

New homes keep Surgo busy

SURGO

NEWS



(l to r) Jeff Charlton, James Walker (MD) and Alastair Woodruff (Keep Estates)

In our last edition we mentioned that we were actively involved in several housing developments and in discussions about others, so we are pleased to announce an exciting new development we are working on in Stannington, Northumberland.

In partnership with newly formed company, Willow Homes, Surgo will be building 34 homes including detached houses at Nursery Gardens comprising a mix of nine property types. These will range in size from two and three-bedroom homes with large kitchen/dining areas to four and five bedroom houses built over three floors and featuring a study and cinema room on the second floor.

All luxuriously appointed throughout with top of the range fitted kitchens and bathrooms, homes at Nursery Gardens have been designed to appeal to a wide range of purchasers.

Willow Homes' representative, Bob Skelly, commented:

"We are delighted to be working with Surgo, which is one of the region's most respected contractors and has many years of house building experience to its credit. This is an area of the county where we believe there is great demand for high quality, well-built properties because of its proximity to Newcastle city centre and more locally, to Morpeth. We are expecting strong demand for the houses at Nursery Gardens and I am confident that Surgo will do a great job for us."

Construction will get underway in January. Keep Estate Agents of Whitley Bay has been appointed to market the properties.

Elsewhere our other residential developments are progressing well. Our scheme at 31-33 Church Street, Durham, for Up North Group which has involved the refurbishment of a three-storey, 200-year-old property into luxury apartments and student/leisure accommodation, will be the first of our current

residential developments to reach completion in summer 2018.

At Northumberland Park, near Backworth, where we are building 50 affordable homes for Northumberland Estates, we are on schedule to deliver these by August next year. Following on, by the autumn of 2018, our scheme at Thornhill Road in Ponteland (formerly the old library site) for Ascent Homes, where we are building 27 one and two-bedroom apartments, is also on schedule

In total, Surgo is currently involved in 127 new homes which are either in for planning, being refurbished or under construction.

Stop Press!

Surgo has been awarded another phase of NetPark in Sedgfield, County Durham where next generation medical treatments will be developed. More information inside.

A dream home - it's all in a day's work



Maintaining the theme of housebuilding, the seven-bedroom dream home with bar/snug, sunken seating, cinema and boot room which we are building on a hillside for a private client is certainly not your regular housebuilding project.

The house is superbly located at Hartford Bridge, Bedlington, situated on a four-acre plot and surrounded by mature vegetation. Two storeys high, it will be built using a mix of Lake District slate and stone with elements of cedar cladding and extensive glazing. Internally, a grand staircase set within a double height entrance with atrium space, will greet visitors.

Small roads, restricted access and just in time deliveries are only a few of the challenges we will be facing but Surgo is up to the task and over the next twelve months, will be working with architects, Howarth Litchfield – a tried and trusted project partner - as well as BDN Engineers, to build our client's dream home.

Second NetPark appointment

Surgo has been appointed to the next phase of development at NetPark by the Centre for Process Innovation (CPI) following our success on CPI's National Formulation Centre, where construction is now ending.

This new project, the National Centre for Healthcare Photonics, will provide open access facilities to help firms and universities develop light-based

technology to diagnose and monitor acute and chronic conditions. It will also help to scale up remedies for ailments such as cancer and brain injuries and research whether a skin burn can heal naturally or requires grafting.

Expected to open in late 2018, we are delighted to be involved in a centre which will once again involve the delivery of state of the art research and development facilities, and in this case, present the region as a 'global hub for healthcare photonics'.

In appointing Surgo to this next phase, Dr Tom Harvey, Strategic Programmes Manager, Healthcare Photonics said:

"CPI's new National Centre for Healthcare Photonics at NETPark will provide the specialist expertise and facilities that companies need in order to be able to bring new products to commercialisation faster and with less risk."



CPI Phase 1 nearing completion

A Letter from the Chairman



Rather than dwelling on what has been happening in the world recently and over which we have little control, on this occasion, I want to mention events much closer to home – to illustrate the effectiveness of a teamwork based approach leading to a successful project and therefore a very happy client– something that is close to all our hearts.

The project in question, the full strip out and refurbishment of Richmond House at The Watermark development in Dunston, did not attract significant media attention, was not 'high profile' with a value of £1.5m overall, nor of long duration at 18 weeks. However,

the timescale and complexity made it a challenging and at the same time, very worthwhile project.

We won the job after a two-stage tender. Our attitude and approach at interview, we were told, clinched the deal, which created a sound platform for developing a successful working relationship, with the very well-informed client – Wilson Bowden Developments.

Because of the relatively short programme, elements of the design were still being developed and approved well into construction, so we often had to 'proceed at risk'. Additionally, there were a significant number of change requests, still ongoing into the final weeks, so many things could have gone wrong.

Close liaison, a proactive attitude, excellent teamwork from the client team and consultants including Project manager, Gleeds, Architect, Stephen

George and partners, Engineers BWB and our supply chain won the day.

I believe this is a text book project because it demonstrates how important mutual trust and team work are and reinforces the need for good communication. What's more, the client was delighted with our workmanship and attitude – what better way to end 2017?

Congratulations to all those involved and best wishes to everyone for the festive season and of course, the year ahead. Thanks to all our clients, consultants and supply chain for your continuing support throughout 2017.

Kind regards,

Ian Walker
Chairman



Completed schemes

In the last issue we announced that we were making good progress on a mixed-use scheme in Newbiggin-by-the-Sea for Arch.

This is now complete and the official opening took place in November with local dignitaries including Cllrs Liz Simpson and Richard Wearmouth who cut the ribbon.

The development forms part of Newbiggin's ongoing regeneration with eight much needed two-bedroom apartments on the upper floors for rent and three 1,500 sq ft retail units at ground floor level as well as accessible public conveniences to cater for increased tourism to this part of the coast.



Newcastle West Academy

We have also completed the £2.6m West Newcastle Academy on Armstrong Road in the west end of the city, which opened for the start of the new academic year in September and caters for approximately 200 Key Stage One and Key Stage Two pupils.



The official launch – (l to r) Jeff Charlton, Cllr Liz Simpson, Richard Schofield, Arch, Cllr Richard Wearmouth, Paul Graham



A half century for Brian



Surgo takes great pride in its people and their commitment to the company, so it gave us great pleasure in August to celebrate Brian Dunn's 50 years with us, making him our longest serving employee.

Following in his father Norman's footsteps, Brian joined the firm as an apprentice plant fitter. Now, some fifty years later, he has responsibility for the repairs and maintenance of the essential small plant and equipment used on our numerous sites across the region.

Presenting the keen fisherman with a rod and reel, as well as a bottle of whisky and an engraved whisky tumbler, Jeff Alexander, director, thanked him for his unfaltering service and dedication to both his job and the company.

Thanks for your generosity

In our last edition we mentioned that director, Jeff Alexander, was taking part in the Great North Run to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society, which makes a tremendous difference to anyone affected by any form of dementia, so thanks to everyone who supported Jeff. He turned in a sterling performance, running the 13.1 miles in 01.51.41 and raising around £1,300 for a very worthy cause.

Investing in new talent

We often talk about the importance of investing in new talent and training the workforce of the future and we're pleased to announce that we have taken on Dylan Bell at the beginning of October, who joins us as an apprentice bricklayer. Welcome to the company Dylan.

In brief

The LABC Inspector for Backworth has nominated Colin Kinghorn for a Bricks award. The awards recognise the exceptional work of developers, builders, contractors and housing associations who go the extra mile, regardless of size, to deliver quality in construction. Colin is currently working on the affordable housing site for Northumberland Estates at Backworth.

Well done to Stu, too

And let's not forget Stu McDougal, who celebrated 35 years with Surgo on 6th December. Stu is currently site manager on the Ponteland scheme for Ascent Homes.



New arrival(s)

Congratulations also to David Wright, who, as well as reaching 50, is also a new grandad. His grandson Max was born on 24th October, weighing 8lb 11oz and is doing well.

And, we are all eager to hear news of Mo's new arrival as she is due to become a grandmother in December too, but may just miss our deadline.

Big birthdays

There's been a few landmark birthdays since our last newsletter too – Joe Baron, David Wright and Darin Stephens all celebrated their 50th birthdays, while Jim Walker and John Young can now claim their bus passes and railcards at 60! Congratulations.

