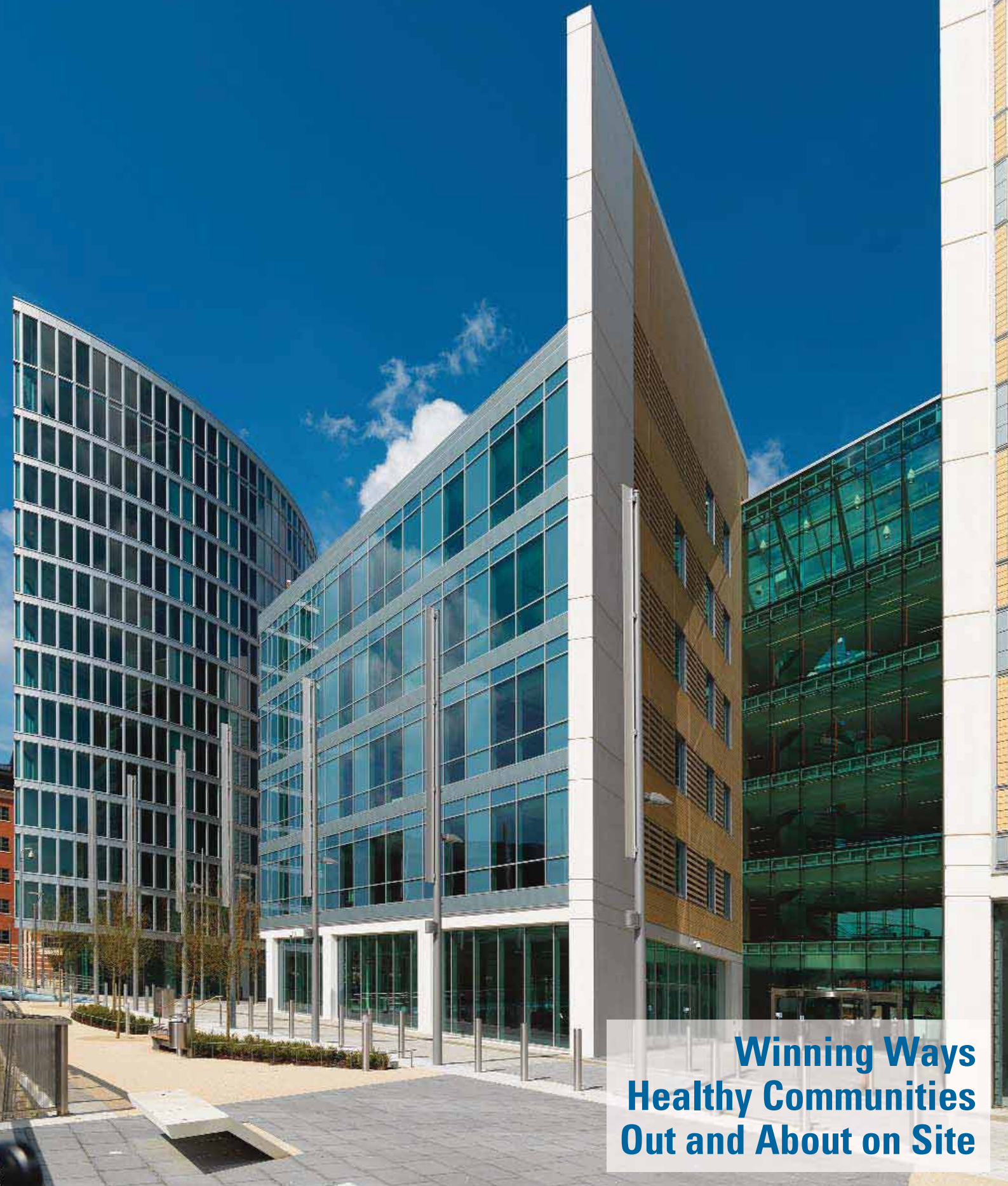


Cowlin *News*

Autumn/Winter 2010



**Winning Ways
Healthy Communities
Out and About on Site**

THE HANDS-ON SOLUTION

General Works

This year the General Works department, in Wales, has completed contracts which include repeat business with clients Principality Building Society and continued relationships with Cardiff City, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil Councils, amongst others. Their work has included new build developments and refurbishment and regeneration projects.

General Works has an edge over its competitors as it benefits from a core of directly employed tradesmen, something that many other contractors are unable to boast. The department has been very successful in winning new contracts recently and is reaping the rewards of strong customer relationships, built on a reputation for quality projects completed on time and, of course, to budget. Current projects have a value over £4.5million.



"The Council was very impressed with the professional conduct of Cowlin and the relationships they forged with local businesses and the community. This resulted in the project being delivered smoothly and within budget and time. The Council was extremely pleased with the performance of the contractor and would have no hesitation in appointing the contractor again."

Gavin Lewis, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Current General Works Projects

Talbot Green New Sector Police Station - £792,025

The project includes the demolition of the existing police station and construction of a new 2 storey sector station on the same site together with external works. Completion January 2011.

Taf Parc Bargoed - £302,000

The development of a new Environment & Heritage Centre which will be a focal point for visitors and provide a venue in the parc for activities, exhibitions, talks etc. the centre will have two storeys, a meeting room, cafe area, walled outside seating and visitor information point.

Dare Valley Country Park - £130,000

The site is the existing Dare Valley Country Park Visitor and accommodation Centre. The works comprise the installation of a new prefabricated workshop building, including demolition of an existing building, new reinforced concrete slab and associated external works.

Sarn Life Centre - £590,000

Construction of a new single storey extension for the day centre including external works and car park.

Banna Park Sports Pavilion - £522,000

Construction of a new single storey sports pavilion.

Principality Building Society Monmouth - £427,000

Construction of a new branch and refurbishment of flats above.

Bute Park - £900,000

The design and construction of a new nursery education and training centre, with associated workshops and external works.

Secured Contract

Cybil Street, Clydach - £900,000

Construction of 14 general use flats, due to start in the new year



Have you Heard of M.A.P?

The Mission Alignment Process (M.A.P.) is our signature, customer alignment toolkit predicated on service focused behaviours at all levels.

- MAP is a proactive approach to establishing expectations and measuring performance during all phases of our projects.
- MAP is not just another satisfaction survey.

Using the M.A.P. as a platform we will create a well informed approach to attaining alignment with customer expectations and delivering service excellence.

Research consistently concludes that:

"an effective relationship with the customer is the foundation on which every other component of the business is built."

With more choice than ever customers have unprecedented levels of power in the marketplace. As a result only those that can successfully develop best in class service levels are assured a future in their industry; this is especially true of construction.

Companies with a reputation for service excellence and committed frontline staff produce higher net profit margins than same sector rivals that do not enjoy a similar reputation.



"Today's construction organisations need to be at their best simply to stay alive, let alone grow"

The reality is Cowlin can no longer differentiate through technical ability alone. Likewise only one brand can be the cheapest, the others have to find another way to stand out.



In today's economic climate our customers are demanding greater value, quality of service and attention. These same customers are also acutely aware that their patronage is of growing importance.

In order to improve our competitive position we need to go that extra mile and create a brand which ensures our customers have the very best construction experience – every time.

NEW - M.A.P. pages coming soon on illuminate

Welcome to the Autumn/Winter edition of Cowlin News. Following on from the Summer edition we will expand further on the broader benefits that our sites are providing to local communities, catch up on site activities and find out about your charitable endeavours both on site and in the regional offices. Thank you to all those who have contributed to this edition and I look forward to hearing what's happening out and about for the next edition. Please remember to let me know about your community activities and events, your ideas, innovations and best practice



First, a word from Neil and David:

“As we come towards the end of another year, no doubt all of us slightly older and wiser, we remain influenced by the ever changing uncertain world around us. To ensure that we, as a business, remain the client’s Contractor of choice we have effected a number of new initiatives and changes within the business, a number of which are included within this newsletter.

As we move into a New Year we need to ensure we remain proactive and provide professional management of our clients and that this is one of the key messages consistently promoted. There is ongoing training to educate all our staff, so that they understand the objectives and strategies for the clients for whom they work. We have asked them what they want from a firm such as ours and we have subsequently acted on the results of this market information. We have taken considerable time and effort to capture what our business really stands for and therefore have been able to instil and write down the core values.

We face another difficult year ahead and for each of our potential and existing clients, where we believe there is a future prospect of work, we have a clear plan that outlines what we need to do to win any specific opportunities.

We have been faced with a number of tough decisions over the course of the year, which is a sad reflection of the economic times and I thank everyone for their continued commitment to making our business a good place to work. I wish you a Happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2011.”



‘Where has 2010 gone? In some ways the year seems long if you look at all that has taken place, then in other ways it only seems a short while back that we were planning for the Christmas break.

2010 was always going to be a challenging year and that it proved to be for the Welsh division. The market has tightened and we in turn have responded to this. The market is also more demanding and we have responded to this.

We have raised our game and this has put different pressures on all of us from pre qualification processes to community benefit initiatives. Now more than ever we are having to work harder to present the company in its true professional light to get onto tender lists and qualify for tendering so it is important now for us all to focus on our values and what Cowlin as a business stands for.

Clients are demanding more than just buildings or putting brick on brick as these are givens, the additional benefits we bring to the communities we work in and our social conscience on environmental and health and safety issues will differentiate us from the rest of the market.

The hard work invested in this area is already reaping rewards and this is a credit to all. 2011 will be another challenging year but we have the structure, people and approach to tackle this effectively in Wales and I thank you all in anticipation of your support and commitment.

May I wish you and your families a merry Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.’



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Recent Awards

Congratulations to everyone who contributed to these successes

Two out of the seven RIBA awards in Wales this year were awarded to Cowlin Design & Build projects. The RIBA Awards are given for buildings that have high architectural standards and make a substantial contribution to the local environment. Both buildings were cited as exceptional examples.

Ty Gwyn Special Needs School and Respite centre was awarded the first BREEAM excellent certificate for a Cardiff Education project.



Sustainable -

We ARE Building

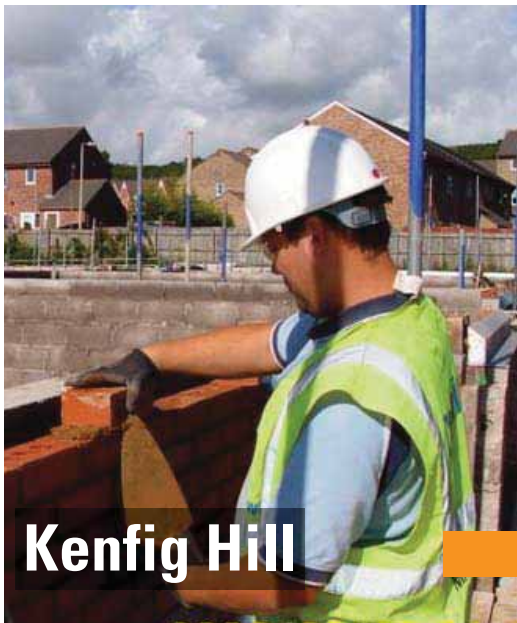
Our clients now build work experience, apprenticeship, training and up-skilling

targets

into our contracts



Nantyglo



Kenfig Hill

Two sites where these targets are having a positive impact on the local community are Nantyglo and Kenfig Hill, both extra care home schemes.

As a benchmark we are targeted for one apprentice or work experience placement for every million pounds of the contract. However, some contracts do stipulate more or add specific criteria for recruitment. For instance, in Nantyglo the team is working with our clients, United Welsh Housing, and JobMatch to provide work opportunities for people furthest away from the job market or with multiple barriers to work. As part of the Employment Routes programme seven unemployed people on a Route to Construction are currently on site working towards their NVQ level 1, by the end of the project. In Kenfig Hill Steve Addis has already completed his Bricklaying NVQ Level 1 and they have a 3rd year apprentice being given the opportunity to finish his course after being displaced earlier this year. They have also had 6 short term work experience placements from a local skills centre, with a second intake due before Christmas.

Both sites are engaging with local schools and colleges and have had visits from various groups looking to gain first hand experience of the industry. As well as site tours and talks the students are inducted onto site and learn the importance of health and safety training and our Zero Harm objectives.

Shane Thomas is one of the seven JobMatch participants. He said:



“Before approaching JobMatch, I had struggled to find work, due to transport issues and a lack of confidence and basic skills. Although I did attend college to do bricklaying, I was unable to find work, which was very disappointing, though I managed to find a few hobbies to keep me going. I was lucky enough to get a place on this Employment Route with JobMatch. I found the Foundation weeks very helpful and since being on site with Cowlin I have learnt all the on-site rules around Health and Safety, Risks and Hazards as well as practical skills. I’m enjoying what I’m doing and looking forward to the future.”

Increasing Employee Engagement

Partnering to deliver sustainable solutions

Engaging with Communities

Attracting and Developing

Successful

Healthy Communities

1 in 3

clients describe sustainability as their most important consideration for the future



Purton

Ensuring a positive impact on the communities we serve is of great importance to us, and our clients, as we all consider our future business and the needs of the end users, the local community and the economy.

Across our sites good things are happening and your efforts are being recognised by our customers:

Steve Cranston, Head of Community Investment: 'United Welsh are working in partnership with Cowlin Construction to ensure that the investment being made at the Nantyglo site provides a lasting legacy within the local community. This has included work with the local schools, including site visits and donating furniture to the local community. This project has also seen 7 opportunities created on site as part of a JobMatch Employment Route. The participants receive training and support whilst employed on site. The aim is that this will then enable them to move into sustained employment at the end of the project. The work that Cowlin carry out is very much hands on and they have always delivered. We are delighted with the way the project is progressing and look forward to seeing the finished result.'

Ian Tucker, Headmaster, St Mary's Primary School: "We look forward to arranging to bring groups of children onto site in the vests and wearing the hats as the project develops. This is also a good opportunity to thank Cowlin for everything they have done so far – always prepared to go the extra mile!"



Life Centre

Nantyglo - Pucklechurch - Ygsol-y-Felin - Purton - Kenfig Hill - Plymouth Life Centre

Here are some of the things that our sites have been doing for their local communities, please let us know what you're doing:

'Design a Sign' Competitions - Students design a new sign to discourage their peers from playing on site, which are used on hoardings.

Furniture donation - We donated the furniture from a staff rental flat to two young people just starting out in their first homes.

Timber donation - Off cuts are being donated to a local college for carpentry lessons

Traveller camp fencing - A new fence donated and erected for the children's play area.

Camera donation - Cameras donated to a local primary school for their environment project

Meet the Neighbour/Contractor events - Across our sites these are important and regular events which keep our neighbours informed

Window cleaning - Sites regularly clean neighbours windows that become dirty because of our activities

Playground jet-wash - A local pre-school's outdoor play equipment received a facelift and a very big thank you.

High Five for High Vis - Rolling out across our sites to primary schools

'Dragon's Den' style Community Project scheme - Community projects were given the chance to present their cause to decide which deserving scheme would receive support during the Kenfig Hill project. The winner will be announced shortly.



Project

Llandarcy Academy of Sport



A two-storey, steel framed sports academy for Neath and Port Talbot College, it is on target for completion in April 2011.

Construction includes a Sports Hall, which will have a timber sprung floor, fully retractable goals and basketball hoops and a state of the art climbing wall. In addition to the hall, the building will house new changing rooms and extra Sports Science educational facilities for the college.

Women's Service Review

"Women's Service Review at the Heath Hospital is a three year phased delivery Healthcare project which has been a mixture of new build and refurbishment work. It is now in its last phase of major refurbishment which is due to handover in January 2011. The scheme has provided new maternity, gynaecology and labour facilities and wards to four floors of the Heath Hospital."



East Building & Access Bridge

Work is progressing apace on the main East Building, with the intended completion of construction works prior to Christmas a determined goal of the site team.



Congratulations and appreciation also go to the site team who constructed the bridge and associated road and paving works, in a busy campus environment with the minimum of disruption and to an extremely high quality.

Compliments from Martin Whalley - Director of Estates

"Stefan is doing a great job under your leadership... it has to be one of the best teams I have worked with (that is the whole of the East building team).

Your patience and assistance in working around Uni activities is also very much appreciated. I look forward to writing the same at the end of each of these mini projects and of course the main build."

INTO Residential

The building works commenced in November 2009 and the first blocks are on target for handover on the 24th December 2010 with the remaining blocks due for handover at the end of April 2011.



The construction is very traditional with mass concrete and beam foundations, masonry superstructure with cedar and metal cladding relief panelling. Roofs are artificial slate on main areas and single ply membrane on the flat area.

The site team are working hard to achieve the quality expected by our client and to meet the demands of our programme.

UPP - Lafrowda

Block 5 – Is progressing well with the external envelope virtually complete with scaffolding being struck. Internally the finishes are progressing well and we will be in a position in December to install carpets in readiness for the furniture to the bedrooms to be installed during January.

Block 6 – This block follows on shortly behind block 5 and is again progressing well, the timber frame has been erected and the roof will commence at the end of November.



Block 7 – The ground works are virtually complete to the foot print of the building and scaffolding has been advanced in readiness for the frame installation to start.

Block 1 – Ground works and basement construction is currently progressing on this block. The welfare compound is in place and will be completed shortly.

UPP - Birks Hall

Having handed over the first two blocks during the summer break, the aim over the next three to six months is to progress the construction of Blocks A2, B2, C1, D1, D2, C2, H and G to enable phased handovers to programme.

Installations including bathroom pods, stairs and roofs are progressing on various blocks with 1st fix operations, fire stopping, boarding and plastering all ongoing. Envelope works consisting of window, brick, render and cladding will be a constant task during the period.



INTO Academic

Finishing and commissioning works are ongoing as the team works towards completion on Christmas Eve.

The INTO building isn't just a practical space in which to deliver lectures, it's a place where students can come for a fantastic education and a fabulous experience. The team are looking forward to handing over a splendid building and focal point for international students.



Kay House



Render, 2nd fix, finishes and M and E works are ongoing to refurbish and change the use of the existing Kay House building into the Music Faculty Building at University of Exeter.

Update

Pucklechurch Primary School

Phase 1a, consisting of the refurbishment of the existing school buildings, is now complete allowing the staff to move from the old Staff Room into their newly refurbished facilities this term.

These initial works, which took place over the summer holidays, has allowed the old Staff Room to be isolated from the existing structure and demolished ready for the new structure.

Demolition is now underway so that the structure can be fully exposed before work on the brand-new kitchen extension begins. The new kitchen will be equipped with more modern catering equipment to prepare even more exciting school dinners!



The first of three extensions, the new Classroom Extension is now reaching to the sky as the brickwork and blockwork progresses well. Further works were undertaken inside the existing building over the October Half Term to rewire and install new lights to the main hall, new ceilings and lights in the girls and boys toilets.

There was even a visit from from Ivor Goodsite to talk to the children at assembly! Nice moves Ivor (Rob!)

St Mary's Primary School



With the temporary school built and in use, the demolition complete and site levels reduced, the new Saint Mary's Primary school at Purton is finally taking shape. The completion of the building footprint

will be ready for ground floor slab pours before Christmas.

The school have been keen to get involved and learn more about the construction.



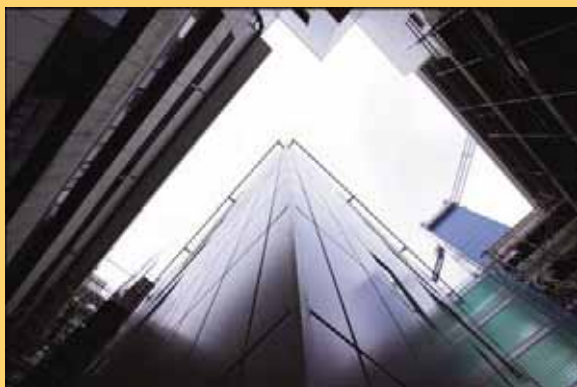
The children have taken part in the 'Design a Sign' competition, to design a new site

safety sign warning children of the dangers around a construction site and during a recent site visit we answered questions for their school project on 'make believe' stories. It was a great opportunity for the Year 6 classes to see the start of their new school building and experience construction groundworks first hand. Particular thanks go to 'Managing Director' Eddie Keogh for his time and his tales of life as a construction groundworker.

Tertiary Tower, University Hospital Wales

We have completed a project within the UHW which comprised of a shell and core contract to construct a seven storey concrete frame complete with external cladding/windows and roof coverings. Prior to this contract's completion we were awarded the fit-out contract for the basement and ground floor and a separate fit out contract for four of the upper floors.

The ground floor fit-out was a challenge as we installed a cyclotron machine which produces radiation used in the treatment of patients entering a PET scanning machine. (I believe there is only one other like this in Britain) there was a very hi-spec M&E installation included in this contract.



The upper floors were split into two neurosurgery operating theatres, a renal ward with outpatients department and a paediatric decant ward plus the construction and installation of four separate plant rooms. A full fit-out of all floors has been carried out and handed over to hospital staff who are now using the facilities treating patients.

Plymouth Life Centre



Work has continued on the reinforced concrete structure for the main swimming pool and dive pool.

Over the next weeks, key activities include the continuation of the sports hall concrete slab, the dive tower columns from the pool surrounds and work will begin on the structural steel frame to the dry dive area, located at the northern end of the building. Roofing works and external block work detail will also continue.

Did You Know?

- To date, in the region of 600 people have worked on the project and this number is expected to reach 2,000 by the time the Life Centre is completed.
- Over 120,000 man hours have been worked on the project to date
- 1,200 tonnes of structural steelwork is being used in the construction – the equivalent weight of 178 male African elephants.
- Almost 20,000 tonnes of concrete is being used in the project and will be strengthened with over 1,000 tonnes of high-tension steel reinforcement.
- Over a kilometre of piles support the Life Centre.
- To fill the main swimming pool requires 2.9 million litres of water. The dive pool takes 2.2 million litres – the equivalent of 8.97 million pints of beer!



Ysgol-y-Felin

Phase 1 infants block was handed over successfully on 4th October, one month ahead of programme.

We are now progressing well with the phase 2 refurbishment and are also due to hand over the Assessment Unit at the start of December.

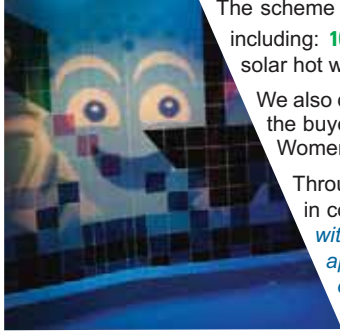
Many thanks to the team at Ysgol-Y-Felin who helped achieve this.



Collaborative Approach Delivers Long Term Value - Ty Gwyn Special Needs School

The Ty Gwyn project involved the construction of a state of the art school for pupils with severe disabilities from the age of 3 to 19 and a new two storey respite care centre. As well as providing a school that met the complex physical and learning needs of its pupils, our client was determined to find a sustainable solution that 'achieved best long term value' by addressing economic, environmental and social requirements.

The project is a **Constructing Excellence in Wales Demonstration Project** in recognition of the breadth of sustainability and collaborative approach pursued throughout the project, and is also the **first BREEAM Excellent School for Cardiff City Council**.



The scheme boasts a range of future proofing features developed in conjunction with the Carbon Trust including: **1000m Ground Source Heat Pumps** producing 100KW heating energy; 2 rainwater harvesting tanks; solar hot water panels; and SUDS – water attenuation tanks.

We also delivered an impressive package of social and economic benefits including: **64% local labour**; meet the buyer events; 2 Apprentices recruited and now full time at Cowlin; **20% labour force in formal training**; a Women in Science, Engineering and Construction demonstration day; and numerous school visits and classroom talks.

Throughout the project, consultation and collaborative working were paramount and each element of the project was developed in consultation with the full range of stakeholders. *"The Ty Gwyn project was all about teamwork, we had a good relationship with everyone involved from the client and design team to supply chain and end users, which stemmed from the inclusive approach that was taken from the very start. This was a challenging project, but with the children having such special needs everyone knew that the end result had to be not only fit for use, but safe, secure and above all robust. The attention to detail, that shows in the building now, came from the consultation at the beginning."* Ross Williams, Project Manager



In aid of...

Once again your favourite charity organisations have benefitted from your generous efforts:

Cowlin Wine Challenge - Plymouth Office

Mike O'Neil reports on this year's event:

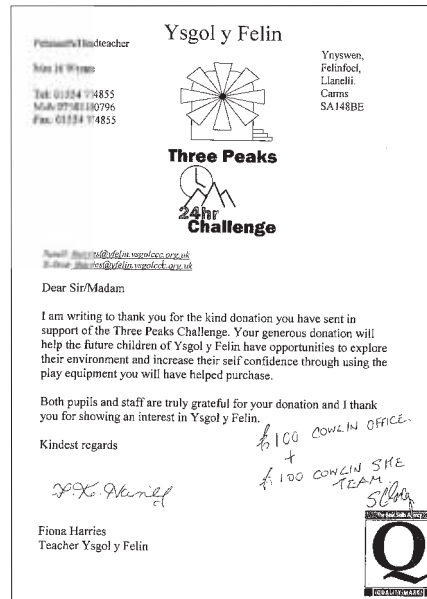
"This was our 6th year of holding the Cowlin Wine Challenge which attracted a record 25 teams of two. The teams, from a cross section of the local business community, fought a tough battle with some very high scores being achieved.

The eventual winners were Hoare Lea's Team 1 who were previous winners 3 years ago. Hoare Lea 2 picked up the wooden spoon trophy for lowest score!

The Cowlin Wine Club Team did not disgrace themselves coming in only 3 points behind the winners.

On the night we raised **£615** for the Building Better Futures Charity which again this year will be matched £ for £ by Balfour Beatty."

Congratulations Mike and team for another highly successful evening.



The Site Team and Cowlin Welsh Division donated £100 each to sponsor a team from Ysgol-y-Felin on the Three Peaks Challenge

News of the Life Centre Team's sponsored slim
Weigh in is 10th December - and they are on target to lose their 100lbs!
There's still time to sponsor, please email Donna Bristow to pledge.

Sport Relief 2010

Dominic Freda, Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, University of Bristol; Cowlin sponsored Dominic's son £100:

"Thank you for supporting my son's charity bike ride in March (apologies for the lateness). He's the one on the left and in the end they raised £1,000 for Sport Relief"



CHILDREN IN NEED - Welsh Division
Rhian, Carys and Lowri wish to thank everyone who bought their chocolate biscuit cake.
You raised £60 for Children in Need.
Thank you for your generous support.

and finally...

Well done Jamie

A Cowlin umbrella spotted on the BBC News website during the Ryder Cup.

It's Ok it was holiday!



breast cancer CAMPAIGN
researching the cure

Wear it Pink
Bristol Office

Wearing something Pink and 'buying' Mervyn's wife Sarah's gorgeous pink cakes during 'Wear it Pink' day raised £52, which was doubled when paid into HSBC Bank.