

ONESIXFOUR

SUMMER 2016

THE MAGAZINE FOR EVERYONE
AT WILLMOTT DIXON



DESIGNED FOR SUCCESS

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BIGGEST NEW
CULTURAL
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Nic Simpkin, right, has arrived as chief executive, supported by deputy chief executive Andrew Telfer



RESIDENTIAL AMBITIONS UNVEILED

OUR PLANS FOR SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH IN THE HOUSING MARKET WERE UNDERLINED BY THE RECENT MOVE TO PUT ALL OUR RESIDENTIAL SKILL-SETS UNDER A NEW BRAND, WILLMOTT RESIDENTIAL.

Bringing together Prime Place, Be:here and Willmott Partnership Homes under the new brand will help drive further internal collaboration and better utilisation of synergies.

It is the next phase to meet our aspirations to be one of the UK's pre-eminent residential specialists by increasing our scope to acquire more land and undertake larger developments.

Rick Willmott explains, "Our new company provides the required scale, differentiation and diversity to take us to a new level in a competitive housing market."

LEADERSHIP

We've assembled a top team to lead Willmott Residential. Andrew Telfer becomes deputy chief executive following his pivotal role growing our development capability, and his role includes overseeing our house building activities with the support of Willmott Partnership Homes chief operating officer Charlie Scherer, who now reports to him.

We also welcome Nic Simpkin who joins as chief executive of Willmott Residential and Andy Taylor as finance director. Both Nic and Andy bring impressive track-records in housing development that include time at Berkeley and St Modwen respectively.

ALL CHANGE

The change means that all of Willmott Partnership Homes sites are being rebranded to the new company name. This will see the familiar yellow hoardings change to purple to reflect the company's new branding.

Rick continues, "Willmott Residential has a significant presence through Prime Place and Be:here, with 5,000 units on site, under control or in planning. In addition, Willmott Partnership Homes builds 2,000 homes a year with an expanding geographic presence.

"We now want Willmott Residential to assemble a larger and longer dated land bank and have started a process to determine how best to provide a substantial injection of new capital, whether through debt, private placing or public listing. This is a thorough process, with different options being considered we remain open-minded as to the best route to take. When we have a carefully considered plan our people will, on all occasions, be the first to know."

The Victorian-era inside of Alexandra Palace will be preserved for future generations



PEAK INSIDE VICTORIAN TIME CAPSULE

HITCHIN'S RESTORATION OF THE ICONIC ALEXANDRA PALACE IS LIFTING THE LID ON A GOLDMINE OF VICTORIAN-ERA ARCHITECTURE THAT HASN'T BEEN SEEN FOR DECADES.

Under operations manager Steve Harnett, we're refurbishing the Palace's East Wing to turn its world-famous former BBC Studios into an immersive birthplace-of-TV experience. Before that happens, we have to bring back the original 1870s grandeur, and as work begins, it's giving the team a sense of stepping back in time as they see the original, if decaying, design features.

HIDDEN GEM

Three million people enjoy Alexandra Park and Palace every year, but when watching bands like Florence and the Machine or cheering on the darts, just yards away there's an astounding theatre and Britain's first-ever broadcasting TV studio, lying hidden and derelict.

Steve says, "It's been a jaw - dropping experience to see inside such a famous venue that has been untouched for decades. It's like stepping back into the 19th century when you see the décor. Our role now is to protect the East Wing's historic features, strip out dilapidated modern fittings and remove asbestos. The Victorians built Alexandra Palace to entertain, inform and educate visitors. Our job is to keep the Palace doing just that."

Work will be completed in 2017.



Ally Pally team: Steve Harnett, 2nd from left, with his team outside the famous mast

LEADING ON DIVERSITY

DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE IS THE KEY TO AVOIDING A FUTURE SKILLS CRISIS, SAYS OUR CHIEF HR OFFICER RICK LEE.

We are passionate about encouraging people from all walks of life into our industry and breaking down the stereotypes that can be associated with construction. One area we are focussed on is attracting more women into the industry; construction is still largely male dominated and we would like to redress the balance to create the strongest possible workforce.

We have twice as many women in our group than the average construction company: 22 percent as opposed to 11 percent- that's good news, but the UK workforce is comprised of 46% women, so the construction industry is lagging behind. To avoid future skills shortages and ensure we employ the best people we need to make sure our industry and company alike, hold a wide appeal and that we promote the large variety of opportunities available in a career in construction.

MAIN AGENDA

How we build a more diverse workforce is a hot topic in the industry. On some of the larger infrastructure projects, such as London's Tideway super sewer, clients are setting targets to encourage better gender balance. With the construction industry having a big pipeline of work, this action is becoming important to safeguard against a capacity gap.

"The best people are always hard to find," says Rick Lee, Chief HR Officer. "It becomes more challenging after a recession because large numbers of people who leave don't come back. This means our capacity to build coming out of a recession is constrained."

There are other reasons for wanting to attract a more diverse workforce. Research shows that diverse teams are more likely to come up with a wider range of ideas and solutions. And, as our industry is growing and changing and new technologies are coming to the forefront, different skill sets and competencies are required.

FINDING A PRACTICAL SOLUTION

There are several strands to achieving greater gender balance: creating the right working environment and culture, attracting young women to join the industry and having women in senior roles so that younger women can see there is a career path ahead of them. Rick says the next management development programme for directors and potential directors has a higher proportion of women than ever before.

"The reason is that we have always recruited exceptional female management trainees who are now coming through the pipeline," says Rick. "And we have also recruited talented people from outside the business as well. So whilst we have made progress in all of these areas, we're not resting on our laurels - we plan to do even more."

According to Rick, our 'Your Say' survey demonstrates that women enjoy working for us. "Women tell us that they feel more positively about working for Willmott Dixon than men do," he says.

IMPROVING BENEFITS

Another way of helping to support gender balance in our workforce is by supporting both men and women achieve the challenging balance of raising a family with progressing their career. By improving our maternity and paternity leave and the keep-in-touch programme, we've helped parents get back into the swing of things when they return.

There are also plans to harness technology to allow people to work more flexibly where appropriate. "We've just introduced some clear guidance around flexible working, which will help people get the job done and achieve a good work life balance," says Rick.



GEMMA WELSHER

Pre-construction manager Gemma Welsher has worked for Willmott Dixon for 10 years, starting as a project surveyor at our Bristol office and now based in Cardiff.

"Willmott Dixon has always supported me in my career progression over the years. I've never felt that I was stagnating," says Gemma, who had just returned from a one-week residential leadership course at Henley Business School when we caught up with her.

Gemma says that she has always been encouraged to take time off for family commitments, and in turn encourages members of her team to do the same. Having taken a two-year career break after her second child was born, during which time she worked remotely for us on a contract basis, she applauds the recent changes to maternity and paternity rights. "It will make a huge difference," she says.

"I think the most important aspect in achieving gender balance in construction is awareness; the industry is still quite stereotyped and in reality, regardless of gender, there are opportunities that will appeal to everyone."

Rick also highlights our Dignity and Respect policy as an important foundation for creating the right culture. "We want to sustain a culture that treats people fairly, values and respects them," he says, adding that a new poster campaign has been launched to reinforce this message.

Looking ahead ten years, one of the most important groups we must target is tomorrow's workforce. Rick believes that attracting female school leavers is one of the most important ways that companies like ours can achieve a better gender balance. "Much of the problem is that the construction industry can be stereotyped and associated only with trades, education in this area is vital to promote all potential career routes."

"We are also working with other companies to improve the image of construction," says Rick. A new CITB website for young people who are considering a career in construction has been launched. The careers pages on The Hub are the most visited and potential recruits will find videos of women in Willmott Dixon talking about their careers.

"We are also working to build long-term relationships with several girls' schools around the country, so that we can communicate the broad range of career choices and paths that the industry offers," says Rick.

Rick is keen to emphasise that, "we want to attract, retain, develop and promote the best people, irrespective of gender but in order to do that we must ensure the industry is appealing to all."



EMMA BILSON

"One of the great things about Willmott Dixon is the flexibility: you are not pigeon holed," says Emma Bilson, who began with us as an assistant design co-ordinator before moving to bid management and is now a pre-construction manager at Cobham.

Emma's original roles were all about technical detail, but what she really enjoys is strategy and leading a team. "I love pulling a team together and inspiring everyone to work together to create something different in the eye of the customer," she says.

Gender is never an issue at Willmott Dixon, says Emma. "My mentors have always inspired me to be forward and driven, regardless of my age or sex," she says. "It's a warm, friendly and fun environment where everyone is on the same footing."



KAREN CAMP

Karen Camp has been with us for 16 years, working in three different parts of the group, and moving four years ago to Interiors where she is commercial director.

While some women feel that their career progression is slowed by breaks to have children, Karen's experience has been quite the opposite: "I was promoted in 2004 to surveying manager and 2006 to commercial manager; both times I was six months pregnant," she says. "I was promoted to commercial director five months after returning from having my third child. That's quite reflective of our company: it is very progressive."

Karen also runs the management trainee programme at Interiors. "Seeing people develop and flourish is highly rewarding," she says. Having spent ten years with another contractor before joining us, she believes our training programme is the best in the industry. "The graduates and trainees tell us that no other company offers such an extensive and attractive programme," she says.

"We have recruited exceptional female management trainees who are now coming through the ranks"

Rick Lee



Chief HR Officer Rick Lee: "we want to attract, retain, develop and promote the best people"



COBHAM'S TALL AMBITION

ON A SMALL PLOT NEXT TO ALDGATE TUBE STATION, THE CITY'S LATEST HIGH-RISE BUILDING IS TAKING SHAPE.

A Cobham team led by construction manager Terry O'Neil is the latest to be adding to the capital's rich architecture with the 13-storey Dorsett City hotel, which is right next to the 18th-century St Botolph Church.

It comes as a Hitchin team are putting the finishing touches to Stanhope's Summit House in nearby Shoreditch (see page 22) and Partnership Homes are down the road in Canary Wharf, building out the 1,176-home Aberfeldy Village for Prime Place.

SUPERSTITION

One feature of Dorsett City hotel is there is no 4th floor, as the Chinese do not like number 4 on buildings so the Hong Kong-based client left it out of the drawings. Terry says, "We did get some enquiries from the public at the start about the number on the lift shaft jumping from 3 to 5. It's one of those customs you have in the Far East."

This will be Dorsett's second hotel in London and when complete in December 2016, it will provide 270 bedrooms along with a restaurant, fitness centre and 1,600 sq ft of meeting areas for the business community.

It's just the latest hotel we're involved in, following the Novotel in Hounslow, a Holiday Inn at London Southend Airport and Interiors' on-going refurbishment work for Travelodge.

Cobham MD Roger Forsdyke explains: "Dorsett underlines our strength of delivering tall buildings on tight, constrained sites in urban locations. When you take into account similar projects by Housing, Cobham and Interiors, we're probably one of the top three biggest contractors in London at the moment."



The only way is up: Terry O'Neil looks skyward in the shadow of the 'walkie talkie'



DOOR OPENS FOR

RESIDENTIAL EXPANSION

THESE ARE HEADY DAYS FOR WILLMOTT RESIDENTIAL, THE NEW BRAND FOR OUR RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES.

It brings together complimentary skill sets that make it one of the country's most significant residential specialists, with a future set on expansion both geographically and by size.

Willmott Residential's new chief executive Nic Simpkin brings an impeccable pedigree of success in housing development as the former finance director at Berkeley, and by teaming up with deputy chief executive Andrew Telfer, it makes for one of the industry's most potent leadership teams. Add in new finance director Andy Taylor who joins from St Modwen and you have a board at Willmott Residential equipped to deliver on the ambitions strategic plans.

AMBITION

From a standing start less than ten years ago, our development capabilities now make us a top ten player in London and the South East. Through Prime Place and Be:here, who have both become major brands in their own

right under MDs Brian Brady and Matthew Pullen, we now have over 5,000 homes on site or in the pipeline going through planning. Importantly, both can operate together to accelerate development, like at Aberfeldy Village and Brentford FC, or independently on their own sites.

With new land opportunities emerging weekly, the role of Willmott Residential will be to unlock new funding solutions capable of growing Prime Place and Be:here's land bank and doubling the pipeline in two years.

Nic says, "Our business can grow and become as synonymous to housing creation as my former company and household names like Barratt and Taylor Wimpey. We have the same quality of people, and now the scope to realise the potential we've shown for the past three years."

QUALITY BUILDER

Equally central to Residential's future is the newly named Willmott Partnership Homes. Under chief operating officer Charlie Scherer, it's expanded from its core South East base into the Midlands and North, becoming a market leader in key sectors like care and retirement, alongside traditional new homes.

Under Charlie's plans for being 'No 1 by Reputation', the company is also rolling out a host of initiatives that include building 1,000 homes a year utilising off site technology sourced from two preferred suppliers for light steel and timber.

Charlie's team, under MD Simon Leadbetter for Midlands and North and MD for London and South David Smith, is now rolling out a brand refresh programme that will see the colour purple replace the familiar yellow on sites, which will give it a distinct new identity to underline its residential specialism.

Andrew Telfer, who is promoted to Residential's deputy chief executive and is responsible for our contract building activities, sums up the new era the company heralds, "We've spent the past five years strengthening our residential offering by acquiring the best talent in the market. Our new brand is the natural culmination of focus to be a developer and builder of scale; our people want to be part of an exceptional company that succeeds and that's what we have here."



Setting the national agenda: Andrew Telfer, left, joins Poplar HARCA chief executive Steve Stride, right, in showing Lord Heseltine our Aberfeldy Village development to support his estate regeneration work for the Government



Prestigious company - defence secretary Michael Fallon meets Prime Place's Guy Cope, centre, and Mark Ottley at the opening of our Sevenoaks development

"We now have the scope to realise the potential we've shown for the past three years"

Nic Simpkin



“Scape is a door opener, but you have to meet expectations or they will look elsewhere very quickly”
Nick Corrigan

NORTHERN AMBITION

IT'S ONLY BEEN A MATTER OF YEARS SINCE WE STARTED TO HAVE A PRESENCE IN THE NORTH EAST, AND IN THAT TIME A STRING OF CONTRACTS HAS SEEN WILLMOTT DIXON BECOME THE NO. 1 CONTRACTOR IN THE REGION. 164 MET OPERATIONS DIRECTOR NICK CORRIGAN ON A TRIP AROUND TYNESIDE AND TEESSIDE TO FIND OUT MORE.

One thing about Nick Corrigan's time in our company is that he doesn't stand still! After his arrival as operations manager in 2013, he was promoted to project director at the end of 2014 and then into his current role a year later. "Two promotions in two years shows I joined the right company; one that allows you to meet your aspirations," Nick says. "I think Anthony's looking over his shoulder now!" he jokes.

"When I joined Willmott Dixon, I liked being part of a successful company that is family-owned and not driven by delivering profit for city institutions. We're part of something special and that's never been more true than in the North East," says Nick.

The North East is a tough market. With 2.6 million people and the highest unemployment rate in the UK (8.1%, and 3% above the national average), most of our work comes from local authorities and other publicly-funded organisations. Reputation for quality is everything.

The main theme of Nick and the team's efforts is building that reputation with repeat business from the likes of South Tyneside Council, Darlington, Middlesbrough and Sunderland City Council. All have provided a host of projects, mostly via Scape's Major Works framework.

"Scape is a door opener, but you have to meet expectations or they will look elsewhere very quickly. Our team have delivered and the reward is new projects," says Nick, who continues, "the real test is to keep doing it year-on-year in a challenging market."

RELATIONSHIPS

In fact, Nick is constantly building relationships. This includes knowing potential clients who, while they might not need a new building now, will do in three years' time. In essence, Nick is putting the company in the space to support planning of their assets.

This type of relationship paid off at Teesside's Olympia Building, with the university acquiring two large buildings for student accommodation, one of which needed to be brought up to fire regulation.

"I said to the vice-chancellor: 'If you need any support, just give us a ring,'" Nick recalls, "sometimes people just want to bounce an idea off you."

As it turned out, making the changes were more complicated than the university had expected (see box), so we were called in to help complete the fireproofing work before the summer holidays were out - being a trusted partner like that gets remembered.

FOCUS ON SUPPLIERS

Nick is not complacent about work; "When you set the standards high and something doesn't go to plan, you quickly get lots of criticism. My approach is to take ownership, not hide, point fingers or assume someone else is sorting it out. Sometimes the problem isn't even ours, but saying 'not my responsibility' isn't what the client wants to hear. They want to trust your expertise."

Building up a strong supply chain has been vital. With high demand for quality members in this particular micro-climate, the days of 'them and us' are over, as Nick says, "If we are just another contractor who keeps them at arm's length, we are no different to the rest."

Talking about how he chose a career in construction, Nick says he didn't like being stuck in an office. "I work with some amazing people, all different characters from various organisations, be they teachers, council workers, you name it. We help them succeed and what better legacy can you have."

HEBBURN CENTRAL, SOUTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL

Our team picked up the £12m leisure centre, 25m pool, council services, multi-use games area and library when refurbishing South Tyneside Council's Town Hall. It also has a police desk.

Procured under Scape, the award winning community hub was designed by architect FaulknerBrown and covered with the same oxidised steel material found on the Angel of the North which calls to mind the shipyards which the area used to support.

The library interior with its complex palette of colours and finishes was a key client and architect focus and took months of planning, with every element mocked up before being installed on site.

Our team, under Glyn Jones, maintained close communication with local residents and shopkeepers to prevent loss of car parking spaces on the neighbouring precinct during construction. It went so well, they won a Civic Trust Special Award for Community Impact and Engagement!



Hebburn's new Community Hub is regarded as a catalyst for investment in the town just west of Newcastle

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION, TEESIDE UNIVERSITY

The £5.4m project to refurbish two 1960s multi-storey blocks, suitable for the demands of 187 contemporary students, was half simple-half difficult. Work on block A was carried out over the summer holidays. However, block B required a sharp increase in fire protection to the steel in order to bring it up to regulation.

It was initially suggested to tackle the project, which was needed for the 2017 academic year, by wrapping building columns in fireproof boards. However a time and motion study showed this would have taken until Christmas.

Instead, the team decided to press ahead with a Rockwool product called BeamClad which was applied through accessing the columns through the ceiling. Teesside University has benefited from Willmott Dixon's problem-solving abilities.



Work at Teesside University includes a large TV wall for the campus

“Two promotions in two years shows I joined the right company; one that allows you to meet your aspirations”

Nick Corrigan

LIFE OFF THE PITCH

When he's not managing our workload and growth in the region, Nick is mixing it up on the pitch, "I've always played rugby; it's the same feeling of like-minded people working together trying to get things done. You've got to make people feel comfortable so they know they can trust you. The whole team, we help people and make life easier; and people remember that."

With the number of award-winning projects starting to stack up in the North East, our profile is rocketing through the roof, and Nick is doing great work leading his very own Toon Army.

“We help them succeed and what better legacy can you have”

Nick Corrigan

DOLPHIN CENTRE REFURBISHMENT

The team carried out a vital refurbishment of Darlington's Dolphin Centre pool which was shut for three months while the air-handling units and ceiling were replaced.

It was vital that the works, carried out over the festive season, completed for the New Year. With the volume of work involved, this was a tough call and included getting six old air-handling units out, and six new ones in, while the leisure centre remained open.

The whole pool hall also had to be scaffolded to provide access columns, which took half of the time allocated to put up and take back down. The units were delivered in sections and hoisted up for installation. Ingeniously, the team used a full-height training wall to remove waste.



We delivered a total refurbishment of Darlington's Dolphin Centre pool



LETCHWORTH HOUSE COULD END FUEL POVERTY

A HUMBLE SEMI IN LETCHWORTH COULD BE THE INSPIRATION THAT TAKES HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE OUT OF THE FUEL POVERTY TRAP.

A fifth of households are blighted by fuel poverty, where over 10 per cent of their income is spent on fuel. That's set to change with Energy Services (ES) teaming up with BRE to showcase how pre-war built homes can be more energy efficient.

Targeting a period home is important as most people affected by fuel poverty live in homes built before 1945, which are badly insulated and leak heat. By upgrading a 1920's home provided by Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, Energy Services aims to show how simple and cost effective work can save households hundreds of pounds in costs each year.

Re-Thinking's MD Rob Lambe said: "With such a large number of older and heritage properties in the UK, there is a need to help people to keep warm and save energy. Our project not only enables us to learn more about installing the right solutions for heritage homes but provides us with a unique opportunity to develop research that will help underpin similar projects in the future."

Features that will be installed include wood fibre internal wall insulation, new windows, solar PV panels, a waste water heat recovery system and a demand-controlled ventilation system.

The house was monitored beforehand by BRE and will be assessed afterwards to see the fall in energy use following the changes. It will provide a template to inform the investment decisions of city councils, housing associations and local authorities across the country helping them to invest millions in their housing stocks.

OXFORD TOWER REVAMP

One recent example is Oxford, where the council is using ES to refurbish five tower blocks. This includes works to the communal structure of the blocks; over-cladding and additional insulation, replacement of windows, new heating systems and upgrading of the communal electrics and fire safety systems.

When completed, it will extend the life of the flats by a minimum of 30 years as well as improve resident lives by reducing heat loss, cutting fuel bills and reducing the fire risk.

Rob adds, "Councils like Oxford are tackling their older stock, and thanks to the data we'll get from our Letchworth pilot, they will be better informed about the investment decisions that need to be taken for older properties."

Top Left Image: The 1920s built home being upgraded to show how period properties can be made more energy efficient to reduce fuel poverty

Top Right: Rob Lambe, centre, joins Oxford Council officials to launch the massive tower block upgrade



DON'T TALK TO ME ABOUT NUMBERS

JOHN WATERMAN WANTS TO MAKE CONSTRUCTION THE APPLE OF THE CONTRACTING WORLD. WE CAUGHT UP WITH HIM TO ASK HIM TO EXPLAIN.

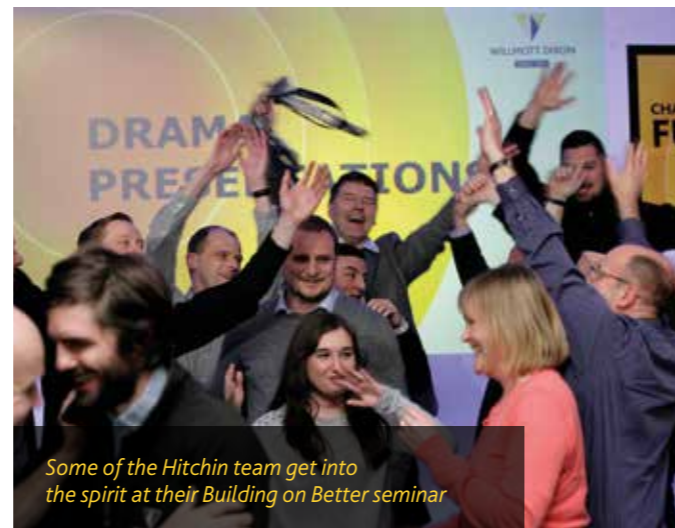
HOW HAS YOUR FIRST YEAR AS COO BEEN?

It's been really challenging, for lots of reasons. At first I was wrestling with understanding what my mission was. Once I understood that, I had to engage the LCO boards... which was not always easy.

People are surprised when they discover that my focus in meetings is not to talk about the numbers and what's happening on jobs. I want to talk about what creates the results rather than the results themselves. The boards found that a challenge initially.

I want to know, among many other things, how we focus and deliver a great service to our customers, how we are developing our people, what legacy we are leaving,

particularly in terms of sustainability and community engagement and how we differentiate our business from our peers.



Some of the Hitchin team get into the spirit at their Building on Better seminar

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT ABOUT CONSTRUCTION?

I have learnt that we do amazing things, we have amazing people and that we work for some great customers. But we are not consistent in everything we do. We need every customer to be happy, every person in the business to be content and every project to be defect free.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT BUILDING ON BETTER?

Building on Better is our mission to become a very different construction business, one that is not just about building buildings. It's about serving our customers, creating amazing spaces for people to learn or work in; it's about the journey our people go on as they develop through our business.

We are already good but we can be great. As a business, we want to be more whole-brained, more compassionate, trying to find solutions for problems before they happen, rather than dealing with problems as they hit us. That means we have to really understand our customers, what they do and why they do it, not just our external customers but our internal customers: our colleagues, our people.

HOW WILL IT MAKE US A BETTER BUSINESS?

It is going to make us more profitable because we will be different. All of our people will be engaged in what makes us great, and we will become greater. As a result of that, we will have more customers and more repeat business, and we will attract more people who believe in the same things as we do and want to come and work with us.

I also believe that we will be able to retain more people. If someone really believes in the way a company does business and what it stands for, and if that business is so different from its competitors, they are more likely to want to stay.

Ultimately, Building on Better is about creating a community around a purpose. When we deliver new spaces, we want people to enjoy the whole experience, to feel that they have got so much more out of the process than a new building. It's a concept that has worked for brands like Apple, John Lewis and Easyjet.

WHAT ARE YOUR BIG PRIORITIES THIS YEAR?

Having written our strategy with the LCO's and launched it last year, this year is about embedding the strategy and creating something real. I am amazed at how far the businesses have got in their thinking. We've got people talking about it, coming up with ideas, sending me emails about it. It is very exciting. Come 2017, I hope we will be able to say 'We have made a big difference'.

One of our next tasks is to clearly define our purpose, our 'why' - in just six to eight words. I've asked the MDs from all the LCOs to nominate two people who will come to a workshop and we're aiming to get it done by the end of June this year.

We are also rolling out customer awareness courses across the business this year. The goal is to change customer service from being a phrase to being a belief. We have to set our standards high, and train and develop our people to understand what the business is trying to achieve and how they can contribute to our success and their own.

HOW IS THE MARKET LOOKING FOR CONSTRUCTION?

The market is looking good. Increased activity in the South East has slowly spread to most of England and there's a positive environment in the whole market. There is the promise of exciting projects across the country which I see continuing for the next three to five years, largely based on the fact that many of our customers have significant roll-out plans in place.

Many universities are looking to renew their campuses and stock, there's still a huge amount of activity in education, particularly primary schools and now moving into secondary schools. Commercial work is becoming more available and we hope a great focus on the health sector will give us some reward.

There are still concerns about the skills and availability of the supply chain. One of our biggest focuses is to reduce the size of our supply chain with the aim of creating deeper relationships. That way, we can find ways to become more effective, more efficient together which makes us more attractive to customers and more able to cope when the market is less buoyant, without having to compromise on our culture and values.

WHAT DO YOU DO OUTSIDE WORK?

Most of my time outside work is dedicated to my children, and I love that. I have two boys, nine and six years old. One of my greatest pleasures is taking them off in our camper van and cooking sausages in the wilderness. I love watching football and rugby, and I'm just getting into coaching football with one of the boy's teams.

Building on Better: delivering more than just great buildings





"I joke with Dad that I've come back to put all his work right!"

Tony O'Shea

A DESIGN ICON

INTERIORS IS DELIVERING LONDON'S MOST IMPORTANT CULTURAL PROJECT FOR 2016; CREATING A NEW HOME FOR THE DESIGN MUSEUM AS IT MOVES FROM SOUTHWARK TO KENSINGTON. WITH ALL EYES ON THE WORK, 164 MET THE TEAM CHARGED WITH CREATING A LANDMARK THAT WILL ATTRACT OVER 650,000 PEOPLE A YEAR.

Many people go into the construction industry with a desire to be able to say 'I built that' about landmark buildings.

Tony O'Shea from Interiors is one of them and, in a quirk of fate, is working on a project that his own father could say the same thing about.

As operations manager on our £20.6 million project to fit-out the Design Museum's new home in Kensington, Tony is in the spotlight. However, the fame of delivering London's most important cultural project this year has not gone to his head, it's business as usual...

FAMILY CONNECTION

The origin of this project was a £200 million redevelopment of the Kensington High Street site by Chelsfield and the Ilchester Estate. One of the conditions of the project included introducing an arts or heritage building into an area already packed full of world famous museums.

With the Design Museum desperate to move from its building in Southwark to bigger premises, the developer offered the vacant Commonwealth Institute. It was the right fit for the Design Museum, which agreed to its new home – it just needed a company to get the interior ready! That's what Tony and our team are doing right now, with an opening date set for 24th November, so no pressure!

The iconic Commonwealth Institute was built by John Laing at the beginning of the 1960s - and one of the bricklayers on that job was Tony O'Shea's own father.

"I joke with Dad that I've come back to put all his work right!" laughs Tony. Sadly, that original brickwork has all gone as part of major works carried out to the building prior to the involvement of Interiors.

THREE PART ACT

Interiors' role in this iconic project is to turn the old building into a space ready for the Design Museum's own team, who will complete the third phase and install the exhibits.

Tony explains, "It's about altering the existing building to suit the museum while saving some of the existing features. I would say it's the most important fit-out in London as it will attract 650,000 visitors when open and also has free entry."

Interiors got the go-ahead on the contract in January 2015, but an award was not confirmed due to delays on the previous phase. Apart from a weekly two-hour visit, Tony and the team were not allowed on site for nearly five months after winning the job, but that time was not wasted.

DE-RISK

"We used that time to de-risk the project and look at all the cost details and for any gaps in the design in order to flesh them out early," explains Tony. "That was quite successful but we couldn't complete it entirely as we couldn't get in the actual building, so all the mechanical and electrical work at that point was all theory."



Management trainee Kieran Legg checks quality inside the Design Museum's new home

The fit-out work covers six floors from lower basement up to a second floor. The challenge has been to meet the quality in the design brief specified by architects John Pawson and OMA.

Tony continues, "The difficulty is the quality of the finishes and the need to make that look good can be a challenge. It's the finite detail. Our build part is the permanent exhibition, so it can't overwhelm the temporary exhibitions. What John Pawson have done is quite subtle."

Tony gives the example that the second floor is oak with oak panelling and white floors. The joinery is particularly significant and this package is valued at around £1 million out of a £20.6 million construction cost.

Tony adds, "There is a lot of metal and timber cladding and getting those junctions with the floors and ceilings is important. They are very particular with the design and we have been working with them to incorporate the M&E."

"There is a lot of metal and timber cladding and getting those junctions with the floors and ceilings is important"

Tony O'Shea

Article continues ▶



Tony's army: a strong team ethos and respect are central to Tony's leadership on the Design Museum

M&E A BIG CHALLENGE

Giving an example of the challenges faced with the M&E aspect of the job, Tony talks about a 300m-glass balustrade with a timber handrail fitted with LED lights that he describes as "very tricky to say the least."

The team also had to ensure that none of the M&E work was visible in certain sections, such as the second floor, which features designer-in-residence rooms. This involves taking up positions in various parts of the building to make sure that no M&E work could be seen and where it was, be promptly hidden.

SUMMER PEAK

Work will peak in May, when nearly 150 people will be on site. This includes 10 from Interiors working on the design and supervising construction. Tony is supported by principal surveyor Darren Sample and Andy Horrocks, who is in charge of technical services and has played a key role in unifying the design and construction team.

"Andy has played a major part in the coordination of the architectural and services teams," says Tony.

Four people – Richard Dale, Keiran Legg, Adrian Ichim and Les Zek Burnos – work on the building management side, while Lauren Powell, Mark Bond and Phil Carter are providing their surveying expertise.

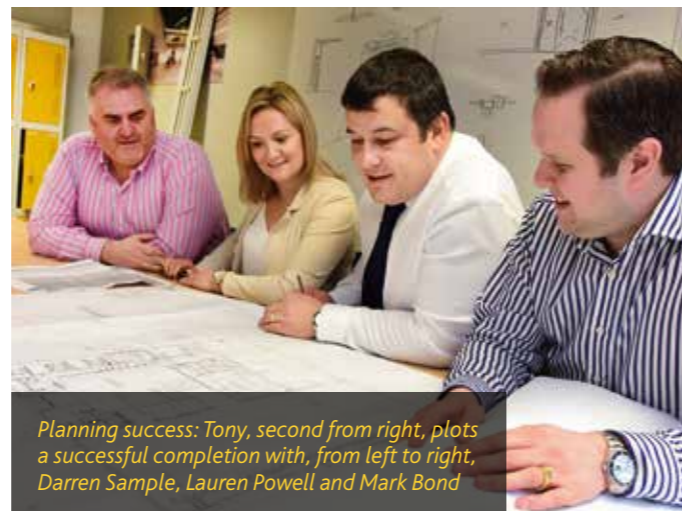
A crack team for a flagship project undertaken!

BIG IS BEAUTIFUL

It's the second £20m+ project Tony has worked on, following the 15,000 sq m fit-out of the iconic Cockcroft Building at the University of Brighton. That was Interior's biggest job until taking on the Design Museum project, which is scheduled for completion in August.

The museum's team will then carry out stress testing and installation of the exhibits before the refitted building opens in November. By then, Tony and his team will have moved on to another London landmark. Work on the Houses of Parliament will follow but he expects to remember the Design Museum for as long as his own father.

"It's nice to be involved with a building that's going to be around for hundreds of years to come. It's a flagship project for us and will get a lot of coverage in the media when it opens."



Planning success: Tony, second from right, plots a successful completion with, from left to right, Darren Sample, Lauren Powell and Mark Bond

COMMUNITY MINDED

To regular users of London Underground, Holland Park is a stop on the Tube. But there is also a large green space of the same name amongst the hurly burly of Kensington that we are helping regenerate.

The work is one of our Community Investment Projects (CIP) and sees Interiors source materials and equipment, as well as provide labour, to revitalise the 22.5-hectare park.

"We have a CIP on every scheme, sometimes they are collective on smaller projects but on major schemes like this they are project specific," says Tony.

As part of this commitment, Interiors is supplying equipment including protective site gear and a pair of water butts, whilst providing new signage and helping repair nature trails.

Keiran Legg, a surveyor on the project with responsibility for this CIP, explains: "The paths are made out of bark but are worn out and that will be a week's work for four blokes."

The team has also provided a fortnight's works experiences for eight students in a range of disciplines on the scheme from plumbing and electrical work to working with the management team.

"That will give them experience to see if they want to pursue a career in construction" adds Tony, who started with Willmott Dixon as an apprentice carpenter in 1989.

Apart from a short period at another contractor, he has spent his entire career at Willmott Dixon and hopes that working on the Design Museum will inspire those students to follow his path.



The team is converting the vacant Commonwealth Institute on High Street Kensington into the Design Museum's new home

PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT	DESIGN MUSEUM FIT-OUT
LOCATION	KENSINGTON, WEST LONDON
VALUE	£20.6 MILLION
CLIENT	DESIGN MUSEUM
CONTRACTOR	WILLMOTT DIXON INTERIORS
ARCHITECT	JOHN PAWSON/OMA
MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL CONSULTANT	CHAPMAN BATHURST
COST CONSULTANT	TURNER & TOWNSEND
PROJECT MANAGER	GARDINER & THEOBALD



The village covers a large area of Ascot, giving residents a self-contained community

RETIREMENT IN ASCOT

FIVE-STAR RETIREMENT

Partnership Homes is cementing its position as a leader in the care and retirement sector with over £100 million worth of projects in care homes, extra care developments, and retirement villages each year. One of these projects is Lynwood Retirement Village in Ascot.

The first question visitors to Lynwood have is: what's a giant chess board doing in the middle of a Partnership Homes scheme? This is just one architectural feature for residents to enjoy in their retirement.

It's an impressive project; a village in its own right with 128 apartments, nine cottages and a 93-bed care home set within 20 acres of mature woodland and landscaped gardens.

Owned and operated by automotive industry charity BEN, the development recently gained the accolade of 'best retirement scheme' in the What House Awards 2015.

With Partnership Homes seeing work volumes mushroom in recent years in the sector, COO Charlie Scherer explains, "There's a huge amount of investment in quality retirement homes as people live longer and are willing to pay for housing that suits their needs as they get older. It's a growing market for us and I think we have a pedigree second to none right now."

VILLAGE WITH ALL THE LUXURIES

Lynwood follows similar retirement villages that Partnership Homes has built in terms of scale and facilities. Residents have on their doorstep a choice of restaurants, a hair salon, indoor bowls green and even a swimming pool and spa.

This 'community within a community' is set to be replicated across the country as developers switch their attention to the growing retirement market. For Partnership Homes, it's also a third of its workload.

It's not just chess players the village caters for; it provides a 24/7 care service for older residents, supporting those who might suffer from dementia and Alzheimer's with live-in healthcare staff.

Charlie continues; "It's a specialist area, but when they say that being 70 is the new 50, you are building whole communities for people who are fit and want to live where they can lead active lifestyles. Our know-how in this area is helping developers create the modern home for those in retirement."



Residents of Lynwood Village don't have to be chess ground masters, but they can certainly indulge their interest in the game with this giant chess board



Our team at Scarborough Leisure Village are just one of our projects opening up its doors to visitors in June

PROJECTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

CITB'S ANNUAL OPEN DOORS EVENT IS SET TO SHINE A LIGHT ON MORE OF OUR PROJECTS THAN EVER BEFORE!

Open Doors is an industry-wide initiative that allows the community to book tours of construction sites and this year's event on 13th-18th June will feature 25 of our sites. It's a unique chance to see behind the scenes at 'live' construction sites as we aim to reach out to a new generation of potential recruits.

See in the box to the right which projects near you are taking part. While many of the tour slots will have gone, if you speak to the relevant contact they might be able to set up special 'staff' slots.

OPEN DOORS

Get into Construction

Visit our sites!

13th-18th June 2016

- 1 East Durham College
Houghall Campus, Durham, DH1 3SG
- 2 Scarborough Leisure Village
Scarborough, YO11 2JF
- 3 Scarborough UTC
Scarborough, YO11 2JF
- 4 Scarborough CUSC
Scarborough, YO11 2JF
- 5 Bolton Albert Hall
Bolton, BL1 1RU
- 6 Layden Drive
Doncaster, DN5 8UY
- 7 Ysgold Clan Clwyd
St Asaph, LL17 0RF
- 8 Nottingham Biosciences
Nottingham, NG1 1GN
- 9 Brent Basin
Nottingham, NG2 4DS
- 10 The Design Museum
London, W8 6AQ
- 11 Heron Hall Academy
Enfield, EN3 4SA
- 12 Summit House - 70 Wilson Street
London, EC2A 2EA
- 13 Dorsett City Hotel
London, EC3N 1AB
- 14 One Public Dock
London, EC4V 3CS
- 15 Aberfeldy Village - Phase 2
London, E14 0PH
- 16 Ronald McDonald House
London, SE1 7JF
- 17 St Chad's
Tisbury, RM18 8LJ
- 18 Oasis Academy Arena
Orpington, SE25 4GZ
- 19 Silvern - High School/Ysgold Uchchradd
Blackwood, Carmarthen, NP22 0NU
- 20 Temple Back Fire Station Bristol
Bristol, BS1 6EU
- 21 Hart Leisure Centre
Faversham, GU15 5HZ
- 22 Wildermesse Schools
Sevenoaks, TN13 3SN
- 23 Gatwick Diamond
Crawley, RH10 9AF
- 24 Sussex University Chichester
Falmer, BN1 9QJ
- 25 The Met Office
Exeter, EX1 3TS

WILLMOTT DIXON
SINCE 1852

OPEN DOORS a unique chance to see behind the scenes at major 'live' construction sites. For more details please click on a participating Willmott Dixon site or visit www.opendoors.construction



SCALING ANOTHER ECO-SUMMIT

OUR HITCHIN TEAM IS SETTING THE STANDARD FOR THE MODERN WORK SPACE WITH ITS FIFTH PROJECT FOR LOW CARBON WORKPLACE, A DEVELOPER CONSORTIUM WHICH TRANSFORMS AGEING COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS INTO ENERGY-EFFICIENT, MODERN OFFICES.

Sitting in the heart of trendy Shoreditch in London is the future of modern office refurbishment. Better space layout, low energy use and ultra-modern connectivity – the face of low carbon construction is here!

Summit House is a refurbishment with a difference – our team led by construction manager Simon Wilson are tearing down the inside of a tired 1980's office block and creating 9,500 sqm of BREEAM excellent work space with EPC B certificate. No wonder companies are lining up to lease space!

LOW CARBON WORKPLACE

This is our fifth project for Low Carbon Workplace (LCW), a developer consortium which converts old commercial buildings into modern, energy-efficient offices (see box).

Simon explains: "When it's finished, nobody will know it was a refurbishment and its environmental performance will be better than practically any new-build offices going up around here."

Simon knows his green projects – his track record includes the UK's first zero-carbon school, Crouch Hill Community Park in north London.

TIGHT SITE

On Summit House, as well as hitting the eco requirements, the team has to deliver the refurbishment on a highly congested site in the City. "Compared to a new-build, it's much more complex and labour intensive," says Simon.

The team of London office specialists started last March by stripping back the five-storey office to the structural steelwork. "The frame was coated with mandolite, which couldn't be shot-blasted because of dust issues, so we had to break that off by hand," explains Simon.

"When it's finished, nobody will know it was a refurbishment"

Simon Wilson

"Additionally, a huge amount of decorative concrete around the entrance needed to be ripped out. We used four Brokk robot breakers, but the noise issues limited how much we could use them. So, most of it had to be done by hand as well. As with the mandolite stripping, it was very laborious because of the HAV issues. We had to use three men on rotation through the day."

BETTER LAYOUT

The fifth floor of the office block has been removed completely, and two extra storeys are being added above. All the floors are being reconfigured to increase space, and an infill has been added between Summit House and a neighbouring Victorian property.

"The existing foundations provide enough support for the extra floors, the infill's steel structure, each 350mm in diameter, driven to a depth of 24m," explains Simon.

Extra structural steel has been added to the new lift cores on the west side of the building, where the service lifts and risers are located, plus the top two storeys, which also features a stylish, free-standing helical spiral staircase.

"The steelwork here doesn't need to be as heavy duty as in the existing frame, and normally we would use much lighter beams in this scenario," says Simon. "However, the architect wants all the exposed beams to match in size, so we've used the same depth in the steel sections to create that appearance."

MEETING THE ECO TARGETS

To meet the environmental targets, Summit House will have an intelligent building management system and many passive design features. On the upper floors, shading on the glazing prevents solar gain, while on lower floors, low emissivity coating keeps warmth inside. Internally, infrared sensors will

adapt temperature, light and ventilation in occupied areas. Water pipes will transfer heat from parts of the building that need cooling to areas that need heating, and vice versa.

The most visually striking feature of Summit House will be a new copper facade. "These spandrel panels are supplied by KME, and treated with an acid wash which means they will last for 10 to 15 years, whereas exposed copper normally turns green in a year," says Simon.

Cleverly, the panels include hidden vents which connect to the building's ventilation system, and draw in air from the outside. Otherwise, ventilation comes from the roof plant, via the central risers.

Simon says the biggest M&E challenge of the job is running the ductwork within the depth of the exposed structural beams. "We've tried to reuse existing holes in the beams, but obviously there is a limit to how many new holes we can drill," he explains.

The project has posed plenty of logistical challenges in terms of movement of materials and equipment.

"We cannot prefabricate anything because there was no way of getting it on to the site," he explains.

ON SITE STORAGE NOT AN OPTION

There is no storage on site, so Simon had to reserve eight parking bays on nearby Wilson Street for the length of the project – at a cost of £150,000. "Everything has to come straight off the lorry, and we have a JIT delivery system to schedule deliveries," says Simon.

Summit House is scheduled for completion in August 2016.



Measuring up: Joe Fowler makes sure the measurements add up under the careful eye of Rob Gill

Article continues ►

Hitchin's team of central London office specialists are again creating something special in the City

Robertson's timber system building homes



PARTNERSHIP HOMES' OFFSIGHT GOAL

WILLMOTT DIXON AND THE LOW CARBON WORKPLACE

Summit House is the latest project in a five-year partnership between Willmott Dixon and the Low Carbon Workplace (LCW).

LCW is a consortium of Stanhope, Columbia Threadneedle Investments and The Carbon Trust, which has funding of £175m to invest in transforming outdated offices into low carbon workspaces.

So far, LCW has acquired nine properties. Four are complete – each one delivered by Willmott Dixon – Carter Lane in the City, Kew Road in Richmond, Grove House in Hammersmith and Mansel Court in Wimbledon. Summit House will be the fifth.

“On our first job, we were in competition with other contractors, but since then, every project has been

negotiated on a two-stage basis”, explains Hitchin MD Chris Tredget, “So far, these projects have been worth about £50m to £60m.”

LCW is selective about its projects. “We pick offices where we can raise the building’s energy performance to an EPC B and achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating.” says Stanhope operations director Rob Watts.

Hitting low-carbon targets on refurbishment projects can be tricky, but Watts says that they offer considerable savings in embodied energy compared to new-builds. “Retaining the original structure at Summit House means we reduce the total energy embodied in the project by 10% to 20%, compared to if we used a new frame.” he says.

LCW looks for sites with a high public transport accessibility level (PTAL) to cut the carbon footprint of the building when in operation. Summit House will have a rating of 6b, the highest available.

PARTNERSHIP HOMES IS MEETING THE SKILLS SHORTAGE HEAD-ON WITH PLANS TO MAKE UP TO 1,000 HOMES USING PRODUCTS PRE-MADE IN FACTORIES.

The company has signed three-year strategic agreements with the leading suppliers of timber frame and light-gauge steel frame systems, with the aim to reduce reliance on on-site trades as skill shortages and costs continue to bite across the industry.

To provide economies of scale, Partnership Homes has signed agreements with Robertson Timber Engineering as sole supplier of timber frame products, while Fusion Building Systems will provide light-gauge steel frames.

Chief operating officer Charlie Scherer explains, “This is an important step in our strategy to provide a high quality product that utilises the benefits of factory-made systems while also reducing our exposure to the labour price escalation we’ve seen in recent years. We aim to build 1,000 homes a year by 2017 using systems provided by Robertson and Fusion, with the consistent quality also aiding our zero defects strategy.”

The benefits of sole supplier arrangements, including design standardisation, greater quality of product and more efficient construction timeframes, make these important long-term strategic deals for Willmott Dixon.

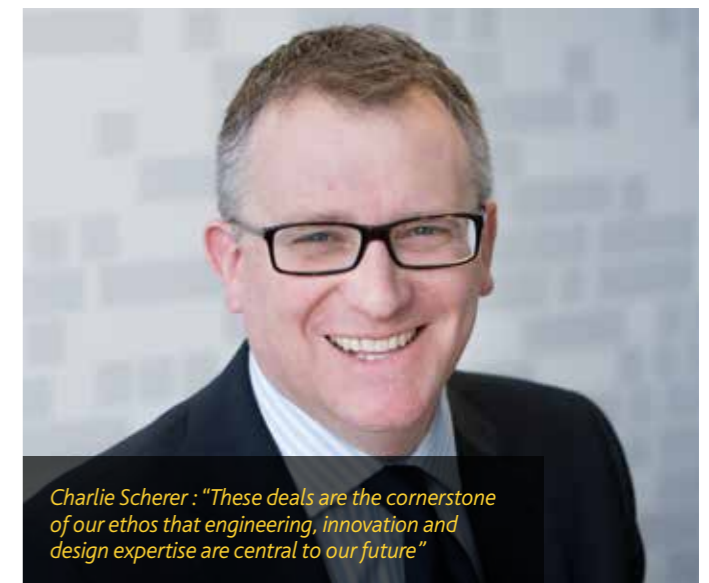
Charlie continues, “These two deals are the cornerstone of our ethos that engineering, innovation and design expertise are central to delivering cost-effective, sustainable build solutions for our clients.”

Tim Carey, product director, said: “If we are to address the significant capacity gap that currently exists in the

construction sector, we need to think more intelligently about our supply chain. The selection of Robertson and Fusion will help maximise efficiencies across our projects, enabling us to deliver as many high-quality homes in as short a time frame as possible whilst ensuring they are delivered to the quality our clients deserve.

“These deals are the cornerstone of our ethos that engineering, innovation and design expertise are central to our future”

Charlie Scherer



Charlie Scherer: “These deals are the cornerstone of our ethos that engineering, innovation and design expertise are central to our future”

PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT	SUMMIT HOUSE
LOCATION	LONDON EC1
COST	£21 MILLION
CLIENT	LOW CARBON WORKPLACE (A CONSORTIUM OF STANHOPE, COLUMBIA THREADNEEDLE INVESTMENTS AND THE CARBON TRUST)
MAIN CONTRACTOR	WILLMOTT DIXON INTERIORS
ARCHITECT	ASTUDIO
ENGINEER	HTS
PROGRAMME	MARCH 2015 TO AUGUST 2016
PROJECT MANAGER	GARDINER & THEOBALD

Riding high: Nick Heath, left, and construction manager Paul Smith outside BioCity which is shooting up rapidly



NOTTINGHAM WORKLOAD

WITH A NEW OFFICE AND A BURGEONING ARRAY OF PROJECTS, OUR CONSTRUCTION TEAM'S PROFILE IN NOTTINGHAM IS SOARING! 164 MET UP WITH OPERATIONS DIRECTOR NICK HEATH TO FIND OUT MORE.

A city once famous for Brian Clough and being the home of Raleigh bicycles is now growing as a centre for new industries like the biotech sector as it seeks to be one of the UK's top five cities for science.

Central to this theme is the new BioCity, which provides space for companies specialising in creating and developing life science businesses. It's been so successful at attracting companies that a new extension was commissioned – built by our team!

BIOCITY

The new life science building is a five-storey state-of-the-art facility to house leading companies like Sygnature Discovery and free up space in BioCity for new companies to use the incubator facilities.

Procured by Nottingham City Council under the Scape Major Works framework, our team, under Nick, will deliver the facility by spring 2017 where it will be a catalyst to create 250 new specialist bioscience jobs.

"This will set the standard for the city and help to regenerate the east central part of Nottingham," says Nick "BioCity is an operator that will support small businesses by commercial leasing to start-ups and SMEs working in science-tech areas such as agricultural herbicides and new pharmaceuticals."

The site has quite a history. It was nearby that Boots' original research and development building sat on Pennyfoot Street, before moving to its headquarters in Beeston and it was here that Dr Stewart Adams developed the drug Ibuprofen in 1961 (he still lives nearby).

NOT QUITE LAS VEGAS

The most striking aspect of the building will be its cladding, lit up and programmed to change colour. "It uses NASA software to track the solar flares of the sun," says Nick. "The lighting will change according to the intensity of the sun, with reds and yellows." At the moment it is expected to be 24-hour cycle but there may be planning restrictions. "Even so, it won't be like Las Vegas," jokes Nick.

It is a major part of the building and consists of 8,000 metres of fibre optics which mimic the gaps in Nottingham lace, creating a greater effect but adding more complexity. Along these fibres are nylon junctions.

The sunscreen is to be so well-built that it will be good for the building's thermal performance. "The council wanted it to be the most identifiable building around," says Nick. "So far client, council and committee love it, so it ticks all the boxes."

When complete, it will be equipped with high-tech biology and chemistry laboratories built in a range of sizes to allow companies to expand, with ancillary space for commercial leasing to both start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises.

NEW OFFICE

For a company with a growing workload, thinking ahead is crucial and this includes providing space to expand. This saw the Nottingham team move from its longstanding office at Phoenix Park to the centre of Nottingham in Lock House in the Southside Business District.

It's not just Construction growing in Nottingham; our Partnership Homes team is delivering the Trent Basin, a 45-home waterside scheme on the north bank of the Trent, opposite the Lady Bay nature reserve. It's a collaboration between Blueprint and Nottingham City Council to regenerate 3.5Ha within the Nottingham Waterside regeneration zone into a new community located midway between the city centre and countryside.

"At Phoenix Park we were out of town," says Nick, "The main driver for coming in was the investment in Nottingham itself, and the presence of the Scape Group, our framework client."

The new offices differ in other significant ways. "The old office was all about the separation of disciplines like planners, estimators and designers," says Nick, "This is more open and conducive to cross-fertilisation." As well as affording greater access to Nottingham's services, Lock House also gains space over the previous premises, from 30,00sq ft to 50,00sq ft, and was subject to a refitting spend of £150,000. "Plus, you can go running along the canal," adds Nick.

HOW'S THAT!

Another priority has been social value, with our team making waves by re-building a well-known but derelict club-house and pavilion in collaboration with the Trent Bridge Community Trust.

"Adding the new club was our trainee challenge for 2015 and sees cricket brought back into Nottingham centre after many years," says Nick, who went on, "It's in keeping with the history of Nottingham as a cricket town and was great to see 12 local trainees gain hands-on experience in making it happen and create a new home for a community-based cricket team called The Meadows."



Cricket stars Simon Jones and Graeme Swan join our trainee challenge team as we create a new pavilion in Nottingham

CARDIFF CENTRAL SQUARE

FEW COMPANIES HAVE DELIVERED SO MUCH TO TRANSFORM CARDIFF AS OURS, AND THE LCO LED BY MD NEAL STEPHENS REMAINS AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING POSITIVE IN THE CAPITAL OF WALES. 164 MET THE TEAM DELIVERING ANOTHER CITY CENTRE LANDMARK.

Our team are centre stage as Cardiff undergoes major change, delivering the award-winning Cardiff and Vale College and now a showpiece project in the city centre.

The latest project is phase one of a redevelopment that will transform a section of the city between the railway station and the world-famous Millennium Stadium. It's the vanguard of a development that will rival anything currently happening in London.

CENTRAL SQUARE

For many years the area next to the station was a bit of an eye-sore, a run-down part of Cardiff that needed change. That's now happening with the huge Central Square, a 1 million sq. ft development in the heart of the Cardiff Enterprise Zone that

will set a new standard for city centre regeneration. It will be office-led, but with a mixture of uses, providing high quality commercial, civic, residential, hotel, leisure and retail space.

The first stage, One Central Square, has been delivered by our local team led by operations manager Gareth Williams, who says, "One Central Square really opens up this part of the city, it's a big statement of ambition that is attracting interest from across the country. It also continues our relationship with Rightacres that saw us build Cardiff and Vale College nearby."

One Central Square is a grade A 135,000 sq ft BREEAM Excellent office building over ten storeys. Sitting on the western side of the square overlooking the River Taff, in the shadow of the stadium, it's the modern face of a city booming with investment and opportunity.

TWO YEARS IN THE MAKING

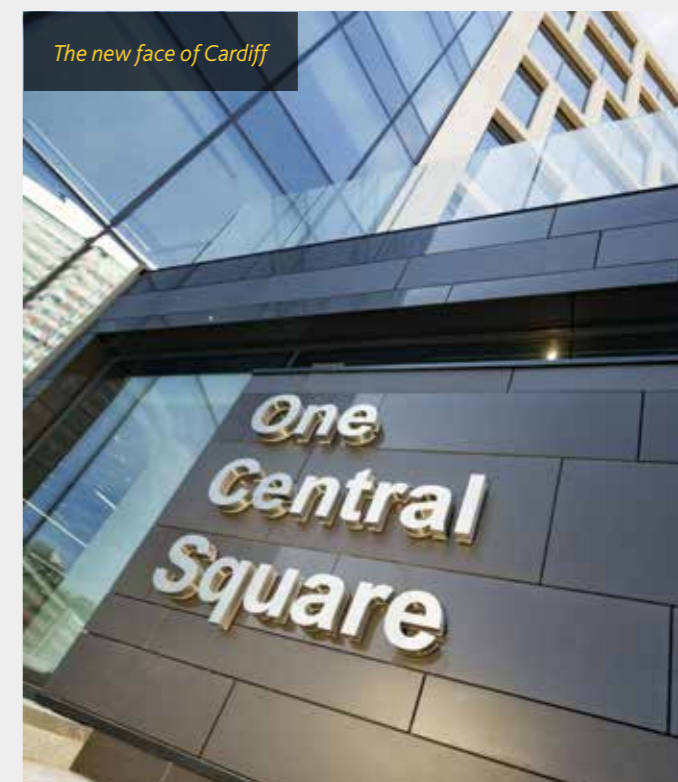
The team landed the One Central Square contract at the start of 2014 and started on site in July. From the beginning they have battled difficult ground conditions, clashes with historic piles, flooding, heavy winds and crowds heading for fixtures at the Millennium Stadium. Given the complications Gareth

and the site team have had to overcome, they have done well to handover the project on time in early 2016.

Gareth continues "It has been a team effort to help pull through the difficulties we experienced. We have faced up to the challenges that such a tight, brownfield city centre site can bring and are pleased with the finished product. This part of Cardiff is desperate for regeneration and we have been fortunate enough to be able to build on the great work Willmott Dixon has carried out on other major projects in the city."

The 135,000 sq ft Cat A offices are now regarded as some of the best in Wales, with a host of big name companies lining up to lease space. Following next is a new £120m headquarters for BBC Cymru Wales, by a different contractor, as well as the preparatory work on the 120,000 sq ft 2 Central Square office scheme.

It's prime time for our Cardiff team!



The new face of Cardiff



MEET OUR ONE CENTRAL SQUARE TEAM



KIRSTEN JONES, SENIOR PROJECT SURVEYOR

Merthyr Tydfil born and raised Kirsten has been with Willmott Dixon for ten years and is a graduate of the management training scheme.

Initially Kirsten, probably the UK's only female quantity surveyor that holds a Master of Arts degree in Chinese, took some persuading that the construction industry would be right for her. But since she first started on the scheme her experience with Willmott Dixon has taught her those initial doubts were unfounded and that working in construction can offer a challenging, vibrant career.

"I lived in China for three years before I joined as a trainee. The construction industry can be daunting but you need to be able to accept it and prove your capability. There are people that joined at the same time as me or since that have fallen by the wayside – their characters didn't suit the industry. I thoroughly enjoy my job. Even though the project has been handed over there is still plenty of work left for us surveyors," she says.



HUGH JONES, BUILDING MANAGER

Building manager Hugh is a relative newcomer to the Willmott Dixon fold, joining our team on the One Central Square scheme in August 2014 after gaining experience in commercial, hotel, office and residential developments across Wales and the South West.

Hugh cites the logistics of getting materials onto a wind affected site with precious little lay-down space, in the city centre and with thousands of match-day spectators to manage as one of the most significant challenges the team has faced during the development.

"Getting materials in and out has been difficult. We have had to look a couple of weeks ahead and try and predict everything. When the precast concrete cladding panels were being installed we were heavily dependent on the cranes and the mast climbers to feed the work," he says.



One Central Square is the first of a huge regeneration now starting



GARETH WILLIAMS, OPERATIONS MANAGER

With a wealth of experience built up across a range of projects in the 15 years he has been at Willmott Dixon, operations manager Gareth Williams is used to the last minute flurry of work that

heralds the end of a scheme. One Central Square is no different but with last minute changes in the scope of work, the handover date has approached a little quicker than he would expect.

"There have been a few changes in design and finishing on some of the floors but we are on top of it. Certainly the biggest frustration on this scheme has been the wind. It's not just the crane time that it hits there is everything else. It has hampered our work laying the roof and stripping the scaffold. It becomes a real space and logistics issue," he says.

When not striding around site Gareth likes to spend his time striding up the fairway on golf courses near his home town of Cwmbran. With a handicap that has slipped from 13 to 17 he is keen to get back on course and claw that back.

"I've been too busy working to play that much recently. I could do with getting a few rounds in," he says.



DARREN HANCOCK, CONSTRUCTION MANAGER

Darren moved across to the One Central Square scheme in it's later stages, lending a helping hand in getting it over the completion line while he waits for his next project (work to provide an accommodation centre for parents of sick children being treated at the University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff) to take off.

Darren is no stranger to this part of the city having delivered the new city centre campus for Cardiff and Vale College just down the road. He welcomes the contribution we have made to the on-going redevelopment of the city.

"It has been great to be involved in these projects. The delivery of both Cardiff and Vale College and One Central Square are important milestones that can only benefit Cardiff and the surrounding area for years to come," he says.

It's not just the main One Central Square development that has benefitted from the professionalism of our site staff and members of our trusted supply chain.

A small scheme in Ely to the west of Cardiff will be able to help offer trades training and promote apprenticeships to young adults thanks to input from the One Central Square site team.

Working alongside staff from our supply chain members SMG, Topfix, Evans Electrical, CMB Engineering and Ian Williams Carpentry and even the local fire brigade, a dilapidated old betting shop adjacent to the Dusty Forge pub has been transformed into a centre that will help utilise the expertise of local retired tradesmen and bring more people into the construction industry.

The 'Retired Men in Sheds' project will leave a lasting legacy by offering activity for retired people and young tradespeople starting out on their careers in construction. In the long term it is hoped that some of these trades trained at the Dusty Forge Ely will work on Willmott Dixon projects, ensuring the viability of the scheme.



JAMES HANWELL, BUILDING MANAGER

Another graduate from the Willmott Dixon management training scheme, James joined us as a trainee in July 2008 and followed a construction management degree course at the University of Salford.

"It was a really great course, split over three years with a six-month placement each year. I would recommend that route to anyone. It was one of the key drivers that convinced me to join Willmott Dixon," he says.

But it has been another build that has taken up much of James' spare time over the last few years. He is putting the finishing touches to a five bedroomed house he has been building for himself in the village of Nelson around 15 miles North of Cardiff and is no stranger to managing stretched deadlines because of it.

"I was working away on our project to build the new Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd primary school in Newtown, Powys a lot last year and only got home at weekends so it has taken longer than I thought," he says.

PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT	ONE CENTRAL SQUARE, CARDIFF
COST	£20.5MILLION
CLIENT	RIGHTACRES PROPERTY
CONTRACT TYPE	JCT 2011 DESIGN AND BUILD
ARCHITECT	RIO ARCHITECTS

Rick and colleagues completing the Cyclotour du Léman in 2015, which was the catalyst for the 2016 Willmott Dixon classic



BACK TO OUR ROOTS FOR

CYCLE SPECTACULAR

CYCLING ENTHUSIASTS ACROSS THE COMPANY ARE GETTING SET FOR THE INAUGURAL WILLMOTT DIXON CLASSIC, WHICH AIMS TO RAISE THOUSANDS FOR CHILDREN'S CHARITY ACTION MEDICAL RESEARCH.

Up to 200 riders will gather in Royston in September to complete a route that will include our first project on Wimpole Estate and also Bassingbourn, the village where it all started for our company in 1852.

The Classic takes place on 23rd September and starts from the Royston Heath Sports Club where participants have the choice of two routes; the 85-mile version that takes in the Sunesis school in Biggleswade or a shorter 68-mile option. Both take in the glorious Hertfordshire countryside and several Willmott Dixon landmarks, along with rural road and picturesque villages and a few rolling hills.

Creating the Willmott Dixon Classic is a natural evolution for the many cycle fundraisers arranged by LCO's that have netted hundreds of thousands for charity. Last year Rick Willmott led a team that raised over £90k by completing the Cyclotour du Léman around Lake Lausanne in Switzerland. The money went to Stoke Mandeville's National Spinal Unit and former H&S inspector Steve Thomason who was paralysed in a road traffic accident.

Rick explains, "This Group-wide charity event celebrates our history and allows our many colleagues who love cycling to raise important funds to support the excellent work of Action Medical Research. I'm delighted we have something that gives so many people a chance to see where it all started for us over 160 years ago."

The event is open to staff as well clients, consultants and our suppliers, with nearly 200 expected to take part in September. Want to get involved? Drop an email to Andrew Geldard.



Calling all cycling enthusiasts: a chance to don the Willmott Dixon Classic jersey



The Willmott Dixon Classic's 86 mile takes in many company landmarks