

More residential success for Surgo



Architect's impression of the redevelopment of the former Library site

We are always delighted to work with established clients, and are pleased to have been awarded two new substantial residential housing projects.

Firstly, at Northumberland park near Backworth, is a housing scheme valued at £4m for Northumberland Estates comprising a mix of 50 two and three bedroom affordable homes.

The project started on site mid June and will be undertaken in phases with a 60-week construction schedule. Other members of the professional team include Summers Inman as quantity surveyors and principal designers, Fairhurst, providing structural engineering and Pod Architects. Anticipated completion is August 2018.

David Straughan, development manager for Northumberland Estates, said:

"We were pleased to appoint Surgo to this important housing scheme and are looking forward to working with the team again at Backworth. This development forms part of the Northumberland Estates' strategic plan to provide more affordable homes for people living in this part of the county."

Our second appointment is as preferred contractor for a development on Thornhill Road in central Ponteland, formerly the site of Ponteland Library. Once demolition of the library building is complete, work can get underway for Ascent Homes to create 27 two-bedroom apartments for open market sale, including four one-bed apartments. The development will be built in two individual blocks over three storeys and linked at first and second floor level with a contemporary glazed bridge.

Due for completion by autumn 2018, the scheme will provide some much needed entry level

housing as well as one and two bedroom accommodation in this area.

Both schemes give us a chance to build on our significant housebuilding experience while developing our relationships with Northumberland Estates and Ascent Homes.

Surgo's residential portfolio is rapidly expanding. Elsewhere Surgo is currently completing an affordable homes project for ISOS in Wallsend plus a mixed-use development for Up North Group in Durham while discussions are underway about further housing work for other developers in the near future.

Stop Press

Surgo has been appointed to the redevelopment of Collingwood College, Durham University - see inside for details and also won a £1m refurbishment of Sacred Heart School's auditorium.



Progress at NETPark

Site teams are busy throughout the region as work progresses well on schemes in the housing, healthcare and energy from waste sectors.

Construction of the CPI's £8 million National Formulation Centre is well underway and clear for all to see as the building takes shape, now that the steel framework is highly visible from the road.

The formulation centre will be an important addition to NETPark. Its location alongside CPI's Printable Electronics and Graphene Application Centres, will enable CPI to provide a joined-up approach to the development of next generation formulated products and their applications across markets such as healthcare and pharmaceuticals, home and personal care, industrial products, oil and gas, paints and coatings, and food and drink.

The ongoing development of NETPark is widely acknowledged as a regional success story and it is gratifying to know that Surgo is playing its part with this third visit to the technology park.

National Formulation Centre for Process Innovation (CPI)



Framework win at Durham

Surgo has picked up a £3.2m refurbishment and new build project at Durham University after securing a place on the university's £114m Minor Works Framework in January this year.

The works at Collingwood College commenced mid June and are scheduled to complete in time for the start of the new academic year in September 2018. Surgo will be

refurbishing the bar and gym areas, providing extensions to both and undertaking associated external works.

Commenting on the win, Jeff Alexander said: "We were delighted with our appointment to this project as a result of winning a place on the framework. With 1500 undergraduates and postgraduates, Collingwood College is large and extremely busy and the bar and gym areas are particularly well used, so it will be a project that really plays to our strengths because not only are we working on a live site which is in regular use by hundreds of students but we are also surrounded by, and working in close proximity to, a number of accommodation blocks."

A letter from the Chairman



It is interesting to read my letter to you all this time last year when we anticipated the appointment of a North East Mayor to galvanise the Government's Northern Powerhouse initiative.

A great deal of water has passed under the bridge since then - not least the Brexit vote. And now, with the recent resignation of the Northern Powerhouse minister, which has resulted in Jake Berry MP taking up the role (the third minister to hold the title since George Osborne launched the initiative in 2014) - another period of delay is likely.

Does the Northern Powerhouse still have potential? Prime Minister, Mrs May, in her latest Queen's Speech did not mention it and focused instead on

what she calls "a new modern, industrial strategy", which has been designed to "spread prosperity and opportunity across the country".

So what does this mean for the regional construction industry and for Surgo?

Quite simply, I believe it means that while we await further news on the impact surrounding the Northern Powerhouse and Brexit, we need to focus on being self-sufficient as far as we are able, operating sustainably, supporting new entrants to the industry whenever we can, sharing best practice, ensuring that our staff are fully trained and supported to produce their very best work each day and striving for the highest standards of customer satisfaction. Only in this way can we ensure that our business is fit to face the challenges of the future.

The horrific Grenfell Tower disaster, notwithstanding the outcome of

investigations, demonstrates the importance of the need for quality and attention to detail in everything we do in our industry. Construction plays a highly significant role - not just economically, but in ways that can affect everyone's lives.

On that note, thank you all for your commitment and dedication, because regardless of position or whatever individual roles are, we all have an important part to play in helping secure a successful future for Surgo and construction in the North East region.

Kind regards,

Ian Walker
Chairman



Mixed use scheme on track

Construction of a new mixed-use development comprised of apartments, retail units and office space for Northumberland-based developer Arch Group is progressing well towards completion.

In total, 1,500 sq ft of retail units will occupy the ground floor, while eight two-bedroom apartments available for rent by Arch Homes will be created on levels one and two. Modern and accessible public conveniences have also been incorporated into the scheme to cater for an increase in visitor numbers as the seaside town enjoys something of a renaissance. Upon completion, the development will also become home to Newbiggin's Town Council, as it relocates to a new central position.

Completed schemes

Since the last issue, a number of notable projects have been successfully completed.

These include the stunning refurbishment of The Gate complex for Crown Estates and the extensive renovation and update of the historically significant Hatton Gallery, a listed building within Newcastle University, to create a contemporary exhibition space for Tyne and Wear Museums.



Two join the board



(l to r) Martin Blight and David Blyth

We often say our business is full of great people both past and present and the back page is the perfect platform from which to give an insight into some of them and share news of their endeavours.

We are pleased to announce that since the issue of our last newsletter both David Blyth and Martin Blight have been appointed to the Surgo board as commercial director and estimating director respectively.

They take their places alongside chairman, Ian Walker, managing director, James Walker, Jeff Alexander, Jeff Charlton, and Steven Coombes, adding further strength and depth to Surgo's senior management structure.

Special award for Ken

Tele handler, Ken Smith, has received special recognition for his can do attitude by winning a Considerate Constructors Scheme Hero award for his work on the mixed use retail scheme we are currently working on in Newbiggin for Arch. Nominated by Paul Graham, our senior site manager on the scheme, he has not only made himself champion of the welfare facilities, but has also taken site cleanliness to a new level, keeping it spotlessly clean which has earned him a number of praiseworthy comments from the workforce and management alike. Well done Ken and keep up the good work!

Helping others

Surgo's employees are a kind and thoughtful lot and often take on challenges to raise funds to help those less fortunate. The latest example is director, Jeff Alexander who will take part in this year's Great North Run to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society.



You can make a donation to this worthwhile cause by visiting his Just Giving page – details are below. Thank you everyone for your support.

www.Justgiving.com/JR-Alexander1



Celebration

Congratulations go to projects co-ordinator John Bewick and his family on the safe arrival of Jack who entered the world in February weighing 9lb 8oz.

We said goodbye to...

Sadly, December last year marked the passing of senior QS, George Hunter after he lost his battle with cancer. Suffice to say, our heartfelt sympathies lie with his family and friends.

Recognising long service

Surgo takes great pleasure in acknowledging the loyalty and dedication of its employees, regularly handing out long service awards. During the past six months five employees have been recognised. This includes, Kath Thompson, Ian McGlen and Stevie Reed who have been with the company for 30 years and Kenny Smith and Brian Morton who've both been with us for 35 years. Together they've clocked up an impressive 160 years of long service. Thank you to you all.