



SPECIALISTS AWARDS 11



Construction News loves specialist sub-contractors. That's why we are the only magazine to run awards dedicated to recognising the very best companies in the industry.

Over the next two dozen pages we showcase the finalists and winners in all 17 categories, plus naming the Judges Supreme Winner. We also look at what winning a Specialists award means to companies and what lies behind their success.

These companies are in the delivery business - doing it better, doing it quicker and often under growing pressure from clients. Every one of the 80 companies on our shortlist deserves a good look by the thousands of main contractor managers who read *CN* every week - if you aren't using these companies, perhaps you should find out more about them.

Thanks to our sponsors, panel of independent judges and to those who took the time to enter -and special thanks to the National Specialist Contractors Council which continues to show great support for the awards. You can see more photos from the night at www.specialistsawards.com.

And look out for the *CN* awards in July - for the first time we have a category just for specialists and you can see the shortlist at www.constructionnewsawards.com.

Nick Edwards, editor





Neil Pennell from Land Securities (left) presents the Fire Protection award to WRR (UK)

THE JUDGES

Neil Pennell, director of project engineering, Land Securities
Tanya Ross, associate director and business manager, Buro Happold
Rudi Klein, chief executive, SEC Group

Fire protection

WRR (UK)

The judges said:

“This is a well-managed business committed to customer service, safe working practices and developing people. Its remarkable staff retention figures show that WRR is an excellent company to work for”

WRR (UK) is particularly proud of its work on the ExCeL Exhibition Centre



The year 2009/10 was not an easy one for the construction industry and the fire protection sector was no exception, says WRR (UK) business development manager Jon Francis.

WRR is a specialist subcontractor delivering installed and managed interiors and fire protection packages and its strategy for the year was simple: to focus on retaining key accounts by providing outstanding service.

To WRR, outstanding service means frequent communication, including regular visits by its managing director, taking on more responsibility, increasing

environmental responsibility and most importantly, zero accidents.

The strategy worked. There were no workplace accidents, all of its key accounts were retained and there was a 15 per cent increase in training spend.

To provide the best possible customer service, Mr Francis says WRR encourages a balanced environment of hard work and social reward, having regular team meetings, paying above industry-average salaries, providing quality company vehicles and giving generous bonuses. As a result only two out of 120 employees and contractors left in the past year.

Mr Francis says all but two people have been at WRR since its new model was formed five years ago, and a large number have been around since the company formed in 1989.

Its main clients, BAM and Sir Robert McAlpine, have been with the company since day one and are responsibly for 60-80 per cent of turnover each year.

WRR has completed 19 fire protection contracts in the past year and the company is particularly proud of its work on the Olympic

Stadium, the Velodrome and the ExCeL Exhibition Centre.

Mr Francis says one of the company’s long-term goals is to reduce the impact of its works on the environment and engage sustainable methods of construction by reducing noise, pollution and waste, and introducing recycling programmes where possible.

Through careful material selection and installation, WRR (UK) has been able to address the global warming and ozone depletion potential of its works.

“Although we have been trying to improve operational efficiency, one area we absolutely do not compromise on is safety,” says Mr Francis.

“And for the second year running we have had no accidents among our 120-strong employee and contractor team.”

THE FINALISTS

Gunfire
Sharpfibre
Ramtech Electronics
Kilnbridge Construction Services
Fire Design Solutions

Building envelope

Alumet Systems (UK)



Vinci's Ken Orbell presents Alumet with its trophy

The judges said:
“Employees are regarded as part of the family and a community environment and health and safety are all clearly part of the way it does business”

THE JUDGES

Andrew Osborne, deputy chairman, Osborne
 Paul Hodgkinson, chief executive, Simons Group

THE FINALISTS

Prater (Highly Commended)
 Bulmer Brick Cutting
 Structherm
 FK Construction
 Weatherwise Special Projects
 Lakesmere

Alumet's Abbey Gate project in Milton Keynes



Not only did Alumet survive last year's recession, but it says it came back stronger than ever thanks to a new business model.

The company has continued to invest and expanded its workforce, product portfolio, production facilities, training facilities, health and safety department, customer satisfaction standards, environmental standards and charity and community support.

In 2010, it secured new partnering agreements with Bovis, Mace, Interserve, Davis, Langdon, British Land and Carillion and launched a new division called EOS Energy dedicated to renewable technologies.

Alumet has big plans for its EOS Energy division and its target is to reach £100 million turnover within five years. While this is an ambitious target, Alumet feels it is achievable and anticipates recruiting an additional 60 members of staff over the next two years.

In June, the company transformed an area of wasteland at its headquarters into a wildlife garden. The 'Green Vision' Garden was opened by TV botanist Dr David Bellamy as a haven for wildlife and features a variety of plants, a pond, insect stack, butterfly box, wormery and various other features.

OVERALL WINNER

Alumet was picked by the judges for the overall Construction News Special Award.

Each judging panel puts forward category champions they think should be considered for the Special Award and an overall winner is found.

CN editor Nick Edwards said: "It's a company that continues to push the boundaries, constantly improving itself and the service it gives clients. It really does the business."

People focus Dean Walton



Director Dean Walton says without doubt Alumet's smartest business decision

has been to move into renewable technologies, and its new division is thriving

"It was essential for the future of the company that renewable energy was taken seriously," says Mr Walton.

It has overhauled its factories and offices to include solar panels, solar shading, new insulation and other energy-saving incentives.

Mr Walton says Alumet's most inspiring project of 2010 was working on St Bartholomew's School in Newbury – the company's first contract with Willmott Dixon – featuring a £3.5m full facade building envelope.

“It was essential for the future of the company that renewable energy was taken seriously”



Judge Alan Crane presents Cuddy Group with the award

The judges said:
“It’s refreshing for a medium-sized company to be so focused on client satisfaction. It is efficient, progressive and does things differently”

Demolition

Cuddy Group

THE JUDGES

Alan Crane, chairman,
3Cs Construction Consultancy
Stef Stefanou, chairman,
John Doyle

THE FINALISTS

McGee Group
Euro Dismantling Services
Cantillon
Erith Contractors
DDS Demolition
Clifford Devlin

Since it was established in 1971, Cuddy Group has achieved solid growth and a reputation for being the best.

Despite recent economic difficulties, Cuddy says its dedication to enhancing the scope of its services, safety standards and use of innovative technologies has never faltered.

Whether tackling highly restrictive specifications or designing innovative solutions to dismantle complex structures, overcoming technical difficulties is one of Cuddy

Group’s specialities.

Every member of staff – from managing directors to office workers – is directly involved in the firm’s health and safety management system and training programme.

With a minimum investment of £2,000 per employee, Cuddy has consistently improved its accident performance year on year since 2005. As of June 2010, the cumulative all injury accident rate had fallen by 97.9 per cent since the end of 2005.

Cuddy Group managing director Mike Cuddy says as the construction industry tries to tighten its belt, clients want more for their money.

“However Cuddy will not drop its price and risk compromising safety standards just to secure a job,” he says.

Instead the team aims to create greater cost-efficiencies, for example by rescheduling works or creating additional revenue streams from recyclable materials.

While working to maintain solid UK growth, the next 18 months will see the company developing a presence in the Middle East.

People focus – Mike Cuddy



Cuddy Group managing director Mike Cuddy says it was a privilege to be involved with

St. Modwen’s brownfield regeneration of the 429 ha former BP oil refinery site in West Wales.

“The development is sure to bring a new lease of life to the area, and having demolished 80,000 sq ft of disused petrochemical plant, offices and associated service buildings.”

Mr Cuddy believes its smartest

business decision in 2010 was the continued investment into the business.

“We spent £2.4 million on new plant, our employment levels rose 5 per cent and we created a brand new land remediation team, now regularly working on contracts worth over £1m.”

“In 2010 we created a land remediation team, now regularly working on contracts over £1m”



JACK HICKES/PHOTODISK/PHOTOS



Jo Simcock of AICA presents EDS with its prize

THE JUDGES

Tim Chapman, director, geotechnics and tunnelling division, Arup
Ken Orbell, project manager, Vinci

THE FINALISTS

The Herpetosure Group
Owls Hall Environmental
Pectel (A Keltbray Division)
D-Drill (Master Drillers)
Bowlins
Lucion Environmental

Site preparation and services

Euro Dismantling Services

The judges said:
“An innovative company bringing high skills to address the clean-up of a range of very contaminated sites. An enviable expert record illustrates the novelty of its very integrated services”

EDS machines working on a Pfizer site in Sandwich; MD Darren Palin and demolition apprentice Wade Roberts receiving an award



Established for over a decade, Euro Dismantling Services (EDS) says it has become a successful and major decommissioning contractor, providing the skills, resources and flexibility to deliver all types of projects safely on programme and within budget.

From £3.5 million turnover in 2000, EDS has evolved into a group with a turnover in excess of £55m in 2010.

Founded by the current chairman in 1994, EDS says it has had no health and safety or environmental notices and has been awarded a ROSPA Gold Award for health and safety achievements for the past four years.



EDS’s management team hold a range of skills and experience that is constantly updated to meet the industry demands. EDS carries out all core activities in-house and has approximately 110 multi-skilled field workers who take part in a wide range of training.

EDS was awarded the ARCA Gold training award for 2008 and 2009.

Globally, EDS identifies indus-

trial plants that have become idle and offers a comprehensive decommissioning solution, including asset recovery, to allow regeneration of the site by others or establish a partnership with the vendor.

The company is currently tendering and actively pursuing projects in a number of countries including Australia, Bermuda, Norway, Qatar and Togo.

People focus – Darren Palin



Managing director Darren Palin says EDS has the capacity to undertake large-scale, complex projects

from start to finish, providing a complete package to its clients.

It has progressed from its early days of controlled demolition to entire project delivery in North America, the Far East and Europe for some of the world’s largest listed companies.

“Our range of expertise has grown with the recruitment of highly qualified professionals, and the on-going training of our

personnel enables us to offer a full range of services we define as ‘Closure Management’,” says Mr Palin.

“Successful project delivery in the UK has led to worldwide opportunities with many of our blue-chip clients including; GSK, Pfizer, Dow Chemicals, Carlsberg, BP and Shell.”

Mr Palin says the company’s best decision of the past year was establishing offices in Canada. It recently recruited a Chinese national to coordinate negotiations with its Chinese clients in Canada.



The judges said:

“A high-quality company which has experienced consistent and sustainable growth founded on customer retention, quality, safety and delivery”

Construct chairman Neil Mitchell (left) presents the award to AJ Morrisroe & Sons

THE JUDGES

Mike Donegan, construction director, BAM Construct
Malcolm Richards, director of structures, Capita Symonds

Concrete

AJ Morrisroe & Sons

Brian Morrisroe founded AJ Morrisroe & Sons in 1983 to meet the growing demand for reliable subcontractors specialising in groundwork and reinforced concrete frame construction.

Mr Morrisroe, who is the company’s managing director, says a strong client base is vital to success in the concrete sector, and the company has developed long term relationships and partnerships based on professionalism and integrity as well as flexibility.

“Our decision to sustain operations in diverse sectors has also worked well for us,” he says.

He adds that the company is fortunate to employ so many talented people, and last year one of its apprentices, Rob Hart, was named Formwork Apprentice of the Year.

As well as being a personal achievement, the award also helped energise the board to continue its commitment to training and investment, explains Mr Morrisroe.

Another recent highlight for the firm has been its work on the London Aquatics Centre for the 2012 Olympic Games. This has been one of the most inspiring projects AJ Morrisroe & Sons has worked on, says Mr Morrisroe.

Celebrated architect Zaha Hadid incorporated many technically challenging features into the reinforced concrete superstructure. These include dive boards, scoreboard wall, a bowl wall and Welcome Zone, and the training ceiling.

These elements pushed the boundaries of what had previously been achieved with concrete. However, Mr Morrisroe says that the company’s project management and engineering team, in particular contracts manager Tony Henry and senior engineer Phil Jefferies, consistently met these challenges.

THE FINALISTS

Gunite (Eastern) (Highly Commeded)
John Cooper Construction
Amery Construction
Structural Systems UK
Evans Concrete

People focus –
Brian Morrisroe



Over the past 10 years AJ Morrisroe & Sons says it has developed a project portfolio that demonstrates its ability to deliver landmark projects.

The firm’s annual turnover has increased steadily over the past five years from £25 million in 2005 to £57m for the year to the end of October 2010.

In 2009/10 (as in previous years) over 80 per cent of its revenue came from the same clients. Although its client base is small it is made up of some of the largest contractors in the UK market such as Balfour Beatty, Skanska, Carillion, Berkeley Homes and Bovis Lend Lease.

“We have worked hard to establish a preferred status in their supply chain and feel this has paid off during this period of reduced construction activity,” says Mr Morrisroe.

“Our preferred status in the supply chain has paid off during this period of reduced activity”

The Library of Birmingham



THE JUDGES

Tim Chapman, director, geotechnics and tunnelling, Arup
Ken Orbell, project manager, Vinci

The judges said:
“Van Elle has kept on securing good commissions in challenging times, with a 94 per cent repeat order book demonstrating high levels of customer satisfaction”



THE FINALISTS

Roger Bullivant (Highly Commended)
John Cooper Construction

Barhale's Mark Cutler presents the award to Van Elle

Ground engineering

Van Elle

Geotechnical contractor Van Elle prides itself on the quality and value of the services and products it offers while aiming to exceed its customers' expectations.

This is reflected in the amount of repeat business it wins (92 per cent) and the number of

projects it has won through recommendations.

Being one of the few large, independent ground engineering contractors in the industry has meant during this difficult economic climate Van Elle has not had the benefit of a parent company's contracts to rely on. It says the quality of its work and its experience has enabled it to remain competitive.

Van Elle says many of its competitors have diversified over the years while it made the decision to remain a true specialist contractor by only diversifying within the geotechnical sector.

In the past 12 months, it was the sole drilling contractor for E.ON's private housing geothermal drilling contract and has recently been awarded a renewal for 2010-11. Van Elle's restricted access division has worked on many successful yet challenging and high profile projects including the Tate Modern Gallery extension, the Café Royal conversion and Dalston Western Curve London Underground.

The business has grown steadily and until 2008 had seen a year-on-year growth since it was founded in 1984 with turnover peaking at £47m in 2007-08.

People focus - Vic Handley



As with any business, in any industry, director Vic Handley says, communication is the key to success.

For a company to succeed in a competitive environment like geotechnical engineering, it needs a dedicated workforce able to meet client demands and produce innovative, value engineered solutions efficiently, safely and to the highest standards of workmanship – and at the right price.

Five years ago, Van Elle decided to diversify and expand its client base and services portfolio and to limit its exposure in the housing market. Mr Handley says this proved to be a smart move given the collapse in housing in recent years.

“Any business decision can be regarded as ‘smart’ at the time it is made – time only dictates whether it is the right decision or not,” he says.

Over the next 12 months, Van Elle plans to expand its operations nationally and internationally. It has opened new offices in Scotland and Lagos, Nigeria and will open branches in the South-east and South-west in the next six months.

“Any business decision can be regarded as ‘smart’ at the time it is made – time only dictates whether it is the right decision or not”





CN deputy editor Rebecca Evans presents the award to sales and marketing manager Tim Burton

THE JUDGES

Mike Donegan, construction director, BAM Construct
Malcolm Richards, director of structures, Capita Symonds

THE FINALISTS

Heskin Fabrications
Alumet Systems (UK)

Steelwork

SH Structures

The judges said:
“In declining market conditions they have further developed their technical and quality management systems. They have retained all of their staff. They are a preferred choice by clients”

Steelwork company SH Structures says it identified some years ago the need to offer clients a more bespoke and professional service by providing not only complex steel structures, but also managing and delivering other key interfacing elements.

This has seen the firm’s Yorkshire facility working to capacity for a large proportion of 2010, with ongoing contracts being delivered well into 2011.

The firm says the range of projects it take onboard continue

to be diverse and challenging, ranging from footbridges, stations and sports facilities through to public art and work on the restoration of the historic Cutty Sark in Greenwich.

For SH Structures 2010 was more about consolidation than growth, with the focus on taking a step back and looking at the business and how the company could improve its overall strategy.

Over the past year, SH Structures has reviewed its overall project management strategy.

This has led to staff having a closer involvement in aspects of projects other than those directly related to their job. The company says this has meant a closer working relationship between departments and ultimately a more efficient management team.

Its ability to adapt, change and develop by considering areas of the economy, demographics, technology, industry and competition, as well as sector trends, has enabled the company to come through a difficult year .

Hartlepool Sixth Form College and the footbridge over the A40



People focus – Tim Burton



Sales and marketing manager Tim Burton says the qualities required for success in steelwork are no different than those needed for any other subcontracting business.

“It is critical that the company continually strives to improve how it does business to maintain its place in its chosen sector,” he says.

Mr Burton adds that the company is fortunate to have an

experienced and loyal workforce, who are passionate about what they do and this is reflected in its ability to retain staff.

One of the individuals who helped make a difference was contracts manager David Perry, whose contribution to the management of a number of complex projects was a great asset, says Mr Burton.

“It is critical that the company continually strives to improve”

Building services

HWEnergy



HWEnergy accepts the award from RAC editor Andrew Gaved

The judges said:
“It has an enthusiasm and passion for what it does and a commendable commitment to training across the company”

THE FINALISTS

Airedale Mechanical & Electrical (Highly Commended)
 Briggs & Forrester
 Rotary Southern
 Grainger Electrical Services
 Parker Bromley
 Morecrofts

THE JUDGES

Neil Pennell, director of project engineering, Land Securities
 Tanya Ross, associate director and business manager, Buro Happold
 Rudi Klein, chief executive, SEC Group

Managing director Bruno Berardelli with some of the residents of Walter Cameron Way in front of the HW Energy Unit



Reducing carbon emissions and heating costs and increasing sustainability are some of the issues facing organisations across the UK and it is HWEnergy’s job to help companies meet these challenges through biomass heating.

HWEnergy is Scotland’s oldest biomass heating specialist, helping customers deliver more than 4,000 tonnes of CO₂ savings a year. It has created employment in both its own business, fabrication partners and throughout the woodfuel supply chain.

HWEnergy says it uses client satisfaction as a key performance indicator and regularly gathers survey feedback on completed projects. Almost all of its client satisfaction ratings are very good to excellent and the company says the levels of repeat business proves this.

All of HWEnergy’s 28 employees take part in training, from health and safety courses in first aid and confined space training to attending management courses at MIT in Boston and R&D training at Cambridge University.

The company has also taken on both an apprentice electrician through SECTT and an apprentice plumber through SNIPEF and continues to employ graduate engineers.

People focus – Stuart Reid



Head of sales and marketing Stuart Reid says being a complete solutions provider rather than

simply an equipment supplier is the key to HWEnergy’s success in the biomass heating sector.

“Offering these services, coupled with our commitment to making biomass heating systems work for the customer, no matter what obstacles are encountered, is vital to success,” says Mr Reid.

Mr Reid says 2010 was a successful year which saw the team double in size. This expansion included the appointment of projects operations manager Mark Watkins who has helped improve its project management, procurement and health and safety practices.

The company’s most inspiring work of the past year was the Walter Cameron Way Project. A sheltered housing scheme of 23 properties, HWEnergy designed, planned, built, installed and operates a biomass heat cabin system that allowed the client to reduce its CO₂ emissions by 100 tonnes per year and cut heating costs by more than 40 per cent.

“Our commitment to making biomass heating systems work for the customer, no matter what, is vital to success”

THE JUDGES

Ray Horwood, chief executive, NFRC
 Paul Sandison, strategic procurement manager, John Laing
 Sean Bowles, operations director, Galliford Try



THE FINALISTS

Lakesmere (Highly Commended)
 FK Construction
 Advanced Roofing
 Breyer Group
 BriggsAmasco
 Prater

The judges said:

“A stunning example of a medium sized company that is looking to the future and achieving excellence in all the key areas. A first class roofing company”

Constructing Excellence's Don Ward presents the prize to Geoff Neal Roofing

Roofing

Geoff Neal Roofing

Geoff Neal Roofing Ltd (GNRL) is a York-based family firm that has built a reputation for quality, service and safety during its 28-year history.

Founded and run by managing director Geoff Neal, the company employs 22 skilled roofing specialists and craft operatives. It undertakes around 220 domestic and commercial roofing projects a year, delivering an annual turnover of £2 million.

Despite its relatively small size, the company's focus on excellence and customer service means its clients now include several prestigious national and regional organisations including the National Trust, English Heritage, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), York's Retreat Hospital and York Primary Healthcare Trust.

The company is a member of the National Federation of Roofing Contractors, listed on its Heritage Register, and a winner of several roofing awards since 2007.

In February 2010, GNRL was selected as a principal contractor by Wetwang Parochial Church Council (PCC) to carry out major roofing renovation work on St Nicholas's Church. The church, which stands in the centre of Wetwang village, is a largely Norman building which was modified in the 13th century.

The £161,000 project was scheduled to be carried out over a 14-week period and involved the removal of the church's existing lead roof and its replacement, together with ancillary leadwork.

The project is the largest initiative of its type ever undertaken by the company.



The Geoff Neal St Nicholas's Church roofing team



People focus – Geoff Neal

Managing director Geoff Neal's father George set up the original roofing business in the 1940s and today Geoff's son Oliver is employed as contracts director.

Mr Neal says: "GNRL works on around 250 domestic and commercial roofing projects a year, delivering an annual turnover of £2m. Since 2003, the company has seen its turnover grow by 200 per cent.

"Lead-worker Carl Tumman, who achieved a Silver Award from the LTA, and estimator and health and safety manager Adam Gontarek have had a

particularly positive effect on winning new business and delivering outstanding workmanship."

Mr Neal says the company's smartest decision over the past 12 months has been to successfully apply for Heritage CSCS cards for its employees.

"As a result, it is now one of the few companies in the region to carry these cards. This industry recognition of GNRL's specialist skills has enabled the company to expand the services it can offer and bid for new types of work," he says.



Lavendon received its award from Mike Donegan, construction director, BAM Construct

THE JUDGES

Ray Horwood, chief executive, NFRC
 Paul Sandison, strategic procurement manager, John Laing
 Sean Bowles, operations director, Galliford Try



Access and scaffolding

Lavendon Access Services

The judges said:

“A company that stands out from the pack in terms of commitment to a strong and uniformed workforce while achieving excellence to customers”

In 2010, Lavendon demonstrated leading safety and innovation in performance while setting new operational standards through its international TechX programme.

Between 2007 and 2009, accidents involving staff halved, falling from 52 to 27 and in 2010, Lavendon achieved the Rospa Gold Award and won the Hire Association of Europe Effective Health and Safety Management Award.

The company also supports industry-wide improvements and has been advising the International Powered Access Federation on best practice in the use of spreader pads.

Despite difficult trading conditions, Lavendon continued to invest in skills training. The Lavendon Academy is the largest powered access training provider in Europe and in 2010 it signed a deal to provide St John Ambulance first aid courses.

Lavendon runs an apprenticeship scheme in partnership with the National Construction College and recently started a management training scheme

to help retain and develop its employees

As part of its plan to constantly improving its customer service, Lavendon started its Technical Services Department in 2010. A technical call centre, it provides clients with advice from qualified engineers.

The company says its 24/7 service solves 30 per cent of problems over the phone, saving customers – and the business – time and money.

THE FINALISTS

Turner Access
 Admiral Scaffolding Group
 Connect Scaffolding
 Ezee Scaffolding
 The Up and Under Group
 Network Scaffolding

Historic access at York Minster



People focus – Richard Miller



Sales and marketing director Richard Miller says success is about more than just hiring kit – companies must offer a consistently high level of service and quality equipment while helping customers meet their Health and Safety commitments.

In 2010, Lavendon recognised more than 100 employees for going beyond expectations.

In recent times, the decrease in construction output in the UK

caused Lavendon to restructure its business, resulting in a loss of employees and morale.

“We picked ourselves up and continued to work hard, innovating and setting high standards - we achieved RoSPA Gold, HAE Hire Company of the Year and IAPA Powered Access Company of the Year at the same time,” he says.

“We picked ourselves up and continued to set high standards”

Finishing & Fit-out

H&J Martin

The H&J Martin team is keenly aware of its 160-year heritage and the contribution made by the Martin family who now own a business in its fifth generation.

“We firmly believe this family ethos is the bedrock that has allowed us to build the strong relationships necessary to survive and grow in today’s demanding market,” says business development manager Daniel Chesney.

The firm has seen a major uplift in business and it believes this is a result of its planning and ability to attract and retain clients through delivering quality projects and developing strong personal relationships.

Over the past 12 months the fit out division has delivered unrivalled success in what H&J says was the most demanding, yet rewarding, year in its history.

Under the leadership of director Geraldine Gordon the division has successfully grown despite the most difficult of market conditions.

H&J Martin’s fit out team delivers projects across a variety of sectors from commercial to retail, residential to hospitality.

In February 2010, H&J Martin completed a multi million pound fit out for AIG in Bucharest. This project was a 44,200 sq m office development over 20 floors for AIG. It was carried out in the winter months, and the H&J team were often working in temperatures as low as -30 deg C.

Through 2011, H&J Martin aims to develop its new offices, support the growth of local project teams and build on the work it has completed in Germany and Romania.

People focus – Daniel Chesney

Business development manager Daniel Chesney says the single most important element in the success of a business is its clients and the most effective resource to ensure client satisfaction and retention is its people.



He says the past three years have been the most challenging in memory and despite this the company has remained focused on its expansion plans, from its new offices, to recruitment of new personnel to continuous investment in its people.

Mr Chesney attributes this calculated strategy to the ambition of fit out director Geraldine Gordon supported by members of the board, the Martin family and all employees.

This approach has produced sustainable growth and established a solid strategic foundation to aid future success.

A reduced market means increased competition and the company has met this challenge by developing client relationships through key account teams, delivering leaner construction to clients through transparency of its business practices, says Mr Chesney.

“Where we differentiate ourselves is quality of the end project and satisfaction for the end user,” he says.



Osborne deputy chairman Andrew Osborne presents H&J Martin with the trophy

The judges said:
“This fifth generation company has grown through developing its team, attracting new clients and fearlessly exploring new geographic regions across Europe while nurturing the relationships with repeat customers”

THE FINALISTS

Create Interiors
 Astec
 Mivan
 A Andrews & Sons (Marbles & Tiles)
 Redec
 S Lucas

THE JUDGES

Andrew Osborne, deputy chairman, Osborne
 Paul Hodgkinson, chief executive, Simons Group

THE JUDGES

Alan Crane, chairman,
3Cs Construction Consultancy
Kevin Fear, head of health and
safety strategy, Construction
Skills
Steve Bolt, chief scientist, WYG

The judges said:
“Setting targets,
providing resources
and measuring effect
in order to drive
performance
improvement”



THE FINALISTS

Mace Security and Electrical
(Midlands) (Highly
Commended)
Alumet Systems (UK)
Passivent
The Herpetosure Group
Clifford Devlin
Frosts Landscape Construction

Cementation Skanska gets its prize from Thomas Vale’s Bill Munn

Sustainability

Cementation Skanska

For a century, Cementation Skanska has installed piled foundations for projects across the UK. Sustainability at Cementation Skanska has four key areas; ethics, health, safety and environmental management. This has been consolidated into three priority areas; social, environmental and economic, in line with parent company Skanska.

The firm’s social agenda addresses human resources, health and safety, community, and business ethics, and uses a carbon footprint calculator to indicate the impact of activities. It also runs a sustainability competition to encourage new ideas.

Geothermal manager Peter Smith points to sustainability behaviours including the removal

of individual waste bins to encourage recycling; electronic reporting to reduce paper; and video conferencing to cut travel.

Cementation Skanska introduced a green car policy with all cars to be under 130g/kg CO₂ emission while vans are tracked for maximum efficiency and fitted with fuel reduction devices.

Other initiatives include harvest-

ing rainwater for steam cleaning and using biodegradable or low-sulphur fuels where possible.

Mr Smith says the company pioneered the introduction and growth of energy piles in the foundation industry. In 2010, its geothermal development was extended to diaphragm walls at the Knightsbridge Palace hotel.

Cementation Skanska works only with responsible suppliers and subcontractors who recognise their responsibility to protect the environment and foster good relations with employees and local communities, says Mr Smith.

It sources wood from certified sustainable suppliers and all its reinforcement comes from recycled steel. To date its energy pile solutions are provide almost 6 MW of geothermal heating and cooling, saving around 3,800 tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually.

“Our aim is to be the top green foundation contractor and to maintain a key contribution to Skanska’s Deep Green drive,” says Mr Smith.





Alumet Systems receives its trophy from Francesca Roberts, chief executive of Crash

OVERALL WINNER

Alumet was picked by the judges for the overall Construction News Special Award.

Each judging panel puts forward category champions they think should be considered for the Special Award and an overall winner is found.

CN editor Nick Edwards said: "It's a company that continues to push the boundaries, constantly improving itself and the service it gives clients. It really does the business."

Training

Alumet Systems (UK)

THE JUDGES

Brian Moone, director, Mace Business School
Bill Munn, director, HR, H&S, resources, environment, Thomas Vale
Alasdair Thompson, development director, Franklin Andrews

THE FINALISTS

D-Drill (Master Drillers) Lakesmere
Erith Contractors
Swift Horsman Group
Ploughcroft
PILOn

Throughout 2010, building envelope provider Alumet continued to invest heavily in training with a large team to provide specialist training support including human resources, health & safety and environmental.

It also expanded its training facilities, funded courses, improved performance and staff morale and received positive feedback from clients.

Training developments for 2010 include a dedicated training centre at its headquarters, a training roof where the solar panel installation team can learn in a safe environment and key performance indicators (KPIs) for each department.

To further the education of employees, the company fully sponsors staff to complete qualifications ranging from day courses to degrees.

Along the way Alumet has built relationships with external training providers from Warwickshire County Council to the Chartered Institute of Marketing.

The company also tailors its training policies to suit its staff and has a range of appraisal systems.

Alumet's Absence Management Policy ensures staff receive support for any time off for holidays, bereavement, health issues, stress or pregnancy. The policy ensures staff feel confident discussing personal issues such as bullying and discrimination at work and as a result, the company has seen a 48.6 per cent reduction in lost days due to absence in the past 3 to 4 years.

The judges said:

"Alumet has forged important links with external bodies and the community to support its learning and development objectives. Its results are clearly demonstrated through its business KPIs such as reduced absenteeism"

People focus – the team

When asked which people made the biggest difference to the company in 2010, Alumet director Dean Walton found it difficult to single out individual staff when its success had truly been a team effort. However, he says its leadership was instrumental in its 2010 achievements.

Managing director Gary Summers and the board continued to explore new markets and Mr Summers was recently named Midlands Entrepreneur of the Year. Lee Summers (environmental manager, now director) helped Alumet through ISO14001 and to land the coveted Green Apple Awards for

Environmental Excellence.

Commercial director Neville Grunwald assembled the new Renewable Technologies division, while sales director Laurence McBeth and team continued to secure contracts to keep the factory busy.

Over the next 12 months, Alumet plans to continue training staff on environmental issues and aims to become the most sustainable facade company in the UK. "We see innovation and diversification as necessities, not just options, if we are to stay ahead of the competition," says Mr Walton.



Max Willcox guides Andy Campbell as part of the company's mentoring programme



Claire Ferdinando, training manager at The Health & Safety People, presents the trophy to FK Construction

THE JUDGES

Alan Crane, chairman, 3Cs Construction Consultancy
Kevin Fear, head of health and safety strategy, ConstructionSkills
Steve Bolt, chief scientist, WYG

The judges said:
“An enormous investment in health and safety training and behavioural aspects, and measurement of effect”

Health and safety

FK Construction

FK Roofing Services believes in setting the highest health and safety standards for itself and says it is able to retain the trust of its clients as a result.

Over the past year it has implemented an “Incident and Injury Free” programme, which focuses on making all staff more risk aware and underlining personal responsibility.

Thanks to this collective approach, FK has seen its accident frequency rate fall by 50 per cent.

It says it remains committed to the well being of its workforce and has increased investment in safety training by 5 per cent, now providing 16 days of training per staff member.

The company now employs a specialist in-house safety officer who leads the implementation of internal training programmes. This is carried out with external consultants to make sure the latest regulations and safe working practices are adhered to.

Maintaining its health and safety record is of high importance for FK. As well as having Building Confidence and Safe Contractor accreditations, its workforce is 100 per cent CSCS approved and NVQ qualified.

Site managers and company directors regularly attend IOSH management courses and are inducted in the Construction Plant Competency Scheme. Other

CITB courses include Site Manager Safety Training Schemes, Manual Handling, Working at Heights, Safety Netting Inspection, Scaffolding Inspection and First Aid.

Health and safety is observed to the highest standards from the planning stage of each project and in-house designers carefully consider every architectural detail to minimise risks without compromising design.

People focus – Francis Keenan



Managing director Francis Keenan says the whole FK team has worked together to improve the business and its services, but two individuals have continued to go above and beyond.

Quality, safety, health and environment manager David Raine has improved health and safety procedures across all FK sites through the “Incident and Injury Free” programme. Meanwhile, commercial director Paul Bentley has worked to improve efficiencies within the supply chain by embracing and transferring the partnership-working ethos to all suppliers and clients.

Mr Keenan says: “The success of the business is testament to its ability to flex and adapt to the market, economy and clients’ changing needs over the past 30 years.”

The Royal Opera House was a flagship project



THE FINALISTS

Prater (Highly Commended)
Lanes Group - Lanes for Drains
Maylarch Environmental
Lakesmere
Owls Hall Environmental
Weatherwise (Special Projects)

“Our success is testament to our ability to adapt to the market and clients’ changing needs”

Glenigan economics director Allan Wilen (far left) presented the award to Weatherwise



THE JUDGES

Brian Moone, director, Mace Business School
 Bill Munn, director, HR, H&S, resources, environment,
 Thomas Vale
 Alasdair Thompson, development director,
 Franklin Andrews

The judges said:
“Excellent growth – a strong forward order book which is underpinned by clear management vision and processes that support a controlled and sustained growth”

Business growth

Weatherwise Special Projects

THE FINALISTS

Alumet Systems (UK) (Highly Commended)
STV Building Services
JLES Group
Owls Hall Environmental
Amery Construction
Erith Contractors

Weatherwise Special Projects was established in 2007 with the vision of becoming a leading specialist subcontractor with strong financial resources, innovation and the entrepreneurial flair to successfully compete for total building envelope projects.

The company says its approach and vision was different to the traditional way new businesses establish themselves in this high-risk market sector.

Weatherwise’s business plan concentrates on the high margin and high quality end of the market and with selected partners it has built strong working relationships and has agreed sustainable commercial terms.

In spite of tough market conditions, Weatherwise says it has made a profit year on year which is down to its motto the “One Team Approach” and its willingness to learn from its peers.

For 2010-11, it has secured over £10 million in contracts and for 2011-12 over £3m with repeat clients.

But it says it also recognises the need to balance environmental and social issues and to act and trade ethically while achieving the margins that sustain the business.

People focus - Wayne Little



Managing director Wayne Little says Weatherwise’s values of safety, innovation, commercial

awareness, transparency and professional delivery with collaboration are at the core of everything it does, whether dealing with clients, suppliers or subcontractors.

Mr Little says the company’s most exciting project of the past year has been at Mann Island, Liverpool for BAM Construction.

Its biggest subcontract package to date valued in excess of £18m, the contract involved one commercial building and two residential apartment buildings, the latter being separated by a structurally glazed public area.

He says the work at Mann Island was inspiring due to the technical complexity of the project and the fact materials were sourced from all over the world.

To ensure its ongoing success, Weatherwise is constantly looking to build long-term relationships and its records show repeat business is the main driver of its success.

“We are working very hard on zero defects. We aim to do it once and once only,” he says.

“We are working very hard on zero defects. We aim to do it once and once only”

Mann Island, Liverpool





Costain's Stephen Wells presents the prize to Dorman Long Technology

THE JUDGES

Stephen Wells, business development director, Costain
Mark Cutler, chief executive, Barhale

THE FINALISTS

Lakehouse (Highly Commended)
Lakesmere (Highly Commended)
Yorkon
Van Elle
PJ Carey Contractors

Project excellence: public sector

Dorman Long Technology

Designer and manufacturer of mechanised structures and steel bridges, Dorman Long Technology, was chosen by Costain to work on the A34 Wolvercote Viaduct Replacement.

The viaduct carries a four-lane highway across a canal, railway lines and the A40, and the existing eight-span structure was built in the 1960s.

It was Dorman Long Technology's job to design, supply and operate a hydraulic lifting and skidding system to slide the new Southbound deck 16.6 m sideways from its construction position into its final position.

To maintain traffic over the viaduct throughout the replacement process and minimise land use, a phased demolition and

construction scheme was used.

The new deck is 254 m long and weighs 4,920 tonnes. The slide was carried out on 27-28 March 2010.

The A34 Southbound deck was closed to traffic from 7pm on the Saturday and the deck was jacked onto the skid units and the temporary movement joints removed. The slide began at 1.30am on

Sunday and the deck was in position by 7.30am and on its bearings by noon. The carriageway was reopened to traffic on Sunday afternoon.

The client was delighted with the pilot project, and the minimum disruption caused to traffic, and as a result it is likely that this method for bridge replacement will be used in future.



The team used a hydraulic lifting and skidding system

People focus – Tom Betts



Operations director Tom Betts says the project highlighted the firm's ability to meet a unique challenge.

"The rewards of this project were an improved understanding of each other's roles," he says, naming three individuals who were key to the project's success. Principal engineer Steve Beardsmore led the team that developed the DL-SU250/350 skid system, and engineered the slide operation; site project manager Rob McLane took on

pre-site planning, operation programming, installation and commissioning of equipment; and slide master Mike Wade provided technical co-ordination in the planning and implementation of the slide. Subcontractor Steel Lifting Services installed the skid track and provided erector services on slide night.

"This project improved our understanding of each other's roles"



Prater received the trophy from Suzannah Nichol, chief executive at awards supporter NSCC

THE FINALISTS

- Yorkon (Highly Commended)
- C Spencer
- SPV Group
- Style Partitions
- Interserve Project Services

Merchant Square,
Paddington, London



Project excellence: private sector

Prater

The £87 million Merchant Square residential building was constructed at the side of the Grand Union Canal in Paddington, London.

Completed in November 2010, the new 15 storey block of apartments is part of a new square for London's West End, which combines living, working and relaxing into one picturesque waterside development.

Prater was employed by Carillion Build to complete the design-and-build facade on the new apartments using a number of cladding and curtain wall products.

Prater says the project involved constant consideration and advice from the company around the feasibility of incorporating a mix of components onto and within the facade finishes.

The 9,700 sq m facade was constructed onto the building framework with a mix of some 20 different products and systems which had been selected by the architect and the client for the building fabric.

The combination of finishes and products included a Heuck

SSG curtain wall system with both top hung and parallel opening vents, a composite backing wall system and a Reglit cast glass plank sealed rainscreen system.

People focus – Chris Leach



Operations director Chris Leach says what makes Prater unique is it is the only envelope provider that offers the full range of technical disciplines in-house.

“Traditionally a complex building envelope such as Merchant Square would be split into different packages, resulting in many issues surrounding the differing interfaces,” he says. “However, Prater was able to take a holistic view and work with the architect from the outset to bring the design concept to life.

“The team responsible for the success of the project included operations manager John O’Kane, project manager Bob Cashmore, site managers Stuart Richardson, Michael Giles and Billy Higham, commercial manager Garry Cooper, design manager Brian Hunt and technical manager Roger Kind.”

THE JUDGES

Stephen Wells, business development director, Costain
Mark Cutler, chief executive, Barhale

The judges said:

“A complex project delivered on time and budget. It was proactive, safe and of superb quality”

“The result is an aesthetically striking, high performance building that Prater is proud to have helped create”