



PRACTICAL COMPLETION REACHED AT NETPARK

WE HAVE REACHED PRACTICAL COMPLETION OF THE LATEST PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT AT NETPARK IN SEDGEFIELD - THE £4.5M CENTRE FOR PROCESS INNOVATION (CPI) - A NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY THAT WILL DELIVER NEXT GENERATION LIGHT-BASED HEALTHCARE TREATMENTS.

Our appointment to the project just over a year ago saw us teaming up again with the award-winning Durham architects, Howarth Litchfield, after we had successfully completed the National Formulation Centre together, which is located next to it.

The National Healthcare Photonics Centre (NHPC) will support the scale-up and commercialisation of medtech products, acting as a hub for businesses of all sizes and academic partners to work on innovative methods of diagnosing disease, imaging systems - including endoscopy - and light-based treatments.

With a gross internal floor area of approximately 2000m² including all M&E services, the NCHP building provides space for work across two floors and includes a suite of laboratories covering specialist optics, life sciences, electronic and ionising radiation testing and development work.

We are very pleased to have been involved in such a ground-breaking development - and one which has such significance within the regional economic strategy, promoting innovation as well as economic and skills infrastructure.

It has been a challenging project to work on - a tight site, with many trees, which has necessitated a cautious build programme to maintain existing planting whilst not compromising the highly specialised laboratory and office space.

Its high-profile location on the park and its visual impact and quality finish, with a glazed curtain walling section to its primary elevation, is in keeping with the current styling of NETPark and it has been designed to achieve a BREEAM very good rating.

The facility will officially open on Tuesday, 19 March.

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Welcome to another year and to our new style newsletter which reflects the look of our recently refreshed website, so I do hope you enjoy reading it, and while you're at it, take a look at our website, too.

According to a Government briefing paper, issued on 12 December 2018, estimates have put the number of new homes needed in England at between 240,000 and 340,000 each year. While the total housing stock in England increased by around 220,000 homes in 2017-18, it is still far lower than the estimated need, which is proving to be good news for Surgo.

Although Brexit continues to create a drag on economic optimism, there are still institutions looking to invest with the residential sector primed to give good returns. This economic backdrop sees housing playing an increasingly important role in our business. For instance, we currently have two prestigious housing schemes at Stannington and Medburn under construction, as well as several public sector developments planned or underway.

Poor weather at the start of 2018 caused a few delays, particularly at Stannington and Medburn, so this had a knock-on effect on our turnover, which was disappointingly lower than last year's - but it does mean that 2019 promises to be a bumper year for us.

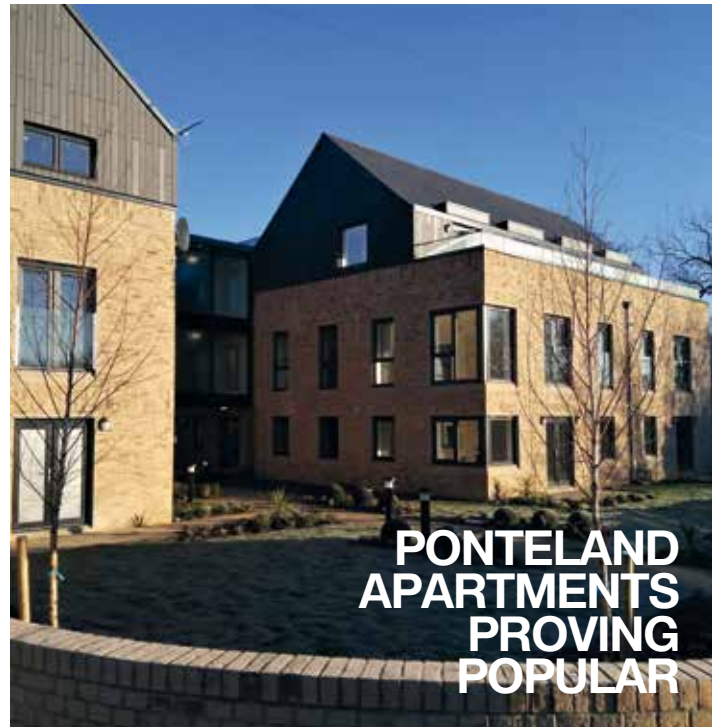
With 2019 underway and new opportunities ahead, I should like to send you my sincerest wishes for your good health and happiness. Let's do our best to put the NE construction industry on the map in the coming year.

Kind regards,

Ian Walker
Chairman



NEWS IN BRIEF



Construction has just completed at the Hemingway Court development in Thornhill Road, Ponteland for Ascent Homes.

Built on the site of the former library, it comprises a stunning collection of 25, one and two-bedroom apartments and penthouses, built in two individual blocks over three storeys and linked at first and second floor level with a contemporary glazed bridge.

Speaking about the project, construction director, Jeff Charlton, said:

"We are pleased with the finished development, our first for Ascent Homes, but it has been a challenging project overall. It is a very tight site, situated on a busy road with traffic travelling to and from the nearby shops, school and local amenities. We also had to provide 24-hour access around the site to the residents of the adjoining assisted living development, Henderson Court. In fact, true to form, some of our site team have done so much to help and befriend the residents, one or two have said they will be sorry to see us go!

"The development has been well received and there is a great deal of interest in it from would be buyers, so we hope it will lead to further work from Ascent Homes in the near future."

STOP PRESS

Surgo has been appointed to a refurbishment project for a high-end retailer and a student accommodation development in Newcastle City Centre for Silverstone Property Consultants.

We have just begun work on a £3m social housing scheme of 24 bungalows in Consett for Karbon Developments which is scheduled for completion in January 2020.



COLLINGWOOD COLLEGE GETS A NEW LOOK

In December, we completed our first project won as a result of our place on Durham University's Small Works Framework.

Collingwood College, now with a new lease of life, was refurbished over an 18-month programme, driven by principal, Joe Elliott, who is determined to give students the best possible facilities.

The contract involved the construction of a new conservatory and lift to all floors, an external terrace and landscaping, demolition of the existing gym to create space for a new gym/cardio area and a Junior Common Room games area with new bar, dance studio and theatre area, refurbishment of the existing bar and externally, the replacement of a service road.

Joe Baron, contracts manager, said: "This was a challenging project, particularly in terms of access restrictions, which necessitated the installation of a haul road before work could begin. Additionally, delivery trucks passing by occupied student bedrooms and issues with demolition and piling noise as well as those associated with a building in 24-hour use, created the need for careful scheduling of works and close consultation with all stakeholders."

Particular praise must go to the site team led by Len Ronayne and Harry Birkbeck, who did a marvellous job in keeping the project on schedule and delivering it within budget.



APPRENTICE NEWS

Surgo is well known for its commitment to training so we are delighted to welcome two new apprentices, Josh Brennan (L) and Igwe Eke (R), who have joined as apprentice joiners and will study part-time at Newcastle College while gaining hands on experience at live sites throughout the region.

Our intention was to appoint only one apprentice, but they impressed so well at interview, we decided to give both Josh and Igwe the chance to benefit from a rewarding career in construction. The financial support we received from Northern Counties Builders Federation (NCBF) via its apprentice bursary scheme, made this second appointment possible.

CONGRATULATIONS COREY

Congratulations to Corey Wigglesworth who has recently successfully completed his training and as a permanent member of our team, has been working on the Hemingway Court apartment development in Ponteland. Well done!





NATIONAL SHORTLISTING FOR PETE

Pete McGlen was one of only two in the country to be shortlisted as an 'Unsung Hero' for LABC Warranty's 'The Bricks Award 2018', which recognises those who go above and beyond the call of duty to complete the job.

Jeff Charlton, Director, said: "I am delighted Pete was shortlisted. It is a great achievement and we are proud that his contribution has been recognised nationally."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THERE ARE SO MANY ANNOUNCEMENTS, SADLY, WE CAN ONLY MENTION EACH MEMBER OF STAFF BRIEFLY...

ARRIVALS

Welcome to three new site staff, Peter Mills, Paul Rigg and Graham Charlton (Paul and Graham are returners to Surgo).

RETIREMENTS

Henry Birkbeck, site foreman, retired in November after 30 years' service. Paul Clark, labourer, retired in August 2018 after 19 years with Surgo. Stu MacDougall, retired in January after 36 years with us.

LONG SERVICE

Michael Brayson, site manager, 30 years
 Jeff Charlton, director, 30 years
 Kenny Ward, joiner, 30 years
 John Young, assistant site manager, 25 years
 Thanks to you all for your continued service and hard work.

DEATHS

Keven McClarence, bricklayer, died August 2018 after 18 years with Surgo. Very well liked, we extend our deepest sympathies to his family and friends.

WELCOME TO THE WORLD

Carl Swatton has welcomed a wonderful baby boy, Lincoln, into the world on 31st October.



CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Surgo made a donation of £405 to People's Kitchen, which translated into 81 Christmas dinners and rounded up a further 323 food items as well as 59 Advent Calendars, which were delivered on 10 December to the Children North East Family and Parenting Unit. Thanks to all who contributed to the collection, the proceeds of which were very gratefully received by local families in need.