distracting from driving, believing that it is holding the phone that is a distraction rather than the call itself. Research shows the call is the main distraction, and hands-free calls cause almost the same level of risk.

It can, in fact, be illegal to use a hands-free phone while driving. Depending on the individual circumstances of an accident, a driver could be charged with ‘failing to have proper control of their vehicle’.

Driver tiredness
Driver tiredness is one of the biggest killers on our roads, particularly on motorways and other monotonous roads. They tend to be high-speed crashes because drivers do not break before crashing so the risk of death or serious injury is greater than in other types of crash.

The highest risk group is young male drivers who are most likely to crash due to tiredness in the mornings after little or no sleep. Older male drivers are also at risk during the mid-afternoon, when it is common to experience a ‘dip’ in your body clock.

Nearly half of tiredness-related crashes involve someone driving a commercial vehicle.

Drink / Drug driving

Drink driving is still one of the biggest killers on our roads. One in seven UK road deaths result from drink drive crashes where the driver was over the limit.

There is no doubt, also, that illegal drugs have a variety of very serious negative effects on driving ability and that drug driving is a major killer on our roads. In the UK, around 18% of people killed in road crashes have traces of illegal drugs in their blood, with cannabis being the most common.

Research has shown that taking cannabis almost doubles the risk of being involved in a fatal crash.

Different drugs affect people in different ways and the effects can last for days, sometimes without someone realising.

Alcohol is a depressant drug and even small amounts (such as half a pint of lager) affect drivers’ reaction times, judgement and co-ordination. What’s more, it creates a false sense of confidence meaning they are less able to assess their impairment and are more inclined to take risks.

There’s no way of knowing exactly how long it takes to sober up completely after drinking, but it’s longer than many people think. For example, if you finish drinking 3 pints of strong lager or a bottle of 12% ABV wine (many are stronger) at 11pm, you may not be rid of the alcohol until at least 9am, but it could take much longer depending on factors such as your weight.

4 x 4 vehicles
Did you know that a pedestrian hit by a large 4 x 4 is more than twice as likely to be killed than if they were hit by a normal sized car?

So, do you give your full attention at the wheel? And are you leaving enough room between you and the vehicle in front?
working well together

Meet the team — Laneside Quarry

We are pleased to introduce our team from Laneside Quarry, a landfill operation in Kirkheaton.

From left to right: Richard Hartley (Projects Manager), Gary Oldroyd (Booking-in Clerk), John Heaton (Machine Driver), Avinus (Nat) Kennedy (Machine Driver), Clive Heptinstall (Machine Driver), Chris Ward (Site Foreman), and Jason Jones (Machine Driver).

This quarry and brickworks site in Kirkheaton has enormous environmental significance and a great deal of work had to be carried out before filling operations could commence.

Surveys carried out on behalf of Casey, of the ponds and habitats at the quarry, showed that the site was home to an estimated 10,000 Great Crested Newts, Smooth Newts, Common Frogs and Toads.

The Great Crested Newt is a protected species and prior to the detection of those at the quarry, there were no known records of the species in the area. The site is now ranked as one of the top 20 in England for Great Crested Newts.

Before any works could start, it was necessary to clear the site of the newts and create new habitats for them, ensuring no newts were killed or injured during the process.

Casey worked with the Environmental Research and Advisory Partnership and DEFRA to ensure that the works were set up in the best possible way, and that at no point during the activities, would any Great Crested Newts become isolated from their breeding habitat, food or shelter.

The first stage of the clearance involved the building of new exclusion fencing and pitfall traps (buckets sunk to ground level). This fencing directed the newts toward the traps which were emptied on a daily basis, with all captured newts moved to an area outside the exclusion fencing.

At the same time, new habitat for the newts was created around the margins of the site. This involved excavation of around 30 new ponds, grassland seeding, scrub planting and the creation of several hibernacula (turf covered piles of rubble with many cracks and crevices where the newts can shelter). It was important that these new habitats had enough time to establish before any newts were transferred to the area.

The Great Crested Newt translocation works were completed in November 2013, and we estimate that in excess of 25,000 newts have been re-homed.

Monitoring of the newts will continue until 2021.

Working with you

Here’s Carl installing a bird house at the home of Mr Sutherland, an Eastlands Homes resident in Gorton.

Carl, our Site Foreman, made the boxes himself out of waste timber and they have been donated to residents.

Here’s hoping the box provides a nice warm home for a family of fledglings this spring.

Casey are carrying out works for First Choice Homes Oldham, including upgrading lighting, smoke alarms and doors.

The image below shows Casey staff holding an open day at Laburnum Community Rooms in Shaw to explain to residents exactly what works will be carried out in their block and how it might affect them.

We’ve donated a new kitchen for the Victoria Community Centre in Whitefield.
How building design affects performance

Good daylight in schools leads to a
- 10% increase in overall performance among pupils
- 20% faster progression in mathematics in schools
- 26% faster progression in reading in class

Workers have
- 25% Better memory function when they have views from their buildings
- There are gains of up to 11% in productivity in offices with fresher air
- Offices with access to daylight and operable windows experience an increase of up to 18% in productivity

Green buildings can deliver
- Decrease in waste output 70%
- Reduction in energy use 30-50%
- Reduction in water usage 40%
- Decrease in carbon emissions 35%

Did you know, foundations for the aquatics centre, handball arena and the Olympic stadium in London used concrete with more than 30% of recycled materials?

The construction and maintenance of buildings and other structures is responsible for about half of British carbon dioxide emissions.

Office plants can
- Increase staff productivity by 38%
- Boost staff well-being by up to 47%
- And increase creativity by 45%

Workers

Office plants

Did you know, foundations for the aquatics centre, handball arena and the Olympic stadium in London used concrete with more than 30% of recycled materials?

Sources: World Health Organisation, Heschong Mahone Group, World Green Building Council, Exeter University, Stern Review, UN, Olympic Delivery Authority, Salford University, Carnegie Mellon University, Canada Green Building Council

There is always a lot of input required to produce this newsletter, and it’s a team effort. We would like to say a big Thank You to all contributors to this issue: James Billing, Sue Croll, Sarah Harwood, Caroline Jones, Richard Hartley and Tony Barry.